
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2019

by R C Kirby BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/U1620/W/19/3230717

216-218 Barton Street, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL1 4HH

- 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 Resham Singh against the decision of Gloucester City Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01377/FUL, dated 16 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 January 2019.
 - The development proposed is replacement of existing shop front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development above has been taken from the appeal form and Council's decision notice as it more accurately describes the proposal than that included on the planning application form.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in the case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal properties are located in a row of commercial premises with residential accommodation above. The new shop front has been installed in both units. The shopfront is constructed of aluminium and the entrance doors are flush with the front of it. At the time of my visit the security grill was closed at No 218 but open at No 216.
5. A photograph has been provided which indicates that the previous shop front at the premises was constructed of timber and the entrance door to each unit was recessed within it, and centrally located between the windows above.
6. I find that the use of a dark coloured material with a slim frame design, set above the original stall riser respects the character and appearance of the host property and surrounding area. However, the detailed design of the shop front, and particularly the position of the doors within it and the deep fascia does not reflect the style and proportions of the shop front that it replaced. As a consequence, it unbalances the front elevations of the appeal properties, and the contribution that they make to the character and appearance of the area.

7. I acknowledge the appellant's desire to secure his premises, however the security grills that have been installed, when closed result in a solid blank elevational treatment at street level which results in an imposing, harsh frontage on these properties, creating a 'dead' frontage, which is harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
8. I acknowledge that there are a variety of styles of shop fronts within the parade of which the appeal premises form part, as well as a number of external security grills. However, be that as it may, none of the shop fronts are directly comparable to the appeal proposal in terms of their design, and in the absence of understanding the circumstances relating to the security shutters, I am unable to ascertain whether the examples quoted are directly comparable to the appeal scheme. In any event, the presence of shutters elsewhere does not justify harmful development. Each planning application and appeal must be considered on its merits.
9. In light of the foregoing, I conclude that the new shop front is harmful to the character and appearance of the area, in conflict with the aims of Policies SD4 and SD8 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy and the Council's Shopfronts, Shutters & Signage Supplementary Planning Document which collectively require that new development should respond positively to, and respect the character of the site and its surroundings, enhancing local distinctiveness. In reaching this conclusion I note that the appellant is willing to consider a revision to the design of the shop front. However, I have no detailed drawings before me to consider, and am unable to consider this matter further.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR