

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

**APPLICATION TO BE DETERMINED UNDER POWERS DELEGATED TO
CHIEF PLANNING OFFICER**

PART III REPORT (INCORPORATING REPORT OF HANDLING)

REF : 19/00203/FUL
APPLICANT : Hawick Angling Club
AGENT : Roxburghe Home Solutions Ltd
DEVELOPMENT : Replacement windows
LOCATION: 5 - 1 Sandbed
Hawick
Scottish Borders
TD9 0HE

TYPE : FUL Application

REASON FOR DELAY:

DRAWING NUMBERS:

Plan Ref	Plan Type	Plan Status
Photo	Location Plan	Refused
	Existing Elevations	Refused
	Proposed Elevations	Refused
50MM outer frame	Specifications	Refused
70mm T-Transom	Specifications	Refused

NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIONS: 0

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS:

No representations.

The Community Council has been consulted but has not responded to the public consultation.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND POLICIES:

Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2016:

Policy PMD1: Sustainability
Policy PMD2: Quality Standards
Policy ED3: Town Centres and Shopping Development
Policy HD3: Residential Amenity
Policy EP9: Conservation Areas

Shop Fronts and Shop Signs SPG (2011)

Recommendation by - Stuart Herkes (Planning Officer) on 24th September 2019

This application proposes replacement windows within the shopfront of a premises at 5 - 1 Sandbed, which lies within the Core Area/Area of Prime Frontage in Hawick's Conservation Area. The site is the premises of Hawick Angling Club. At present the windows are red-painted timber-framed units. The Applicants' concern is that these should now be replaced by uPVC units. A proposed elevation drawing (in fact, a drawing imposed on a photograph) describes thick and apparently white-framed units substituted for the existing timber units. Supporting specification details clarify that these would indeed be fixed (non-openable) units with heavy, obviously modern frames and mullions of non-traditional profiles.

While the existing window units are themselves not traditional units with a pronounced horizontal emphasis, they have relatively slender frames which - since these are coloured to match the shop front's doors and shopfront - are at present, relatively unobtrusive in their appearance. The proposed uPVC units however, would see a considerable thickening of the frames and the introduction of very heavy and obviously non-traditional glazed units in their profiles, dimensions and material. Were these units to be brilliant white as suggested by the photomontage, these would be even more visually dominant and incongruous, being liable to 'confuse' the character of the premises, by suggesting a domestic rather than commercial appearance.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Shop Fronts and Shop Signs advises that: "it is important that a shop front is designed with proper regard to the appearance, not only of the individual building, but of the wider street scene or townscape of which it is part". The particular sensitivity of premises in Conservation Areas is noted. In fact, it is explicitly recognised that shop fronts, and the quality of shop fronts, are "a prime influencer on character" in Conservation Areas. Accordingly, while the existing shop front is not a traditional shop front, it is relatively unobtrusive visually; the window-frames in particular (being slender-framed units, coloured to match the shop front) are not prominent features. However, while perhaps incidental, the proposal would see the new window-frames becoming visually prominent features in their dimensions and colour, liable to dominate the character of the frontage of the premises, and introduce a decidedly domestic and non-traditional character, which would be both incongruous and an eyesore in its effect on the premises and the Conservation Area. It is the case that surrounding shop fronts are fairly mixed in their characters with respect to the retention of traditional details, but a critical consideration is that none feature such heavy and domestic appearing frames and as such, I can find no context that would allow what is proposed to be acceptably accommodated. It would be notably different and out-of-keeping with surrounding shop fronts; and I consider, unacceptably so.

The proposed replacement units patently do not retain the design, pattern and dimensions of the existing unit and would look obviously different, non-traditional, and I consider, unsympathetic to the property and its situation within the Core Area/Area of Prime Frontage of the Conservation Area. I am aware that the Applicant is concerned that account is taken of there already being uPVC units in surrounding premises but there are no equivalent heavy-framed and domestic-looking white uPVC glazing units in shop front windows in the near vicinity. These windows would simply not be sympathetic replacements for the existing, and do not retain or introduce any appropriate and traditional features. The effect would be entirely negative and visually disruptive in terms of its impacts upon the site and surrounding area, including the Core Area/Area of Prime Frontage of the Conservation Area.

Taking account of all of the above, I consider that the proposal is objectionable, and that the character of the Conservation Area would not be appropriately conserved were the uPVC units (including with their use of applied astragals) to be used in this shop front. I have advised the Applicant that I would be supportive of the principle of the existing windows being replaced by timber-framed units, but ultimately their concern has been that the units should be uPVC, advising that uPVC is already a material present within the vicinity. There are certainly non-traditional designs and materials of windows in the surrounding area, but this in itself does not (at least in isolation) require, or otherwise allow, the Planning Authority to set aside the requirements of planning policy and the guidance of the Replacement Windows and Doors when it comes to the assessment of a specific proposal; while as noted above, account is necessarily had to the design and appearance of the specific proposed replacement units which in this case, are obviously modern, with decidedly heavy-looking framing. Moreover, the specific proposal here is a shopfront and an additional concern is also the potential for the proposed units to give a decidedly domestic character to the premises. While white uPVC windows may indeed be featured relative to upper residential flats, their introduction to a shopfront in place of painted timber-framed units would have a significant, and I consider unacceptably detrimental, visual impact, both confusing the character of the premises and drawing undue attention to the window-frames themselves as a feature (when at present these are simply 'read' as part of the shopfront without any undue prominence or salience).

REASON FOR DECISION :

The planning application should be refused for the following reason:

(i) the proposal fails to comply with Policies PMD2 and EP9 of the Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2016, and with the advice contained within the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Shop Fronts and Shop Signs 2011, in that its appearance has a significantly adverse and unacceptable visual impact on the character of the building, and is highly detrimental to the character and appearance of Hawick's Conservation Area.

Recommendation: Refused

- 1 The proposal fails to comply with Policies PMD2 and EP9 of the Scottish Borders Council Local Development Plan 2016, and with the advice contained within the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Shop Fronts and Shop Signs 2011, in that its appearance has a significantly adverse and unacceptable visual impact on the character of the building, and is highly detrimental to the character and appearance of Hawick's Conservation Area.

“Photographs taken in connection with the determination of the application and any other associated documentation form part of the Report of Handling”.