Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1105/24 **Recommendation: Approve**

Site: **74A Montague Street, Worthing**

Proposal: **Shopfitting including new shopfront, security shutter and awning**

Site Visit: 15.10.2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site, Surroundings and Proposal

The application site relates to a three storey building located on the north side of Montague Street within the town centre. The application relates to the ground floor which is a vacant shop unit. There are two other shop units within the same building with differing shopfront designs. No.74 has a modern aluminium framed shopfront and white fascia panel positioned between simple brick pilasters at either side, and with the main entrance positioned off-centre within the shopfront.

The site is within the Primary Shopping Frontage Area within the town centre. It is not within the Conservation Area. The boundary of the Montague Street Conservation Area lies to the west of the site beyond No.76 on this side of Montague Street.

Permission is sought for a replacement shopfront to the south elevation and would include a new roller shutter and awning. A separate application for advertisement consent has also been submitted (AWDM/1106/24 refers). The shopfront design comprises of a centralised entrance to the frontage with shopfront windows in two main sections either side, tapered at the corner and into a deep entrance recess forming an arcade-like entrance. The shopfront glazing would have a concealed frame and the stallriser would be tiled in a matt tile coloured 'vanilla'. The roller shutter cassette itself would be concealed behind the fascia and with the shutter indicated to be a perforated lath roller shutter with the bottom section being solid. It would have a powder coated finish in RAL 4364 'Audi Grey'. The awning cassette would be finished in RAL 7039 (Quartz grey) with 'Nickel' coloured fabric awning.

Relevant Planning History:

95/05481/ADV - INSTALLATION OF ONE INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN AND ONE PROJECTING SIGN WITH LETTER ILLUMINATION ONLY
STATUS: CCN 12th September 1995.

99/00500/FULL - Installation of a new shop front
STATUS: CCN 26th July 1999.

99/00525/ADV - Installation of internally illuminated fascia sign and internally illuminated projecting box sign
STATUS: REF 26th July 1999.

99/00604/FULL - Installation of new shop front and external air condition unit to rear
STATUS: CCN 31st August 1999.

99/00721/ADV - Installation of one non-illuminated hanging sign and revised internally illuminated fascia sign
STATUS: ADC 27th September 1999.

06/0689/FULL - Installation of powder coated aluminium shop front and entrance doors.
STATUS: REF 14th August 2006.
Appeal Allowed ref: APP/M3835/C/06/2028160

06/0695/ADV - Installation of an internally illuminated fascia sign and an internally illuminated projecting box sign.
STATUS: REF 14th August 2006.

07/1021/FULL - Use of land for the provision of outdoor seating in connection with the ancillary coffee shop use of no. 74A Montague Street
STATUS: REF 16th October 2007.

09/0865/ADV - Installation of internally illuminated fascia sign and projecting box sign. (Retrospective)
STATUS: ADC 25th November 2009.

AWDM/0156/17 - Retention of replacement fascia sign and projecting sign to front (south) elevation for 'Yours' both with internally illuminated halo letters only (retrospective).
STATUS: APP 7th August 2018.

AWDM/1106/24 - Display of one internally illuminated fascia sign and one internally illuminated projecting sign
STATUS: PCO .

Consultations:

The **Highway Authority** has commented as follows:

This application seeks the fitting of a new shopfront, security shutter and awning. The site is located on Montague Street, an E-classified road. Upon review of the submitted plans, no highway safety concerns would be raised. However, the applicant is advised that the proposed awning will overhang publicly maintained

highway and therefore, will be required to obtain a Section 177 Licence from the WSCC Street Works Team prior to commencement of the works.

In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 115), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

If the LPA are minded to approve the application, the following informative should be applied:

Section 177 Licence
Before the commencement of any operation, the applicant is advised to contact West Sussex County Council (Tel no: 01243 642105 or email street.works@westsussex.gov.uk) to obtain a Section 177 Licence under the Highways Act 1980 to cover any structure that overhangs the highway.

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 main issue in the determination of the application is design and the visual amenity impact of the proposal and highway safety considerations. There would be no significant impact on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers given the scope of works proposed.

The existing shopfront is a modern aluminium shopfront allowed at appeal in 2007 (Appeal ref APP/M3835/C/06/2028160).

The current proposal with a centralised entrance offers an improvement to the existing shopfront arrangement and the deep recess/arcade-like design would not cause any significant harm to visual amenity.

Roller shutters are not a particular feature of the shopping area although it is noted that there are some examples in the vicinity of the site. However those approved nearby are generally across the entrance/doorway and not obscuring the display windows unless internal. Although it is noted that the neighbouring shopfront to the east appears to include shutters that span the full width in two sections of the shopfront, and further to the east at No.66 'Sports Direct' has a full width shutter across its whole ground floor entrance with no shopfront display at ground floor.

The roller shutter as originally proposed at No.74a indicates a relatively solid appearance, limiting views of the shopfront display when in use. A request for this element to be deleted from the application was made with an internal shutter arrangement as an alternative suggested but the agent has not agreed to this, citing security/insurance reasons for requiring this particular design. The agent has sought to demonstrate the amount of visibility through the shutter by providing photos showing a similar shopfront illuminated behind the shutter and has clarified that the shutter would be concealed when open for the duration of shop opening hours. The agent also clarified that the design provides a 30% 'free area' and not 21% as originally stated, although the elevation detail provided does not demonstrate this. Nevertheless it is considered that this design would not provide a good level of visibility and would be harmful to visual amenity and the vitality of the town centre.

In response, the agent has provided a revised elevation detail showing a punched and glazed design with slots of 150mm x 50mm at 170mm centres, to give a 48% open area. The bottom laths would be solid for rigidity.

Whilst it is disappointing that the applicant has not been able to compromise on an internal shutter or an alternative shopfront design that does not require the full width roller shutter, the revised design does offer a larger perforation with some improved visibility from the proposals as originally submitted. In the context of other nearby roller shutters in this particular vicinity it is considered that a refusal on design or visual amenity grounds would not be justified in this particular instance. The roller shutter would be set back from the brick piers and would be powder coated to provide a reasonable appearance, in keeping with the colour scheme of the shopfront and signage design.

Whilst the awning cassette would be quite bulky, its position under the fascia sign would help blend with the recipient building and have a satisfactory appearance on balance. Although it would overhang the highway, no safety concerns have been raised by the Highway Authority and the applicant is advised to obtain a licence from WSCC for those works.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Conditions:-

1. Drawing Numbers
2. Standard time limit
3. Materials/finishes as indicated
4. Shopfront display lighting to remain on when shutter is closed

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.

- Section 177 licence required

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

Case Officer: Rebekah Hincke Date: 08.01.2025

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 10/01/2025