



Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Application No:	20220309
Location:	Londis, 29 Milton Road Gravesend Kent
Description:	Change of the shopfront façade, including external security shutters.
Applicant:	Jappy Takhar
Site Visit Date:	26.04.2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

The applicant has submitted the following in support of the application:

Application form

Drawing no. D01 Rev. 6 (Existing Block Plan, Proposed Block Plan, Location Plan)

Drawing no. D02 Rev. 6 (Existing Plan and Elevation)

Drawing no. D03 Rev. 6 (Proposed Plan and Elevation)

Heritage Statement

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20151080	Change of use of first and second floor levels from residential to storage in connection with the existing A1 retail shop at ground floor level.	Permitted	02.03.2016
20030553	Change of use of the ground floor of no. 30 into class A2 Financial Services; use of the first and second floors above nos. 29 & 30 as two self-contained maisonettes; erection of single storey rear extension to no. 29 to form enlarged retail area, w.c. and staff room and alterations to store at the rear; first floor rear extension to no. 30 to form a kitchen; installation of new shopfronts to nos. 29 & 30; replacement of first floor front windows to nos. 29 & 30 and construction of dormer window in the rear roof slope of no. 30.	Permitted	27.08.2003
20020341	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged retail area and cloakroom/w.c.	Permitted	19.06.2002
20010789	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged retail area and cloakroom/wc.	Refused	02.01.2002
20000317	Partial demolition of part of the ground floor walls and infilling of the open passageway between the two shops to form one enlarged retail unit and installation of new shopfronts and roller shutters incorporating an entrance door to the upper floor flat.	Permitted	15.09.2000

19950801	Alterations to the ground floor front elevation, partial demolition of part of the ground floor load bearing walls and infilling of open passage- way between the two shops to form enlarged retail area.	Refused	05.02.1996
19881162	Installation of a new shopfront.	Permitted	01.03.1989
19860536	Erection of a single storey rear extension to form a porch	Permitted	22.09.1986

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS05 – Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas
- TC9 – Shopfronts
- T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- AP7 – Milton Road

The Council has a statutory requirement under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF 2021 sets out that those policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and the review found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted, and the need to ensure a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan First Review 1994 generally conform with the NPPF 2021, the Council will also seek to replace these saved policies via the emerging Local Plan.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

- SPG 4 – Security measures for shopfronts and commercial premises (2020)
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015)
- Management Plan – Gravesend Town Centre Conservation Areas (2009)
- Milton Place Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Conservation

The pair of traditional timber shop fronts, pilasters, corbels and fascia's to this building have been replaced or obscured with modern and unsympathetic metal framed shopfronts, external security shutters and fascias. The original recessed arch to the accommodation above has also been poorly altered with a uPVC door set flush to the pavement, partially removing the arch. This has resulted in harm to the appearance of the conservation area, which is contrary to local and national policy and for this reason cannot be supported.

It should also be noted that the 5 original timber vertical sliding sash windows at first and second floor have been replaced with uPVC top hung casement windows that also cause harm to the appearance of the conservation area.

For the above reasons the proposals cause harm to the conservation area and cannot be supported.

KCC Heritage

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 19 properties, and on site and in the press. The consultation periods expired on 13 and 27 May 2022 respectively.

No letters of representation have been received from neighbouring properties.

Local Ward Councillors were also consulted, and no responses were received.

Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks permission for the change of the shopfront façade, including external security shutters. Details of the shutters have not been included with the application, but they are present within the existing façade.

The works have already been carried out and include the installation of a white UPVC shopfront with external shutters. There is a central access door serving the residential use above that has also been replaced in UPVC in line with the shopfront but the red line around the application site does not include this area.

[The description originally included reference to fascia signage, but the agent was informed that this would need a separate advertisement consent and the signage has therefore been removed from the description.]

Principle Issues

The main issue to consider in the determination of this application is the design of the shopfront changes and the impact on the application building and surrounding street scene. There are no amenity or highways concerns.

Design and Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area

Section 12 of the NPPF 2021 relates to achieving well-designed places and sets out the Government's requirements in relation to design issues. Paragraph 126 emphasises the importance of achieving high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

No. 29 Milton Road lies within the Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area and the Milton Place Conservation Area. In line with Policy CS05 (Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area) of the Core Strategy 2014, it is important that redevelopment is supported where this improves townscape character.

The NPPF 2021 also places great significance on the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets, and on new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraphs 197 and 190 respectively). This is echoed in Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, which states that the significance of the Borough's heritage assets and their setting should always be preserved or enhanced. Saved Policy TC3 of the Local Plan 1994 also states that development is expected to make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The Council's planning guidance for shopfronts within the town centre or local shopping centres seeks high standards of shopfront design and aims to ensure shopfronts are designed to maintain the attractiveness of the centre. Any proposed alterations should therefore well designed, including the type and colour of materials, and appropriate in terms of the scale and character of the original building, to make a positive contribution to the area.

Specifically in relation to shopfronts, Policy TC9 of the Local Plan 1994 states that the Borough Council will resist developments that would result in existing shopfronts of traditional design and materials being lost, and that would result in the installation of security grills and shutters on the exterior of shopfronts.

It is recognised within the Milton Place Conservation Area Appraisal that there are modern shopfronts on Milton Road. No. 28 to 31 Milton Road, however, are identified as being buildings of townscape merit, as they are recognised as being good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. The Appraisal states that the greatest threat to the character of the buildings on Milton Road is the introduction of unsuitable shopfronts and shop signage.

The works to the shopfront under this application have already been carried out. Over time, changes have been made to this shopfront that have gradually damaged its original noteworthy character.

Google Maps Street View August 2009:



Google Maps Street View May 2018:



Current shopfront:



Unfortunately, the traditional and original features of the frontage have been replaced or obscured with the replacement shopfront, which is of both poor design and materials. External security shutters have also been installed. The central recess to the residential use above has also been poorly altered and a UPVC door put in. The chunky white shopfront frames are incongruous and harmful to the application building. The uniform appearance between the two parts of the shopfront has also been fragmented. There was an opportunity to install something better or improve upon the existing and this has unfortunately been wasted. In addition, planning procedures were contravened by installing the new shopfront without planning permission.

The poor design and materials of the retrospective shopfront, with the loss of traditional and original features, and the lack of any consideration to the Conservation Area designation, significantly detract from the character and appearance of the application building and fail to preserve or enhance the surrounding Conservation Area.

The proposal would therefore fail to comply with the above requirements of saved Policies TC3 and TC9 of the Local Plan 1994, Policies CS05, CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 126, 130, 190 and 197 of the NPPF 2021.

New signage would be the subject of an advertisement consent application and would be appropriately assessed as and when such an application is submitted, with a particular consideration of the designation of the site. An informative should be included on this basis.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The poor design and materials of this retrospective shopfront, together with the loss of the traditional and unified features of the previous original shopfront, are considered to significantly harm the character and appearance of the application building and fail to preserve or enhance the surrounding Milton Place Conservation Area. The proposal therefore fails to comply with the requirements of saved Policies TC3 and TC9 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994, Policies CS05, CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 126, 120, 190 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Katherine Parkin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>K. Parkin</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	15th June 2022	Dated:	16th June 2022