



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 April 2022

by Martin Allen BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/21/3288071

84 Fortis Green Road, Hornsey, London N10 3HN

- 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 c. Deniz, C & I Foods Limited against the decision of London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref HGY/2021/2153, dated 7 July 2021, was refused by notice dated 1 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is the installation of new shopfront.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the time of my visit the development had been undertaken and so my decision is made on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, bearing in mind the sites location within the Muswell Hill Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies within a parade of commercial premises arranged along Fortis Green Road. The parade is characterised by distinctive arched detail which defines the extent of shopfronts, with entrances to units above ground floor being recessed behind the arches. There is variety in the shopfronts present along the parade, however traditionally detailed and proportioned shopfronts, where present, are positive features of the streetscene.
5. The site lies within the Muswell Hill Conservation Area (the CA). I observed that the significance of this designated heritage asset lies, in part, in the high quality of buildings within the vicinity of the appeal site. The presence of traditional detailing provides a significant positive contribution to the quality of the urban environment.
6. The appeal scheme details the replacement of the previous shopfront with a new, powder-coated aluminium installation. The development comprises five equally proportioned glazed panels extending the width of the arched opening. The panels form bi-fold doors, allowing the entire frontage to be opened. While the previous shopfront has been removed, from the submitted plans it is clear

that this was constructed of timber, with a centrally located, recessed door, set with display windows either side.

7. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal for the Muswell Hill Conservation Area identifies that the appeal site forms part of a terrace dating from 1900 which is a positive contributor to the conservation area. Furthermore, with specific regard to shopfronts within the CA, many original shop fronts have been lost from the parades within Muswell Hill. The appraisal further identifies that where original features remain, they contribute to the interest and vibrancy of the streetscene.
8. The appeal scheme has replaced a traditionally designed, timber shopfront with a modern and unsympathetic replacement that fails to replicate the original in terms of both design and materials. As a result, there has been a diminution of the quality of the shopfront at this location, which diminishes the positive contribution of the parade as a whole. I acknowledge that there are examples of other unsympathetic shopfronts in the vicinity of the site. However, I do not have details of the circumstances that led to the installation of these examples. Furthermore, their unsympathetic appearance does not provide an appropriate template for further shopfront alterations. As such, they do not persuade me of the acceptability of the appeal scheme.
9. I acknowledge that the built form of the building and urban grain would be unchanged, as well as that there is some variation within the shopfronts present in the locale. Additionally, there is reference to the appeal building and neighbouring properties not being statutory or locally listed buildings. These matters do not however diminish the harm that I have identified.
10. The scheme also includes the provision of a retractable awning above the arched detailing and swan neck lighting sited on the arch itself. I observed that the awning was positioned sufficiently above the arch to ensure that this feature was not obscured when closed. There were tables and seating to the front of the establishment which would benefit from the awning when opened and as such it serves a useful purpose. I note that the lighting would be positioned lower than other lighting to the surrounding shopfronts, however it would not obscure the arched detail and would not look uncharacteristic. As such, I do not find reason to resist the development on the basis of these two elements of the scheme.
11. Nonetheless, the shopfront itself would be an incongruous addition to the site with consequential harmful effects on the locality. Therefore, the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, which includes failing to preserve the significance of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset. Thus, the scheme conflicts with policies DM1, DM8 and DM9 of Haringey's Development Management Development Plan Document (2017), policies SP11 and SP12 of Haringey's Local Plan: Strategic Policies (2013) (the Local Plan) and policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan. Together, and amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development is of a high design quality, that traditional shopfronts will be retained, and that development conserves the historic environment. In not according with these policies, the proposal would also conflict with policy SP0 of the Local Plan.
12. In identifying the harm above, I find that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset. In accordance with paragraph

202 of the National Planning Policy Framework, I have had regard to the public benefits of the proposal. The limited economic benefits arising from the proposal would in my view attract little weight. Therefore, the public benefits are insufficient to outweigh the harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset that I have identified.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Martin Allen

INSPECTOR