

Application No: **11/0119C**

Location: **11- 13, HIGHTOWN, SANDBACH, CW11 1AD**

Proposal: **New Full Glazed Entrance to New Shopfront; New Sliding Panelled Shopfront to Fold Back to One Section**

Applicant: **Costa Coffee**

Expiry Date: **21-Mar-2011**

Ward: **Sandbach East & Rode**

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to conditions

Main issues:

- The impact upon the character and appearance of the site
- The impact upon neighbouring residential amenity
- The impact upon the Conservation Area

REASON FOR REFERRAL

Councillor R. Bailey has called in this application to Southern Planning Committee for the following reason:

'The revised frontage would not be acceptable in its current form due to the location in the Conservation Area, as they contravene policy BH9 (i), (ii), (iii) and (v) of the Local Plan.'

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The application unit is situated on the southern side of Hightown, within the Sandbach Conservation Area, within the Sandbach Settlement Boundary. The site contains a two-storey building with windows at ground floor only. The doorway and shop window is recessed and a column supports the overhanging first floor. The site is currently an unoccupied retail unit.

DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

The applicant seeks planning permission for a new shop frontage. At present the ground floor frontage of this vacant retail unit is recessed and it is proposed that half of this frontage is brought forward to street level to match the surrounding units.

Revised plans have been submitted for a new shop frontage that would be constructed from a fully glazed aluminium framed shop front; a single, glazed 1000mm entrance

door and a stone render wall on the side elevation next to the vacant half of the unit. A concurrent application for change of use has also been submitted (11/0475C).

RELEVANT HISTORY

11/0475C – Change of Use of part of the existing ground floor unit from retail (A1) to a mixed use Coffee Shop (A1/A3) - Undetermined

11/0138C – Illuminated adverts – Approved 21st March 2011

30506/3 – Installation of 4 roof lights to first floor mansard – Refused 8th November 1999

19072/3 – Variation of condition – Planning permission 8/16457/3 (Amendment to opening hours) – Approved 27th October 1987

16457/3 – Change of Use to Health Studio from storage ancillary to ground floor retail unit – Permission 5th February 1985

10226/9 – Shop sign – Approved 29th January 1980

POLICIES

National policy

PPS1 – Sustainable Development

PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 - Spatial Principles

DP7 - Promote Environmental Quality

Local Plan Policy

PS4 - Towns

GR1 - General Criteria for New Development

GR2 - Design

GR6 - Amenity and Health

BH9 - Conservation Areas

S.11 - Shop fronts and security shutters

CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways – No objections

VIEWS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL:

Sandbach Town Council – No objections

OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:

None received

APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Photographs
Heritage Statement

OFFICER APPRAISAL

Shop Fronts

Within Policy S11 of the Local Plan, it is advised that *'Shop fronts should respect the scale, proportions, character and materials of construction of the upper part of the structure and where relevant the setting of the building in relation to adjoining buildings and the street scene in general.'*

At present, the application site at ground floor level is set back and has a predominantly glazed frontage. At first floor level, there are no openings. It is boarded and rendered with a white paint finish and includes the signage of the previous occupier 'Ethel Austin'.

The application is for half of this ground floor premises to be brought forward to the natural building line of the neighbouring units on Hightown. As per the existing site, the predominant material that would be used to make up the frontage would be glass. As such, because no changes are proposed to the upper part of the structure other than the proposed signage (part of separate advertisement consent application), and the proposed glass frontage would benefit the street scene by being brought forward to match surrounding units, it is considered that the proposal adheres to this section of policy S11 within the Local Plan.

Policy S11 also advises that Shop Fronts of architectural or historic interest should only be removed in exceptional circumstances. It is considered that the existing shop front does not hold any significant architectural interest, a view supported by the councils Conservation Officer. As a result it is considered that the proposal adheres to policy S11 of the Local Plan.

Design

The frontage would primarily consist of glass which is similar to neighbouring units and the frontage at ground floor level would be brought in line with the neighbouring frontages. In response to policy GR2 of the Local Plan, it is considered that the shop front would be sympathetic to the character, appearance and form of the site and the surrounding area in terms of the choice of materials and its visual, physical and functional relationship to neighbouring properties.

Amenity

In respect to the impact of the development on neighbouring units, it is considered that there would be no issues created by the development in relation to loss of privacy, loss of light or visual intrusion as a result of the development. As such, it is considered that the development adheres with policy GR6 of the Local Plan.

Conservation Area

The existing building is of no heritage value in terms of the Conservation Area as it is typical of a modern shop unit. Bringing the existing vacant unit into a new use will be beneficial to the appearance of the area, while the alterations to the shop unit are not considered to cause any harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer has suggested a condition to ensure that timber or powder coated metal materials are used for the framing and finishing of the shopfront (and not plastic) and this can be imposed accordingly. Otherwise, it is considered that the proposal adheres with policy BH9 of the Local Plan.

Other matters

Highways have advised that they have no objection to the proposed development.

CONCLUSIONS

It is considered that the new shop front would respect the setting of the adjoining buildings and street scene in general and would not have a detrimental impact upon the Conservation Area, Highway safety or residential amenity. As a result, it is considered that the proposal complies with Policies S11 (Shop fronts and security shutters), GR1 (New Development), GR2 (Design), GR6 (Amenity and Health) and BH9 (Conservation Areas) of the Congleton Borough Local Plan First Review 2005.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Application for Full Planning

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to following conditions

1. Commencement of development (3 years)
2. Development in accord with approved plans
3. Materials as application
4. Specification of window design / style

Location Plan: Cheshire East Council Licence No. 100049045

