

DESIGN AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

RETAIL UNIT, 26/30 KING STREET, TWICKENHAM, TW1 3SN

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Design and Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Tesco Stores Ltd (the applicant) in support of an application to replace the entrance doors which currently exists to the ground floor retail unit at 26/30 King Street, Twickenham, TW1 3SN.
- 1.2. The application proposes the following development:
“Replacement entrance and shopfront.”
- 1.3. The remainder of this statement is set out at follows:
- Section 2 outlines the site and surroundings including the relevant heritage designations;
 - Section 3 sets out the relevant planning policy context;
 - Section 4 details the proposal considerations against the relevant planning policy and heritage context; and
 - Section 5 provides a conclusion.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The site is an existing commercial unit located to the ground floor of a prominent three-storey building which is sited along King Street in Twickenham Town Centre. The upper two storeys are formed of red brick and the frontage benefits from tall windows with a central concrete protrusion bordered by a metal railing. The ground floor is far more modern, consisting of a large glazed frontage and two recessed entrance doors with central concrete pillar.
- 2.2. King Street is a prominent shopping street in Twickenham. The ground floor unit (the site) was formerly two separate premises but has been amalgamated for a number of years and is understood to have operated as a cycle store for the majority of this time. King Street is densely populated with high street uses including retail shops, cafes, banks and restaurants.
- 2.3. Given the location of the site, surrounding development is predominantly retail in character. The design of buildings along the street, and particularly individual shopfronts, varies considerably but overall the area benefits from a notable traditional high street character.
- 2.4. In line with this character, the site falls within the Queen’s Road Twickenham conservation area. The site itself is not listed although there are a number of listed buildings nearby including the adjacent George Public House.
- 2.5. Twickenham station is located approximately 550m walk (7-min) to the north. The River Thames lies to the south.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1. The following planning policy documents are of relevance to the site:
- Richmond Local Plan (2018);
 - Twickenham Area Action Plan (2013);
 - London Plan (2021);

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- NPPF;
- Richmond Design Quality SPD; and
- Richmond Shopfronts SPD.

Richmond Local Plan (2018)

3.2. Policy LP1 'Local Character and Design Quality' states that applications will be considered for their compatibility with local character including the relationship to existing townscape, development patterns, views, local grain and frontages as well as scale, height, massing, density, landscaping, proportions, form, materials and detailing.

3.3. It goes on to refer to shopfronts specifically, stating that:

"The Council will resist the removal of shopfronts of architectural or historic interest. Shopfronts, including signage and illumination, should complement the proportions, character, materials and detailing, surrounding streetscene and the building of which it forms part. Blinds, canopies or shutters, where acceptable in principle, must be appropriate to the character of the shopfront and the context within which it is located. External security grilles and large illuminated fascias will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. In sensitive areas, such as Conservation Areas and relevant Character Areas as identified in the Village Planning Guidance SPDs, rigid and gloss finish blinds will generally be unacceptable".

3.4. Paragraph 4.1.12 of the supporting text to policy LP1 continues to state that *"The design of new, and alterations to existing, shopfronts is important both to the appearance of the individual property and to the character and appearance of its local area. Any proposal will therefore be assessed against relevant SPDs, including Village Planning Guidance as well as the Shopfronts SPD".*

Twickenham Area Action Plan

3.5. The Twickenham Area Action Plan does not provide any specific design policies and instead states that *"new development and schemes in Twickenham will be subject to a number of existing policies within the Core Strategy and Development Management Plan as well as local, regional and national guidance with respect to design and access for all".*

London Plan

3.6. Policies D1 to D4 of the London Plan address general design principles and require that development is designed to a high standard, is accessible, and reflects existing character. Policy D5 refers to inclusive design specifically and requires that developments are *"able to be entered, used and exited safely, easily and with dignity for all".*

Material Considerations

Richmond Design Quality and Shopfronts SPD's

3.7. The shopfronts SPD sets out a grading for shopfronts which can be summarised as follows:

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Grade A - shopfronts of the highest quality, where there will be a strong presumption in favour of retention and repair.

