

REPORT 2

APPLICATION NO. P04/W0671/RET
APPLICATION TYPE RETROSPECTIVE
REGISTERED 11.11.2004
PARISH WALLINGFORD
WARD MEMBER(S) Mr Nigel Moor
Mr Imran Lokhon
APPLICANT Stan James
SITE 68 High Street, Wallingford
PROPOSAL Installation of roller shutters over existing window and door to front elevation.
AMENDMENTS
GRID REFERENCE 460640/189494
OFFICER Miss S.L. Millin

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is referred to Planning Committee because the views of Wallingford Council conflict with the officer recommendation.

2.0 THE SITE

- 2.1 The site, shown on the **attached** OS extract, is approximately 200 metres from Wallingford town centre and lies within the Wallingford Conservation Area. It comprises a 1980s red brick building, similar to others on High Street. It has brown painted wooden windows on the first floor elevations and green projecting box signs and roller shutters on the ground floor elevations. Numbers 72, 73 and 74 High Street have all retained their brown wooden window exteriors whilst incorporating their individual shop signature.
- 2.2 This application has been ongoing since 2004. Cowan Racing were the original applicants and erected the aluminium and acrylic box signs and roller shutters prior to consent being granted. Since then Cowan Racing has been replaced by Stan James betting agent who have recently been sent a letter to explain the reasons for refusal.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The application seeks retrospective full planning permission to install roller shutters over the existing door and windows to the front and side elevations. The roller shutters are housed within three boxes that project ...mm from the wall of the building. The roller shutters and box housing are bright green and are made of acrylic and aluminium.
- 3.2 The applicant has stated that the shutters will be used during the following periods:

Summer months - 9:30pm to 9:00am

Winter months - 6:00pm to 9:00am

N.B. They have been observed closed regularly outside of these times.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

3.1 Wallingford Town Council No objection.

Conservation Officer Objection. The roller shutters have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the shopfront and street scene within the Wallingford Conservation Area.

Appeals and Enforcement Objection. Considers the roller blinds detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Neighbour letters (1) Objection. Main points raised are:

- i) Roller shutters are visually obtrusive. Garish colour scheme within a Conservation Area
- ii) Roller shutters are symbolic of run down inner city areas

4.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 P81/W0398/LB – Demolition of builder's yard. Rear extension to existing shop. New shops and residential accommodation above; office accommodation and car parking,
together with alteration to access. Planning permission and listed building consent.

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, Policies:-

G6 - Promoting good design

CON7 - Proposals affecting a conservation area

CON8 - Advertisements in conservation areas

PPG15 - Planning and the historic environment

(C.56 New Shop Fronts)

Traditional Shopfront Design Guide.

The South Oxfordshire Design Guide

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The main issue to consider on the determination of this application are as follows:

- i. Whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Wallingford Conservation Area.
- ii. Whether there are any special circumstances to justify the proposal

6.2

Conservation area impact

The building makes a positive contribution to the line of shops along the High Street which is situated within the Wallingford Conservation Area. The High Street has no other shops with projecting box signs or external roller shutters. The Traditional Shop-front Design Guide advises that 'solid roller shutters can have a deadening effect on the building and street and are almost always unacceptable'. This advice is supported by policy CON8 of the Local Plan.

The materials that have been used for the box signs and roller shutters; aluminium and acrylic, are unsuitable and not in-keeping with the character and appearance of the area. Policy CON8 of the local Plan states that '..all new shop fascias should be made of natural materials'. The Traditional Shopfront Design Guide reinforces this by advising that 'Projecting box signs will not be acceptable, especially if constructed from plastic or perspex'.

6.3 The roller shutters are considered to be an incongruous feature in the Wallingford Conservation Area. They are considered to have a busy and cluttered appearance and a deadening effect on the building when closed. No other shop along the High Street has such roller-shutters. The shutters' incongruous appearance is compounded by its use of non-traditional materials. The roller shutters are not considered to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wallingford

Conservation Area.

Special circumstances

Whilst it is appreciated that the bookmaker deals with large amounts of money on a daily basis and that the shop's security is important, it is considered that there are other means of securing the shop without the need for such prominent shutters. As such, it is considered that the security of the shop does not outweigh the harm these shutters have on the character and appearance of the Wallingford Conservation Area.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The roller shutters and box signs were erected without prior consent. They currently neither enhance nor preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area and consequently are contrary to Policy CON8. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

8.1 **That planning permission be refused for the following reason:**

1. That having regard to the design and materials of the roller shutters and bulky nature and materials of the housing boxes, the proposal detracts from the visual amenities of the area and causes harm to the character and appearance of this part of the Wallingford Conservation Area. As such, the proposal would be contrary to the provisions of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011, particularly Policies G6, CON7 and CON8, and to advice in the South Oxfordshire Design Guide, particularly the Traditional Shopfront Design Guide.

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