



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2022

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MScTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 31 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/Z/22/3293409

36 Westgate, Shipley BD18 3QX

- 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 Ashiq Hussain against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/04729/FUL, dated 14 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 3 December 2021.
 - The development proposed is installation of shopfront roller shutters (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the shutters on the character and appearance of the host building and street scene.

Reasons

3. This part of Westgate is characterised by two and three-storey, stone-built, terraced buildings of a traditional character. Whilst a number of the ground floor shop units, including the appeal site, contain modern shopfronts, there are good examples of traditional timber shopfronts found along both sides of the street. These attributes give this part of Westgate a distinctive, pleasing character and sets it notably apart from other shopping streets in the wider area, particularly the more modern shopping units further along Westgate and Kirkgate.
4. The external metal roller shutters proposed have already been installed at the appeal site. When in the closed position, they cover the whole of the shopfront beneath the fascia. By reason of their size, materials, and form, the shutters appear in stark contrast to the traditional stone facade of the terraced building, notwithstanding that their black colour treatment matches the shopfront. Although not completely solid, the degree of transparency from the small perforations is minimal when the internal lights are switched off, and when viewed from an angle. As a result, the shutters are visually dominant, with a deadening and unwelcoming effect on the street when closed. This is detrimental to the character and appearance of the host building and street scene as a whole.
5. The appellant has suggested the use of a condition requiring internal lighting at times when the shutters are closed. However, this would not overcome my concerns when the shutters are viewed at an angle.

6. Reference has been made to several examples of existing shutters in the area, as well as the previous shutters at the appeal site. While there are some external shutters in this part of Westgate, they appeared to be in the minority, and I have no details of their age and whether any benefit from planning permission. In any case, those that I viewed, including the appeal site, confirmed that such measures do not make a positive contribution to the street scene. The presence of other harmful shutters cannot be justification for yet another harmful installation at the appeal premises.
7. I have taken account of the crime figures that have been submitted and that the shutters provide benefits by preventing crime. However, even if I were to accept the appellant's position that internal security measures are not possible in this premises, I am not persuaded, on the evidence before me, that alternative external security solutions such as those suggested in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document - A Shopkeepers Guide to Securing their Premises, 2012 (the SPD), have been fully considered, and that they would be ineffective in providing a satisfactory level of security for the premises.
8. I therefore conclude that the shutters cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the host building and street scene. Thus, the proposal conflicts with Policies DS1 and DS3 of Bradford's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2017) in so far as they seek good design, attractive streetscapes, and shop front design that is consistent with the character, quality and materials of the existing facade. The proposal is also contrary to the SPD, which aims to provide clear and practical design guidance on how to provide effective security in ways that will not adversely affect the appearance of the building or the wider area. These policies and guidance are consistent with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive and will add to the overall quality of the area, and against which I find further conflict.

Conclusion

9. Given the above, the proposal would not accord with the development plan taken as a whole and there are no considerations that outweigh this finding. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR