

Committee	PLANNING COMMITTEE (C)	
Report Title	256 KIRKDALE SE26 4NL	
Ward	Sydenham	
Contributors	Geoff Whittington	
Class	PART 1	Date: 1 DECEMBER 2011

<u>Reg. No.</u>	DC/11/77811
<u>Application dated</u>	7 July 2011, completed 3 August 2011
<u>Applicant</u>	Hargreaves Architects Ltd on behalf of Robinson Jackson Ltd
<u>Proposal</u>	The retention of an aluminium framed shopfront.
<u>Applicant's Plan Nos.</u>	3601/1A & 3188/1, Design and Access Statement & Site Location Plan
<u>Background Papers</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Case File - LE/240/256/TP (2) Adopted Unitary Development Plan (July 2004) (3) Local Development Framework: Core Strategy (2011) (4) The London Plan (July 2011) (5) Supplementary Planning Document: Shopfront Design Guide
<u>Zoning</u>	Adopted UDP - Existing Use LDF: Core Strategy

1.0 Property/Site Description

- 1.1 The application site is a single-storey commercial property projecting from a three-storey building on the corner of Kirkdale and Westwood Road. The premises are currently occupied by an estate agents.
- 1.2 The surrounding area provides a range of commercial activity, with upper floor residencies. Sydenham Road lies to the south-east of the application site.
- 1.3 The site lies within the Cobb's Corner Conservation Area.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 In 2004, permission was granted for the change of use of the premises from retail (A1) to office use (A2).

3.0 Current Planning Application

- 3.1 The application seeks the retention of an aluminium framed shopfront that was installed without the benefit of planning permission in early 2011. The shopfront incorporates a large proportion of glazing, with a central entrance and stallriser.

4.0 Consultations and Replies

Neighbours & Local Amenity Societies etc

- 4.1 Consultation letters were sent to 15 neighbouring properties and the Sydenham Society. Ward Councillors were consulted and notices were displayed on site and in the local press.
- 4.2 An email was received from Cllr Best, objecting to the proposal on the following grounds;
- (1) curvature of building has been lost;
 - (2) missed opportunity to consider a wooden shopfront, incorporating a curvature;
 - (3) does not accept the applicant was unaware of the location within a conservation area.
- 4.3 The Sydenham Society have commented upon the appearance of the former frontage, stating that they 'recall the shopfront as curved'.

Support Response

- 4.4 One letter of support received, stating they 'consider the new look of the unit is clear, fresh and modern looking.'

(Letters are available to Members)

5.0 Policy Context

London Plan

- 5.1 The London Plan was published in July 2011. Policies that are relevant to the application are:-

7.4 Local Character and 7.6 Architecture.

Local Development Framework – Core Strategy

- 5.2 The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 29 June 2011. The Core Strategy, together with the London Plan and the saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan, is the borough's statutory development plan. The following lists the relevant strategic objectives, spatial policies and cross cutting policies from the Lewisham Core Strategy as they relate to this application:
- 5.3 The following lists the relevant strategic objectives, spatial policies and cross cutting policies from the Lewisham Core Strategy as they relate to this application:-

Objective 10: Protect and Enhance Lewisham's Character; Policy 15: High Quality Design for Lewisham; and Policy 16: Conservation Areas, Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment.

Adopted Unitary Development Plan

5.4 The relevant saved policies of the UDP (adopted July 2004) includes:-

URB 3 Urban Design; URB 8 Shopfronts and URB 16 New Development, Changes of Use and Alterations to Buildings in Conservation Areas.

6.0 Planning Considerations

6.1 The replacement shopfront was installed without authorisation from the Council in 2011. The applicants have advised they were unaware the property was located within a conservation area, however permission would have been required for the new shopfront had the property not been sited within a designated conservation area.

6.2 The main planning issues to consider are whether the replacement shopfront enhances the appearance of this building within the streetscene, and whether it preserves and respects the character of the Cobb's Corner Conservation Area.

