
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2016

by David Troy BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 21 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/W/16/3152430
23 Prebend Street, Islington, London N1 8PF

- 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 Mr M Saponara against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2015/4777/FUL, dated 9 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 29 February 2016.
 - The development proposed is alterations to shopfront to include timber glazed extension to accommodate customer seating.
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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 property and the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is located at the end of a small parade of commercial units and comprises of a restaurant/delicatessen and residential accommodation above. The commercial units are set in front of a block of flats in a predominantly residential area and presently contain awnings which are retractable to the front of the premises. The area is characterised by a wide paved pedestrian area to the front and areas of open space located immediately to the north and east of the site. These features give the area a strong unifying character and appearance, which is further enhanced by the presence of mature landscaping and established trees within the open space and along the roadside.
 4. The proposal would entail the construction of a single storey extension to cover the existing customer seating area at the front of the premises. The proposal would be of modern design in the form of a conservatory that would project about 3m out in front of the property and extend about 5.5m across the width of the premises. The extension would be of timber framed construction and glass.
 5. The proposed extension, however, would protrude in front of the existing building line into the wide paved pedestrian area. Such positioning would compromise the sense of space and openness in the area, interrupting the
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established rhythm and integrity of the terrace of commercial units and the character and appearance of the area. I consider that the single storey addition, by virtue of its scale and modern design, would dominate the frontage of the building and would significantly detract from the architectural integrity of the host property. These shortcomings are exacerbated by the appeal site's prominent position, which would be visible from a number of public vantage points in the area, including the adjacent Islington Conservation Area (the CA). As such I consider that the proposed extension would result in an incongruous and out-of-keeping addition to the host property and the street scene.

6. I have considered the appellant's comments that state the new development would comply with the relevant planning policies and would be de minimis. The Local Planning Authority statement does not support that this structure would be de minimis and I have no reason to form a contrary view on this matter. I note the appellant's comments regarding the proposal extending to a similar distance to the existing awning and to the awnings at the adjacent properties. In addition, the appellant states that the proposed use of transparent glazing and the extension's open weight design would reduce the impact. Whilst the existing awnings have some visual impact, these features are retractable and thereby reduce the visual clutter when they are not opened. The proposed extension would be a solid structure and would have a continuous impact on the host property and the streetscene.
7. I note the appellant's comments about the local support for the proposal, that the current structure has been in situ for more than 25 years and there have been no previous complaints about it. However, this does not outweigh the harm I have identified and as such afford them limited weight in this case.
8. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed extension would cause harm to the character and appearance of the host property and the area including the adjacent CA. The development conflicts with Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan 2016 and Policies CS8 and CS9 of the Islington Core Strategy 2011. These policies, amongst other things, seek to ensure that new development demonstrates a high quality design that positively contributes to the local character and distinctiveness of the area, and conserves and enhances Islington's built environment and heritage assets including conservation areas.
9. The development would also conflict with Policy DM2.1 of the Islington Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2013 that seeks to ensure that development proposals respect and respond positively to existing buildings, the streetscape and wider context. The development does not accord with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Islington Urban Design Guide 2006 which includes similar design aims relating to maintaining building lines and street frontages.

Conclusion

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

David Troy

INSPECTOR