

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 1 March 2017

by R Barrett BSc (Hons) MSc Dip UD Dip Hist Cons MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 12th April 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/W/16/3164827

Corona Hotel, Belgrave Road, London SW1V 2BQ

- 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 Tony Fisher against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 16/09287/FULL, dated 27 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is creation of new lower ground and ground floor infill extensions to provide six additional bedrooms.
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Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Y/16/3164830

Corona Hotel, Belgrave Road, London SW1V 2BQ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Tony Fisher against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 16/09288/LBC, dated 27 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 November 2016.
 - The works proposed are creation of new lower ground and ground floor infill extensions to provide six additional bedrooms.
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Decision

1. Both appeals are dismissed.

Main Issues

- Whether the proposed upper ground floor extensions would preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the grade II listed buildings, 85-89 Belgrave Road; and
- Whether they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Pimlico Conservation Area (PCA).

Reasons

2. The appeal site includes three listed buildings all in use as one hotel. They form part of a terrace of listed buildings, similar in their scale, Classical style and design. They are five storeys above a basement with stucco frontages, with Classical detailing. Their scale, style and design, including their timber framed mainly sash windows, along with their similarity to other buildings in the listed terrace, add to their significance as heritage assets.
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3. The rears of the listed buildings are plainer, mainly of brick and have been altered and added to over time. Those characteristics, along with their mainly timber sash windows, tall closet wings and traditional detailing significantly add to the listed buildings' significance. The same characteristics contribute to the high quality historic terraces that help define the character and appearance of the PCA.
4. The proposed upper ground floor extensions, when taken together with the first and lower ground floor extensions previously allowed¹ would cover a significant amount of the rear elevation. Due to their height and massing, they would diminish the prominent appearance of the closet wings as significant features of the rear elevations. This would be the case even though they would be set back from some of the existing rear projections. In addition, they would be positioned in front of existing windows, and would partly obscure views of them. Furthermore, they would include modern sloping roof forms with large roof lights, which would appear odd against the generally traditionally detailed additions at the rear. Their modern appearance would jar against the traditionally detailed rears and would diminish the buildings' historic integrity.
5. As I have found that the appeal buildings positively contribute to the PCA and that the appeal proposals would result in harm to them, it follows that they would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the PCA.
6. In coming to these conclusions, I have taken account that the appeal proposals would result in a greater uniformity at the rear. It is suggested that the appeals would facilitate further upgrades, which are necessary to ensure the longevity of the hotel business and help keep it in its optimum viable use. They would also support employment at the appeal site. However, I have limited substantive evidence in this regard. I have taken account that the proposed materials would match that on surrounding buildings, that the front would be unchanged as a result and that the rear is open to limited views, further limited by trees and planting. However, they would be open to some views particularly from the upper floors of surrounding buildings. All in all, none of these matters outweigh the harm that I have identified.
7. I conclude that the appeal proposals would fail to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the grade II listed buildings, 85-89 Belgrave Road and the character and appearance of the PCA. For these reasons, they would be contrary to Policies S25 and S28 of Westminster's City Plan Consolidated with Basement and Mixed Use Revisions (2016) and Policies DES1, DES5, and DES10 of the City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan (2007). Those policies, together, aim to recognise Westminster's wider historic environment and conserve its extensive heritage assets, including listed buildings and conservations areas. They also seek to incorporate exemplary standards of sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture.

Public Benefits

8. In accordance with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I accord great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets. I consider that the harm to the significance of the heritage assets identified would be less than substantial. Mindful of my statutory duties,

¹ PP 04854888

this is a matter to which I attach considerable importance and weight. In this case, no public benefits as identified in paragraph 134 of the Framework, are before me, which would outweigh that harm.

Other Matter

9. I am aware that the appeal is designed to overcome the Council's concerns on a previous scheme and those expressed by my Colleague in determining previous appeals.² I acknowledge the efforts made to address those. However, I have found that unacceptable harm would still be a consequence of these appeals.

Conclusions

10. For the above reasons, and taking all other matters raised into consideration, I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.

R Barrett

INSPECTOR

² APP/X5990/Y/14/3000880 and APP/X5990/W/14/3000877