



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 May 2020

by M Madge DipTP, MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 June 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/20/3244769

351 Green Lane, Seven Kings, Ilford IG3 9TH

- 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 Gnyanchandra Valabhaji Joshi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 3193/19, dated 8 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 23 October 2019.
 - The development was described as "retrospective application for front canopy and shutters".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I saw at my site visit that the front canopy and shutters have been substantially completed. From what I could see, the development appears to be in accordance with the siting and appearance shown on Drawing no: 19173_099A.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the parade and street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a mid-terraced property located within a parade of shops which forms part of a primary shopping frontage to the Green Lane Local Centre. The area has a residential and mixed-use character with buildings of brick and painted render with traditional fascia signs and canopies. Buildings lining both sides of Green Lane are set well back from the highway. Several shops display goods on the pavement frontage during opening hours and some have retractable canvas canopies.
5. The development projects forward of the original shop front into an area which was previously devoid of permanent development. The adjoining shop frontages remain open. As such, the development introduces a feature which is out of keeping with the overall street scene and the established traditional pattern of development in the wider area.

6. Like other shop frontages in the locality, I understand that the frontage of the appeal site was used to display goods during opening hours and it previously had a retractable canvas canopy. This previous arrangement allowed goods to be taken in and the canopy to be retracted outside of opening hours, thus leaving the frontage area clutter free when the shop was closed.
7. The development is a permanent structure extending over the goods displayed for sale. During opening hours, the shutters are retracted leaving only the front canopy and support columns visible. When the shop is closed the shutters are lowered, allowing the goods being displayed to be securely stored on the pavement within this bulky frontage extension. As a result, the sense of openness that is gained from the wide pavements, a noticeable feature of the area, is permanently reduced.
8. Shops having goods displayed for sale on their frontages make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the wider area in terms of providing an active frontage. The development serves a similar daytime function to that previously provided by the retractable canvas canopy; providing protection to goods and customers from the elements. However, when the shop is closed, the extension is visually dominant and incongruous. While the surrounding area may not be formally recognised for its historic or architectural merit, the development is out of keeping with the established pattern of development within the parade and wider street scene.
9. The development has a high-quality finish, using a colour scheme to match the existing shop front and the perforated shutters may allow light to shine through during the hours of darkness. However, these matters do not alleviate the harm that I have identified above.
10. The appellant has brought to my attention several other instances along Green Lane where it is suggested canopies of a similar appearance have been erected. The canopies at 394 – 398 and at 378 Green Lane have the appearance of the traditional canvas canopy arrangement. While No 378 does have permanent walls, these are formed by the original low brick boundary wall being provided with railings above. The neighbouring properties to No 378 also have low brick walls to their frontages. From the evidence before me, only the development at 339 – 341 Green Lane is comparable in location and appearance. However, as the council has confirmed that this canopy does not benefit from planning permission it cannot attract any weight in my determination of this appeal.
11. Consequently, I find the development harms the character and appearance of the parade and street scene. The development therefore conflicts with Policies LP26 and LP28 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (adopted March 2018). These policies seek, amongst other things, high quality design to enhance character and appearance; and specifically for shop fronts, that new development respects the overall character and interest of the street scene and host building.

Other Matters

12. While the development is located in close proximity to the Seven Kings Road junction, it is set sufficiently far back so as not to obstruct visibility for drivers emerging from this junction. Similarly, it is set sufficiently far back from the pedestrian crossing on Green Lane so as not hinder pedestrian access. I

therefore find the development is acceptable in highway safety terms, and I note the Highway Authority has not expressed any concerns.

13. I acknowledge that the development represents an investment for the appellant and that it serves a functional purpose for the business, which could contribute to economic prosperity and to creating conditions to allow the business to expand, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the London Plan. However, I have no evidence before me to demonstrate that this particular development has increased the vitality and/or viability of the existing business or the local centre.
14. The development has received significant support from the local community. I acknowledge that the development provides protection to customers and it does represent a positive investment in the shop. Furthermore, the development does not harm the living conditions of adjacent residents. None of these matters outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the parade and street scene that I have identified.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

M Madge

INSPECTOR