

Heritage Statement

Internal alterations to ground floor

59 High Street
Alton
GU34 1AB



Site Information

Consultant	Keith Oliver
Client	M Khan
Site Address	59 High Street, Alton GU34 1AB
LA	East Hampshire DC
Description of Development	Internal alterations to ground floor
Pathway (PD/Application/Appeal)	Application

Constraints Review

Heritage Assets	Grade II Listed/Conservation Area
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Local Policy Requirements

Local Plan/Core Strategy	East Hampshire District Local Plan. Joint Core Strategy.
Effective Policies in Development Control	CP 1 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development CP 30 - Historic Environment
SPG/SPD's	None

Planning History

Relevant History	None relevant
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Report Date

August 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1. 59 High Street is a two-storey terraced property on the south-east side of the road, close to its junction with Turk Street.
- 1.2. The proposal seeks to undertake internal alterations to the ground floor.
- 1.3. Town Planning Expert act as agents for this application.





Site Photograph

Matters Pursuant to the application

- 1.4. The property is listed as being of special architectural or Historic Interest, Grade II. The listing describes it as follows:

HIGH STREET 1. 5236 (South East Side) No 59 (Swarthmore)

Mid-C18. 2 storeys plus attic; 6 bays wide. Stuccoed; tiled mansard roof. Ground floor with asymmetrically placed door in panelled reveal with simple rectangular fanlight and Tuscan surround and 5 flush sash windows. 1st floor with 6 similar windows. Moulded cornice. 3 dormer windows in the roof. A plaque indicates that the house was from 1816 to 1819 the home of the future Cardinal Newman.

Nos 59 to 63 (odd) form a group.

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2. Site Context

- 2.1. 59 High Street is a two storey, mid-18th century, terraced property, with rooms in the roof.
- 2.2. The building is stuccoed with a tiled roof.
- 2.3. The ground floor was last in use as an estate agents, and there is separate residential accommodation above.
- 2.4. It lies in a line of commercial properties within Alton town centre.
- 2.5. Adjacent units are of differing styles and heights, and are occupied by various commercial businesses.

3. Local Development Framework

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the primary national planning policy guidance and the updated version was last issued in July 2021.

Sustainable Development

- 3.2. Paragraphs 8 and 9 of the NPPF sets out the Government's overriding objectives of securing sustainable development. Para 8 of the NPPF identifies the roles of the planning system in achieving sustainable development:

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 3.3. Paragraphs 10 and 11 go on to provide further emphasis on the focus towards sustainable development stating:

10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development

11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

3.4. With regard to the historic environment Paragraph 189 indicates:

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. 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.

3.5. It advises in paragraph 194:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; ...

Local Policy

- 3.6. The East Hampshire District Local Plan. Joint Core Strategy was adopted in 2014 and is the principal document in the Local Development Framework and provides the vision and framework to shape the future of East Hampshire.
- 3.7. The following policies are considered relevant:
- CP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development.
CP30 - Historic Environment
- 3.8. A Plan Review is in progress but is still at a relatively early stage such that little weight can be afforded to it.
- 3.9. The Alton Conservation Area was first designated in 1970 and was been reviewed and extended in 1982.

4. Principle of Development

- 4.1. 59 High Street is a 2-storey property, which dates from the mid-18th century.
- 4.2. The upper floors are in separate use with no direct access from this unit.
- 4.3. The property has been used commercially, most recently as an estate agents, and at some time all internal features that may have existed, fire surrounds, cornices etc., have been removed from the ground floor.
- 4.4. It is noted that the listing identifies no internal features, although this is not definitive.
- 4.5. The proposal is to convert it to use as a clinic offering physiotherapy and massage among other services. The clinic currently operates from the first floor of No 70 High Street, Alton.
- 4.6. As both the former and proposed uses fall within Use Class E no change of use arises.
- 4.7. Currently the premises consist of three main rooms at the front with storage and toilets to the rear.
- 4.8. The proposal is to sub-divide the front area with stud partitions to create five interview and treatment rooms. The reception would be at the rear allowing access from the High Street or the parking area behind.
- 4.9. The work would be undertaken so it can be installed and removed if required, without any impact on the existing plan or fabric of the building.
- 4.10. No external alterations are proposed.
- 4.11. The ground floor of this property has been vacant in excess of a year, and it is generally acknowledged that the best way to keep a building in good order is to find an appropriate use.
- 4.12. The refurbishment of this building within the city centre is therefore intended to maintain the property in a sympathetic manner, thus preserving this historic building which will continue to contribute to the economic and cultural fabric of Alton.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. 14 South Street is a 3-storey Georgian property which has been recently used for retail purposes.
- 5.2. The proposal is to convert it to use as a clinic offering physiotherapy and massage among other services.
- 5.3. The intention is to create a number of interview and treatment rooms.
- 5.4. The work would be undertaken as stud work, which should have no impact on the historic fabric, and can be removed in the future if required
- 5.4. No external alterations are proposed.
- 5.5. The proposal would in the opinion of the applicant preserve and maintain this historic building and as such contribute to the vitality and viability of Alton town centre.