

Planning Committee

04 January 2011

Reference:
APP/10/01169

Area Team:
North Team

Case Officer:
Miss K Elliot

Ward:
Hoylake and Meols

Location: 100 MARKET STREET, HOYLAKES, CH47 3BE
Proposal: Retention of shop front
Applicant: Mr M Mellors
Agent :

Site Plan:



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Development Plan allocation and policies:

Key Town Centre
Policy SH1 Criteria for Development in Key Town Centres
Policy SH8 Criteria for Shop Fronts
SPG43 Shop Front Design Guide

Planning History:

APP/10/00316 Change of use to dance school Approved 31/03/2010

Summary Of Representations and Consultations Received:

REPRESENTATIONS

Twenty letters of notification were sent to the occupiers of neighbouring properties and a site notice was displayed. Three separate letters of objection were received and these can be summarised as follows:

- the application did not include a design and access statement;
- the main entrance to the building has been moved and caused traffic congestion of Elm Grove;
- the proposal should comply with Building Regulations and the Disability Discrimination Act;

- the shop front detracts from the appearance of the street scene and in particular adjacent to the conservation area;
- the proposal is bland and unattractive and the use of white plastic surrounds is at odds with other shops in the vicinity;
- if approved, the proposal would set a precedent for others to follow;
- the proposal is inappropriate the overall character of Hoylake and is unacceptable;
- the use of large, obscurely glazed windows offers no visual interest;
- more appropriate materials and window displays should be used.

CONSULTATIONS

Hoylake Civic Society did not comment on the proposal.

Director's Comments:

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO PLANNING COMMITTEE

The application was removed from delegation by Councillor Ellis on behalf of local residents on the grounds that the shop front has a negative impact on the street scene, particularly in relation to the materials used and the general format of its structure.

INTRODUCTION

The proposal is for the retention of an existing shop front.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The principle of the development is acceptable subject to Policies SH1, SH8 and SPG43.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The site comprises a mid-terrace property within Hoylake Key Town Centre. The premises was formerly an A1 furniture shop with an aluminium shop front. The site is surrounded by a variety of other commercial uses typical of a town centre location.

POLICY CONTEXT

Policies SH1, SH8 and SPG43 are directly relevant in this instance.

APPEARANCE AND AMENITY ISSUES

The premises previously had a shop front consisting of a grey aluminium with clear glazing fascia. The proposal is to retain its replacement - a white plastic shop front with obscure glazed window units. The principle of the development is considered acceptable. The use of the premises was granted planning permission as a dance school earlier this year however at the time no external alterations were proposed. The shop front to which this application relates has been installed since then. The application did not require a design and access statement to be submitted as part of the application, as stated in one of the objections received, under revised legislation issued in April 2010. In terms of access the shop front provides a level entrance way in to the premises off Market Street although it would appear the main entrance is now off Elm Grove, where there was previously a opening. This and any internal alterations would not require planning permission as suggested in the objection and in response to the traffic concerns raised, this would have been addressed under the previous change of use application and is not relevant to the shop front. Any compliance with Building Regulations or the Disability Discrimination Act is also not for consideration.

The application site does not fall within a conservation area and does not affect a listed building. Neither does the site immediately adjoin a conservation area, and thus it could not be said to affect its setting as suggested in the objections raised considering the nearest conservation area is the southern end of Hoylake at The Kings Gap. The site occupies a mid row position within a small shopping parade. Within the parade itself there is very little consistency in the design of the frontages, there are a mix of timber aluminum and upvc shop fronts of varying proportions. The frontage that was previously in place was of no significant value in that it was poorly proportioned and made of low quality materials albeit fairly inoffensive due its large glazing panes and minimal framing. However this is not to suggest that the replacement of one poor quality design with another is acceptable but it is considered the design of the new frontage is of a standard design that is not out of keeping with others within the immediate vicinity. There are several other upvc frontages along the northern section of Market Street and it would be unreasonable to insist on alternative materials when the property itself is

not listed or within a conservation area.

That proposed is generally well proportioned, tidy and functional. In addition it is slightly recessed on one side which reduces its visual prominence somewhat. The starkness of the white pvc does increase the prominence of the unit, however this will obviously become dull in time and the applicant has offered to colour coat the frame in a grey colour. This would be a significant improvement and could be controlled by condition. It is considered that the perceived visual impact from the proposal is due to the expanse of frontage which is across two units. The advertisement signage also adds to the prominence of the frontage, however such adverts do not require consent. Whilst the objections mainly raised concerns in relation to the visual impact of the shop front, it is considered on balance that it would be difficult to sustain a refusal to the proposal on these grounds when the site does not lie in a designated area.

In conclusion the design of the shop front is considered acceptable in the context of the use of the site and is not considered detrimental to its setting. In addition the shop front should relate to the business it serves. The use is not that which would usually be associated with a traditional display window and it is assumed that the use of obscure glazing is for privacy reasons. The proposal is not considered to result in significant visual harm or detract from the character of the area. There are numerous other examples of upvc shop fronts in the vicinity and it would be unreasonable to insist on alternative materials when the property itself is not listed or within a conservation area. The proposal is not considered detrimental to the character of the street scene and is recommended for approval.

SEPARATION DISTANCES

Separation distances do not apply in this instance, as no residential properties will be affected by the proposed development.

HIGHWAY/TRAFFIC IMPLICATIONS

There are no Highway Implications relating to this proposal.

ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

There are no Environmental/Sustainability issues relating to these proposals.

HEALTH ISSUES

There are no health implications relating to this application.

CONCLUSION

The proposal complies with Policies SH1 and SH8 of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan and SPG43 and is deemed not to undermine the vitality and viability of the Key Town Centre or be detrimental to the character of the area or neighbouring properties.

Summary of Decision:

Having regards to the individual merits of this application the decision to grant Planning Permission has been taken having regards to the relevant Policies and Proposals in the Wirral Unitary Development Plan (Adopted February 2000) and all relevant material considerations including national and regional policy advice. In reaching this decision the Local Planning Authority has considered the following:-

The proposal complies with Policies SH1 and SH8 of Wirral's Unitary Development Plan and SPG43 and is deemed not to undermine the vitality and viability of the Key Town Centre or be detrimental to the character of the area or neighbouring properties.

Recommended Decision: Approve

Recommended Conditions and Reasons:

1. The shop front hereby approved shall be colour coated in accordance with details to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the date of this permission. The approved details shall be implemented within 6 months of the date of this permission and retained as such thereafter unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

Last Comments By: 11/11/2010 11:27:00

Expiry Date: 02/12/2010