

**APPLICATION NO:**

24/00058/FUL

**CASE OFFICER:**

John Fleming

**WARD:**

Prescot North

**PARISH:** Prescot  
Town Council

**LOCATION:**

16-20 Eccleston Street, Prescot, Knowsley, L34 5QE

**PROPOSAL:**

INSTALLATION OF NEW ALUMINIUM SHOP FRONTS TOGETHER WITH NEW TILED STALL RISERS AND REMOVAL OF PROJECTING CANTILEVERED CANOPY OVER SHOPS NO'S 16-20. VARIOUS FACADE REPAIRS TO FRONT AND REAR ELEVATIONS, PLUS NEW SHOP SIGNAGE AND PROJECTING NON ILLUMINATED SHOP SIGNS. REFURBISHMENT OF 3NO. MAISONETTES INTERNALLY PLUS EXISTING REAR STAIRS AND FLAT ROOFS, NEW WINDOWS AND DOORS TO ALL ELEVATIONS. ERECTION OF 2.1M HIGH METAL FENCING AND GATE TO REAR ACCESS STAIRS TO FLATS

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**Site Description**

The application property is located in Prescot Town Centre which is identified for retail and community uses. The application site is a 20<sup>th</sup> Century three storey building located within Prescot Conservation Area.

The building features white UPVC windows, brick and concrete facing materials at first and second floor level and 3no. units comprising of one vacant unit, estate agents and and a bar and bistro at ground floor level.

The property includes a flat roof canopy which is shared no. 14 Eccleston Street.

To the rear of the property is an area of hardstanding and access to Maisonettes located above the ground floor units.

**Proposal**

The application proposals seek alterations to the existing shop front consisting of new aluminium shop fronts, tiled stall risers and removal of the existing cantilever flat roof canopy above the 16- 20 Eccleston St. together with associated repairs to the existing facing brickwork and insertion of new windows across all elevations.

New signage is also proposed above the existing shop fronts together with 3no. projecting signs which are to be non-illuminated.

At the rear of the property is the erection of 2.1m high metal fencing to flats.

To the first-floor internal alterations are proposed to convert the existing internal layout to 3no. 2 bedroom apartments which will include kitchen, lounge at first floor level and 2 double bedrooms and bathroom at second floor level.

## **Consultations**

**Town Centre Manager** – No objection. Request condition in relation to Construction Management Plan.

**Conservation and Design Officer** – No objections. Recommendations made.

**Environmental Health** – No objection in principle. Condition suggested.

## **Representations**

This application has been publicised following consultation by letters to 38 neighbours and advertised by site notice and press notice. No representations have been received.

## **Planning History**

Ref: 18/00377/FUL - Installation of new shop fronts together with reduction in depth of projecting cantilevered canopy over shops, removal of external staircase to rear and installation of new staircase, erection of boundary treatments to flats and erection of 2.1m high fencing and gates to create new rear access to flats. Granted 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

Ref: 23/01008/COU – Retention of use from retail (use class e) to wine bar and café (use class sui generis). Granted 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

Ref: 10/00492/COU – change of use of former fruit shop (use class A1) to financial and professional services (use class A2). Granted 21<sup>st</sup> October 2010.

Ref: 74/10973/HIST – Installation of new shop front. Granted 25<sup>th</sup> July 1988.

Ref: 74/10972/HIST – Display of illuminated shop sign. Granted 25<sup>th</sup> July 1988.

Ref: 74/00566/HIST – New shop front. Granted 5<sup>th</sup> January 1975.

## **Relevant Policy**

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF clarifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be

followed.

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

*Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy – Adopted 2016*

CS2 - Development Principles  
CS6 – Town Centres and Retail Strategy  
CS7 – Transport Networks  
CS14 – Principal Regeneration Area – Prescott Town Centre  
CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development  
CS20 – Managing the Borough’s Historic Environment

*Knowsley Unitary Development Plan – Saved Policies Adopted 2006*

S10 - Advertisements  
DQ5 – Development in Conservation Areas  
DQ2 – Security in the Built Environment

*Supplementary Planning Documents*

Prescot Town Centre Masterplan SPD – Adopted 2016  
Shopfronts and Signage SPD – Adopted 2023.

The application site is allocated as a Town and District Centre (Prescot Town Centre) in the adopted Development Plan. The site is located within an established town centre which includes a variety of uses ranges from retail shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and bars. As such, alterations to the existing application property is acceptable as is the internal reconfiguration of the existing residential units subject to compliance with the relevant Development Plan policies referred to above.

**Article 35 Statement**

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating with the applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Assessment**

**Principle of Development**

The proposed development is acceptable in principle given that it supports the Local Planning Authority’s wider ambitions to support the regeneration of Prescot Town Centre.

A similar application was previously approved in August 2018 (application reference 18/00377/FUL) which shares many similarities to the proposed development subject to this application and as such the principle of development is therefore established.

## Heritage and Design

The application site is located within Prescott Conservation Area. The Conservation and Design Officer's response highlights the importance of Prescott's heritage and notes that Prescott suffered from a certain amount of demolition in the 1960s and 1970s, which was usually associated with slum clearance or road widening schemes. Consequently, there are a number of mid to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century buildings, such as the application property located along Eccleston Street.

Policy CS19 and CS20 seek to preserve or enhance the Borough's historic and architectural assets. The application site falls within the conservation area but it is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century building which appears out of place particularly in the context of surrounding properties. The application site is not a listed building however it is located within Prescott Conservation Area and within close vicinity to St Mary's Church a Grade I listed building.

In accordance with section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, there is a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. This is also reflected in saved Policy DQ5 which requires that new development within conservation areas must preserve or enhance the character of the area.

