The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 May 2019

by M Heron BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/W/19/3223347
Ground Floor, 4 The Green, Winchmore Hill, Southgate N21 1AY

- 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 Hasan Hassan against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
- The application Ref 18/02645/FUL, dated 30 June 2018, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2018.
- The development proposed is new windows and awning.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for new windows and awning at Ground Floor, 4 The Green, Winchmore Hill, Southgate N21 1AY in accordance with application, Ref 18/02645/FUL, dated 30 June 2018, subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

   2) Notwithstanding the 'box sign', the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing entitled 'Location and Block Plan', DPL.01., DPL.02., DPL.03., DPL.04., DPL.05., DPL.06.

   3) No development shall commence until a scheme for the materials to be used and measures taken to secure and protect the historic features at the shopfront has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

   4) The sections of leaded glass in the upper parts of the front-facing shopfront windows shall not be removed and shall remain in perpetuity for the lifetime of the development hereby permitted.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council's Officer report states that the current use is for a dry cleaning business. However, submitted plans show an existing café. This is consistent with my observations on site. In any event, this appeal deals only with the physical alterations to the shopfront.

3. Submitted plans appear to show that a 'box sign' is proposed. However, this element of the proposal is not within the description of development and did

not form part of the Council's assessment within its Officer report. I have therefore not considered this sign in the determination of this appeal. Taking this into account, I consider that Policy DMD41 of the Improving Enfield Development Management Document (DMD), which is referred to in the Council's decision notice and deals with advertisements, is not relevant to this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area, with particular regard to its effect upon the character and appearance of the existing shopfront, the host building and the terrace in which it is located.

Reasons

5. The appeal site lies within the Winchmore Hill Green Conservation Area (CA), a designated heritage asset. I therefore have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of this CA. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also advises that great weight must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and any harm must be weighed against public benefits or other criteria (depending on the degree of harm).

6. In considering the significance of the CA, the Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane Conservation Areas Character Appraisal (CACA) shows that the appeal site falls within an area known as The Green. The significance of this part of the CA is derived from the appreciation of the original historic village core. Contributing positively to this are rows of flat-fronted terraced buildings, most of which date from Victorian times, that front an irregular triangle of open land. The remaining original features and interesting architectural details at these buildings, including shopfronts that date from Victorian and Edwardian times, make an important contribution to the significance of this part of the CA.

7. No 4 is a ground floor commercial premises that currently accommodates a coffee shop. This is located within a mid-terrace building which, as shown within the CACA, makes a positive contribution to the area. In common with nearby shopfronts, I observed that No 4 has several original period features. These include a stall riser, a recessed entrance door and sections of leaded glass in the upper parts of its windows. These original features add interest the host building and are typical of the architecture within this part of the CA. Overall, I find that the shopfront at No 4, the host building and the wider terrace in which it is located contribute positively to the character and appearance of the CA.

8. It would appear that the proposal seeks to introduce new transoms and mullions to the two large shopfront windows. This would allow the windows to be opened and would give them a sash style appearance. A new awning is also proposed.

9. The Council do not appear to object to the sash style windows and, in my view, they would harmonise with similar style windows on floors above. However, it has concerns that they would result in the loss of sections of original leaded glass. Although the appellant has confirmed through written correspondence that this would not be the case, the retention of this leaded glass is not clear

on submitted plans. Under these circumstances, and as the loss of this original feature would be unacceptable, it is reasonable and necessary to impose an appropriately worded condition to ensure that it remains. This condition would meet the tests set out in paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and would alleviate the Council's primary concern with the proposal. Subject to its imposition, I am satisfied that the scheme would not result in the loss of any original features at the shopfront.

10. Turning to the proposed awning, this would be retractable and such a feature appears to have been historically present at No 4. I also observed that there are awnings at nearby shopfronts. I am therefore satisfied that this element of the proposal would be an acceptable addition to No 4 and would not appear incongruous within the streetscene.

11. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the shopfront, the host building or the terrace in which it is located. It follows that it would preserve the character or appearance of the CA as a whole. The proposal would therefore accord with Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan, Core Policy 30 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 and Policies DMD37, DMD39, DMD40 and DMD44 of the DMD. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that ground floor frontages preserve significant features at the host building and respect the rhythm of surrounding properties, and that proposals are high quality in design, appropriate to their context and conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets.

Conditions

12. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council. Having regard to the tests set out in paragraph 55 of the Framework, I have amended the wording where necessary in the interests of clarity and simplicity. In addition to the standard time limit, a condition specifying the plans is required in the interests of certainty. Furthermore, a condition requesting a scheme for materials to be used and measures taken to secure and protect the historic features at the shopfront is reasonable and necessary. This is also true for a condition which would prevent the loss of sections of leaded glass at the shopfront. These conditions are required to ensure that the proposal would preserve the historic interest of the host property and the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would not conflict with the development plan and, having considered all other relevant matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

M Heron

INSPECTOR