



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2023/1177
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	223 Muswell Hill Broadway, Hornsey, London, N10 1DD
Proposal:	Alterations to shopfront and associated works.
Case Officer:	Josh Parker
Valid Date:	28/04/2023
Applicant:	...
Agent:	Miss Lucy Hayward

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with Conditions

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application relates to the currently vacant commercial premises occupying the ground floor of 223 Muswell Hill Broadway, a 4-storey end of terrace building on the corner of Muswell Hill Broadway and Queens Avenue. Previously the building has been used as a bank on the ground floor and residential above. The building is located within the Muswell Hill conservation area but is not listed. Muswell Hill Library is a Grade II Listed building located on the opposite side of Queens Avenue to the site.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Shopfront alterations and associated works. Including the enlargement of the existing building's windows along its Muswell Hill Broadway frontage and the creation of a new window opening at the apex of the building. All windows and doors to have new aluminium frames and glazing. New signage is also proposed and is the subject of a parallel application for advertisement consent.

SITE HISTORY AND ENFORCEMENT

The building has a long and extensive history of planning and advertisement consent application. The most recent and relevant ones are listed below.

HGY/2023/1178 - Application for consent to display advertisements. This is a parallel application to the current shop front proposal. Pending.

HGY/2022/1420 - Planning permission granted to remove signage and make good; remove night safe and make good; remove ATMs and make good. These works were linked to the closure of the Barclays bank that formerly occupied the building. Decided 12.07.2022.

HGY/2015/0929 - Planning permission granted for the installation of 3 no. condenser units on flat roof of single storey extension to rear.

HGY/2014/3226 - Advertisement consent granted for the display of 2 x internally illuminated fascia signs and 1 x internally illuminated hanging sign.

HGY/2013/0352 - Advertisement consent granted for the display of 2 x internally illuminated fascia signs and 1x internally illuminated hanging sign.

HGY/2013/0364 - Planning permission granted for new replacement aluminium frame glass door, removal of window vents, installation of new window glass, removal of metallic mesh and installation of new louvers and installation of parapet protection.

The planning history of the site has been taken into account when coming to this decision.

CONSULTATION

LBH Conservation - No objection to the replacement of the existing windows which are themselves recent replacements. However object to the proposed increase in the size of the openings.

Officer comments: See report below.

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by the way of letters, and press and site notices. The number of representations received from neighbours, local groups, etc in response to notification and publicity of the application were as follows:

1 objection received.

Objection summarised:

- Further damage to the fabric of a heritage asset.

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The main planning considerations raised by the proposed development are:

1. Design, appearance and heritage;
2. Vitality and viability of the town centre;
3. Impact on neighbouring amenity.

Design, Appearance & Heritage

Policies 7.1, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6 of the London Plan (2021) states that development should make a positive contribution to the local character, public realm and streetscape. It should incorporate the highest quality materials and design appropriate to its context. 6.13 Policy SP10 Preserve and enhance district centres, SP11 requires development to enhance and enrich Haringey's built environment. DM policy DM1 also requires development proposals to respect their surroundings while Policy DM9 requires the conservation of the historic significance of Haringey's heritage assets.

The proposal has been revised during the application process and now has been revised where the windows on Queens Avenue will be retained and refurbished. All windows on the other faces on the ground floor would be reshaped and glazed to allow a greater interaction with persons passing by on the footpaths of Muswell Hill Broadway and the point of the building. The stone on these openings will be lowered and new cills with detailing would be added. Historically the entrance was from the tip of the building where the two roads meet, this is to be glazed and the entrance would be maintained off Muswell Hill Broadway.

It should be noted that over the period of Barclays tenure of the building two ATM machines were installed in two of the original window openings fronting the Broadway, these have since been uninstalled following the closure of the bank, and have been partially blocked (see planning history above). These two window openings are therefore much smaller than the other, original, windows on this frontage and have an incongruous appearance. This frontage has therefore already been compromised. The LBH Conservation officers' concerns are noted regarding the proposed enlargement of the windows along the Broadway frontage and how this will reduce the visual solidity of the building's base, and make it appear top heavy. However officers consider that a sufficient amount of the original stone cladding on this ground floor elevation to be retained for this impact to be not significantly harmful to the overall appearance of the building. Particularly given that the proposal will replace the existing incongruous appearing smaller windows where the former ATMs were located. The replacement of the long blocked up former entrance at the top of the building with a large window is also considered an improvement.