The shop fronts do not appear to be original and are not uniform. The proposed shop fronts at ground floor level will be recessed and set at an angle reflective of the building itself. Evidence has been uncovered relating to the original mosaic tiles behind the existing shopfronts to pilasters and fascia which are to be restored. The proposed stallrisers and areas in front of the doors are to be covered in mosaic tile to match. The shopfront installation will involve the removal of the existing canopy with the remaining canopy left at no.14 to be made good. Whilst the loss of what appears to be an original feature is regrettable, the proposed alterations will create a uniform appearance to this portion of the building and is reflective of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century nature of the site. This will ensure that the character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved despite the loss of the canopy.

The proposals includes installation of new slimline double glazed aluminium windows and timber doors to the front and rear elevations. The current window arrangement at the front elevation are a mixture of materials and not consistent. The material and design proposed is characteristic of the building and implements a new consistent window layout which is a positive alteration in response to the local setting.

The proposed repairs to the slate and cleaning of concrete does not require planning permission but it is a welcome additional to the overall design aesthetic which will improve the overall character and appearance of the application property and that of the wider street scene and conservation area.

The shop fronts would remove the existing external roller shutters and relocate these within the shop fronts in accordance with the shop front and signage SPD.

As originally submitted the proposals included timber fencing to the rear of the application property serving the maisonettes. This was considered out of keeping with the urban setting and alterations have been made to replace this with metal railings which is a more appropriate materials in the context of the town centre.

As submitted there was no details in relation to a lighting scheme in relation to the

improvements made to the residential maisonettes. A lighting scheme has been secured via condition in the interests of safety within the built environment.

S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires decision makers to show special regard to preserving listed buildings and their settings in exercising planning functions.

The most significant feature would be the removal of the existing canopy. Although an element of the canopy would be retained this falls outside the scope of this application. Notwithstanding this, the canopy is an intrusive feature and detracts from the setting of the street scene and the majority of its removal would therefore improve the setting of the conservation area and that of St Mary's Church which is Grade I listed. The shopfronts would result in more cohesion between each unit and would be reinstated to a style and design of its original state. The amendments to clean and restore historic details also weigh favourably in terms of enhancing the existing historic features of the property.

Overall, the development is acceptable in terms of design and would benefit the visual amenities of the area and improve the street scene and that of the conservation area and is considered acceptable in terms of design.

The harm to designated heritage assets has been considered and it would have a neutral affect on the conservation area and would cause no harm to the character or appearance of the conservation area nor would it adversely affect the setting of any nearby listed buildings. As such, the proposal is considered to comply with the requirements set out in the NPPF(2023), policies CS19 and CS20 of the Knowsley Local Plan (2016) and Saved Policy DQ5 of the Unitary Development Plan.

#### Highways and Amenity Impacts

The proposal would benefit the occupiers of the flats in the surrounding town centre by improving their outlook in terms of visual amenity.

The occupiers of the maisonettes would benefit from the scheme as the route access would be secured and benefit from additional security by the new boundary treatment.

The operation of the site would remain the same in terms of existing uses and as such would not result in any adverse effects to residential amenity of nearby neighbouring properties.

A request was made from the town centre manager for a condition to be placed on the application for a Construction Management Plan to be submitted. The concern is due to pedestrian movement during day and traffic movement in the night together with newly laid paving found on the high street together with impact of amenity of nearby residents and businesses. A request was also made by Environmental Health for a condition in relation to construction hours.

The proposed development is relatively minor works and therefore the need for a CMP is considered unnecessary and unreasonable in the context of the application. In addition the suggestion relating to construction hours is also unreasonable given that the previous application which is largely reflective of what is currently proposed included no such condition.

It is not considered that the development would result in any adverse effects to highways safety nor would it result in adverse impacts to residential amenity.

## **Conclusion**

The proposal would be acceptable in terms of design, residential amenity and highways (subject to condition attached). The proposal also complies with the relevant Core Strategy, Replacement UDP policies and guidance in the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

## **Recommendation**

That planning permission will be granted subject to the following condition(s):-

- 1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) Prior to the occupation of the 3no. maisonettes, a scheme for the provision of lighting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in relation to the rear shared access.

Reason: In the interest of security and to comply with Policies CS2, CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted in January 2016 and saved policy DQ2 of the Unitary Development Plan adopted 2006.

## **SCHEDULE 1**

| Date Received | Ref. No | Version | Drawing/Document Title     |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------------------------|
| 07.02.2024    | 100     |         | LOCATION PLAN              |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.01  | REV A   | PROPOSED SITE PLAN         |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.02  | REV B   | PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR      |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.03  | REV A   | PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR       |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.04  | REV A   | PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR      |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.08  | REV B   | PROPOSED SECTION A-1       |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.10  | REV A   | PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION   |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.11  | REV A   | PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION B1 |
| 15.05.2024    | 200.12  | REV A   | PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION B2 |

**Signed Case Officer<sup>1</sup>:**     **John Fleming**

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<sup>1</sup> I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed.

**Signed Authorising  
Officer<sup>2</sup>:**

**K Foster**

**Date:**

**17/05/2024**

## **INFORMATIVES**

### **ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT**

This permission does not authorise the display of any advertisements on the application site a separation application for which may be required which should be made to the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

Please contact the Council's Development Control Section (tel: 0151 443 2381 for further information).

### **COAL AUTHORITY**

The proposed development lies within a coal mining area which may contain unrecorded coal mining related hazards. If any coal mining feature is encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Coal Authority on 0345 762 6848.

Further information is also available on the Coal Authority website at:  
[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-coal-authority)

Standing Advice valid from 1st January 2023 until 31st December 2024

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