23/1/07

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: ADC/0457/06 **Recommendation - Application Permitted**

Site: **57 - 59 Test Road Sompting Lancing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Roller shutters to existing shopfront**

The Application

The property consists of a large modern brick building containing retail units on the ground floor with two floors of flats above. A number of the ground floor retail units are utilised collectively as a Co-operative Supermarket and the retail unit on the north eastern side is utilised as a fish and chip shop. The shop front window of the Co-operative shop spans approximately 21.5m. The large shop front windows are surrounded by brick pillars and blue fascia boards above. A balcony on the first floor of the building protrudes out over the shop front. Access to the site is from both Hamble Road to the west and Test Road to the north.

The application proposes to install external shutters across the shop front. The shutters are constructed from 75 x 0.9mm thick galvanised steel, with small 'punched' sections allowing light to pass in and out of the building. The shutters are to be located in three roller shutter boxes located at the top of the shop front, directly beneath the protruding balcony and are to be locked down over the shop front when the supermarket has closed for business.

Consultations and Representations

Consultations/Comments
The Sompting Parish Council has objected to the proposal stating that the shutters would detract from the appearance of the neighbourhood and would be contrary to the appearance of the street scene. They feel that external shutters are more suited to the inner city and would prefer internal shutters.

Third Parties
No third party letters have been received.

Relevant Planning Policies and Guidance

Adur District Local Plan: AG1, AG2, AB20, AS5.
West Sussex Structure Plan: DEV1.

Planning Assessment

The key planning considerations of this application are the impact of the proposed shutters on the general visual amenity of the area and the character of the shop front.

The surrounding area contains largely residential development with flats to the south west, semi-detached dwellings to the north and semi-detached dwellings to the south east. The supermarket is set back from Test Road, to allow for parking, provided for the flats above. It is acknowledged that the proposed shutters will have a visual impact on the shop front when they are locked in the closed position. The shutters are, however, only to be locked over the shop front after business hours which are currently understood to be from 7am to 10pm. Additionally the land slopes slightly downwards towards the south and the car parking area located below Test Road is surrounded by a retaining wall on the northern side. The visual impact of the shutters therefore would be reduced slightly by the relatively large distance between the shop front and the residential development to the north and the lower level of the shop front relative to the northern side of Test Road.

The site is within a small area subject to Adur District Local Plan policy AS5. The policy AS5 seeks to retain a predominant shopping use (Use Class A1) in the area. The ground floor of the building was purpose built to support retail uses and the proposed shutters would not therefore be out of keeping with the character of the building. There are only two retail units in the area, a fish and chip take away and the Co-operative supermarket. The general public would be unlikely therefore to peruse this retail area and more likely to visit the site for the specific purpose of supermarket shopping or to custom the fish and chip shop. The shutters therefore, would not have any significant visual impact on either customers using the supermarket during business hours or the general public.

The Sompting Parish Council's comments regarding the shutters detracting from the character of the area and the street scene are noted and it is conceded that the shutters will have a visual impact when they are locked over the shop front. Given the nature of the business and the existing character of the building, however, and taking into account the actual times the shutters will be closed over the shop front, the impact on the character of the area and street scene is not considered to be so detrimental as to warrant refusal.

A condition should be included on any approval that the details of the finishes of the shutters and the shutter box be provided for approval to ensure that the shutters and shutter box match the existing shop front. A condition should also be included to ensure that the shutters are only locked over the shop front after normal business hours.

It is noted that the proposed shutters will not have any impact on the existing disabled access provision to the supermarket.

Taking into account the location of the site, the nature of the business and its customers, it is considered that the proposed shutters will not have a significant detrimental impact on the character of the area and are not inconsistent with the nature of the business or the character of the building. The proposed shutters should be approved.

Recommendation

APPROVE for reason that:-

The proposed shutters would not detract from the character or appearance of the local area or alter existing access provision for people with disabilities. The development can take place without unacceptable detriment to the amenities of neighbouring properties and would consequently not conflict with the relevant policies of the Adur District Local Plan (AG1, AG2, AB20, AS5) and the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-16 (LOC1, DEV1).

Conditions

1. C1Ci
2. C12Ai '...until details of the colour finish of the shutters and shutter box have been submitted to and...'
3. 'The shutters hereby permitted shall be locked in the open position during the normal business hours of the retail unit'.

Case Officer: [redacted].....

Date: 11/1/07.....

[redacted]

Head of Planning and Community Division: [redacted].....

Date: 15/1/07.....

Chairman of Planning and Regulatory Committee:.....

Date:.....