

Comhairle Chontae Atha Cliath Theas

PR/1181/22

Record of Executive Business and Chief Executive's Order

Reg. Reference: SD22A/0315 **Application Date:** 28-Jul-2022
Submission Type: New Application **Registration Date:** 28-Jul-2022
Correspondence Name and Address: Magahy Broderick Associates 123, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2
Proposed Development: New shopfront and internally illuminated shopfront signage.
Location: Unit 4, Newcastle Shopping Centre, Main Street, Newcastle, Dublin
Applicant Name: Newcastle-Lyons Pharmacy Limited
Application Type: Permission

(EW)

Description of Site and Surroundings:

Site Visit: 25th August 2022.

Site Area: stated as 0.027 Hectares.

Site Description:

The application site comprises the ground floor (unit 4) of the Newcastle Shopping Centre, a small mixed-use complex consisting of apartments on the first floor and four retail units on the ground floor. Unit 4 is on the eastern side of the Shopping Centre and fronts the car parking area, which separates the complex from Newcastle Main Street.

Proposal:

- New shopfront and internally illuminated shopfront signage.

Zoning:

The site is subject to zoning objective – VC, *'To protect, improve and provide for the future development of Village Centres'*.

SEA Sensitivity Screening

The site is within the Newcastle Architectural Conservation Area and within the site of geological interest and associated Area of Archaeological Potential.

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The Newcastle Local Area Plan 2012-2018

The site is located on main street within the boundaries of the Newcastle Local Area Plan.

On the 23rd of October 2017, by resolution, the Local Area Plan was extended for further period (in accordance with Section 19 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended). The Local Area Plan will now expire on 9th December 2022.

Consultations:

<i>Water & Drainage Design Services Section –</i>	No objections.
<i>Roads Section –</i>	No report received.
<i>Conservation Officer-</i>	Comments received – AI /Refuse.

Submissions/Observations /Representations

No submissions have been received.

Relevant Planning History

SD17A/0158

Granted Permission for a change of use of existing first floor commercial unit to 2-bedroom apartment and all associated site works.

SD11A/0201

Change of use of foodstuffs store to restaurant; including internal alterations; ventilation shaft to rear and replacement shopfront to front.

Granted with six conditions, including conditions regarding ventilation.

SD06A/0867

Planning permission granted for erection of a new shop frontage with new signage to the front elevation, internal alterations and new delivery door and externally mounted plant equipment to the rear elevation.

S99A/0101

Planning permission granted for the subdivision of existing retail shop into 2 self-contained retail shop units and the provision of a new retail shop front and security bollards.

Relevant Enforcement History

None recorded for subject site.

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Pre-Planning Consultation

None regarding the current proposal.

Relevant Policy in South Dublin County Council Development Plan (2022-2028)

9.5.5 Village Centres

Policy EDE13: Retail - Village Centres

EDE13 Objective 2: To protect and conserve the special character of the historic core of traditional villages and to support their enhancement and upgrade.

EDE13 Objective 3: To ensure high quality design standards and densities are used in traditional village centres, that are informed by the surrounding character of the area.

Policy QDP7: High Quality Design – Development General

Promote and facilitate development which incorporates exemplary standards of high-quality, sustainable and inclusive urban design, urban form and architecture.

QDP7:

High Quality Design – Street Frontage

QDP7 Objective 3:

To require a high quality of design and finish for new and replacement shopfronts, signage, and advertising, having regard to the requirements set out in Chapter 12: Implementation and Monitoring.

Policy EDE1: Overarching Support sustainable enterprise and employment growth in South Dublin County recognising the County's role in the Dublin region as a driver of economic growth

Policy EDE4: Urban Growth, Regeneration and Placemaking Support urban growth and regeneration through the promotion of good placemaking to attract employees and employers and to provide a competitive advantage to the County and diverse investment opportunity.

Policy IE1: Overarching Policy Ensure that development occurs within environmental limits, having regard to the requirements of all relevant environmental legislation and the sustainable management of our natural capital.

