Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0301/25 **Recommendation: Approve**

Site: **20A Montague Street Worthing West Sussex BN11 3HA**

Proposal: **Proposed new ground floor shopfront and new entrance to upper floor commercial units**

Site Visit: 01/05/2025

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and surroundings

The application site relates to a three-storey building located on the north side of Montague Street within the town centre. The building has a pair of shopfronts at 20 and 20A.

The site is within the Primary Shopping Frontage Area within the town centre within the pedestrianized area. The site is within the South St Conservation Area. The site is adjacent to 22 Montague St which is a Grade II listed building.

Proposal

Permission is sought for a replacement shopfront. The revision would provide a separate access to the first floor offices on the western side of the shopfront. The entrance to the ground floor commercial unit would be located to the eastern side of the shopfront. The new shopfront would be constructed in timber with detailing to match the neighbouring property. It would include a new stallriser with timber mouldings and casement fanlights above the new doors.

Relevant Planning History:

93/05487/FULL - INSTALLATION OF NEW SHOPFRONT
STATUS: REF 16th April 1993.

93/05488/ADV - INSTALLATION OF ONE EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN AND ONE EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED PROJECTING BOX SIGN
STATUS: REF 16th April 1993.

98/05384/FULL - INSTALLATION OF A NEW SHOP FRONT AND RETRACTABLE BLIND
STATUS: CCN 15th September 1998.

98/05385/ADV - INSTALLATION OF ONE NON-ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN
STATUS: ADC 15th September 1998.

08/0295/ADV - Installation of replacement facia sign, illuminated by white trough light and installation of one non illuminated projecting sign.
STATUS: REF 14th May 2008.

08/0546/ADV - Installation of replacement illuminated fascia sign and one non illuminated projecting sign.
STATUS: ADC 2nd July 2008.

AWDM/0956/15 - Removal of fire escape door (and associated fire escape) at second floor and bay window at first floor (rear/east elevation); replacement first and second floor timber windows to match existing.
STATUS: APP 25th September 2015.

AWDM/1720/15 - Change of use from Use Class A1 (shop) with storage above to mixed use A3 (restaurant/cafe) and A5 (hot food takeaway) on ground and first floor with staff facilities on second floor. Proposed new extraction flue to rear (north) elevation.
STATUS: REF 5th February 2016.

Consultations:

Worthing Society: No response

Conservation officer: the Council has strived to include recessed lobbies on shopfronts. Lobbies provide interest and variety in the street scene, by preventing long monotonous straight lines of shopfronts which are flush with the back of the pavement. Other than that, it seems fine.

Following commentary from the applicant on the context the following comments were received:

I take the point Mike is making that the shopfronts either side are both well articulated and each has a recessed lobby. Having walked virtually along the street, I note the quality of this timber shopfront is also much better than some of the flat fronted aluminium ones that have sprung up nearby. In the circumstances I am happy to waive the lobby requirement in this particular case.

Representations:
None received

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM6, DM13. DM24

South St Conservation Area Appraisal
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

Principle of development

Works to existing commercial properties are acceptable in principle subject to assessment of other material considerations. It is noted that planning permission is not required to subdivide units within the same use class so the separation of the ground floor shop and first floor offices is permitted.

Visual amenity and conservation

The unit is one of two within the same building. The two shopfronts are currently laid out differently but each has a single central access to the corresponding retail unit. The proposal would installi a timber shopfront which would be similar in design to the units to both the east and west. The additional door will introduce more openings in the shopfront.

The conservation officer originally requested a recessed lobby to provide variety and interest in the streetscene. The applicant noted that the shopfronts on either side are articulated with lobbies and that the shopfront as drawn in its context provides the interest sought. The conservation officer has noted the point and has considered that given the context and the high quality timber shopfront to be provided to replace the aluminium one the requirement for a lobby can be waived in this instance.

It is considered that the proposal would enhance the appearance of the conservation area.

Residential amenity

The development does not propose any alterations which would be considered to have an adverse amenity impact.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Materials/finishes as indicated

Informative:

1. Approved following discussion

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Louise Prew Date: 27/05/2025

Authorised by: Peter Barnett Date: 27 May 2025