

Application Number: 24/11019 Advertisement Consent
Site: 47 HIGH STREET, HYTHE SO45 6AG
Development: Illuminated sign (Retrospective)
Applicant: Hythe Turkish Barbershop
Agent: Sanders Design Services Ltd
Target Date: 27/01/2025
Case Officer: Julie Parry
Officer Recommendation: Refuse
Reason for Referral to Committee: Parish Council contrary view

1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

- 1) Amenity
- 2) Public safety

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a retail unit within Hythe High Street within an area which forms part of the Hythe Conservation Area. The High Street holds importance in the Conservation Area on account of its large collection of historic buildings, including listed buildings, and its status as one of the oldest streets in the settlement. Number 47, which is currently used as a barber shop, forms part of a more modern addition to the High Street in the form of a supermarket and associated shops, with flats and restaurant above, which were built in the early 1970s. This larger building therefore provides a natural visual stop to the principal historic part of the High Street. The shopfront of number 47 has been altered without planning permission / advertisement consent to include a large box fascia sign which is internally illuminated and houses an external shutter which is finished in black. To the left of the fascia sign is a short red and white barber shop pole.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks retrospective advertisement consent for the retention of the internally illuminated box fascia sign.

The application was submitted in conjunction with a planning application for the external shutters which has been considered separately under application reference 24/11023.

Amended plans were received during the course of the application to clearly demonstrate the depth of the box unit housing the shutters.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal	Decision Date	Decision Description	Status
07/89791 Use as coffee shop (Class A3)	25/05/2007	Refused	Decided
75/NFDC/02549 Installation of a shop front	02/06/1975	Granted	Decided
XX/NFR/13781/5 Supermarket, steak house, five shops, two flats and new service road and surface car park, recreational and public open space	16/11/1973	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided

5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

DM1: Heritage and Conservation

Neighbourhood Plan

Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan
Policy D1 - Exemplary design

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance And Documents

SPG - Hythe - A Conservation Area Appraisal
SPG - Shopfront Design Guide

Plan Policy Designations

Conservation Area
Primary Shopping Area
Built-up Area
Primary Shopping Frontage
Town Centre Boundary

6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hythe & Dibden Parish Council: Recommend PERMISSION.

7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Conservation Officer: Objects

The internally illuminated box fascia sign has an unacceptably adverse impact upon amenity, which is reflected in its failure to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. The internally illuminated box fascia sign has a significantly harmful effect on the visual amenity of this part of the town and on the setting of the listed buildings to the west.

HCC Highways: No objection

9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

None received

10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

Paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that poorly placed adverts can be harmful to local character of the area. There is a separate consent process within the planning system that controls the display of advertisements which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, which is in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Control of Advertisements (England) Regulations 2007 regulation 3 (1& 2).

Amenity

Policy ENV3 requires new development to achieve high quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness, quality of life and the character and identity of the locality.

Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan Policy D1 seeks new development to demonstrate exemplary standards of design, to demonstrate that local character and context has been fully recognised and what is valued locally is respected. The aim is that new development shall respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of the built environment.

The shopfront of 47 High Street is modern in design, comprising a large sheet of glazing, which lacks the traditional character of some other shop fronts along the High Street. However, prior to the installation of illuminated signage and the external box shutter, the building was unobtrusive and had a neutral impact on the street scene and significance of the Conservation Area.

There have been other applications in the Conservation Area for illuminated signage, including the nearby Post Office, along with shops which have included illumination without the benefit of Advertisement Consent. These applications have been refused, and the Council have resisted the use of illuminated signs in order to maintain the historic character which is important in this well used town centre.

The shop unit forms part of a more extensive, relatively modern retail building, with the Morrisons to the left and Waitrose to the right. The shopfronts are set back under a canopy which contains some strip lights to illuminate the shop frontages. The Waitrose frontage is mostly glazed and is advertised with a modest fascia sign which is lit by strip lights within the canopy. Morrisons is also glazed to the front with flat fascia signs which are externally lit.

The immediate area is chiefly characterised by small shops with varied shopfronts of generally traditional design whose signage primarily lacks illumination. This general lack of large internally illuminated signs makes an important contribution to the traditional visual character of the High Street, and thus it is also a factor which in turn contributes to the significance of this historic area.

The large internally illuminated box sign sits proud of the shutter box which results in a bulky addition standing proud of the shopfront. On account of the fact that internally illuminated box signs are not characteristic along most of the High Street, their presence is clearly at odds with this character. This is appreciable despite the fact that the advertisements are located within a modern shop front at one end of the street.

