Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2016

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) DiP TP MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 15 February 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Z5060/Z/15/3135541
171 Broad Street, Dagenham, Barking and Dagenham RM10 9HX

- 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 Continental Food Centre against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.
- The application Ref 15/00843/FUL, dated 13 July 2015, was refused by notice dated 15 September 2015.
- The development proposed is described as a ‘ground floor front side light extension with shutter’.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a retail unit within the ground floor of a property, which is located within a commercial parade, in the Broad Street Neighbourhood Centre (‘Centre’). In common with most of the other properties in the Centre it is set back from the carriageway behind a wide, hard-surfaced area consisting of a forecourt and the pavement. Part of the existing forecourt either side of the shop entrance is used as an area for the display of fruit and vegetables.

4. It is proposed to erect an extension which would project 2m out from the shop front. Although details of its construction and materials are limited, the proposal would have 3 metal posts, a sloping roof, and a galvanised shutter on its principal elevation.

5. Whilst some of the commercial units in the Centre have external display areas, the Council states that there are currently no front canopy extensions, and I observed no nearby examples of significant front-projecting extensions on my visit. Given that the building line in this parade and the neighbouring parades is relatively straight, the proposal would conspicuously interrupt views looking along them. As a result of its size and its forward projection, the proposal would disrupt the rhythm of the streetscene, and would harm the area’s established character of largely open forecourts.
6. I appreciate that front canopy extensions are not uncommon on retail parades, and the Council accepts that there are similar extensions to this one elsewhere in the Borough. However, they are not a feature of this Centre and this parade.

7. Amongst other matters, and in general terms, policy BP11 of the Barking and Dagenham Borough Wide Development Plan Policies DPD 2011 (‘BWDP’) and policy CP3 of the Barking and Dagenham Core Strategy 2010 require that proposals achieve a high standard of design, and that they respect, protect and strengthen local character.

8. For the above reasons, the scheme would conflict with the established character of this Centre and would conflict with those policies. Although BWDP policy BP8 also requires proposals to have regard to local character, as that policy appears to be directed at residential development and protecting residential amenity, it is of limited relevance to this proposal.

9. I note that the scheme would not encroach on the public highway. The appellant points out that proposals such as this can provide additional space for business owners and a wider choice for customers. However, from the limited evidence before me, the benefits to this business, which already has an external front display area, do not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified to the character and appearance of the area. For that reason, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Chris Couper
INSPECTOR