

- 5j (a) 3/10/1474/AD – Illuminated fascia sign;
(b) 3/10/1555/LB – Illuminated fascia sign;
(c) 3/10/1719/LB – Demolition and reinstatement of internal lobby, clad interior of shop, erect internal partition, install new lighting system and refurbishment at 17 Old Cross, Hertford for Mr Michael Tindale

Date of Receipt: (a) 25.8.10
(b) 31.8.10
(c) 6.10.10

Type: (a) Advertisement consent
(b) Listed Building consent
(c) Listed Building consent

Parish: HERTFORD

Ward: HERTFORD – BENGEO

RECOMMENDATION

- a) That advertisement consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
1. Standard advertisement (7A012)
 2. The level of illumination shall not exceed 150 lumens/m²

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area, and in accordance with policies ENV1 and BH15 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

Directives:

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies ENV1 and BH15. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that advertisement consent should be granted.

- b) That Listed Building consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
1. Time limit (1T141)
 2. Materials of construction (2E113)

Directives

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies ENV1 and BH15 and guidance in national Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning and the Historic Environment. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that Listed Building consent should be granted.

- c) That Listed Building consent be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:
 1. Time limit (1T141)
 2. New plasterwork (8L054)
 3. Making good (8L104)

Directives

1. Other legislation (01OL1)

Summary of Reasons for Decision

The proposal has been considered with regard to the policies of the Development Plan (East of England Plan May 2008, Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, Minerals Local Plan, Waste Local Plan and the saved policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007), and in particular policies ENV1 and ENV3 and guidance in national Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning and the Historic Environment. The balance of the considerations having regard to those policies is that Listed Building consent should be granted.

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The application site is the same for each of these three applications and is shown on the attached OS extract. It is a double-fronted shop most recently in retail use on the ground floor, with permission having been granted in 2007 (Ref: 3/07/2034/FP) for the conversion of the upper floors to flats. Permission was granted earlier this year for use of the ground floor of the property as a dentist (Use Class D1) but this permission has not been implemented.

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- 1.2 The proposed advert and listed building applications relate to plans to refurbish the property for retail use. Application 3/10/1719/LB involves internal alterations to create a product demonstration area, retail displays and a cash desk. In addition, shutters and a blind would be fitted to the inside of the shop windows.
- 1.3 Applications 3/10/1474/AD and 3/10/1555/LB involve the addition of a new fascia sign that would be partly illuminated by halo effect lighting. Plans indicate other minor works such as the addition of decals to the windows that do not require formal consent.
- 1.4 The applications are being reported to the committee as they have been submitted by a member of the Council.

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 The property has a lengthy planning history, much of which relates to the residential conversion of the block of units from 13-17 (odds) approved under ref. 3/07/2034/FP. These do not relate to the consideration of these applications.
- 2.2 The following specifically relate to no. 17:
 - 3/09/1149/FP – Removal of outbuilding & the provision of external staircase to first floor – Approved October 2009
 - 3/09/1150/LB – Demolition of outbuilding and external rear walls, provision of external staircase and internal alterations – Approved September 2009
 - 3/10/0206/FP – Change of use from retail (A1) to dentist (D1) – Approved April 2010

3.0 Consultation Responses

- 3.1 Conservation – With regard to the applications (a) and (b) for the fascia sign, the Conservation officer has no objection to the proposed sign considering it balanced in scale, of modern and simple design matching the character of the building. Proposed illumination is also considered acceptable in the busy urban context of the building. A lighter shade of grey was recommended for the proposed sign – but this can be considered through the discharge of conditions. There was objection to the use of decals on the shop windows as they would change the proportion of the windows, however express consent is not required for these works. The officer recommended specific conditions for an approval.

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3.2 With regard to the application (c) for the internal works, the Conservation officer has no objection to the proposed development as the works are fully reversible and would not materially affect the historic fabric of the building. Amended drawings have been submitted that confirm the intent to retain the existing double doors to the shop. Conditions are recommended to ensure the works would be in keeping with the character of the building.

