



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 May 2022

by J Symmons BSc (Hons) CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 June 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/W/21/3280209

142 Ilford Lane, Ilford IG1 2LG

- 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 K Patel against the decision of London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1673/21, dated 23 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as the 'erection of shop front'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the time of my site visit the development had been completed. I have dealt with the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the shop front on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a ground floor restaurant and take away business located on Ilford Lane at the corner with Howard Road. It is the end unit of a short terrace of businesses which are slightly set back from the rear of the footpath. Directly adjacent to the property's entrance, is a road crossing to Howard Road.
5. This section of Ilford Lane is characterised as a busy suburban throughway with terrace rows of various retail and commercial properties running along both sides. The majority of these properties are set back from the road and footpaths and their fronts are typically aligned to give a predominately flush and symmetrical front appearance which gives the street scene quite a wide and open character. A number of properties have front retractable verandas as well as some fixed cantilever canopies. There are some limited examples of more permanent looking front lean-to and more enclosed type extensions.
6. The development is a moderate sized front lean-to extension with a low pitched roof. It occupies the narrow private paved area between the back of the footpath and the property's original frontage being approximately 1.5 metre wide. While roller shutters to the shop front were down during my site visit, which prevented observation of the fenestration, the size of the extension's structural frame was very visible. In all likelihood, the extension will add to the building's internal space.

7. It is appreciated that there are a variety of property frontages in the area. However, even with its moderate size and low-pitched roof profile, its forward position and steel structural frame with roller shutters creates a solid and prominent looking projection which reduces the openness of the street and does not relate well to the surrounding buildings. The extension looks out of character for the area and overly dominant in this section of the street scene. The yellow colour finish, which matches the front banner sign, further emphasises its incongruity. While I appreciate the colour could be changed and the roller shutters are often raised, the structure, due to its bulk and forward projection would still look visually intrusive and out of character.
8. The appellant advises that the design complies with the local authority's design guide for extensions. However, the Council dispute this and the appellant has failed to reference which guidance they are referring to.
9. The appellant acknowledges that there are no examples of enclosed canopies within this row of businesses but suggests that this is because most are retail rather than take away. While I note this business use difference, it does not lessen the harm that the development creates to the character and appearance of the area.
10. The appellant provides a number of examples of front extensions. These include Nos 94, 116, 118-126, 130, 141-143, and 243-245 Ilford Lane. The Council advised that the extension at No 130 was dismissed at appeal and that No 142 does not have planning permission. It also notes that other extensions at Nos 167-169 Ilford Lane do not have planning permission. While I acknowledge the examples provided, the full details of the circumstances, design and planning status of these has not been substantiated and none are directly comparable to the development. Moreover, I have considered this appeal on its own merits and concluded that it would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area.
11. In conclusion, the development would harm the character and appearance of the area and conflict with Policies LP26 and LP28 of the Local Plan. These policies seek to ensure that shopfronts and new developments promote a high-quality standard of design which respects the overall character of the building and streets on which they are located, add interest, and help stimulate a vibrant pedestrian street scene. It would also be contrary to Policy D3 of the London Plan 2021, which seeks to ensure that development enhances local context by delivering buildings and spaces that positively respond to local distinctiveness. The appellant has also referred to Policy D1 of the London Plan 2021; however, this policy relates to undertaking area assessments and preparing development plans and therefore is not relevant to this appeal.

Other Matters

12. While I do not doubt that the appellant has aimed to design a high-quality extension which minimises its visual impact by limiting its size and height, uses energy efficient and low carbon materials and has carefully considered the site levels and natural sun light factors, these do not mitigate its visual impact on the street scene. Nor has it been demonstrated that the development's benefits in terms of business growth and enhancing the vitality and viability of the area outweigh the visual harm identified.

13. It is accepted that the development will have limited impact on neighbouring residents' living conditions or amenity and that Environmental Health have not raised any concern. However, this does not justify the character and appearance harm I have found.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Symmons

INSPECTOR