Policy IE2: Water Supply and Wastewater

Policy IE3: Surface Water and Groundwater

Policy IE4: Flood Risk

Policy IE7: Waste Management

Policy IE8: Environmental Quality

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12.4.3 Riparian Corridors

12.5 Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking

12.7.4 Car Parking Standards

Table 12.26: Maximum Parking Rates (Residential Development)

12.7.5 Car Parking / Charging for Electric Vehicles (EVs)

12.7.6 Car Parking Design and Layout

12.11.1 Water Management

12.3.1 Appropriate Assessment

12.3.2 Ecological Protection

12.3.3 Environmental Impact Assessment

12.4.1 Green Infrastructure Definition and Spatial Framework

12.4.2 Green Infrastructure and Development Management

12.5 Quality Design and Healthy Placemaking

12.5.1 Universal Design -

Provision of wayfinding and signage at appropriate levels, particularly in the public realm;

12.5.4 Public Realm: (At the Site Level)

Promote greater connectivity and permeability throughout the development through the provision of a network of well-connected public spaces and streets, with materials, and signage that is easily interpreted by all;

12.5.5 Healthy Placemaking and Public Realm: (At the Neighbourhood Level)

Table 3.18: Key Principles for Healthy Placemaking and Public Realm at Neighbourhood level

12.5.7 Signage – Advertising, Corporate and Public Information

Development proposals that include signage should take account of the following:

- In general, signs on a building should only advertise goods or services that are associated with the premises and no more than two advertising signs should be erected on any elevation;*
- Signs should generally be limited to the ground floor of a building unless located directly over the entrance to a major commercial or retail building;*
- Signs should be simple in design and integrate with the architectural language of the building and not obscure any architectural features;*
- Signs should be proportionate to the scale of the building to which they are attached and sensitive to the surrounding environment;*
- Signs attached to Protected Structures and in Architectural Conservation Areas should be in keeping with the character of the building and adhere to best practice conservation principles (see Section 12.3.8 Architectural Conservation Areas);*
- Any sign or associated structure should not create an obstruction to pedestrian or cyclist movement or create a traffic hazard;*

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- *Careful consideration should be given to the materials used in the construction of a sign and the methods used to light it.*

Table 3.19: Signage

12.11.4 Environmental Hazard Management (iii) Lighting External lighting schemes and illuminated signage on commercial and industrial premises, sports grounds, and other community facilities, should be designed, installed and operated so as to prevent nuisance to adjoining occupiers and road users, in the interests of amenity and public safety.

13.2.7 Architectural Conservation Areas

- All development works within ACAs should seek to limit, reduce and remove urban and visual clutter including building signage, traffic signage, bollards, utility boxes and other free-standing installations. In addition to the general requirements of this Development Plan, signage proposals within ACAs shall have regard to the requirements outlined in Chapter 12 of the Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities, DAHG (2011).
- Any proposed new advertising signage should be of high quality and should visually respect the existing character of the ACA

Development within Architectural Conservation Areas

Policy NCBH20: Architectural Conservation Areas

Preserve and enhance the historic character and visual setting of Architectural Conservation Areas and carefully consider any proposals for development that would affect the special value of such areas.

- *NCBH20 Objective 1:* To avoid the removal of distinctive features that positively contribute to the character of Architectural Conservation Areas including building features, shop fronts, boundary treatments (including walls), street furniture, landscaping and paving.
- *NCBH20 Objective 5:* To reduce and prevent visual and urban clutter within Architectural Conservation Areas including, where appropriate, traffic management structures, utility structures and all signage.
- *NCBH20 Objective 7:* To ensure proposals for shopfronts and retail signage within ACAs adhere to best practice and achieve high quality designs which respect the character of the area. In this regard, applicants shall be required to have regard and adhere to the principles laid out in South Dublin's Shopfront Design Guide.

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Natural/Cultural and Built Heritage

- Newcastle village is designated Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA), recognising high-quality groups of structures within the village areas. Newcastle contains landmark medieval structures, a relict field system morphology and a built form that underscores the historical significance of the area

Newcastle Local Area Plan 2012-2018 (extended to 9th December 2022)

It is an objective of this Local Area Plan:

- To concentrate new commercial and community development including retail floorspace around historic/cultural, civic and retail nodes along Main Street in a manner that contributes to Main Street's vitality and viability and its re-establishment as the Village Core. (Objective LUD1)

The site is within the Main Street) Neighbourhood, and within the designated Village Core.

6.2.3 Land Use and Density

Main Street is located in the Village Core and will act as a mixed use promenade and centre of activity at the heart of Newcastle Village with a range of uses including residential, retail (anchor stores), general commercial (flexible use units), civic, community and tourism uses.

