

**CUMBERLAND COUNCIL
CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Proposal: Change of use from commercial (beauty salon) to mixed use commercial (florist) and residential

Address: 16 Main Street, Egremont

Reference: 4/23/2181/OF1

Date: 20/07/23

Description: This is an unlisted two-storey building located within Egremont conservation area, currently in use as a beauty salon

Conclusion: No objection

Assessment: This proposal retains a shop unit at the front, so should preserve the active use the building currently has. It does not appear to require any reconfiguration of the exterior including the old common entry path that runs down the north side of the building.

If any of the internal walls to be removed are historic masonry, I'd request the applicants and their contractors give consideration to whether there is heritage impact in removing them, or whether there are any surviving features worth considering when carrying out the work.

Externally, if installing a new shop sign I'd suggest this is a good opportunity to improve the appearance in comparison with the current sign. Cumberland Council (Copeland area) has a Shop Front Design Guide that can be accessed online from our conservation documents page (as can Egremont's Conservation Area Appraisal) [Conservation and Design Documents and Guidance](#), so I'd recommend consulting these resources to help inform new signage design.

I expect the works to have a small positive impact on the appearance of the conservation area and the settings of the listed buildings at 12 Main Street and the Town Hall

Relevant Policies and Guidance:

Section 72 of the 1990 Act states that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of [a conservation] area."

Paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that "Development that is not well designed should be refused".

NPPF para. 197 states that "In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation..."

NPPF para. 199 states, in the case of designated heritage assets, "great weight should be given to the asset's conservation", irrespective of whether potential harm is substantial, less-than-substantial, or total loss. Where harm to a designated heritage asset is less-than-substantial, it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (para. 202).

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when making decisions.

Referring to assets in a conservation area, NPPF para. 207 states that loss of an element that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area should be treated as either substantial (under para. 201) or less-than-substantial harm (under paragraph 202).

The former Copeland Borough Council's Local Plan contains a number of relevant policies:

- Local Plan Policy ST1C(ii) highlights the importance of protecting, enhancing and restoring the Borough's cultural and heritage features and their settings.
- ST1D emphasizes the council's commitment to creating and retaining quality places.
- ENV4A stresses the importance of protecting listed buildings, conservation areas and other features considered to be of historic, archaeological or cultural value.
- ENV4B outlines support for heritage-led regeneration, ensuring assets are put to appropriate, viable and sustainable uses.
- ENV4C aims to strengthen the distinctive character of settlements through high quality urban design and architecture that respect character and setting.
- DM13D outlines the need, in converting non-residential buildings within settlement limits, or in subdividing large residential buildings within settlement limits, for conversion works to conserve the character of the building.
- DM27A outlines support in principle for developments that "protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic, cultural and architectural character of the borough's historic sites and their settings".
- DM27B: "Development proposals which have a significant adverse effect on a Scheduled Ancient Monument or its wider site or setting will not be permitted".
- DM27C outlines the restriction in principle of development within conservation areas to that which preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.
- DM27D highlights the necessity of avoiding disrespectful alterations, substantial demolition, adverse effects on setting or views, or changes of use that harm the conservation or economic viability of a listed building.

The Conservation Area Design Guide is a supplementary planning document adopted in 2017 that is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within conservation areas in the legacy Copeland area. It is therefore applicable to this application.

The Shopfront Design Guide is a supplementary planning document adopted in 2021 that contains information on design of shopfronts and their signage, so would be a useful resource when reconfiguring the signage.

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Conservation and Design Officer