



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2019

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/W/19/3234240

Pilot Hotel, Catesby Road, Coventry CV6 4AU

- 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 Titanium Car Sales against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2018/3473, dated 12 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 3 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is the use of part of the car park for car sales.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effects on the setting of the listed building and the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal relates to part of the open car park of this grade II listed public house. The public house dates from the late 1930s and is described as a 'reformed' public house. Its design is characteristic of its era and it is situated at the end of a block of residential properties and has a frontage onto 3 roads.
4. Its design and location give it a prominent position within the surrounding, mainly residential, area. The surrounding car park provides a generous space. In my view, the car park provides a symmetrical and well-balanced area of land around the public house, which complements its rather imposing presence. Although the car park is largely featureless and plainly surfaced, I consider that it provides an uncluttered setting which complements the character of the listed building. In this way, I consider that it adds to the significance of the building.
5. The Council's submitted documents express concerns about the effects of looped bollards, CCTV/lighting columns and the likelihood of the presence of banners, 'for sale' signs and other commercial paraphernalia. The appellant has indicated that they are willing to remove the proposed bollards and CCTV/lighting columns from the proposal and I have taken account of this. In addition, the appellant states that there will be no need to 'for sale' signs or any other commercial signs or devices. They state that the intention is that viewings will be by appointment only and so there will be no need to attract customers in this way.

6. I have taken careful account of what the appellant has said in relation to signs and other visual paraphernalia. In my consideration it would be difficult and impractical to limit planning permission such that it was carried out on a by-appointment basis only. Similarly, I consider that it would not be practically possible to prevent the type of information and signs that are commonly applied to vehicles which are for sale. Whilst I have no reason to doubt the appellants' intentions at this point in time, if permission were given, the needs of the business may change and given that planning permission runs with the land, ownership may change and may involve a different style of operation. On this basis, I consider that it is likely that such signs and other features would have a considerable presence on this area within the setting and curtilage of the listed building. Taking account of the appellants' desire for larger vehicle spaces, it also seems possible that larger vehicles with a greater visual presence could be sited at the appeal site.
7. In my view, this would have a notable effect on the character of the setting of the listed building. The visual clutter that I have described would have a harmful effect on the significance of the listed building. I also consider that it would have a harmful effect on the residential character of the surrounding area, most notably on Rollason Road. I have taken note of the other commercial uses on the site and also noted the Council's response to the effects of some of these on the area. In my judgement, their presence does not mean that the proposal would be acceptable.
8. The appellants state that the existing business at the public house is running at a loss and that the additional income would go some way to reversing this. I have taken full account of the appellant's representations in this respect but I find that this is insufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
9. In relation to the harm to the significance of the public house, I regard this to be 'less than substantial' as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Such harm needs to be balanced against any public benefits arising from the proposal. Again, I have taken account of the appellants' submissions and agree that there would be some public benefit derived from the contribution to the overall business of the listed building. However, in my judgement, this is insufficient to outweigh the harm. As a consequence, the proposal is contrary to Policies DE1 and HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR