

DELEGATED DECISION OFFICER REPORT

AUTHORISATION	INITIALS	DATE
File completed and officer recommendation:	AC	20/08/2019
Planning Development Manager authorisation:	AN	20/08/2019
Admin checks / despatch completed	AP	21/8/19
Technician Final Checks/ Scanned / LC Notified / UU Emails:	RL	21/08/19

Application: 19/00949/FUL **Town / Parish:** Harwich Town Council
Applicant: Mr Jonathan Morris
Address: 238 High Street Harwich Essex
Development: Preparation and decoration of existing shopfront and replacement of existing ATM and surround.

1. Town / Parish Council

Ms Lucy Ballard
 Town Clerk
 Harwich Town Council

Harwich Town Council has no objection to this application.

2. Consultation Responses

Building Control and
 Access Officer

No adverse comments at this time.

3. Planning History

00/00943/FUL	Installation of Automatic Teller Machine	Approved	20.07.2000
02/00365/ADV	ATM cash machine surround sign	Approved	17.04.2002
91/00609/ADV	Illuminated fascia and projecting sign	Approved	16.07.1991
03/00840/ADV	1 Fascia sign and 1 projecting sign	Refused	11.07.2003
03/01754/ADV	1 fascia sign and 1 projecting sign	Approved	27.10.2003
90/00046/FUL	Alterations to shopfront for the installation of an automatic teller machine.	Approved	02.03.1990
18/00660/ADV	Proposed 2 No. fascia signs, 1 No. projecting or hanging sign and 2 No. other signs.	Approved	21.06.2018
19/00949/FUL	Preparation and decoration of existing shopfront and replacement of existing ATM and surround.	Current	
19/00950/ADV	Replacement of existing fascia,	Current	

projecting and ATM signage.

4. Relevant Policies / Government Guidance

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

National Planning Practice Guidance

Tendring District Local Plan 2007

QL1 Spatial Strategy

QL6 Urban Regeneration Areas

QL9 Design of New Development

QL10 Designing New Development to Meet Functional Needs

QL11 Environmental Impacts and Compatibility of Uses

ER31 Town Centre Hierarchy and Uses

EN17 Conservation Areas

EN18 Fascia and Shopfront Signs in Conservation Areas

HAR12 Dovercourt Town Centre Regeneration Plan

Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft (June 2017)

SP1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

SPL3 Sustainable Design

PPL8 Conservation Areas

PP14 Priority Areas for Regeneration

Local Planning Guidance

Essex Design Guide

Essex County Council Car Parking Standards - Design and Good Practice

Dovercourt Masterplan Revisited; April 2019

Status of the Local Plan

The 'development plan' for Tendring is the 2007 'adopted' Local Plan. Paragraph 213 of the NPPF (2019) allows local planning authorities to give due weight to adopted albeit outdated policies according to their degree of consistency with the policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF also allows weight to be given to policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency with national policy. As of 16th June 2017, the emerging Local Plan for Tendring is the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft.

Section 1 of the Local Plan (which sets out the strategy for growth across North Essex including Tendring, Colchester and Braintree) was examined in January and May 2018 and the Inspector's

initial findings were published in June 2018. They raise concerns, very specifically, about the three 'Garden Communities' proposed in north Essex along the A120 designed to deliver longer-term sustainable growth in the latter half of the plan period and beyond 2033. Further work is required to address the Inspector's concerns and the North Essex Authorities are considering how best to proceed.

With more work required to demonstrate the soundness of the Local Plan, its policies cannot yet carry the full weight of adopted policy, however they can carry some weight in the determination of planning applications. The examination of Section 2 of the Local Plan will progress once matters in relation to Section 1 have been resolved. Where emerging policies are particularly relevant to a planning application and can be given some weight in line with the principles set out in paragraph 48 of the NPPF, they will be considered and, where appropriate, referred to in decision notices. In general terms however, more weight will be given to policies in the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan.

