



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 May 2026

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 June 2026

Appeal Ref: 6005074

33 High Street, Ruislip, Hillingdon, HA4 7AU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Sawjani, Sawsons Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 11021/APP/2025/2587.
 - The development proposed is Replacement Shopfront + entrance door to first floor.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal of the character and appearance of Ruislip Village Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. There is a statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.
4. The appeal site is located within the CA and falls within character area 2 (High Street) as identified in the Ruislip Village Conservation Area Appraisal (2010) (CAA). As is the case with most of the commercial units along the High Street, the appeal building is not statutorily listed.
5. The CAA identifies that the High Street forms the commercial hub of the area, with parades of shops and other commercial premises on both sides. It identifies that this part of the CA derives its significance from the predominantly two and three storey, purpose built commercial parades interspersed with some good quality individual buildings. Whilst it states that the shop fronts are generally unremarkable, the decorative detailing at first floor and above is of considerable visual interest, exhibiting a variety of lively decorative detailing, most of which is characteristic of the architecture of the 1920s and 1930s.
6. The appeal site is within a two-storey purpose built parade. It comprises of a painted timber shop front with an associated fascia on the ground floor, with a prominent gable detail above at first floor level which is consistent with the design detailing of other buildings within the terrace. Collectively, it contributes to the

- significance of this part of the CA through its architectural design and traditional material palette.
7. The proposal is for a replacement shopfront, including associated internal roller shutter and entrance door to access the first floor. The existing shopfront, whilst comprising painted timber, does not appear to be original and is not of any particular historic interest. However, as a result of its timber construction and general design and proportions, it does nonetheless reflect the traditional character of the historic commercial frontage.
 8. The CAA confirms that the majority of shops in the High Street have lost their original shop fronts and identifies that the main negative change in recent years has been the introduction of modern shopfronts and signage, many of which are inappropriate in terms of their size, position, design, materials, colour and degree of illumination.
 9. The proposed replacement shopfront would comprise a blue powder coated aluminium frame and door, aluminium stallriser below the cill, new sealed double glazed clear laminated units and a new flush blue security shutter set internally. The existing brown painted timber door to the first floor flat would be replaced by a new brown powder coated aluminium door with a sealed double glazed obscure glass panel.
 10. The proposed replacement shopfront would largely replicate the design and proportions of the existing shopfront including its fascia depth, stallriser height and general glazing arrangement and in this regard, it would reflect the established architectural rhythm of the High Street. The proposed roller shutter would be set internally and would replace an existing security shutter and thus would be unlikely to add further harm. However, the removal of the existing timber shopfront and its replacement with a modern aluminium shopfront would further erode the established palette of traditional materials and would contribute to the degradation of the historic qualities of the area, further reinforcing the negative changes that have taken place along the High Street, as highlighted in the CAA. This would be to the detriment of the character and appearance of the site, the wider High Street and CA.
 11. I have had regard to the presence of other modern aluminium shopfronts along the High Street, including those within the same terrace as the appeal property. However, I do not have any information regarding the age or planning status of these shopfronts. In any event, the existence of these modern shopfronts has diluted the historic authenticity of the area and should not be used to justify further unsympathetic alterations.
 12. I therefore find that the proposed shopfront would result in visual harm to the site and would diminish the contribution it makes to the character and appearance of the area. Accordingly, it neither preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the CA.
 13. Given its modest scale and localised effect, in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (the Framework), the harm to the significance of the CA as a whole would be less than substantial. However, having regard to Paragraph 215 of the Framework, such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme, including, where appropriate, securing its optimal viable use.

14. The appellant has highlighted several benefits of the scheme, including better security, sustainability and commercial viability. However, I am not convinced that these benefits could not be achieved through the repair and retention of the existing shopfront, or its replacement with more sympathetic traditional materials. These benefits do not therefore outweigh the harm identified.
15. For the reasons given above, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. As such, it would fail to comply with Policy HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies (2012); Policies DMHB1, DMHB11 and DMHB13 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 – Development Management Policies (2020), the Framework and the guidance set out in the CAA. Together and amongst other matters, these policies and guidance seek to ensure that development harmonises with the local context, uses high quality building materials and finishes and avoids harm to the historic environment, and makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the area. In addition, Policy DMHB13 requires that shop fronts complement the original design, proportions, materials and detailing of the building and street scene.

Conclusion

16. I have found that the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole, and material considerations do not outweigh that finding. Therefore, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR