



Planning Services
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5BY

PP-09507784

26 February 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE EAST ENTRANCE OF
THE ASHLEY CENTRE, HIGH STREET, EPSOM KT18 5AB**

On behalf of Epsom Ashley SARL, please find enclosed an application for full planning permission for the refurbishment of the East entrance of The Ashley Centre, High Street, Epsom, KT18 5AB.

Planning permission is sought for:

“Alterations and improvements to the East Entrance, including new paving, over-cladding to elevations, new aluminium framed sliding doors, new lighting features, signage zones and associated works.”

In addition to the cover letter, the application submission is supported by the following documents:

- Completed application form;
- Completed Community Infrastructure Levy form;
- Site Location Plan (drawing ref. 3822-AP(02)1000P02);
- Design and Access Statement; and
- Full set of architectural drawings, comprising:
 - Existing Ground Floor Plan (drawings ref. 3822-AP(02)1041P02);
 - Existing First Floor Plan (drawings ref. 3822-AP(02)1042P02);
 - Existing Ground Floor Reflected Ceiling Plan (drawings ref. 3822-AP(02)1043P02);
 - Existing Elevations (drawings ref. 3822-AP(02)1044P02);
 - Existing Sections (drawings ref. 3822-AP(02)1045P02);
 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan (drawings ref. 3822-AP(04)1041P02);
 - Proposed First Floor Plan (drawings ref. 3822-AP(04)1042P02);
 - Proposed Reflected Ceiling Plan (drawings ref. 3822-AP(04)1043P03);
 - Proposed High Street Elevations (drawings ref. 3822-AP(05)1044P03); and
 - Proposed Sections (drawings ref. 3822-AP(06)1045P03).

The planning application fee of £234.00 has been paid to Epsom & Ewell Borough Council via the Planning Portal.



Site Description

The site consists of the East entrance of The Ashley Centre, which is located along Epsom's High Street and within Epsom town centre. The application site is one of three main access points to The Ashley Centre by pedestrians and is situated to the north of the shopping centre.

The site falls at the centre of a Primary Shopping Area and lies adjacent to Primary Retail Frontages, as designated on Epsom & Ewell's Planning Policy Map. The surrounding context is therefore predominantly retail units, with the East entrance providing key access to retail units with The Ashley Centre itself.

The site also falls within Epsom Town Centre Conservation Area and lies near to listed buildings at 72 High Street, 74-76 High Street, 107 High Street, and 109-113 High Street. The site itself is not statutorily listed but is designated within Epsom's Historic Town Core, which is recognised as an Area of High Archaeological Potential.

The site falls within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding.

Relevant Planning History

The Ashley Centre sits at the heart of the shopping area and was opened in October 1984. In 2006 the centre was redeveloped adding additional retail space and public toilets. The development has a mix of uses combining shops, a multi-story car park and office space.

There is no recent relevant planning history associated with the East entrance of The Ashley Centre.

The Proposal

The application proposes to refurbish the existing East entrance of The Ashley Centre, which fronts the High Street to the north. The full scope of works includes:

- New and replacement paving, which extends to the High Street kerb;
- New façade over-cladding at ground and first floor level;
- New aluminium framing on the external wall at first floor level;
- New aluminium framed automatic sliding entrance doors;
- Various new lighting features; and
- New signage zones¹.

The proposed development is part of a wider, largely internal (and not subject to planning permission), refurbishment of The Ashley Centre. This would include the refresh of the mall spaces, removal of clutter, and the introduction of a bold, contemporary design to improve the attractiveness of the centre and support its retail role. This is all the more important given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on town centres. The proposed refresh would help support the recovery.

The proposals have been informed by pre-application advice received from the Design and Conservation Officer (Lance Penman) on 3 February 2021 via email.

Full details of the location and materials of the proposals have been provided in the accompanying Design & Access Statement and supporting drawing pack.

¹ Note, this application does not seek advertisement consent.



Planning Policy

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) (2019)

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF supports the presumption of sustainable development and states that development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be permitted without delay.

Paragraph 80 states that significant weight should be given to the need to support economic growth and that policies and decisions should help create conditions for business to expand and adapt.

This is supported by paragraph 85, which requires planning policies and decisions to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

Paragraph 127 sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Paragraph 193 requires local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposed developments on the significance of any designated heritage asset affected.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Local Development Framework – Core Strategy 2007

Policy CS1 establishes the overarching principle for new development throughout Epsom & Ewell. It states that development should contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvements necessary to achieve sustainable development.

Policy CS5 requires development proposals to protect and enhance the Borough's heritage assets, including historic buildings and conservation areas. High quality and inclusive design will be required for all developments.



Policy CS14 states that measures to improve Epsom town centre, including new development, will be encouraged especially where they help it to adapt and reinforce its role in meeting the needs of the local community and acting as a focus for a range of activities (including retail, cultural, business, leisure and residential) and where they recognise and build on the distinctive character of the place.

Development Management Policies Document – 2015

Policy DM8 (Heritage Assets) seeks to resist the loss of Heritage Assets and sets out that every opportunity to conserve and enhance them should be taken by new development.

Policy DM9 (Townscape Character and Local Distinctiveness) states that planning permission will be granted for proposals which make a positive contribution to the Borough's visual character and appearance. Consideration will be given to the following

- Compatibility with local character and the relationship to the existing townscape and wider landscape;
- The surrounding historic and natural environment;
- The setting of the proposal site and its connection to its surroundings; and
- The inclusion of locally distinctive features and use of appropriate materials;

Policy DM10 (Design Requirements for New Developments) requires development proposals to incorporate principles of good design.