Grade B - shopfronts which make a positive contribution to the streetscene, but where there may be scope for enhancement.

Grade C - shopfronts which have a neutral impact on the streetscene, and may have limited original features.

Grade D - shopfronts which are considered to have a negative impact on the streetscene.

- 3.8. The SPD goes onto note that it is important to consider how shopfronts relate to the character of the street as a whole and notes that proposals for shopfronts should respect the design of the building into which they are fitted, its architectural character, age, scale, form and materials.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.9. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF states that '*planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth.*'
- 3.10. The following section assesses the proposals against the above relevant planning policy and heritage considerations.

4. PROPOSAL AND HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

Proposal

- 4.1. Planning permission is sought for the replacement of the existing entrance swing-doors to the King Street elevation. The entrance is proposed to be removed and replaced with a new aluminium shopfront (coloured Grey RAL 7016) and new aluminium automatic telescopic sliding door (coloured grey RAL 7016).
- 4.2. Additional detail on the proposal is available on the proposed plans prepared by Tesco Feasibility Architecture (Drawing No.s 02_TWIC_02C and 03_TWIC_03B).

Considerations

- 4.3. It is notable that the existing shopfront, and particularly the existing doors, are of a modern design and very few historical features are retained.
- 4.4. Indeed, the existing shopfront and doors are formed of aluminium with a large pillar that is sited to the centre of the entrance. This pillar and the additional entrance neither serve a purpose nor improve the appearance of the shopfront. Planning permission for the amalgamation of the units was achieved in 2000 (LPA ref. 00/1569) and it is likely that any historical features of the original shopfront were lost in this process.

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- 4.5. It is further notable that the design of other buildings on the street, and particularly the shopfronts, varies greatly in terms of design, form, colour and materiality.
- 4.6. In this instance it is notable that the existence of the recessed entrance does little to improve the overall appearance of the shopfront. It is further notable that there are examples of shopfronts which do not utilise recessed entrances in close proximity, including Boots opticians, Iceland and The Optical Gallery.
- 4.7. Given the above, the removal of the existing entrance doors and replacement with a new upgraded entrance is considered acceptable. The existing entrance benefits from very little design quality and thus it is not considered that the proposal to unify the frontage will worsen the character or appearance of the site. Indeed, the proposed new shopfront will be formed of aluminium and finished in grey which corresponds with the existing situation.
- 4.8. Similarly, the selected colour scheme will correspond both to the existing situation at the site and to the adjacent listed public house. In any case, there is a high level of variation in design features and colour throughout King Street.
- 4.9. On the above basis it is ultimately argued that the proposal will improve and maintain the existing appearance of the shopfront, and therefore the wider conservation area. On a commercial basis, it will also provide a far more efficient shopfront layout for a convenience store and improve safety and security. On this basis the proposal is considered to have no adverse heritage impacts and to comply with the development plan. It is therefore respectfully requested that the applications are granted.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. This Design and Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a proposal for the replacement of the existing entrance doors to the ground floor retail unit located at 26/30 King Street, Twickenham, TW1 3SN.
- 5.2. The proposals have been considered with regards to local planning policy, local context, and historical context.
- 5.3. Ultimately, given the fact that the existing retail shopfront benefits from no particular historical design quality and the fact that there is a high level of variation in design along the street, which includes precedent for unified shopfronts and the use of aluminium, the proposal to unify the shopfront and install a more modern shopfront is considered acceptable.
- 5.4. Indeed, when considering the aged and degraded nature of the existing shopfront the proposal is in fact considered to improve the overall appearance of the existing shopfront.
- 5.5. Thus, it is considered that the proposals will not adversely affect the appearance of the existing building and will in fact serve to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation Area. On this basis, it is concluded that the proposals should not be refused on heritage grounds.