

WINDSOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL

29 March 2017

Item: 5

Application No.:	17/00283/FULL
Location:	121 High Street Eton Windsor SL4 6AN
Proposal:	Alteration and amendments to shop front fenestration to match adjoining properties 122 and 123 High Street.
Applicant:	The Provost And Fellows of Eton College
Agent:	Mr Eamonn McLarnon
Parish/Ward:	Eton Town Council/Eton With Windsor Castle Ward

If you have a question about this report, please contact: Claire Pugh on 01628 685739 or at claire.pugh@rbwm.gov.uk

29 March 2017

Item: 5

Application No.:	17/00284/LBC
Location:	121 High Street Eton Windsor SL4 6AN
Proposal:	Consent for alteration and amendments to shop front to match adjoining properties 122 and 123 High Street.
Applicant:	The Provost And Fellows Eton College
Agent:	Mr Eamonn McLarnon
Parish/Ward:	Eton Town Council/Eton With Windsor Castle Ward

If you have a question about this report, please contact: Claire Pugh on 01628 685739 or at claire.pugh@rbwm.gov.uk

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal seeks the removal of the shop front of number 121 High Street in Eton and its replacement with a new window and door to match in appearance the ground floor of numbers 122 and 123 High Street (in this terrace). The loss of the shopfront is considered to be unacceptable in principle, as it is significant in understanding the historical use of the building. Furthermore, the presence of shopfronts, intermixed with domestic frontages, is, identified as a special feature within the Conservation Area appraisal. Added to this, the proposed fenestration to match that on the terrace of buildings is not considered to be an appropriate design or appearance, as it would look at odds with the Georgian appearance of the upper floors of this building.
- 1.2 The scheme would result in less than substantial harm upon these Heritage Assets. There are not considered to be public benefits arising from the scheme which would outweigh this less than substantial harm, and it is not considered that the building cannot be utilised without the proposed fenestration changes being implemented. As such the scheme conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

It is recommended the Panel refuses planning permission (17/00283/FULL) for the following summarised reasons (the full reasons are identified in Section 9 of this report):

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | The development would result in the loss of a shopfront which is important in understanding the historical use of the Listed Building, and which makes an important contribution to the character of the Eton Conservation Area, by contributing to the mix of shopfronts intermixed with domestic buildings, which is an identified characteristic of this part of the Conservation Area. The proposed alterations to the façade of the building are considered to be out of keeping with the windows in the upper floors of the building which are of a Georgian appearance, and as a result this will harm the appearance of the Listed Building, and to the appearance of the Conservation Area. The development would result in less than substantial harm to the Heritage Assets. The scheme does not provide public |
|----|---|

	benefits that outweigh this less than substantial harm, and not permitting the scheme would not prevent securing the optimum viable use of the building.
It is recommended that the Panel refuses Listed Building Consent (17/00284/LBC) for the following summarised reason:	
1	The works would result in harm the historical significance of the Listed Building

2. REASON FOR PANEL DETERMINATION

- At the request of Councillor Alexander, irrespective of the recommendation of the Head of Planning for the reason that it is in the local public interest.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

- 3.1 121 High Street is a Grade II Listed Building (comprising a terrace of 3 properties) located within Eton Conservation Area. The ground floor of number 121 was last used as office space (permission for this was granted in 2007 for a Neighbourhood Police Office). Recently (in 2016), planning permission was granted to change the office space to residential use, so that it could be used in connection with other floors of the building which are in residential use. Under the approved plans from the permission in 2016, this showed the retention of the shopfront in connection with the residential use.
- 3.2 The site is situated within flood zones 2 and 3.
- 3.3 The building is situated within the commercial centre of Eton (as defined in the Adopted Local Plan proposals map). Within this part of the Eton High Street are a mix of commercial and residential units.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ANY RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 The planning history is outlined below.

Application Reference	Description of proposal	Decision
461319	New Shop front- LBC	Approved in 1982
06/02838/LBC	Alterations comprising internally replace stud partitions, ceilings and dry lining to existing walls following strip out of existing fittings, new door and exterior repainting	Approved 31.01.2007
07/00010/FULL	Change of use from retail shop to neighbourhood police office.	Approved 07.02.2007
16/02125/FULL	Single storey rear extension, part change of use and conversion of office (B1) to (C3) single dwelling with amendments to fenestration, following demolition of outbuildings.	Approved 21 st October 2016.

- 4.2 Planning permission was granted for a change of use from office to residential at the ground floor of number 121 High Street in 2016. However, during the course of this application, officer's secured amended plans showing the retention of the shop front. Within the Planning Officer assessment of this application, it was stated:

'The amended plans indicate that the shopfront would be retained and therefore both the special interest of the listed building would be conserved as well as its historical merit within the wider context of the Conservation Area, which would also be preserved.'

- 4.3 This current proposal for consideration seeks planning permission and Listed Building consent for alterations and amendments to the shop front of number 121 (to include a new window and

door) so that that the fenestration at ground floor level matches that at numbers 122 and 123 High Street (these neighbouring buildings have residential facades at ground floor level). The existing glazed panel will be replaced with a render block wall. The new window would be a timber sliding sash window, and the new door would be wooden.