The agent has argued that the illuminated sign for No.47 is within a more modern shopfront with illumination already in place under the canopy to the front of this row of shops. However, this is no justification for the display of the proposed internally lit box sign, which is of a non-traditional and garish appearance that impacts negatively on the visual amenities of this historic part of Hythe.

As such, the large, internally illuminated box sign is harmful to the street scene, and detracts from the local character, contrary to Policy ENV 3 of the Local Plan Part 1 and Policy D1 of the Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan.

Notwithstanding the above identified harm to amenity, the Advertisement Regulations also state that "amenity" includes both visual and aural amenity. Therefore, as well as visual amenity, the noise generated by advertisements should be considered. The proposed signage is fixed and would not generate any noise and is therefore considered to have no significant detrimental impact upon aural amenity.

Conservation Area impact

With respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area, there is a duty placed on the Council under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that Conservation Area.

Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM1 states that development proposals should conserve and seek to enhance the historic environment and heritage assets, with particular regard to local character, setting, management and the historic significance and context of heritage assets. This includes a balancing exercise between impact on Heritage Assets against public benefits, which is also referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

The Council's Conservation Officer was consulted on the application and has raised an objection, with the key issues being the impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area along with the impact on the setting of the Grade II listed buildings at 19 The Marsh and 23 High Street.

47 High Street stands at the eastern end of High Street. With adjacent buildings, it forms a visual stop to the principal historic part of the High Street, which is reasonably short and straight, allowing full views along it from the junction with Prospect Place. The general lack of internally illuminated box signs makes an important contribution to the traditional visual character of the historic High Street, and thus it is also a factor which in turn contributes to the significance of the Conservation Area.

The signage is contrary to the Council's Shopfront Design Guidance SPG in that fascias should not visually dominate a shopfront. The SPG also offers the following guidance:

- i. all lettering should be of good design, appropriate to the character of the building involved;
- ii. fascias and signs should normally consist of traditional materials, avoiding shiny or reflective finishes;
- iii. internally illuminated and plastic fascia boxes are not appropriate for historic buildings or areas;
- iv. in historic areas, internally illuminated signs will be resisted.

The proposed sign would be contrary to this advice.

The box housing of the shutter results in the internally illuminated box fascia projecting further forward of the shopfront, adding to the bulky incongruous appearance of the altered shopfront. Overall, the illuminated signage fails to preserve and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of the nearby listed buildings.

The degree of harm to the Conservation Area as a whole would be less than substantial, bearing in mind its extent and how it would affect the significance. Nevertheless, while the harm would be less than substantial, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case, there are reasonable alternatives to the proposed illuminated box fascia sign. The public benefits of the proposal do not outweigh the harm identified to the Conservation Area.

Public safety.

There is a pedestrian area to the front of the shopfront and no vehicular highway to the front of the shop and HCC Highways are satisfied that the advertising will have no material impact on the safety or operation of the highway.

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 also state that 'Public Safety' is not confined to just road safety. Crime prevention and detection are also relevant; the obstruction of highway surveillance cameras, speed camera and security camera by advertisements is now included. It is considered that the proposed signage has no impact upon any such equipment.

As such, no objection is raised on the grounds of public safety.

11 CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

The proposed internally illuminated box sign is a non-traditional and garish sign within an historic context that has an unacceptably adverse impact upon amenity, which is reflected in its failure to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Hythe Conservation Area, contrary to Local Plan Part 2 Policy DM1. The proposal has a significantly harmful effect on the visual amenity of this part of the

town and on the setting of the nearby listed buildings. The proposal would therefore fail to contribute positively to the local character, contrary to the requirements of Policy ENV3 of the local plan and Policy D1 of the Neighbourhood plan along with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework under section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

In light of the above, it is considered that this application for advertisement consent would be detrimental to visual amenities. Whilst there are no public safety concerns, the proposal does not comply with the amenity related provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework and Development Plan, and accordingly it is recommended that advertisement consent be refused.