3.3 Highways – The sign would have no implications on highway safety or pedestrian movement

4.0 Hertford Town Council Representations

4.1 The Council remains uneasy that LED lighting to the fascia sign would be appropriate, and would prefer external lighting. It also requested that the Conservation Officer inspect the proposed alterations to ensure that the historic fabric of the building would not be compromised. Inspection visits have been undertaken in the consideration of the proposals.

5.0 Other Representations

5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of press notice in the case of the Listed Building applications and site notices and neighbour notifications in all three cases.

5.2 No letters of representation have been received.

5.3 The consultation period remains extant in relation to the internal works application, any additional responses received will be summarised on the additional representations schedule circulated at the meeting.

6.0 Policy

6.1 The relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies in this application include the following:

ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV3	Planning Out Crime – New Development
BH15	Advertisements in Conservation Areas

6.2 In addition, the following National policy guidance is relevant:-

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment

7.0 Considerations

- 7.1 Advertisement application (a) must be determined having regard to the impact on amenity, highways and the impact on the Conservation Area.
- 7.2 The key considerations for the determination of the Listed Building applications are the impact on the character and appearance of the Listed Building, and the impact on the character of the Conservation Area

Impact on the Listed Building

- 7.3 The applications involve external and internal alterations to a Listed Building, including the creation of a new fascia sign to replace that currently existing.
- 7.4 The fascia signage would be contained within the boundaries of the existing fascia to the building. The sign would be dark grey in colour, with vinyl lettering to either side. Powder coated metal letters up to 350mm high would spell out the shop name. These would stand out from the body of the sign, and would be illuminated by LED lighting to create a halo effect.
- 7.5 The illumination would be limited in extent (150 lux, equivalent to a dimly lit room) and would only affect the shop name in the centre of the sign. The level of illumination can be controlled by condition to ensure that the sign would not appear incongruous when illuminated. Although illuminated signs are not always acceptable within the Conservation Area, policy BH15 of the Local Plan advises that illumination can be acceptable provided that it is discreet and at the minimum level. Officers consider that this would be the case with this sign.
- 7.6 The proposed development would include an internal shutter to the rear of the shop's windows. The shutter would be a lattice grille of lightweight appearance and would be raised during opening hours. The benefit from increased security to the property is considered to outweigh the limited impact of the shutter on the appearance of the Listed Building.
- 7.7 The development proposed the fixing of decals to the windows. These would be removable once no longer required. While they would alter the appearance of the building, they are not subject of planning control.
- 7.8 The Conservation officer has expressed concerns about the colour to be used for the signage. The colour would be consistent across the property. Although dark, it is noted that there are other dark signs and shopfronts in the area, and although the shopfront is larger than others, it would not appear unduly out of character to the site.

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- 7.9 The internal alterations to the property are largely concerned with improving the suitability of the retail area. Approximately half the front area of the shop would be sectioned off to create a demonstration area for the shop's audio-visual products. The main alterations would be installing a retractable blind to the interior of the shop window, and installing a partition wall to close the area off. These alterations would be reversible in nature, and would not permanently affect the fabric of the building.
- 7.10 The interior of the building would be fitted out with display stands and shelving. These would be false walls that would be fitted with vents to allow the original structure to breathe, and which could be removed once no longer needed.
- 7.11 The development includes a replacement lobby to improve access for disabled users. In addition, a cash desk would be installed in the centre of the shop floor.
- 7.12 The internal alterations are generally reversible and would have little or no permanent impact on the historic fabric of the building.

Impact on the Conservation Area

- 7.13 The new advertisements would only have a limited impact on the Conservation Area. The appearance of the fascia sign would be in keeping with the repainted shopfront.
- 7.14 The property is on the edge of the town centre, and the context of the area is wholly urban. Within this context the proposal to use LED lights to create a halo effect around the raised letters on the fascia sign is considered to be acceptable.
- 7.15 The impact of the development would not therefore be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 Three applications have been submitted for various consents for the refurbishment of this Listed Building within the Conservation Area.
- 8.2 The proposed signage and alterations have been amended following negotiations with the Conservation Officer and are considered to be limited in their impact. They would cause no material harm or loss of the historic fabric of the Listed Building or the character of the Conservation Area.

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8.3 For these reasons it is recommended that advertisement and Listed Building consents be granted for the applications as set out at the head of this report.