Planning Considerations

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The proposal involves alterations to the existing East entrance of The Ashley Centre. The proposed development would not result in the loss of retail floorspace within the Primary Shopping Area.

Paragraph 80 of the NPPF emphasises the importance of ensuring that businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

The new entrances would form part of a wider, largely internal, refurbishment of The Ashley Centre. This is proposed to improve the legibility and attractiveness of the Centre to visitors.

The proposed development would help the site retain and enhance its retail function in response to the changing retail markets, particularly in light of the challenges emanating from the Covid-19 pandemic. The improvements to the entrance would create an enhanced welcome to the centre, drawing shoppers to The Ashley Centre and benefiting the wider town centre in line with paragraph 89 of the NPPF and Policy CS14 of the Local Plan.

In light of this, the proposals are wholly in accordance with the aims of national and local planning policy.

DESIGN

The proposals involve the refurbishment to the East entrance and comprises new paving, alterations to the façade including overcladding and aluminium framing, lighting, and new entrance doors to provide a modern look to a somewhat outdated façade.

The proposals have been developed with a contemporary design solution and material selection whilst retaining and celebrating the prominent local landmark elements including the roof spire and



central first floor façade feature which are considered important to local residents. In pre-application discussions, the Council expressed a preference for a contemporary design at this location.

Given that this part of The Ashley Centre is subject to existing tenancies, it is proposed to maintain the overhang projection of the entrance. Accordingly, to provide a contemporary refresh, a high-quality over-cladding would be introduced to the elevation.

Accordingly, the proposed over cladding would ensure that the current tenants leasing the space at ground and first floor can remain largely unaffected by the proposals. The retention of the existing façade line and overhang projection would be enhanced by the contemporary materials and feature lighting which would provide the visual recognition and announcement of the main entrance into The Ashley Centre from the High Street. The design and materials proposed to the façade would be replicated and continue within the internal Mall refurbishment to provide a cohesive connection from the outside to inside, as part of the same project with a fresh, contemporary theme.

The existing roof spire above the East entrance is a point of reference for many locals and visitors, and as such, the proposals retain this important element within the design to allow the site to continue as a landmark within Epsom town centre. An opal-faced lightbox is proposed at high level ground floor beneath the pitched roof location to provide illumination to the entrance and would cover the full extent of the existing octagonal soffit recess. In terms of the elevational lighting, there would be an opportunity to display lighting in different colours to suit events or seasonal festivities.

The proposal would involve a slight increase in the height of the façade; however, it would still be lower than its neighbouring properties and would not impact amenity.

New natural granite paving is proposed to cover the full extent of the entrance up to the High Street kerb. The proposed paving would be pink/light red in colour to imitative the existing paving and complement the existing aesthetic. The proposed paving would be suitable for pedestrians and vehicular trafficked areas. The tactile paving at the crossing would be replaced and upgraded.

Further detail on the design and materials is set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

In light of this, the design of the proposals would comply with the design principles set out in Policy DM9 and DM10 of the Development Management Policies Document.

HERITAGE AND TOWNSCAPE

The Ashley Centre is not listed but there are a number of statutorily listed buildings nearby. 107 High Street and 109-113 are located directly to the west of the site and are both grade II listed (List Entries: 1028565 and 1213134 respectively). The Epsom School of Art Extension is located opposite the site at 74-76 High Street and is grade II listed (List Entry: 1213288).

The proposals include the retention of key architectural features of the existing entrance and would ensure that the character of the building remains unchanged as a result of the proposed alterations. The proposals would be a betterment and positive change of the existing entrance by creating a modern, contemporary look to an out-dated entrance. Accordingly, the proposals would



not cause harm and would be an enhancement to the setting of the listed buildings which lie immediately to the west of the site.

The site is also located within Epsom Town Centre Conservation Area, which is characterised as a compact area with retail as its primary function. The Epsom Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009) notes the Ashley Centre as being responsible for much of the bustling character of Epsom. The proposals would help to conserve and enhance the Conservation Area by safeguarding the character of the building through sensitive adaptation. The proposed alterations would allow The Ashley Centre to enhance its retail function and provide vitality and viability to the town centre and Conservation Area.

The proposals are compliant with the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990 (as amended) as the development would result in an enhancement of the existing Entrance, and accordingly, to the wider Conservation Area. The proposals would not harm the setting of the nearby listed buildings. As such the proposals are in accordance with paragraph 197 of the NPPF, Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy and Policy DM8 of the Development Management Policies Document.

ACCESS

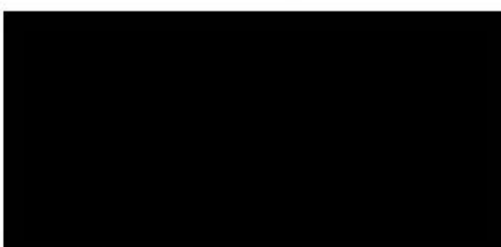
The proposed development would continue to provide a fully inclusive environment and aims to continue to provide equal access, ease of use, and achieve a safe, comfortable and healthy environment. The proposed development would be designed to be level and wide enough to allow wheelchair users and people with buggies to pass easily.

Conclusions

The proposals seek to modernise the existing East entrance of The Ashley Centre. The contemporary approach echoes that suggested by the Design and Conservation Officer. The proposed development would be small-scale and sensitive to its historic context. The proposed works would introduce positive change that is complementary to and will protect, conserve and enhance Epsom Town Centre's historic environment. The proposals is therefore in accordance with local and national policy.

We look forward to confirmation that the application has been validated and trust that the information provided will allow the application to be assessed in a timely manner. If you have any questions or wish to discuss the application, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Sophie Ward

Encl. As listed above