
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 December 2023

by David Reed BSc DipTP DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 January 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/R3515/W/23/3328088
2-4 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant consent, agreement or approval to details required by a condition of a planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Lina Haman, Dovetail Architects Ltd against the decision of Ipswich Borough Council.
 - The application Ref IP/23/00049/CON, dated 18 January 2023, sought approval of details pursuant to condition No 19 of a planning permission Ref IP/00384/FUL, granted on 23 September 2021.
 - The application was refused by notice dated 22 May 2023.
 - The development is the erection of a 100 bedroom hotel and associated parking.
 - The details for which approval is sought are: electric gates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the design of the fence/electric gates is acceptable in the context of the building and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. A 100-bedroom Travelodge has recently been constructed on the northern side of Russell Road with Endeavour House on one side, a vacant site on the other and Ipswich Town's football stadium to the rear. The building comprises a five-storey rectangular block set back behind an area of car parking with a further area of car parking within an undercroft at ground floor level at the western end of the building, the hotel above supported by a series of pillars.
4. The Council's statement explains the crime and community safety concerns with the undercroft area of the building which results in the need for electric gates to secure the undercroft when necessary. Condition No 19 requires the details of the parking areas including electric gates to be approved and carried out prior to first occupation, and whilst the parking details appear to have been agreed the details of the electric gates have not been approved. Despite this, a fence with gates has been erected on site and the hotel is open.
5. The fencing and electric gates run across the front of the undercroft from the boundary wall on one side to the hotel building on the other. Comprising blue plastic coated wire mesh panels about 2.4 m high with similar height sliding

gates, there is no suggestion from the Council that they fail to adequately meet the security objective of protecting the undercroft area from intruders.

6. However, the fence panels are unduly lightweight, a type frequently used for the perimeter fencing of an open site rather than an integral grille that forms part of a building. The fence leaves a visually awkward void between the top of the fencing and the roof of the undercroft, contrary to the approved elevation drawing 4120_PL07.1C which showed a full height grille or screen in front of the undercroft. In addition, the continuous fence/gates run across the front of the brick piers, setting the fence visually apart from the building and disrupting its otherwise vertical emphasis.
7. The result is that the fencing and gates as erected give the clear impression of a disjointed bolt-on afterthought, not an integral part of the building design despite the need for undercroft security being established during the initial design concept stage for the building.
8. The building does not lie in a conservation area nor are any adjacent buildings listed, but it does lie in a high prestige civic setting with the County Council's Endeavour House next door, Ipswich Crown Court opposite and the Borough Council's Grafton House across the road. In this company the building needs to reach a high design standard and the fencing/electric gates as erected do not achieve the necessary quality.

Conclusion

9. For these reasons the design of the fence/electric gates does not meet the necessary standard in the context of the building and its surroundings contrary to Policy DM12 of the Ipswich Core Strategy and Policies DPD Review 2022 which seeks to ensure good architectural design.
10. Having regard to the above the appeal should be dismissed.

David Reed

INSPECTOR