12 RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT

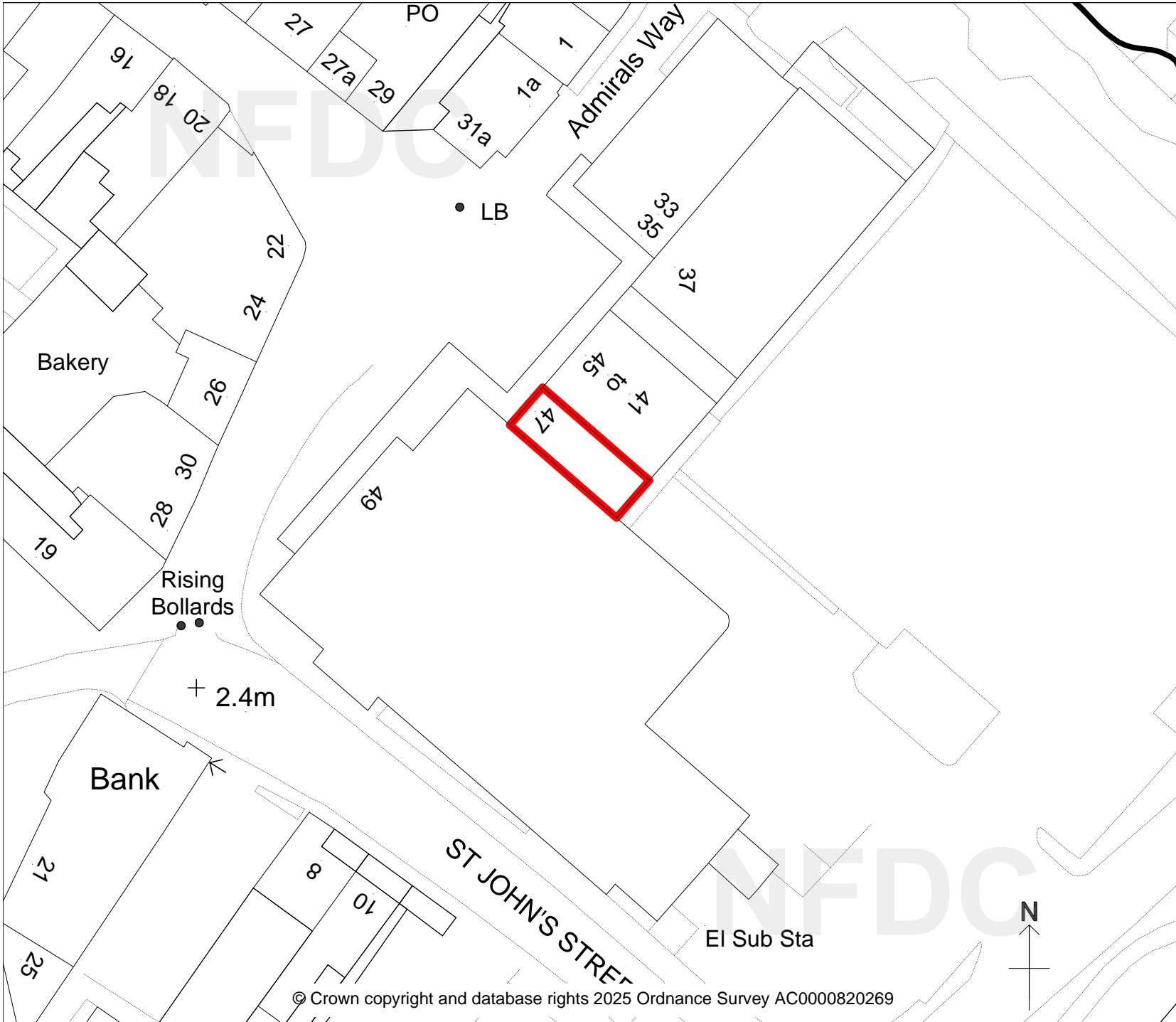
Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The large internally illuminated box fascia sign that is proposed to the front of the building would be detrimental to the street scene and would result in harm to the Hythe Conservation Area by reason of its excessive size, materials and internal illumination, resulting in a sign with a non-traditional, unsympathetic and garish appearance which detracts from and fails to preserve the character and appearance of Hythe Conservation Area and which also has an adverse impact on the setting of the Listed Buildings at 19 The Marsh and 23 High Street. In assessing the proposal against paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority is not satisfied that the development conforms with the duty on decision makers to preserve or enhance as required by Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and the proposal is contrary to paragraphs 212 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1, Policy DM1 of the Local Plan Part 2 :Sites and Development Management 2014, Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan and the Council's Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Further Information:

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

February 2025

47 High Street
Hythe

24/11019 & 24/11023

Scale 1:500

N.B. If printing this plan from the internet, it will not be to scale.