

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 November 2016

by Claire Searson MSc PGDip BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 22nd November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/B2002/W/16/3157416

The Mint, Central Promenade, Cleethorpes DN35 8SF

- 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 Taylor Made Fun Ltd against the decision of North East Lincolnshire Council.
 - The application Ref DM/1086/15/FUL, dated 17 November 2015, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as "*new canopy, re-siting of metal shutters and partial bricking up of windows (slipway elevation only).*"
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Cleethorpes Central Seafront Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The Mint is a single storey building which is currently used as an amusement arcade. Dating from the 20th century, it is constructed from brickwork with large glazed openings which are protected by external box roller shutters. There is a glazed canopy area along the front elevation, supported by cast iron pillars.
 4. The appeal property is in a prominent location within the heart of the Conservation Area, as positioned on the junction of Sea View and Central Promenade. The building forms a part of an entryway onto Cleethorpes pier, which is a locally listed building.
 5. Cleethorpes is a seaside resort that expanded rapidly after the arrival of the railway in 1863. The Central Seafront Conservation Area Appraisal 2013 (CAA) identifies that the character of the Conservation Area is predominantly derived from its Victorian architecture. Specific reference is made to the Victorian and Edwardian buildings along Alexander Road, including cast iron verandas and pillars which add to the seaside character of the area.
 6. Development along Central Promenade in proximity to the appeal site comprises of modern buildings, dating from different periods within the 20th century. These appear to have taken some design reference from the
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traditional architecture of the area with many modern properties having a horizontal emphasis. Most buildings in this area also have covered walkways to the front elevation which echo the Victorian and Edwardian verandas.

7. The proposed roller shutters would be brought forward from the windows towards the edge of the replacement canopy with a setback of around 0.7metres. The guides and shutter boxes would be hidden within the canopy and columns.
8. In bringing forward the proposed shutters, these would infill and effectively box in the covered veranda area. The siting of these, coupled with the utilitarian design of the shutters would result in a large and conspicuous area of blank frontage which would create a sense of hostility and an intrusive and visually harmful addition to the locality. I do not consider that these impacts would be adequately overcome by the conditioning of the design to include a central panel of open mesh. Nor would they be mitigated by the concealment of the box and guides within the canopy structure.
9. The development would also be visible in the long views which are currently gained along Central Promenade and the proposed shutters would therefore be a particularly prominent and dominant feature within the street scene.
10. I accept that roller shutters are a common feature in the area, with many examples having been retrofitted onto existing and traditional shopfronts. However I am mindful the CAA specifically highlights external box shutters as an example of poor quality development within the Conservation Area. At my site visit, which was out of season and during the working week, I was able to see that many roller shutters had a dominating impact. Many were also closed, bringing a deadening effect to the general character of the area and therefore confirming the harmful effect of such developments.
11. Moreover, the examples in the locality were materially different to the proposals before me as they were all typically flush with the windows they are protecting. At the appeal site, any masking or relief of the impact of the existing shutters which are flush to the window would be lost and the development would significantly exacerbate existing harm. The presence of roller shutters elsewhere would not therefore justify the appeal proposal.
12. Overall I conclude that the proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Cleethorpes Central Seafront Conservation Area. As such, the development would be contrary to Policies GEN1 of the adopted North East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003) which, amongst other things, requires new development to be suitable in terms of size, scale and impact on the character and appearance of the area and historical heritage. It would also conflict with Policy BH1 which reflects the statutory test for development in Conservation Areas as well as Policy S15 which permits shutters where they cover only the areas of glass vulnerable to attack.
13. Furthermore, in respect of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I would judge the harm to the Conservation Area to be less than substantial. While I have had regard to the benefits of improved security for the premises, there is little evidence before me that the property has been subject to crime or anti-social behaviour or that the existing shutters were not effective. There is also no evidence to support the appellant's claims that the shutters would add more protection in respect of flood risk. Accordingly, I find

that there would be little public benefit to offset the identified harm. The proposed development would not therefore accord with the Framework which seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Other Matters

14. It is noted within the Officer Report that the site is in proximity to a number of Grade II listed buildings, however the Council does not indicate that the development would cause to harm these buildings in respect of their setting. Mindful of the duties imposed by section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990, and based on my site visit, I have no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Searson
INSPECTOR