
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 September 2016

by Oliver Blower MA (T&CP)

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 29 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/Z/16/3153563
506 - 508 Brixton Road, London SW9 8EN

- 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 Foxtons against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/00581/FUL, dated 29 January 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "installation of external roller shutters on front facade (retrospective application)".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Brixton Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a four-storey mid terrace shop. The upper floors are traditional in appearance, constructed of red brick with stone detailing and timber sash windows. The shop front is more modern in appearance with a tiled façade and large glazed openings. The immediate area is predominantly characterised by traditional brick and stone commercial buildings, the vast majority of which do not have roller shutters. Although the shop front is modern, the upper floors and the terrace as a whole retain a traditional appearance, complementing the broadly traditional character of the immediate area and the Brixton Conservation Area (CA).
4. The development is for security roller shutters with metal slats that have already been fitted to the ground floor of the building. The shutter is housed in a protruding metal box above the windows spanning the length of the shop front.
5. The forward projection of the shutter housing noticeably protrudes past the face of the building, appearing as a bulky and modern intrusion when viewed from the public realm, detracting from the largely traditional appearance of the upper portion of the building and the wider area. When closed the shutters mask the windows, obscuring views in and out of the shop, leading to an

unappealing fortress like appearance. Accordingly the development does not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.

6. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies Q8, Q16 and Q22 of the Lambeth Plan, which seek to ensure that proposed building designs and submitted details are visually attractive; that shop fronts should not have solid or perforated roller shutters or exposed externally-mounted shutter housings; and that development preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas.
7. I note that the appeal site has been subject to vandalism in the past, including broken windows, and the roller shutters are a response to this. Although I sympathise with the appellant, it is the case that increased security could be achieved by other less intrusive means. In any event, in my judgement, the benefit of increased security does not outweigh the harm to the CA identified above.
8. I also note that the appeal site once had roller shutters, prior to the installation of the current shop front, and that some security shutters have been installed nearby. I have not been provided, however, with the planning history of these sites, and in any event these security shutters testify to the harm that such development can cause.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Oliver Blower

Appointed Person