



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2019

by M Heron BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/19/3231056

**162 High Road, Wood Green, London, London Borough of Haringey
N22 6EB**

- 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 Ms Angelina Gyftakis against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref HGY/2019/1167, dated 26 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 15 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as 'alterations to existing canopy to front of building, including reduction in size and levelling'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. From the evidence before me, it would appear that a metal canopy has already been constructed at No 162. This was indeed present at my site visit. The description of development in the submitted application form shows that the appeal proposal seeks to make alterations to this existing canopy. However, this appears to be an unlawful structure. Regardless of what has been done on site and the description of development, I have therefore assessed the proposal on the basis of the plans as submitted. These show the appeal site prior to the construction of the unlawful canopy and the new, altered, canopy which forms the appeal proposal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the Wood Green District Centre.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in a secondary shopping frontage within the Wood Green District Centre (DC). It accommodates No 162, which is a ground floor café set within a large, three and a half storey, building positioned in a visually prominent location on the corner of High Road and Gladstone Avenue. This building has a curved façade and stone ionic columns rising from first to second floor level. In addition, it has interesting horizontal stone detailing at ground floor level which arches around several windows. Although not listed or within the Conservation Area (CA), these features give this building a grand and

- interesting appearance. It therefore contributes positively to the character and appearance of this part of the DC.
5. The appeal scheme seeks to construct a metal canopy at No 162 to provide cover for a small outdoor seating area on a section of the adjacent footway. Having visited the site, I consider that the proposal would be a sufficient distance away from the boundary of the CA so as not to deleteriously impact upon its setting.
 6. However, whilst it would not project beyond the existing conservatory to the side of the appeal building, the proposal would wrap around a significant proportion of its curved façade. In my view, its size, together with its solid metal construction, would give the canopy an unduly 'heavy' and bulky appearance. Furthermore, its solid form would restrict views of some of the sections of the ground floor stone detailing from certain vantage points along nearby footways. Consequently, although the scale of the host building is noted, I find that the proposal would appear as a visually dominant feature at ground floor level that would erode the building's pleasing contribution to the streetscene. This would be to the detriment of the appearance of this part of the DC.
 7. Taking the above into account, whilst some canopies can contribute to the creation of lively and active street frontages, I am not persuaded that this proposal would function well or add to the quality of the immediate area, as advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Given the prominent positioning of the host building, the proposal's harmful impact would be readily apparent from the public domain. I accept that there is a large canopy opposite to the site at the Dominion Centre. However, this building is of a wholly different architectural composition compared to the appeal building and is in a less prominent location. The existence of this canopy is therefore not a justification for introducing a similar one at the appeal site.
 8. I appreciate that the proposal would essentially reduce the width of the unlawful canopy which is currently erected at the site. This would better reveal some of the interesting ground floor architecture of the host building when viewed from certain parts of High Road. In addition, it would remove the supports which may have had a harmful impact upon the stone detailing. Nevertheless, I do not consider that these alterations would sufficiently mitigate the harm associated with the proposal's overall size and unduly bulky, solid, appearance. The existence of this unlawful canopy therefore carries only limited weight in my assessment.
 9. Permission has been granted¹ for other awnings at the appeal building. These appear to have been constructed and used in association with a previous business at the site before being removed. Whilst the proposal's depth of projection and positioning would be similar to these awnings, they appear to have been retractable and constructed of a soft canvas material. Consequently, they are not directly comparable to the appeal scheme, which I find would be considerably more conspicuous and harmful than them for the reasons given above. This is therefore not a reason to set aside the identified harm.
 10. I note that the appellant states that the substantial construction of the proposal is required as a result of high winds experienced at this corner location.

¹ HGY/2014/2960

However, I have no substantive evidence before me to show that it is required to address health and safety concerns associated with such weather conditions. This therefore attracts only limited weight in my assessment. In addition, the absence of objections from neighbours is noted. However, this forms a neutral factor and is not a reason to permit a scheme which would fail to integrate effectively with the character of the host building.

11. I also understand that paragraph 80 of the Framework seeks to support economic growth, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Nevertheless, I have no substantive evidence to show that the dismissal of this scheme would threaten the viability of the existing business. Neither is there substantive evidence to suggest that the needs of the existing business, including the effective use and management of its outdoor space, could not be met with a scheme that would be less harmful to the character and appearance of the host building and DC.
12. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would adversely affect the character and appearance of the host property and DC. It would therefore conflict with Policy SP11 of Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies, Policy DM1 of the Development Management DPD and Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the London Plan. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that developments are of a high standard of design, are constructed of materials that compliment local architecture and make a positive contribution to the streetscape and the quality of the area.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations, including the advice of the Framework, which outweigh this conflict. Having considered all other relevant matters raised, I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Heron

INSPECTOR