



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 April 2023

by Bhupinder Thandi BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/W/22/3308000

243 Wimbledon Park Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 5RJ

- 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 Fort Properties Limited against the decision of London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref 2022/1817, dated 26 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 July 2022.
 - The development is for installation of a new timber shopfront and residential access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. At the time of the site visit I noted that a metal shopfront painted yellow has been installed. I have paid regard to this in coming to my decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a retail unit located within a two and a half storey mixed use building. Retail units are positioned at ground floor with residential accommodation located on the floors above. The shop front comprises a modern metal frame painted yellow with a separate door providing access to the basement flats.
5. The proposed development is to replace the shopfront and the introduction of an additional door providing access to the basement flats. Despite the intention to reinstate a timber shopfront the proposed design principally through the introduction of the additional door would result in a cramped and clumsy design resulting in an unsympathetic and discordant shopfront undermining the appearance of the property and the area.
6. I acknowledge that there are a number of retail units in the surrounding area which have shopfronts of varying designs and materials. However, this adds to the importance of retaining features in the streetscape which make a positive contribution to the area. Moreover, the presence of unsympathetic frontages is not justification for a scheme that I have found to be harmful.

7. Whilst the appellant contends that the existing access to the basement flats is unsafe, I have not been provided with anything to substantiate this. I therefore give this matter limited weight in coming to my decision.
8. I acknowledge that the existing tenant would continue to occupy the retail unit and the proposal would provide a more direct pedestrian route to the basement flats. However, these factors would not outweigh the harm that I have identified.
9. I conclude that the proposed shopfront, due to its design would adversely affect the character and appearance of the building contrary to Policies DMS1 and DMTS 9 of the Wandsworth Local Plan Development Management Policies Document (2016) which, amongst other things, seek high quality design and shopfront design that is related to the scale, proportion and appearance of the building and location.
10. I note the council have referred to Policy DMTS 5 in the reason for refusal, however, I find that with specific regard to this appeal I have given it negligible weight in coming to my decision.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above the appeal does not succeed.

B Thandi

INSPECTOR