

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWD/0413/26 Recommendation: APPROVE

Site: 56-58 High Street, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex

Proposal: New Shopfront (Unit 56)

Date of Site Visit: 16th April 2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a retail unit which is currently vacant within Shoreham Town Centre and the Conservation Area. The address for the unit is 56-58 High Street however the application only relates to no. 56. There is also an application for new signage at the premises AWD/0414/26. The shopfront as existing is modern in appearance with double recessed entrance doors in aluminium. There is vertical tile detailing and stall risers. These are to be retained with the door moved to one side and the other double doors removed to provide continuous shopfront glazing adjacent.

The original application showed details of a new shop front with a single set of double doors to the left of the shopfront. Amended plans have been received to show improvement to the shopfront design in line with advice from the Council's Conservation Architect and also in line with Adur District Council's Design Bulletin No. 1 Shopfront Design January 2019. A Heritage Statement has also been submitted to accompany the application.

The amended plans show a recessed entrance, the Heritage Statement refers to the 'existing pilasters, cornices and overall dimensions remaining as existing.' Changes have been made to the signage also which is considered under AWD/0414/26.

Planning History

Installation of illuminated lettering and fascia – SU/11/87/TP

Replacement Fascia sign with individual Halo-illuminated letters - SU/211/05/TP

Consultations: -

Adur District Conservation Area Group: - APPROVE

Conservation Architect Richard Small: -

56-58 High Street, Shoreham-By-Sea is formed of two distinct buildings, the ground floors of which were combined into one retail unit, for many years occupied by Woolworths, and more recently by The Original Factory Shop. The existing shopfront is typical of Woolworths shopfronts introduced in the 1950s, having sharp angles and deep entrance recesses, with slim unpainted metal frames.

The applications propose the subdivision of the existing retail unit, a new shopfront to the eastern unit, together with an illuminated box fascia sign and projecting sign.

This building is within the Shoreham-By-Sea Conservation Area. The appraisal and management document for this CA highlights that the Council has adopted a design bulletin relating to shopfronts, which provides design guidance for appropriate shop front alterations and signs in the Shoreham town centre, and these aim to conserve and enhance its unique historic and townscape heritage. This document was last revised in 2019.

A new shopfront should not be designed in isolation but conceived as part of the whole building into which it is fitted. Each shopfront should be seen in the context of the design of the whole façade and fenestration of the upper floors, as well as the street scene. This doesn't appear to be the case in this instance; the elevation drawings not showing any floors other than ground, and the entrance doors not relating to the building's facade.

Recessed doorways should be incorporated into new designs as they relieve flat and featureless designs. Looking at the plan, there will no longer be any recess, with the entrance doors flush with the rest of the shopfront.

Fully illuminated fascias will not normally be approved but, if illumination is required by the occupier, subtle lighting can be provided with carefully directed beams, internally individual lit letters (where the background is blacked out), or concealed fascia lighting. The illuminated box sign proposed is not considered to be appropriate on this building.

Projecting signs should not be mounted on pilasters, and fascias should not project beyond or across them. The proposed projecting sign is shown as being attached to the existing pilaster.

The current proposals would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA. The harm identified may be less than substantial, but would not be negligible or insignificant. There is no heritage statement with this application, and feels like a corporate design that has failed to consider the context.

Comments following amendments: -

I note recessed lobbies have now been added to the shopfronts. The position of the hanging sign has been moved from the existing pilaster, and halo illuminated letters will be used rather than a singular internally illuminated sign. Have we accepted other illuminated hanging signs in this locality?

Interestingly, recessed lobbies would normally help to avoid non-compliant ramps, avoiding a sudden change of level at the back edge of the pavement. Despite the upper floors of this particular building (46) creating a strong symmetry which would be better acknowledged by central entrance doors, the layout and security demands of Savers are more likely to be the drivers of the proposed asymmetrical shopfront design. The approach taken relates more to the current use as one large unit rather than two new individual units. Overall the current changes do improve the application proposals and align more closely with the principles from the Council's adopted design bulletin relating to shopfronts, thus lessening the level of harm to the conservation area.

Representations: - None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policy 15, 17
National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)
County Highways Internal Guidance Note Illuminated Adverts Standing Advice (March 2025)
Adur District Council Design Bulletin No.1 Shopfront Design. January 2019.

Planning Assessment

Principle

The site is within a town centre shopping area, this is an existing shop front with changes proposed. The main issues for consideration are amenity and impact upon the Conservation Area and street scene.

Amenity

There will be no impact upon the amenities of the locality or the surrounding occupiers. The replacement shopfront has limited impact in the light of existing.

Impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene and Conservation Area

The Council's Design Bulletin states that, "Standardised forms of "identity" and "image" have resulted in the loss of many individual and attractive shopfronts. Whilst the desire for a "corporate image" is recognised, some designs need to be modified in order to fit sympathetically with the period and architectural style of the building. It is also important that alterations, restorations and replacements are carried out sympathetically in conservation areas."

"Recessed doorways should be incorporated into new designs as they relieve flat and featureless designs."

The Council's Conservation Architect considers that, while the new shopfront will affect the symmetry of the existing building to some extent, the amended design does lessen the harm.

The proposed amended shopfront design is considered to be more in accordance with the adopted design guidance and, on balance, it is considered that it will not harm the visual amenities or street scene and will cause less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved plans

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation N

1. Proactive
2. The applicant is advised that this consent relates to the new shopfront only and other works shown on the application may require a separate permission.

Case Officer: Hannah Barker

Date: 15th June 2026

Authorised by: Peter Barnett

Date: 15 June 2026