5. Officer Appraisal (including Site Description and Proposal)

The town centre is the main retail and service centre for the local population of Dovercourt and Harwich town. The application relates to 238 High Street, Harwich occupied by Nationwide Building Society and located within the Settlement Development Boundary, Town Centre Boundary, Urban Regeneration Area and Conservation Area of Harwich and Dovercourt.

The existing shopfront retains some original Victorian features for example the corbel and pilaster and stallrisers. The application proposes a number of changes to the external appearance, being:-

- repainting the corbel and pilaster
- replacing the somewhat dated beige-tiled stallriser and aluminium shopfront with a granite-grey colour
- replace the existing ATM surround, fascia and projecting signage (see 19/00950/ADV)

Design & Appearance

The Government attach great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning and should contribute positively to making places better for people. One of the core planning principles of The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as stated at paragraph 130 is to always seek to secure high quality design.

Saved Policies QL9, QL10 and QL11 aim to ensure that all new development makes a positive contribution to the quality of the local environment, relates well to its site and surroundings particularly in relation to its form and design and does not have a materially damaging impact on the amenities of occupiers of nearby properties. Emerging Policy SP1 reflects these considerations.

The existing shopfront appears dated and drab and somewhat dominated by the large corporate fascia. The proposed change of colour scheme introduces a timeless Granite Grey with a fascia sign the dimensions of which are considerably smaller and redress the balance between the fascia and the remaining shopfront.

Conservation Area

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. The character of an area is made up not only by individual buildings but also their relationship to each other and the sense of place that they create. The setting of a building is therefore a material consideration when assessing the suitability of development proposals in Conservation Areas.

Paragraph 192 of the NPPF requires the Local Planning Authority, when determining applications for development, to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Policy EN17 of the Saved Plan (Development within a Conservation Area) requires that development must preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Development will be refused where it would harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, including historic plan form, relationship between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, grain, or significant natural or heritage features. Emerging Policy PPL8 reflects this consideration.

The building is close to the western boundary of the Conservation Area; sited on the north side of the High Street. The Conservation Area appraisal notes that "On the north side of the High Street, starting at the western end of the Area, a rough lane leads onto a small series of buildings in the rear court of the main frontage buildings. These properties, dated 1914 are of two storeys, of red brick with good rubbed-brick details, and attractive classical detailing in stone. Beyond are a pair of Arts & Crafts style buildings, though with modern shop fronts: above are slate roofs with original segmental headed dormers, and pilastered frontages with interesting tiled diamond details which are continued through to the chimney tops. Against this the bakers on the corner of Kingsway with its terracotta details is almost indescribably fussy."

Whilst Policy EN18 prefers that fascias/signage are either painted or individually lettered in a suitable material of an appropriate size and design in relation to the building or fascia upon which it is to be displayed; in this particular case the existing materials are aluminium – as are a significant number of fascia in the locale. The choice of colour and sign of signage proposed; incorporating reductions in both the fascia and projecting sign are a modest improvement over the existing and a neutral impact on the character of the Conservation Area.

Impact upon neighbouring amenities

There are commercial premises to the east, west and south of the application site. The proposed works are of a scale entirely appropriate with a corporate rebranding of an existing established commercial premises and as a result will not cause any impact upon the surrounding commercial uses.

6. Recommendation

Approval - Full

7. Conditions / Reasons for Refusal

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason - To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 0940-03, revision B, received 25th June 2019.

Reason - For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 Notwithstanding the details contained within question 22 (Type of Proposed Advertisements) of the application form; the illuminance levels shall not exceed 600 candelabra per metre squared (600cd/m^2)

Reason – To ensure that glare and dazzle is not caused to traffic in the adjoining highway, in the interests of highway safety.

8. Informatives

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Are there any letters to be sent to applicant / agent with the decision?	NO
Are there any third parties to be informed of the decision?	NO