
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2016

by Kenneth Stone BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 20 October 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/M1520/W/16/3152845

The Oysterfleet Hotel, 31 Knightswick Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 9UX

- 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 The Oysterfleet Hotel against the decision of Castle Point Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 15/0751/FUL, dated 25 August 2015, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2015.
 - The development proposed is described as '4 No. self-contained suites with lower ground parking for 5 vehicles'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. I note the description on the application form and that used by the Council on the decision notice differ. There is however, no material difference in the descriptions and I have used that from the application form as that is what the appellant applied for.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The Oysterfleet Hotel is located to the north west of Canvey Island town centre in a complex of buildings forming the Hotel, containing a bar, restaurant and rooms in two main buildings. The buildings are commercially scaled two storey buildings also containing rooms in the void of the high pitched roof. The buildings are clad in a consistent material palette including a reddish brick ground floor and dark stained weather boarding on the first floor and upper level gables. The roof has an orange tile covering.
 5. The proposed building would be attached to the north east corner of the front building, that fronting Knightswick Road. The existing building is set at a lower level than the road and well back from it, with car parking and landscaping to the front. The proposed building would be significantly closer to Knightswick Road than the existing building and although set at the same lower level would form a prominent feature in the street scene, due to its height, bulk and mass
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- and forward positioning. The building would be particularly visible from the north looking south from the Junction of Knightswick Road, Central Wall Road and Elder Tree Road. The scale of the building, whilst commensurate with the existing buildings on the site, would sit much closer to the road than the existing building. The surrounding properties are predominantly domestic scale and for the most part two-storey. There are some exceptions to this but these are set much further back from the road and do not hold dominant positions.
6. I acknowledge that the Oysterfleet site is lower than the road level and this helps ameliorate the existing larger bulk, mass and height of the existing buildings in the context of their surroundings. Whilst the proposed building would also be set at this lower level the advanced position and closer proximity to the road would give it a significantly more prominent siting.
 7. I did note the three storey Oyster Court opposite the site but it is set a significant distance back from the road frontage. I also saw the relationship with the adjoining property in Lakeside Path which is also two storeys with accommodation in the roof. However, whilst this is also set at the lower level of the Hotel it is also well back from Knightswick Road in a more recessive position.
 8. The proposed building would appear an excessively dominant structure in a forward and overly assertive position in the street scene detrimental to the character and appearance of the area.
 9. Of particular concern to the Council was the roof form of the extension which I agree would appear excessively contrived to ensure the overall height would be kept in-keeping with the adjoining main building. The result however is the inclusion of various devices or forms, including a truncated and a saw tooth profile, to reduce the overall height. This would not sit comfortably on the building and would be visible from public locations.
 10. The Development Plan for the area is the Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan, adopted 1998 and whilst this is somewhat dated the policies on design and seeking to protect the character of areas are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and I attach them full weight. The Council's residential design guide was adopted after the Framework and adds further weight to the policies and their consistency with the Framework. Policies EC2, H13 and H17 seek to ensure development is compatible with the character of the area and is of a high quality design. In particular residential design guides 3 and 7 respectively seek to ensure development has regard to existing building lines and roof forms. The proposal would introduce dormers which are not a feature of the existing front building, although it does have small projecting gable windows, and it would have a contrived roof form. It would also sit significantly forward of the existing front building. The overall result would be a form of development that would result in material harm to the character and appearance of the area and which conflicts with the development plan and the supplementary planning guidance for the reasons set out above.
 11. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kenneth Stone

INSPECTOR