

Heritage Statement

Shopfront and Signage Application to 95
Commercial Road

By Primetower Properties

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1.0 Heritage Assessment

1.1 The application site falls within the Ashley Cross Conservation Area (ACCA). The catalyst for the designation of the ACCA was as a result of the areas historical and architectural interest.

1.2 Section 2.2 of the Conservation Area Character Appraisal sets out;

'Until the year 1833 the Tything of Parkstone formed part of the large parish of Canford Magna. When the independent parish was formed, Parkstone itself was just a pretty village, with a small number of villas and suburban houses. Even today Ashley Cross retains many of its original village features.'

1.3 Many of the more notable buildings date from the Victorian and Edwardian era, albeit incongruous C20 development can also be seen – such as the parade of shops with flats above opposite the Application Site. The Conservation Area encompasses several features of note including St Peters Church (bestowed Grade II Listing), The Railway Station and adjoining road bridge, the brick railway arches over Sandbanks Road, and Parkstone Park.

1.4 Of these features, the Application Site is within the visual setting of only Parkstone Park, described as

'a 3.14 acres green space at the heart of the conservation area. The park defines the area around it with its mature trees. The triangular space is bounded by Commercial Road, Church Road and Station Road. Three plans for the park were originally put forward for consideration to the "Recreation & Baths Committee" of the Council on 14th October 1887. The park was laid out in 1888/89 and formally opened by the Prince of Wales on 17th January 1890 on the same day as Poole Park.'

1.5 Today the Park provides a popular open space offering play space as public gardens.

1.6 The surrounding area is typified by a tight urban grain with residential properties over retail/commercial units fronting Commercial Road at 2 ½ and 3 storeys and 2 storey, predominantly terraced housing in the streets running away from the main road. Views are restricted and properties located close to footways particularly on the Commercial Road frontage.

1.7 Paragraph 4.1 of the Ashley Cross Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan, published 2011, describes this area as follows: Page 17 of 20.

'This area lies at the heart of the conservation area. Commercial Road with its heavy traffic flows is a negative feature which divides the conservation area.'

The shops which line Commercial Road and front the park are larger than their domestic counterparts. They are largely three-storey Victorian properties constructed

of red brick under slate roofs. Important features include gables fronting the road, large chimney pots and sash windows. Many of the front elevations have been decorated in the Arts and Crafts style, with stone, stucco or terracotta details. In addition, towers or turrets form typical corner details'.

The high architectural quality of these frontages has been recognised and many of the parades of shops are identified as Local Heritage Assets. These Assets include Lloyds Bank at No.153 Commercial Road, the Library, the Britannia public house, and the Central Hotel.

- 1.8 Paragraph 5.2 of the Conservation Area Appraisal describes design issues for new developments.

'Not all the elements of the Conservation Area contribute to its significance. The removal of a tradable or neutral feature may be acceptable, but any new development should enhance or better reveal the significance of the Conservation Area. Development which removes negative features within the conservation area could be seen as opportunities to progress this aim. This should also be seen as part of the process of place shaping'.

- 1.9 Paragraph 5.7 of the Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the following in relation to shopfronts and signage.

The present economic climate has resulted in short tenures together with pressure to remove historic shop fronts and the imposition of low-quality signage. The Characterisation Study has identified the need for new shopfront and signage designs to comply with the Council's Shopfronts & Shop Signs SPD in order to protect areas of critical townscape such as the Ashley Cross conservation area. Security features such as grills need to be carefully designed to ensure areas of dead frontage are not created.'

2.0 Shopfront and Signage Design

- 2.1 Whilst there is a council SPD relating to shop frontages, there is a wide variety of styles and materials used within this part of the conservation area. Few retain the original proportions and detailing.
- 2.2 The shopfront proposal is split into two elements. One is a and area of existing shop, the second is a new build infill element to the right of the existing shop when viewed from the road. Both will serve the same occupier and thus treated together.
- 2.3 The existing shopfront element comprises a 1960s single glazed shop frontage with black glazed tile stallriser and pilasters. The shopfront is broadly within an area defined by existing pilasters with corbels. However, an existing recessed entranceway serving residential accommodation above splits the existing shopfront with an intermediate pier with no corbel detailing. The existing shop entrance in via a setback door to the side of

the intermediate pier. Therefore, the existing shopfront has a truncated or fragmented appearance when compared to other frontages in the area.

- 2.4 The area above the residential entrance does not form part of the existing or proposed shopfront and signage.
- 2.5 There are no full-length mullions within the existing façade which are generally typical in the area. The glazing panes are butt glazed as appear as one undivided element.
- 2.6 The proposal is to remove the existing 1960s frontage entirely and install a new shopfront to the existing shop, and a new shopfront to the infill element. The righthand existing pilaster of the existing shopfront will be retained, providing the separation between the two.
- 2.7 The shopfront will be contained within the area originally designed for the shop, as described above. The new shopfront to the infill element will take the same proportions and detailing as that used for the existing shop frontage. A recessed entrance area will be provided to the right of the infill shopfront, and a new door inserted into the existing left hand recess of the original shopfront.
- 2.8 Existing corbels, banding and piers will be retained, and repaired as necessary. The 1960s glazed tiles will be removed, and new painted render coat applied with recessed detailing to match the adjacent unit detailing at No.93.
- 2.9 New timber windows will incorporate mullions and a high-level transom to return the shopfront to its original vertical proportions. The window frames will be painted in a matt dark grey in line with the guidance in the council's Shopfront SPD.
- 2.10 The stallriser to both elements will have a rendered panel painted matt grey to match the windows and signage. The height of the stallriser is defined at 400mm in the new infill frontage and will be taken at consistent level through into the existing shopfront. This ensures the visual clarity between the two frontages.
- 2.11 The fascia sign for the shopfront will be kept within the original fascia signage area and will not project out past the corbels of pilasters. A vertical division will be maintained between the new infill element. A fascia pelmet will be used to conceal an existing RWP pipe run, and a recessed LED strip downlighter along the length of the sign.
- 2.12 The fascia will be painted to matt dark grey to match the windows and stallriser. Lettering on the fascia will be in brushed aluminium, with a total height of no more than 60% for the fascia height.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.0 The shopfront and signage proposal does not propose the removal of any built form with historical value. As previously identified the proposal will reintroduce the traditional divided window frontage with vertical proportions significantly improving its appearance within the street scene and relating to the adjoining buildings.
- 3.1 The shopfront will be contained within the space originally designed for the unit. Existing corbels and pilasters will be retained. The signage is contained within the space originally designed and will not obscure the surrounding façade.
- 3.2 It is considered that in terms of assessing the impact of the proposal the development would result in 'no harm' with regards to assessing the impact of a development upon a heritage asset. The proposal would contribute towards the vibrancy and vitality of the local centre pursuant to the spatial objectives of the Development Plan and the core principles set out in the NPPF
- 3.3 For the reasons set out above it is considered that the proposal would protect and enhance the Ashley Cross Conservation Area. The proposed shopfront and signage configuration representative of the historic evolution of the Conservation Area and will form a successful transition between buildings which have evolved to be of differing scales and therefore successfully complete the street scene.