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4th March 2010

10/00178/FUL 8 MAR 2010

Dear Sir,

Supporting Information- Including Design and Access Statement-
Retention of UPVC Windows, Commercial Premises, Earl Street Leek

These premises are the operating base for a U.P.V.C double glazing business, situated on the west side of Earl street opposite the public car park. The applicant has undertaken the replacement of the previous wooden window and door frames with U.P.V.C. style casements. These are considered to be a material change in the appearance of the building and in their letter of the 28th August 2009, the Council confirm that the plastic casements are inappropriate and should be removed, particularly as the building lies within the Conservation Area.

Design Issues

The applicant has previously pointed out that the re-instatement of new timber casements would be prohibitively expensive for such a small business and seeks to retain the existing U.P.V.C. windows. These windows are considered more practical for business premises, and in the context of its location on the edge of a more commercial part of the town centre, not on a main thoroughfare, it is contended that the effect is very limited on the overall appearance of the building. In relation to the Conservation Area, this designation does not provide any additional power in such cases relating to material changes to the external appearance of buildings and there are many examples of properties where such replacement of windows has occurred in recent times within the town centre and Conservation Area.

Nevertheless it is accepted that each case must be considered on its merits and on this basis the current application seeks to retain the existing U.P.V.C windows as not having a

significant impact on the external appearance of a very functional building. The argument could be continued that the effect on the Conservation Area is similarly limited taking into account the location of the building and the more commercial character of the surrounding area. It is for these reasons it is considered that whilst in the first instance it is a fine line as to whether there is a material change in the appearance of these premises, planning permission can be reasonably granted taking into account all material considerations.

Yours Faithfully

S.J. Gower

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