7.2.13 Block Form, Urban Grain and Street Interface

- Windows should not be obscured with advertising or other signage.

South Dublin County Council Shopfront Design Guidelines

2. Overall Guiding Principles - 2.1 The Shopfront in context

The shopfront is not an independent entity. It is an integral part of the building to which it relates, and, as part of that building, to the adjoining building and shopfronts in the streetscape. Therefore, the starting point for the design of the shopfront must be its architectural context – its relationship to the building overhead and to adjoining buildings. Care must be taken not to detract from the overall character of shopfronts which are part of a protected structure or located within an Architectural Conservation Area. Shopfronts located along a Main Street of a town or Village are an integral part of the overall character and therefore any works that would detract or result in the removal of original architectural features within an Architectural Conservation Area or a protected structure will not be permitted. Where new buildings or alternatives to existing shopfronts are proposed, they should complement the existing character of the street in relation to proportions, materials, colours and details. (Corporate retail image – with standardised shopfront design, corporate colours and materials – is rarely appropriate in a historic streetscape. Compatibility with individual buildings

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and with the street scene will be considered more important than external uniformity between the branches of one company). Corporate retail and institutions must cooperate with the Local Authority in modifying their standard 'corporate' lettering or signage or adapt their standard shopfront designs to ensure the character of the host building and streetscape are maintained and enhanced

3.1 Shopfront Elements (continued)

The removal of existing traditional shopfronts will only be considered in exceptional cases. A balance must be achieved between the commercial requirements of an owner / retailer and the protection of the shopfronts within the Architectural Conservation Area. When considering contemporary shopfronts, the shop owner should consider the shop in the context of the street, the building overhead and the adjoining buildings / shopfronts. The framework of the contemporary shopfront should include the essential shopfront elements of fascia, pilasters and stallriser / base. Alternative materials such as stainless steel, stone and polished aluminium will be considered. The success of the framework to the shop in a contemporary design will depend on the detailing of the shopfront and quality of materials. The omission of a stallriser is sometimes proposed within contemporary shopfront designs – this will only be considered where the detail and quality of materials used, both internally and externally, is to a high standard

10.2 Protected Structures and Architectural Conservation Areas

The County Plan includes the Record of Protected Structures and describes the location and extent of the Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA). These designations seek to protect and enhance built heritage. Shopfront, signage and associated works on protected structures or buildings in ACA's are required to go through a more rigorous assessment than none designated structures, the prevailing design policy is one of conservation and enhancement. Works, which materially affect the character of a protected structure, or any element of special interest, require permission. In some cases, this can even include the re-painting of the external walls. Similarly, for the exterior of buildings within an ACA, planning permission is required for works, which materially affect the character of the area. The Councils Architectural Conservation Officer be contacted where confirmation is required.

Relevant Government Guidelines

Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework, Government of Ireland, (2018).

Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022, Dublin Regional Authority & Mid-East Regional Authority, (2010).

Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines, National Roads Authority, (2007)

Waste Management Plan for the Dublin Region 2005-2010, Dublin City Council, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council and South Dublin County Council, (2005)

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Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland – Guidance for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage, and Local Government, (2009)

Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022, Dublin Regional Authority & Mid-East Regional Authority (2010)

The Planning System and Flood Risk Management – Guidelines for Planning Authorities, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government & OPW, (2009)

Assessment

The main issues for assessment are:

- Zoning and council policy,
- Visual impact,
- Landscaping,
- Water Services and Drainage,
- Access and Roads,
- Appropriate assessment,
- Environmental Impact Assessment.

Zoning & Council Policy

The proposed site is subject to zoning objective VC 'To protect, improve and provide for the future development of Village Centres' and is located in commercial unit 4. It lies in the Village Core area on Main Street in the Newcastle LAP 2012-18, which envisages a mixed-use area, including residential, retail, and commercial services. The upgrading of an existing Pharmacy shopfront is acceptable in principle at this location, subject to Development Plan Policies.

As the proposal relates to a shopfront and signage, there would be no impact on green infrastructure.

Signage Policy

The proposed signage would be on a building.

12.5.7 Signage – Advertising, Corporate and Public Information

Development proposals that include signage should take account of the following:

- *In general, signs on a building should only advertise goods or services that are associated with the premises and no more than two advertising signs should be erected on any elevation.*

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- The proposal only demonstrates the main sign over the front entrance of the shopfront, this is considered acceptable.
- *Signs should generally be limited to the ground floor of a building unless located directly over the entrance to a major commercial or retail building;*
- Sign is limited to the ground floor, this is acceptable.
- *Signs should be simple in design and integrate with the architectural language of the building and not obscure any architectural features;*
- The New Castle Shopping Centre is notably a modern build, the building is not protected however the area is within the Newcastle ACA and regard to the existing wood frame structure and adjacent retail units is paramount, the proposal is therefore not acceptable.
- *Signs should be proportionate to the scale of the building to which they are attached and sensitive to the surrounding environment.*
- The proposal is not sensitive to the surrounding environment within the Newcastle Main Street ACA.
- *Signs attached to Protected Structures and in Architectural Conservation Areas should be in keeping with the character of the building and adhere to best practice conservation principles (see Section 12.3.8 Architectural Conservation Areas);*
- The proposal does not and adhere to best practice conservation principles (12.3.8 Architectural Conservation Areas).
- *Any sign or associated structure should not create an obstruction to pedestrian or cyclist movement or create a traffic hazard;*
- The proposal would cause no obstruction to pedestrian or cyclist movement or create a traffic hazard.
- *Careful consideration should be given to the materials used in the construction of a sign and the methods used to light it.*

The proposal is for a branded chain of Pharmacy however the following is noted from South Dublin County Council Shopfront Design Guidelines the *Overall Guiding Principles - 2.1 The Shopfront in context:*

*Where new buildings or alternatives to existing shopfronts are proposed, they should complement the existing character of the street in relation to proportions, materials, colours and details. (Corporate retail image – with standardised shopfront design, corporate colours and materials – is rarely appropriate in a historic streetscape. **Compatibility with individual buildings and with the street scene will be considered more important than external uniformity between the branches of one company**). Corporate retail and institutions must cooperate with the Local Authority in modifying their standard ‘corporate’ lettering or signage or adapt their standard shopfront designs to ensure the character of the host building and streetscape are maintained and enhanced*

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In accordance with *12.5.7 Signage – Advertising, Corporate and Public Information* the sign is generally not appropriate at this location as *set out in Chapter 12: Implementation and Monitoring*. And is not in keeping with Council Policy.

Visual Impact

Given the area is zoned VC and the proposed development location is on Main Street within the Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA), it is considered that the proposed development is unacceptable in terms of visual impact. The proposed signage is out of character with the surrounding buildings. In this regard, it is considered that the proposed signage will have a negative visual impact. The following is noted from the South Dublin County Council Shopfront Design Guidelines *3.1 Shopfront Elements (continued)*

The removal of existing traditional shopfronts will only be considered in exceptional cases. A balance must be achieved between the commercial requirements of an owner / retailer and the protection of the shopfronts within the Architectural Conservation Area. When considering contemporary shopfronts, the shop owner should consider the shop in the context of the street, the building overhead and the adjoining buildings / shopfronts

The proposal contravenes the following 13.2.7 Architectural Conservation Areas in South Dublin County Council Development Plan (2022-2028)

- *NCBH20 Objective 7: To ensure proposals for shopfronts and retail signage within ACAs adhere to best practice and achieve high quality designs which respect the character of the area. In this regard, applicants shall be required to have regard and adhere to the principles laid out in South Dublin's Shopfront Design Guide.*

In this regard the applicant shall be requested by **Additional Information** to resubmit a full redesign of the entire shop front with signage and have regard to this sensitive location with the Newcastle ACA.

Archaeology and Architectural Heritage

Although the development takes place within an area of archaeological potential, the subject application is for a change to the shopfront and signage and no digging or soil disturbance is anticipated. Similarly, located within the ACA, external works are proposed. The signage for the commercial use is contrary to the County Development Plan Policies and Objectives and the New Castle Local Area Plan.

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Architectural Conservation Officer:

The following has been stated by the Architectural Conservation Officer:

I note that the Newcastle Shopping Centre is a modern build and the existing shopfront to Unit 4 is based on a traditional shop front. Although this could be considered to be pastiche it mirrors the traditional form similar to the other corner unit. As you have stated the site is located within the ACA of Newcastle village and while contemporary shopfront designs can be considered I do feel that the shopfront proposed does not add any architectural interest or high-quality design to the existing shopping centre unit. The large signage, colour palette and illuminated shopfront signage would not be considered an improvement on the existing and therefore cannot be justified in this instance. It is therefore considered that the proposed new shopfront is not acceptable within the ACA.