Significance of the Building

6.3 The 3-storey element of the building is a good and well detailed example of its time combining Art Deco style and modernist influences that create a bold statement at this important junction. The single-storey flat roof element follows the curvature of the street corner where the two major historic thoroughfares of Sydenham converge.

6.4 The main entrance to the estate agent is centrally placed within the shopfront, addressing the roundabout and forming a key focal point in the approach from the east from the main high street.

The Principle of a New Shopfront

6.5 In conservation areas, the Council requires 'all new shopfronts and advertisements to relate well to existing buildings and streetscene, be of a high quality design with appropriate materials that preserve and enhance the character of the area; the use of wood will be encouraged and aluminium or uPVC discouraged.'

6.6 The Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 'Shopfront Design Guide', states that 'modern materials, such as aluminium...when carefully designed, can be appropriate for modern shopfronts. The quality and detailing are important.' It also states that materials such as aluminium are not normally acceptable in conservation areas because of their incompatibility with traditional building materials.

6.7 Having undertaken a thorough appraisal of the application property and the immediate surroundings, officers consider the current application, including the suitability of material and design, must be assessed on its own merits. The building is a 1930s purpose-built commercial building in a modern style. As typical for its period, it is considered likely to have originally had metal framed windows, and often buildings of that period also had metal

shopfronts. As such, the change from timber to aluminium is not considered inappropriate in this particular case.

- 6.8 The new shopfront has the display windows enlarged by omitting the transom lights and reducing the height of the stallriser. The effect, however is alleviated by the introduction of etched bands that frame the display area and do not make the windows look overtly large or out of context with the building they form part of. The frames are set within the existing brick pilasters and the shopfront as such has retained the structural and visual support needed. An exception is the new fully glazed door unit which provides a contemporary focal point to the corner.
- 6.9 The new shopfront must also be seen in context with a number of other improvements, namely the de-cluttering of the shopfront, including the removal of air conditioning units on the Kirkdale side and the reduction of signage. The pilaster at the Westwood Hill side has been rendered and painted in the same colour as the windows frame, which has resulted in a more coherent appearance. The overall effect is a restrained, even stylish shopfront, which despite its contemporary approach fits well within the context of the modern style of the building, and does not impact detrimentally upon the character of the Cobb's Corner Conservation Area.
- 6.10 Differing opinions have arisen in respect to the former shopfront, with the ward councillor and the Sydenham Society stating it used to incorporate a curved frontage, whilst Conservation officers consider the current part-hexagonal shape to replicate the former.
- 6.11 It is acknowledged there is curvature above the entrance door and two windows, which may suggest the entire shopfront was once curved, however officers remain of the opinion that the replacement shopfront is of a good appearance, and has a positive impact upon the character of the Conservation Area and streetscene generally.

7.0 Consultations

- 7.1 With regard to procedural matters, neighbour notifications have been carried out in accordance with the Council's usual procedures.
- 7.2 Officers are satisfied that all statutory Council procedures have been followed.

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The aluminium framed shopfront is considered to be of a good modern appearance, whilst managing to preserve and enhance the character of the host building and the Cobb's Corner Conservation Area.
- 8.2 Council policy generally seeks to resist the installation of aluminium shopfronts in conservation areas, however for the reasons stated in this report, the use of such material is considered appropriate for this property and setting. It is therefore recommended retrospective permission be granted.

9.0 Summary of Reasons for Grant of Planning Permission

9.1 On balance, it is considered that the proposal satisfies the Council's Land Use and environmental criteria and is in accordance with saved UDP policy URB 3 Urban Design and Policy 15 High Quality Design for Lewisham of the Local Development Framework: Core Document (2011).

9.2 It is considered that the proposal complies with Policy 15: High Quality Design for Lewisham, Policy 16: Conservation Areas, Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment and Objective 10: Protect and Enhance Lewisham's Character of the adopted Core Strategy (2011), and saved policies URB 3 Urban Design, URB 8 Shopfronts and URB 16 New Development, Changes of Use and Alterations to Buildings in Conservation Areas of the Unitary Development Plan (July 2004).

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

10.1 GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION