



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 January 2020

by B Davies MSc FGS CGeol

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/19/3239029
410 Brixton Road, London, SW9 7AW

- 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 Daniel Taylor (Jamaica National UK Representative Office) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 19/02742/SPF, dated 26 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 20 September 2019.
 - The development proposed is 'the replacement of an existing timber shop front for a single glazing aluminium framed shop front with mounted cladding to columns and fascia and the installation of two bollards following the removal of the existing front double gates and recessed entrance'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. For clarity and succinctness, I have used the Council's description of the development above.
3. As part of their appeal the Appellant has expressed a willingness to remove the bollards from the application, retain a recessed entrance and replace the outer glass door with a gate. The Council have not had the opportunity to comment on these amendments. However, given their detailed analysis of the original plans and clear recommendations relating to these features, I am satisfied that this causes no prejudice and I have incorporated the additional information in my decision.
4. A separate application has been submitted (19/2743/ADV) for advertising, lightboxes and signage and these issues are therefore not considered as part of this decision.

Main Issue

5. The effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the host building and area.

Reasons

6. The site is at the end of an inter-war shopping parade on the busy junction of Brixton Road with Stockwell Road in the Brixton Conservation Area. The parade was designed to be symmetrical and an equivalent curved corner building with

- recessed doorway is reflected on the other end. Whilst architectural features on the upper stories along this row have been preserved in the main, on the ground floor properties much has been covered up or lost. Further loss is not desirable in light of this being a Conservation Area, and Policy Q16 of the Lambeth Local Plan (adopted 2015) specifically requires that development should take the opportunity to respect and reinstate features of the original building. I have given significant weight to the Brixton Conservation Statement (2012) in determining the characteristics that it would be desirable to preserve.
7. It is proposed to remove the transom windows and not reinstate the transom window above the door. The height of the stall risers would be reduced, although the extent of this is not clear from the plans provided. Large panes of glass would traditionally have been supported by detailed timber frames giving a vertical emphasis with transom windows, to reflect the architectural balance of both the building and windows on floors above, and I consider this detailing an important characteristic of the building. A modern equivalent to this structure can be seen on the corresponding building at the opposite end of the row. The proposals do not reflect this important characteristic and are therefore in conflict with Policies Q5, Q11, Q16 and Q22, which together require that window detailing and the form of the building should be preserved or enhanced, and architectural features reinstated where characteristic on adjoining premises.
 8. Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) requires that any harm to a heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification, which has not been provided. In this case I do not consider the overall harm to the Conservation Area to be 'substantial' and I have therefore applied the test in paragraph 196 of the Framework. The construction would generate a short term contribution to the economy and renovate a prominent disused building, but I do not consider that these minor public benefits would outweigh the scale of harm identified above.
 9. The Council's Conservation Officer requested that the recessed entrance be retained, the bollards removed, and well-designed gates used for security over the entrance, if required. Plans submitted at appeal remove the bollards, which are therefore no longer in dispute. A recessed entrance is retained, albeit not as deep as the original. Given the strong symmetrical design of the parade, I have given weight to the presence of a recessed, but more shallow equivalent entrance at the other end of the row. In my opinion the new proposals, whilst not identical to the original structure, are respectful of the original building and therefore not in conflict with Policies Q16 or Q22. The new proposals include gates at the entrance, the design of which could be agreed through use of a condition.
 10. The fascia and pilasters would be clad in black aluminium. Given the huge variety in fascia and pilaster colour, size and design along the parade, I do not consider a change in colour would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The size of the fascia is not overly dominant and, in my opinion, would not conflict with local policies.

Conclusions

11. For these reasons, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Davies

Inspector