It is considered that painting the existing or removing some of the fussier elements of the shopfront design would allow visual improvements.

New suitable signage with perhaps one illuminated element (green cross) at the side of the building would allow it to be identified as a pharmacy during evening/night hours.

It is recommended that the application should be either refused or RFI requested in order to address the concerns above.

Landscaping

No report received. There would be no impact on landscaping features.

Services and Drainage

No applicable in this instance.

Access and Roads

The Roads Department have not reviewed the proposed development; however, the proposal is deemed not to have a negative impact on the adjoining road on Main Street. The shop front is amply recessed back from the main road with a public car park buffer to the south of the site. The use of signs is to be internally illuminated only.

Screening for Appropriate Assessment

On the basis of the information on file, which is considered adequate to undertake a screening determination and having regard to:

- the nature and scale of the proposed development,
- the intervening land uses and distance from European sites,
- the lack of direct connections with regard to the Source-Pathway-Receptor model,

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it is concluded that the proposed development, individually or in-combination with other plans or projects, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the above listed European sites or any other European site, in view of the said sites' conservation objectives.

An appropriate assessment is not, therefore, required.

Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment

A mandatory EIAR is not required by Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2000 (as amended) for this development. Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, and the distance of the site from nearby sensitive receptors, there is no likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development. The need for environmental impact assessment can, therefore, be excluded at preliminary examination and a screening determination is not required.

Other Considerations

Development Contributions

The proposal is for Signage; therefore, the assessable area is nil.

SEA Monitoring Information

SEA Monitoring Information	
Building Use Type Proposed	Floor Area (sq. m.)
Signage	0sq.m (Signage)
Land Type	Site Area (Ha.)
Brownfield/Urban Consolidation	0.027 Ha

Conclusion

Having regard to the area that is zoned VC and the proposed development location that is located on Main Street within the Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA), it is considered that the proposed development is unacceptable in terms of visual impact. In this regard the applicant shall be requested by **Additional Information** to resubmit a full redesign of the entire shop front and signage and have regard to this sensitive location with the Newcastle ACA.

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Recommendation

I recommend that **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** be requested from the applicant with regard to the following:

1. The removal of existing traditional shopfronts will only be considered in exceptional cases. A balance must be achieved between the commercial requirements of an owner / retailer and the protection of the shopfronts within the Architectural Conservation Area. When considering contemporary shopfronts, the shop owner should consider the shop in the context of the street, the building overhead and the adjoining buildings / shopfronts.
 - (a) The applicant is requested to submit a complete redesign of the shopfront and signage and submit a design booklet/statement including photos of existing signage and details of proposed signage with materials and colours that are proposed to be used. In addition, the applicant is requested to have regard to the following:
 - (i) 13.2.7 Architectural Conservation Areas in South Dublin County Council Development Plan (2022-2028)
 - (ii) NCBH20 Objective 7: To ensure proposals for shopfronts and retail signage within ACAs adhere to best practices and achieve high-quality designs that respect the area's character. In this regard, applicants shall be required to regard and adhere to the principles laid out in South Dublin's Shopfront Design Guide.
2. The site is located within the ACA of Newcastle village and while contemporary shopfront designs can be considered. The shopfront proposed does not add any architectural interest or high-quality design to the existing shopping centre unit. The large signage, colour palette and illuminated shopfront signage would not be considered an improvement on the existing and therefore cannot be justified in this instance. It is therefore considered that the proposed new shopfront is not acceptable within the ACA.

The applicant is requested to consider the following whilst considering a re-design of the shopfront:

- (i) It is considered that painting the existing or removing some of the more detailed elements of the shopfront design would allow visual improvements.
- (ii) New suitable signage with perhaps one illuminated element (green cross) at the side of the building would allow it to be identified as a pharmacy during evening/night hours.

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REG. REF. SD22A/0315

LOCATION: Unit 4, Newcastle Shopping Centre, Main Street, Newcastle, Dublin



**Deirdre Kirwan,
Senior Executive Planner**

ORDER: I direct that **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** be requested from the applicant as set out in the above report and that notice thereof be served on the applicant.

Date: 21/09/2022



**Colm Harte,
Senior Executive Planner**