

# John Haynes

## Architectural Design

39, Hawthorn Road, Lincoln. LN2 4QX

Tel. 01522 521272

Mobile 07836 662089

Email [john\\_haynes@talktalk.net](mailto:john_haynes@talktalk.net)

Web [www.john-haynes-design.co.uk](http://www.john-haynes-design.co.uk)

## Heritage, Design, Access, Energy and Biodiversity Statement

**Proposed Shopfront Remedial Works, 13, High Street, Branston, Lincoln LN4 1NB**  
Issue #1 Date- 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### Introduction and Context

13, High Street Branston is a small commercial property situated on the northern side of the High Street approximately 100m to the west of its junction with Station Road and Silver Street and approximately 200m from the main commercial centre of Branston which is centred around the Co-op Store on Station Road, placing it on the periphery of the commercial area. The premises are situated between and opposite residential uses.

The property is within the Branston Conservation area as defined in the Branston Conservation Area Appraisal Adopted March 2018 and within the High Street Character Area identified in that document.

The property ownership consists of the footprint of the main building and an area to the rear for car parking accessed by rights of way over a shared driveway with the adjacent property 11, High Street. The parking area is adequate for 4 "stack" parked vehicles and turning space is available on site. It is believed that this arrangement worked for the previous office use but would be suited to staff only parking not customer parking.

The front of the property opens directly onto the footpath albeit recessed slightly from the main footpath line to the High Street which is a busy road within 100m of the traffic light controlled junction to Station Road and Silver Street.

Any commercial use therefore would need to be a "destination" use rather than catering to passing trade as no roadside parking is available.

When last occupied it was used as an Accountants and Business Advisors offices with a residential flat above the commercial premises which was tenanted up until recently, (flat approved in 1977 under N/13/0203/77).

The Accountants have relocated to a new address on the High Street in Lincoln and the property stood empty for a period of time before being marketed and purchased by the current owner Mr J. Mohammed.

The property is two storey constructed of masonry painted brickwork below a concrete tiled roof and prior to the current owners purchase all existing windows other than the shopfront had been replaced with modern white UPVC windows including the modification of the size of some of the openings on the front elevation (although the decorative lintels were retained). The property had lapsed into a state of disrepair and the shopfront was in particularly poor condition with rotten timber members and the central doors incapable of being safely opened.

The attached property to the west is a two storey residence with a render finished ground floor and natural stone upper floor under a modern concrete tiled roof. This property has white UPVC windows fitted.

The properties to the east are a modern chalet style two storey property in buff brick under a reconstituted slate roof and a single storey bungalow of slightly greater age in buff brown brick under a concrete tiled roof, both have upvc windows fitted.

Opposite, across the High Street is a terrace of 4 stone built two storey houses under a slate roof, these retain painted timber windows to the front elevation but have non matching doors to the central properties.

Generally other properties facing the High Street and elsewhere have been provided with upvc windows with few timber windows remaining. The Commercial properties around the Co-op Store on Station Road (outside the conservation area) have aluminium shopfronts and windows.

Planning use classes, the existing commercial premises will fall under Use class E and no change of use application would be required for uses under the same classification e.g. the proposed barbers shop use would fall under Class E for "provision of services". For alterations to the premises and any signage proposed applications would be required.

Previous owners of the property had made an application for the change of use to a hot food take away (02/0892/FUL) but this was refused on both residential amenity and traffic safety grounds, neither of which reasons are likely to have changed in the interim period.

The location and lack of parking seriously limits potential uses for the property especially when hot food takeaway uses have been ruled out and also impacts on any rental value to be achieved.

Mr Mohammed had agreed a lease with a third party to use the premises as a barbers shop with the separate flat remaining above. This use would complement the location being a "destination use" on the edge of the retail area catering for local Branston residents who would not need to travel by car or who would combine a visit to the hairdressers with other business in the main shopping area.

Unfortunately this tenant commenced work without the owners knowledge and removed and replaced the existing shopfront with a modern aluminium version due to the poor state of the existing timber shopfront without seeking any form of approval, work has now ceased on this pending the outcome of this application. The applicant apologises for this oversight and hopes a suitable scheme of work can be agreed with the local authority.

A letter in respect of the unauthorised works has been issued from Mr S. Jakeway Planning Enforcement Officer of North Kesteven District Council dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 reference ENF/762445/s and this application seeks to address the points raised in that letter (which was incorrectly addressed).

## Policy

No change of use is proposed (Class E is the existing use with an existing residential use first floor flat) and the application is part retrospective for a replacement shopfront to the existing premises with enhancements to make it more acceptable.

Any signage required for a new business will be the subject of a separate application by the tenant once this application is determined.

National policies in NPPF 2023 will apply as well as the Policies within the adopted Central Lincolnshire Adopted Local Plan 2023.

With regard to the latter the application site is within the village curtilage of Branston but notwithstanding its existing commercial use outside the identified District local and Village Centres use area covered by policies 35 and 40. The building and use exists and no changes in overall area or use class are proposed.

Again as the building and use are existing Policy S13 for energy efficiency is relevant only to a limited extent as no extensions or changes in area are proposed. The applicant and their tenant do intend to consider and improve the energy efficiency of the existing where practicable as part of any fit out of the commercial area and upgrade of the first floor flat, for example by provision of more efficient heating lighting and insulation where economically viable. This work is subject to a suitable determination of this application.

The principal Policy for this application is S57 The Historic Environment which sets out criteria for consideration. This is further supported by the following North Kesteven District Council documents

Branston Conservation Area Management Plan Adopted March 2018

Branston Conservation Area Appraisal Adopted March 2018 (including Conservation area plan)

North Kesteven District Council Shopfront Design Guide 2016

NKDC Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023 in respect of the shopfront at this property.

The management plan acknowledges the importance of shopfronts and makes reference to the design guide. It also refers to the loss of traditional timber joinery from the Conservation area but a tour of the area in the vicinity of the property shows a predominance of modern upvc windows and doors in spite of this policy.

The Conservation area appraisal document makes the following points relevant to this application,

The conservation boundary has, in the past been amended to remove buildings which no longer meet the criteria for inclusion this has had a particular impact on the area around the application site where the properties to the east have been removed leaving the application property and the adjacent property 11 High Street isolated on that side of the road.

North Kesteven District Council do not currently publish a “local list” of buildings of interest as this remains under review, there are however buildings in this category listed in the Conservation Area appraisal, neither the application site nor its immediate neighbour are identified on this list or on Map 3 within the document, additionally many of the buildings which are identified have been fitted with UPVC windows contrary to the appraisal.

The document then goes on to identify “positive” buildings this suggests (although the map is not clear) that the adjacent no 11 High Street is one such building yet this too has upvc windows and a concrete tiled roof.

In terms of Policies S60 and S61 Biodiversity the site ownership is either fully developed (for the building) or fully hard surfaced (for the parking area), both of these exist and there is no opportunity to change these items. The proposal (the shopfront) does not affect local biodiversity and will cause no harm or loss of biodiversity.

Specific proposals to address these issues are covered below

## **Design**

### **Use**

The use if the building will remain Class E commercial with a self-contained Residential flat at first floor level.

### **Amount**

No increase in existing floor area is proposed.

### **Layout**

No change to the existing layout is proposed save that described below in relation to the shopfront.

### **Scale**

No change to the scale of the property is proposed.

### **Landscaping**

There are no landscaping changes proposed.

### **Appearance**

This is the key element of the application.

The applicant acknowledges that the existing shopfront was of timber construction and traditional style however this shopfront although visually traditional was in particularly poor condition with many elements being rotten beyond repair and the central doors being incapable of being safely opened (or meeting current access requirements).

The applicant accepts shopfront was removed without permission and once again apologises for this oversight but trusts the council will accept that the work was carried out in good faith at the time albeit misguided.

The applicant trusts the Council in its deliberations will apply due weight to the commercial realities of this site, it is a peripheral site with no readily usable visitor parking and limited scope for passing trade, as such it will command a limited rental value and only appeal to "destination" businesses not needing parking, these uses will be further limited by potential planning restrictions on more lucrative alternatives such as hot food takeaway, there is therefore a limit on what can be spent on the property for it to remain viable or a need for a more relaxed approach to use to create a rental value capable of funding more significant works..

The applicant accepts the comments in the Council letter of 23<sup>rd</sup> October that the style of the aluminium shopfront installed is unlikely to be approved "as it stands" but equally maintains that the property value would not stand the cost of either repair to or like for like replacement of the timber shopfront previously present as suggested, there are also access matters noted below which preclude a like for like solution to the main door.

Although within the conservation area both the application property and the adjacent property have been previously altered by others to lose many of their traditional features (roof finishes timber windows etc) these properties also stand in isolation on the north side of the High Street in terms of the Conservation area boundary. While acknowledging that additional loss is not a given weight should be given to the previous losses made.

By way of this part retrospective application the applicant would wish the council to consider the retention of the existing aluminium shopfront as installed but with the addition of a reinstatement of the timber pilasters and fascia / capping and cornice mouldings to match those removed, in addition it is proposed to add a cill level rail to the shopfront to bring overall proportions more closely in line with the original.

For reasons noted below the new single door will be retained and a level threshold for disabled access provided.

Proposals are shown on the drawings submitted with this application and it is hoped that these can be favourably considered.

Any signage will form a separate application by the tenant in due course

## **Access**

### **Policies**

The access policies are covered by the current Building Regulations.

### **To Site**

Unchanged access from the pavement fronting the High Street and access driveway to the rear (note right of way access, driveway in separate ownership).

### **To Building**

The removed shopfront originally had a pair of narrow timber doors to the centre of the façade, the state of these doors (incapable of being safely opened) suggests that for a significant

period of time access to the offices when in use was via the rear door to the property and that the front doors remained closed. In addition these door leaves were of insufficient width to be used (without opening both doors) for disabled access under Part M of the Building regulations.

The installed single door although different in visual form to the pair does address this issue and allow full accessibility to the commercial unit.

Reintroduction of like for like doors would not meet this requirement.

### **Within Building**

Unchanged (or any changes subject to current building regulations)

## **Energy**

As part of the fit out works to both the commercial area and flat energy using services will be upgraded to modern more energy efficient types.

## **Biodiversity**

No changes are proposed to existing external areas therefore there and no changes or detriment to the biodiversity of the site.

Related Documents:- Drawings 909-A3-001, 002, 003 and 004.

John Haynes

John Haynes Architectural Design