5. MAIN RELEVANT STRATEGIES AND POLICIES RELEVANT TO THE DECISION

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework Sections

Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment- Paragraphs 128, 129, 131, 134
Design- Paragraphs 58, 60, 64

Royal Borough Local Plan

5.2 The main strategic planning considerations applying to the site and the associated policies are:

Within settlement area	Conservation Area	Listed Building
DG1	CA2	LB2

These policies can be found at

https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/download/154/local_plan_documents_and_appendices

6. EXPLANATION OF RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The key issues for consideration are:

- i Impact on Heritage Assets

Impact on Heritage Assets

Significance to the Listed Building and within the Conservation Area

- 6.2 Number 121 High Street is of historic interest as part of a small group of former townhouses situated on the west side of the High Street and forming part of a key development phase of the town. The Heritage Assessment reveals that a study of published information and archival research would strongly suggest that the terraced group was constructed between the late 1840s or 1850s, when a number of plots along the High Street were either developed or re-fronted.
- 6.3 The original three story part of the terraced building (numbers 121-123) are Georgian in date and appearance. By 1870 the front garden of number 121 had been developed; it seems likely that this was the flat roofed front shop extension which is evidenced by the 1891 first Kellys Directory in which it was mentioned that the building was being used as a confectioners. As such, the ground floor of this building was occupied by a retail use far longer than it was used as residential. The shopfront is important in understanding that this Listed building was used for retail historically.
- 6.4 The existing shop front to number 121 is of 1980's construction and is not of particular architectural merit. As such, the existing shopfront itself makes a neutral contribution architecturally to this Listed Building.
- 6.5 Part of the special interest of the Eton Conservation Area is the presence of a rich diversity of buildings of different ages, types, scales, architectural styles, materials and details which illustrate the gradual piecemeal development of the area from the 15th century to the present. The character of Eton High Street is found in its mix of commercial and residential buildings.
- 6.6 The Conservation Area appraisal identifies that for the High Street Area of Eton (which this building is located) that *'there are a considerable number of the High St properties contain good quality timber shop fronts with simple timber fascias and modest signage. Many are very*

decorative, and date from the 19thC. Several former shops are now converted to residential use, but have retained the shop windows. A distinctive feature of the High Street is the intermix of domestic frontages with the shop fronts.'

Impact of the proposal

- 6.7 The proposed alterations to the fenestration is to a frontage that was constructed in the 1980's, and as such the proposal would not cause physical harm to the historic fabric of the Listed Building.
- 6.8 The loss of the shop front, and replacement with the proposed window and door would result in the ground floor level having a domestic appearance, and as such the association of this building with a commercial retail use would be lost entirely. This would result in harm to the historic use of this Listed Building, and would have a detrimental impact upon the historical significance of this Listed Building.
- 6.9 The importance of retaining the commercial shop front is part of the history and evolution of Eton High Street. The special interest of this part of the Conservation Area lies in the intermix of domestic frontages with commercial shopfronts that exist. The Conservation Area Appraisal acknowledges that several former shops have been converted, but have retained shop windows. It is considered that the loss of this shop would dilute down the presence of commercial frontages within the High Street, and these commercial frontages make an important contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 6.10 It is acknowledged that the proposed replacement of the existing window with a tripartite sash and recessed arched doorway to match numbers 122 and 123 High Street will regularise the façades along these buildings. However, it will not add value to the architectural significance of either 121 or 122 and 123, due to the fact that its design will mirror an alteration of the early 21st century that is not architecturally of significance. Within the proposed window, the mullions are too wide, and the proportions of the window as a whole are not correct. The proposed fenestration does not fit in with the Georgian appearance of the sash windows on the upper levels of this building.
- 6.11 It is considered that the scheme would cause less than substantial harm to the historical significance and appearance of the Listed Building, and to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF explains that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 6.12 In this case, the applicant has not put forward public benefits which outweigh the less than substantial harm, and it is not considered that there are any public benefits that outweigh this harm. With regard to securing the optimum viable use of the building, there is nothing to suggest that not allowing these alterations to the façade would prevent the building from being used on a dwelling. The proposal therefore conflicts with paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

7. CONSULTATIONS CARRIED OUT

Comments from interested parties

11 occupiers were notified directly of the application.

The planning officer posted a site notice advertising the application at the site on the 2nd February 2017 and the application was advertised in the Maidenhead & Windsor Advertiser on the 9th February 2017.

No comments have been received to date.

Other consultees

Consultee	Comment	Where in the report this is considered
Conservation Officer	It is considered that the proposed alterations to the ground floor façade of this grade II listed building, located within the Eton conservation area, would cause 'less than significant harm' to the heritage assets and their setting.	6.2-6.12

8. APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

- Appendix A - Site location plan and site layout
- Appendix B – Elevation and floor plan (Existing and Proposed)

9. RECOMMENDED FOR REFUSAL IF PERMISSION IS NOT GRANTED

16/00283

- 1 The development would result in the loss of a shopfront which is important in understanding the historical use of the Listed Building, and which makes an important contribution to the character of the Eton Conservation Area, by contributing to the mix of shopfronts intermixed with domestic buildings, which is an identified characteristic of this part of the Conservation Area. As such, the development would result in less than substantial harm to the character of the Conservation Area. The proposed alterations to the façade of the building are considered to be out of keeping with the windows in the upper floors of the building which are of a Georgian appearance, and as a result this will harm the appearance of the Listed Building, and to the appearance of the Conservation Area. The development would result in less than substantial harm to the Heritage Assets. The scheme does not provide public benefits that outweigh this less than substantial harm, and not permitting the scheme would not prevent securing the optimum viable use of the building. The proposal is therefore in conflict with Paragraphs 50, 58 and 64, and 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and with Policies DG1, CA2 (criterion 1) and LB2 (criteria 3 and 5) of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan 1999 (incorporating alterations adopted June 2003).

16/00284

- 1 The works, through the loss of the shopfront would erode the historical understanding of the building, and would result in harm the historical significance of the Listed Building. The scheme does not provide public benefits that outweigh this less than substantial harm, and not permitting the scheme would not prevent securing the optimum viable use of the building. The scheme conflicts with paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy LB2 (criteria 3 and 5) of the of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan 1999 (incorporating alterations adopted June 2003).