

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Alex Howard.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01288/FP	Replacement shopfront (Development has commenced).	1 Arena Parade Letchworth Garden City Hertfordshire SG6 3BY

Submitted Plan Nos

AL-001B AL-002A Location Plan

1.0 Policies

D1	Sustainable design
D3	Protecting living conditions
SECN12	Achieving well-designed places

2.0 **Planning History**

2.1 None.

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Site Notice and Neighbour Consultation** – None received.

3.2 **Letchworth Heritage Foundation** – None received.

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 The site is a retail unit located on the corner of Arna Parade and Broadway, Letchworth Garden City. The site is a Secondary Shopping Frontage and is within the Conservation Area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 Planning permission is sought for a replacement shopfront. The development has already commenced on site. There is no change of use proposed to the retail unit itself.

4.3 **Key Issues**

4.3.1 The key considerations are design, impacts on Heritage assets, and the impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties. The principle of development is not considered as no change of use is proposed, such that Policy ETC5 is not relevant.

Design

4.3.2 Policy D1 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted provided that development responds positively to the site's local context in addition to other criteria. These considerations are echoed in Section 12 of the NPPF.

- 4.3.3 The proposal seeks to remove of the existing shopfront, which is comprised of charcoal painted timber frames and tinted bronze glass and replace it with a new aluminium framed shopfront. This would consist of polyester powder coated RAL 7016 Anthracite Grey, a toughened glazed shopfront. There would be no obscure film or coloured glass. It also proposes a new aluminium framed door, finished in polyester powder coated RAL 7016 Anthracite Grey. These above matters have already been commenced on site. The remaining works include the removal of the last section of shopfront glazing infill and replacement with a blockwork cavity wall, which will be rendered externally.
- 4.3.4 It is considered that the works already commenced on site and the remaining external alterations to the shop front are acceptable in design terms. The scheme seeks to modernise the external appearance of the shopfront with an anthracite grey finish, rather than the dated timber frames and tinted glass finish that was the case prior to the works commencing. The proposal would retain the retail units' character and appearance in this row of Secondary Shopping Frontages.
- 4.3.5 The proposal is therefore deemed acceptable in design terms and in accordance with Policy D1 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Heritage Impacts

- 4.3.6 The site is within the Conservation Area. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA Act) requires that in the exercise of planning powers, in conservation areas *"special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area"*.
- 4.3.7 The character of this run of shops is quite varied with different external finishes in terms of colour and materials. Moreover, the pre-development state of this unit in particular was quite bland and poorly finished compared to the other units. It is considered that the proposed changes to the shopfront would significantly improve its external appearance and by extension, its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Therefore, the scheme is considered to not result in any material harm to the designated heritage asset.
- 4.3.8 This is in accordance with Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Impact on Neighbours

- 4.3.9 Policy D3 of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals which do not cause unacceptable harm to living conditions.
- 4.3.10 The proposed development, by virtue of its nature and scale, would not result in any harm to the amenities and reasonable living conditions of neighbouring properties, in line with Policy D3 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 4.3.11 This is a form of development which is exempt from BNG Legislation, defined under article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 due to it falling under the scope of the 'de minimis' exemption.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 The proposal is considered acceptable in planning terms in accordance with the relevant local and national planning policies.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 N/A

4.6 **Pre-Commencement Conditions**

- 4.6.1 N/A

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. The development hereby permitted shall only be finished in the materials as stated on drawing number AL-002A and thereafter shall be retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the LPA.

Reason: To ensure that the site is in-keeping with the character of the area and to protect the visual amenities of the locality and to comply with Policies D1 and D2 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 to 2031.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 1 August 2024	