

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0269/26

Recommendation: – APPROVE

Site: Shop Heene Corner 121 - 123 Rowlands Road Worthing

Proposal: Replacement shop front from decorated wooden frames to powder coated aluminium.

Date of Site Visit: 09/03/2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings

The site is located to the south side of Rowlands Road, close to the junction with Heene Road to the west and within a Medium Scale Local Centre, approximately 150m to the west of the Town Centre Boundary. The site is close to but outside of the Ivy Place Conservation Area which lies further west of the site. The application relates to the ground floor unit of 121-123 Rowlands Road which is part of a two storey building occupied as commercial use at ground floor with shop fronts and residential flats at first floor with rough render and quoining detail, beneath a hipped roof.

The unit is currently occupied as a pharmacy spanning two timber framed shopfronts of different styles; the easternmost unit has the glazing covered with an advertisement display and white infill, thicker frames, smaller top lights and a deeper stall riser; the westernmost unit has clear glazing, a recessed doorway, fine timber framing, deep top lights and a lower stall riser. Both shopfronts are painted white.

The property is not a Listed Building.

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for replacement shopfronts, replacing the timber frame with aluminium.

The new shopfronts would see the stall riser to the east unit lowered to match the west unit and the timber frames replaced with aluminium. New top lights of a consistent height would be added across both units and the fascia would be retained as existing. The recessed door would be removed and constructed flush with the rest of the shopfront. The frames would be aluminium, 45mm thick and finished in white powder coating and the stall risers and pilasters would also be painted white. Both units would have double glazed windows and vinyl signage would be applied to the windows of the east unit, as existing.

The application has been amended to add top lights of a consistent height to both units.

Relevant Planning History:

90/05530/FULL - installation of a new shop front together with refurbishment of retail chemist shop

STATUS: Conditional Consent 29th November 1990.

90/05531/ADV - installation of two internally illuminated hanging neon signs

STATUS: Conditional Consent 17th December 1990.

10/0974/ADV - Installation of two non-illuminated fascia signs and one internally illuminated projecting sign.

STATUS: 26th January 2011.

AWDM/1678/23 - Installation of a Medpoint prescription collection machine to the existing pharmacy shopfront window

STATUS: Application Permitted 13th March 2024.

AWDM/1679/23 - Externally illuminated vinyl wrap to the front of the proposed Medpoint prescription collection machine with operation instructions, name and logo

STATUS: Application Permitted 14th March 2024.

Consultations

None required

Neighbour Representations

None received

Relevant Planning Policies:

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

National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

The principle of development can be supported as it upgrades a commercial unit that provides a valuable local service to the community. The matters for consideration are the visual impact of the new shop front on the locality and any impact on the residential amenities of neighbours.

Visual Amenity

The street scene has a wide variety of shop front designs within an established local shopping area. The existing property frontage is split into two shop fronts that differ in style, both in timber but with different height top lights and stall risers and different frames and layout. The row within which the shop sits consists mainly of traditional timber shopfronts except for the unit directly to the west (No.125) which has an obscure glazed window, UPVC fanlights above and a blocked up doorway. This shop

does not appear to be in commercial use at the present time and its uncharacteristic appearance is an anomaly in the street scene. It is however noted that the particularly unsympathetic UPVC fanlights windows of the adjacent unit were installed prior to 2009 (as can be seen on Google Street view) and therefore there is no action that could be taken to remedy this. Further to the east is a row of more traditional timber shopfronts with a residential unit in the centre and further east of this are a number of aluminium modern shop fronts, although it is noted that these are on a more modern building. The shops fronting on to Heene Road to the south of the application property include a mix of traditional timber and more modern aluminium shopfronts.

Consideration must be given to the loss of the traditional timber shopfronts and the impact of this on the character of the street scene. Whilst the use of aluminium is generally accepted for this purpose outside of conservation areas, the design of any replacements are encouraged to replicate traditional features such as top lights and stall risers where possible. For the current application there are other considerations that must also be taken into account, namely the lack of symmetry between the existing units (121 and 123) which are significantly different and the presence of the uncharacteristic alterations that have previously taken place at the adjoining unit.

The plans have been amended to add top lights of the same height across both units. This significantly enhances the design and retains the traditional character of this feature, reflecting the existing shopfront more closely. The proposed shopfront would introduce better symmetry across the two units that are the subject of the application and would result in consistent stall riser height, top lights and vertical division of the glazing. The frame thickness would match and the proportions are more consistent. The use of aluminium is acceptable in this location and in this particular case would provide a more cohesive appearance across the two units. The shopfronts would be finished in white powder coating and the stall risers and pilasters painted white all to match the existing.

The recessed doorway would be lost and moved forwards flush with the shopfront however this type of alteration is visible at other shops within the immediate vicinity including part of the application site (east unit) and is therefore not considered out of keeping in the area.

The proposed shopfronts would not result in any significant harm to the character of the building, the street scene or the visual amenities of the locality. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable.

Active Shopfront

Worthing Local Plan Policy DM13 requires that development within District and Local Centres should retain an active shopfront. The windows to the east unit are currently obscured by advertisements relating to the business and the new shopfront would replicate this existing detail. The west unit which serves as the entrance to the pharmacy and is part of the same business would retain an active shop front display and is therefore in compliance with policy DM13.

Residential Amenity

The proposed changes to the shopfronts would not have any adverse impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers of the flats above or the residential properties opposite the site.

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to condition(s):-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Materials and finishes as specified

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating, with the Applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

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

Case Officer: Amanda Haslett Date: 27/04/2026

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 27.04.2026