

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Tom Rea.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
24/01888/LBC	Installation of a metal awning box and retractable fabric awning and repainting of shopfront. Internal alterations	16 Bancroft Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 1JQ

Submitted Plan Nos

LocationPlan Sht-001 Sht-010B Sht-003

1.0 Policies

HE1	Designated heritage assets
SECN16	Conserve + enhance historic environment

2.0 Site History

- 83/00015/1 – Extension to existing shop to convert into 3 retail units, vehicular access to service area and 20 parking spaces. Approved 31.01.83.
- 83/00016/1LB – Alterations and extension involving partial demolition of existing shop to convert into 3 retail units and demolition of dwelling house. Approved 19.05.83.
- 83/01425/1 – Alterations and extensions to existing retail store to provide 4 units (shops), car park and service area and access from Grammer School. Approved 20.10.83.
- 83/01427/1 – Demolition of part of existing building at rear and of outbuildings, erection of replacement single storey extension and refurbishment of existing shop to enable its conversion into four retail units. Approved 24.11.83.
- 84/00264/1LB – Erection of external staircase and replace part of main roof with asbestos cement slate tiles. Approved 17.05.84.
- 85/00508/1LB – Unit 3, 15/17 -Installation of new shop front. Approved 24.05.85.
- 92/01125/1A – Continued display of fascia sign indirectly illuminated by 4 spotlights. Approved 30.11.92.
- 93/00524/1LB – Internal alterations. Approved 02.06.93.

- 11/00274/1LB – Alterations to existing shopfront including painting of timber and surround and fixings to allow erection of projecting sign. Internal alterations to ground and first floor layouts including reconfiguration of internal stud partitions to form new fitting rooms, staff and stock areas. Approved 04.04.11.
- 11/00281/1AD – Replacement internally illuminated fascia sign; erection of externally illuminated projecting sign. Approved 04.04.11.
- 17/01839/1AD – Installation of one internally illuminated fascia sign and one externally illuminated hanging sign. Approved 08.09.17.
- 17/01905/1LB – Installation of one internally illuminated fascia and one externally illuminated hanging sign to front elevation of store. Approved 08.09.17.

3.0 **Representations**

- 3.1 NHDC Conservation officer : No response
- 3.2 Site Notice / Adjacent occupiers: No comments received

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

The application site consists of ground floor commercial floorspace situated within the three-storey building located at 16 Bancroft, Hitchin, constructed c. early 19th century. The front elevation facing Bancroft comprises a grey brick façade with sash windows at first and second floor level. The shopfront is a modern installation, however contains traditional features including a timber fascia board, pilasters, capitals and consoles, with contemporary glazing typical of this primary retail location.

4.2 **Proposal**

- 4.2.1 The proposals include the following works:

Internals

- Installation of new fixtures relating to proposed use as Café/Bakery, including: partitions, counters, re-heating equipment, food and drink preparation areas, sinks, shelves, customer seating, storage, and customer and staff restrooms. Minor reconfiguration to drainage layout to facilitate kitchen/washing up areas and new WCs.

Externals

- Use of hardstanding area immediately to the rear of no. 16 Bancroft for outdoor seating;
- Installation of new mosaic tiles to shopfront entrance floor;
- Installation of a metal awning box and retractable fabric awning with lettering to valance;
- Installation of externally illuminated fascia lettering, to be installed to right side of fascia band;
- Repainting of shopfront;

4.3 Key Issues

4.3.1 The key issues are the impact on the historic character and fabric of the Grade II listed building.

The application is supported by a Heritage statement which summaries the scope of the works and the expected impact on the impact of the works on the listed building.

The HS states:

Internals

The proposals seek a modest update to the internal facilities that work within the buildings existing structure, avoiding harm to any historic fabric. Works comprise the installation of new partitions, counters, re-heating equipment, food and drink preparation areas, sinks, shelves, customer seating, storage, and customer and staff restrooms, associated with a café/bakery use. The incorporation of these proposals have been guided by a minimal intervention approach and will ensure that the original internal structure is retained, whilst sufficiently facilitating the operational requirements of Gail's. All works are reversible and will not cause any harm to the building. Gail's also propose to utilise the existing M&E & HVAC routing and equipment, connecting to existing louvres and vents towards the rear of the building.

The ground floor of the premises has been in continuous commercial use for many years and consists largely of open spaces with some modern partitioning. The proposed use would use similar partitions and other fixtures that would not have any adverse impact on the existing internal structure of the building in my view.

With regard to the external alterations and advertisement the HS states:

External Alterations and Advertisements

The proposals for the shopfront are minor in nature and will not give rise to harm to the architectural features of the wider building, nor result in any significant alteration to the buildings overall appearance or presence within the Conservation Area.

Consent is sought for the installation of an awning box and retractable fabric awning, to sit at the bottom of the fascia. The proposed installation will result in no harm or significant alteration to the structure or finish of the existing fascia, and will not result in the hiding of any attractive shopfront elements, nor result in the additional of a feature that can be considered overbearing. The awning will be traditional in respect of its design, mechanism and material, and to this end will relate to the building as an entity and as part of the Hitchin Conservation Area.

I would agree that the proposals for the shopfront are limited (for example the main entrance doors and full height glazing is retained, the pilasters are retained and repaired and the depth and width of fascia retained / renewed). The proposed housing for the awning is to be recessed into the fascia board and the awning is to be fully retractable. The proposed letting is limited and internally illuminated. Oyster white paint and red for the awning and lettering are acceptable RAL colours in this location where there are a variety of shopfront colours.

4.4 **Conclusion**

- 4.4.1 It is considered that the internal and external alterations are limited in scope and would in any case preserve and enhance the character and appearance of this listed building and would be generally sympathetic to the setting of the adjoining listed buildings and wider appearance of the Hitchin Conservation Area. The proposals would be consistent with the relevant policies for protecting heritage assets as set out in the North Herts Local Plan and NPPF 2023.

Details of external materials to be used are clear and precise and there is no need for additional conditions in this case.

4.5 **Alternative Options**

- 4.5.1 None applicable

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That listed building consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The work to which this consent relates shall be begun by not later than the expiration of the period of 3 years from the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 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.

Signed	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council
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 Shaun Greaves Determining Officer	Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Date: 4 October 2024	