It is noted that the large horizontal plastic fascia signs that had been located on both frontages for a number of years, were removed under application reference HGY/2022/1420 and the original stone work fascia exposed when the bank closed. The current application and parallel application for advertisement consent of proposed individual halo illuminated letters attached to the existing stone facias, which is considered a more complimentary and appropriate form of fascia advertisement than the precedent set by the former bank.

Ideally the existing windows along the Broadway frontage would be retained and the two former ATM openings restored to their pre-ATM proportions and altering them in the way proposed will be harm the character and architectural interest of the building to the detriment of the character and appearance of the Muswell Hill conservation area. However the degree of harm is lessened by improvements to the former ATM openings, the unblocking of the building's original door at the building's top, by a more complementary and appropriate form of fascia advertising than was previously the case and by bringing a redundant building back into use thus helping secure its long term future and the positive contribution it makes to the character of the conservation area. The degree of harm is therefore considered less than substantial.

Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre

Although the building does contribute positively to the conservation area as highlighted in the conservation officer's comments. Removing the original fabric to create larger openings for the windows on the Muswell Hill Broadway side would make a retail shop more appealing to a potential user, particularly a retailer. The building was designed as a bank is important to draw in people passing by, with the large windows openings means the occupant can showcase a larger range of items differing in sizes. The applicant has a pre-let with a major high street retailer dependent on the proposed (revised) alterations to the shop front being approved.

The LTA has a role preserving and conserving heritage assets however, it is important to acknowledge that the council has a role to promote and encourage development of retail, office, community, leisure, entertainment facilities, recreation uses, arts and cultural activities within its town centres according to the borough's town centre hierarchy supported by Policy SP10. This also aligns with the council's continued investment in the public realm to maximise the historic environment's contribution to town centre vibrancy and vitality in policy, as set out in the NPPF. The addition of the retail outlet like homeware and fashion brand Oliver Bonas is welcomed and would contribute positively to the vitality and viability of Muswell Hill town centre in line with Council policy, at a difficult time for high streets nationally.

Amenity Comments

London Plan Policy D6 outlines that design must not be detrimental to the amenity of surrounding buildings, in specific stating that proposals should provide sufficient daylight and sunlight to surrounding housing that is appropriate for its context, while also minimising overshadowing. London Plan Policy D14 requires development proposals to reduce, manage and mitigate noise impacts.

DPD Policy DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals must ensure a high standard of privacy and amenity for a development's users and neighbours. Specifically, proposals are required to provide appropriate sunlight, daylight and aspects to adjacent buildings and land, and to provide an appropriate amount of privacy to neighbouring properties to avoid overlooking and loss of privacy and detriment to amenity of neighbouring resident.

All works proposed meet all amenity tests when considering effects on light, bulk, sense of enclosure and privacy as the building footprint and bulk remains the same. Construction would be temporary in nature and the introduced windows will replace existing and face other ground floor businesses and therefore acceptable.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

It is acknowledged that the proposal will harm the character and historical significance of the building, however in line with the above considerations, the harm caused to the Conservation Area's wider significance as a heritage asset would be less than substantial as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2023). In line with Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, officers consider this harm to be outweighed by the public benefits of bringing the redundant heritage asset back into use, securing its long term future and improving the vitality and viability of the Muswell Hill District Centre.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been considered. Planning permission should be granted for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with condition(s):

Conditions:

- 1 The development to which this permission relates must be begun no later than three years from the date of this decision notice, failing which the permission shall be of no effect.

Reason: This condition is imposed by virtue of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to prevent the accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved plans and drawings listed in this decision notice, other than where those details are altered pursuant to the conditions of this planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Informatives:

INFORMATIVE: Hours of Construction Work

The applicant is advised that under the Control of Pollution Act 1974, construction work which will be audible at the site boundary will be restricted to the following hours:-
8.00am - 6.00pm Monday to Friday
8.00am - 1.00pm Saturday
and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.