
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2016

by Beverley Wilders BA (Hons) PgDurp MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 4 March 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/W/15/3134635
Grape & Grain, 2 Anerley Hill, London SE19 2AA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by J D Wetherspoon PLC against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/15/00187/FULL1, dated 7 January 2015, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2015.
 - The development proposed is single storey extension to front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and on the Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within the Crystal Palace Park Conservation Area (CA). The bulk of the CA comprises the park itself as well as parts of the surrounding roads including Anerley Hill. The Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for the CA divides it into four broad character areas: the Park, the National Sports Centre, the Palace and the Parkside Residences. The latter includes a group of residential and commercial buildings on Anerley Hill, of a mid 19th Century date. The character and appearance of the area, including the CA, immediately surrounding the appeal site is mixed with differing building styles and materials.
4. The appeal building is a part two storey, part single storey public house located in a prominent roadside position close to a busy junction. It has a pitched roof behind a raised parapet. It is flat fronted with the exception of two porches, one of which is located centrally within the two storey section of the building and contains three large, Georgian style sash windows at first floor. The building adjoins and is set back from another, slightly lower commercial building with a similar roof form. There is some speculation as to the age and origin of the appeal building and whether it incorporates elements of a former hotel on the site. Irrespective of its origins and notwithstanding that it is not specifically mentioned within the Council's SPG, it is an attractive building with a traditional appearance which in my view makes a positive contribution to the

- character and appearance of the CA. Despite some low level boundary screening the building is visible from various vantage points in the immediate surrounding area.
5. The large flat roofed front extension proposed extends across the entire width of the two storey section and halfway along the single storey section of the appeal building. The forward projection would bring the extension almost in line with the front elevation of the adjoining building. The top of the extension, including the glazed panels surrounding the roof terrace, would be the same height as the top of the parapet to the single storey section of the building. It would obscure views of the existing first floor sash windows, the central one of which would be changed to a door.
 6. The size, position and design of the proposed extension are such that it would almost completely cover the existing ground floor of the front elevation of the appeal building. Whilst the appeal building and adjoining building have parapet walls that appear as flat roofs from some angles, the scale and position of the flat roofed extension proposed means that it is an incongruous and dominant addition. Any existing symmetry and rhythm on the front elevation of the building would be lost as a result of the proposal. This would be harmful and would detract from the appearance of the host building and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA. I consider the harm to the significance of the CA would be less than substantial. As such, having regard to paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), this harm needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
 7. I note that the appeal site is in an accessible location within a district centre and that the extended public house would provide enhanced social and community facilities as well as short and long term employment opportunities. Additionally the proposed redevelopment of the public house would bring investment into the area. The appellant also contends that the proposal would encourage linked trips and would enhance the vitality and viability of the district centre. Whilst I have had regard to the public benefits of the proposal, I do not consider that they are sufficient to outweigh the harm identified, particularly given that the site is already in use as a public house.
 8. I am aware that the appeal site formed part of a proposal for a cinema with ancillary foyer and café/bar provisions that was granted planning permission (Ref 10/02629/FULL2). There is some disagreement between the main parties as to whether this permission remains extant. I am not aware of the details or particular circumstances relating to this permission and in any event, I must determine the proposal before me on its own merits.
 9. I also note the original purposes of the Park for leisure and relaxation, the fact that historical photographs show a terrace on the site and recognition within the Framework of the role of public houses as community facilities. I have also had regard to the operating model of J D Wetherspoon Ltd and to the reports by the Institute for Public Policy Research and the Greater London Authority regarding public houses in Britain and London. However, I have seen no specific evidence regarding the role and performance of the existing public house on the site and none of the above matters outweigh the harm identified.
 10. I conclude that the proposal fails to preserve the character and appearance of the CA and that it is contrary to policies BE1 and BE11 of the London Borough of Bromley Unitary Development Plan, the Crystal Palace Park Conservation

Area Supplementary Planning Guidance and to relevant paragraphs of the Framework. These policies and guidance seek, amongst other things, a high standard of design that respects and complements existing buildings and areas and preserves or enhances the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Beverley Wilders

INSPECTOR