



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2008

by **J S Deakin FRICS**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State
for Communities and Local Government

The Planning Inspectorate
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Decision date:
10 December 2008

Appeal Ref: APP/H0738/A/08/2084292

7 Ridley Mews, Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, TS20 1DW

- 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 D J Taylor against the decision of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- The application Ref 07/3388/FUL, dated 20 February 2008, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2008.
- The development proposed is retrospective application for the erection of roller shutters.

Decision

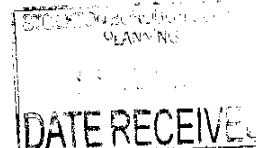
1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue is the visual impact of the shutters on the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene, with particular regard to the appeal site's situation within the Norton Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. At the time of my inspection during working hours, the shutters were raised. However, the submitted photographs clearly show the appearance of the building with them lowered. The bow window and the doorway are completely covered by the shutters that extend down to ground level. They present a blank and featureless frontage and are very prominent and obtrusive. The heavy black painted shutters contrast sharply with the attractive brickwork and white painted window frames. They cause serious harm to the appearance of the building and the street scene. Even when the shutters are rolled up, the box at the top and the guides at the sides project at least 300mm in front of the main wall and detract from the appearance of the building.
4. The design of the shutters fails to satisfy the requirements set out in para 5.9 of the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 1 – Shop Front Design (SPG1) as they cover the whole shop front; do not sit comfortably within the framework of the fascia; do not tone with the rest of the frontage; and do not incorporate the box housing into the shop front as a whole.
5. SPG1 says that external shutters should only be considered if internal shutters are not possible. I fully accept the need for security protection of windows and I appreciate the difficulties of installing internal shutters to bow windows.



Nevertheless, adjoining occupiers of similar premises have fitted various types of external grilles which are much less obtrusive than roller shutters and I see no reason why similar grilles should not be used on the appeal building.

6. Elsewhere in the Conservation Area, there are several examples of external roller shutters. I do not know the planning background of these and consequently cannot regard them as material considerations in favour of allowing the appeal. In fact, I consider that the opposite is true as they show what a deadening effect such shutters can have on a retail area.
7. I conclude that the shutters, as installed, cause unacceptable harm to the appearance of the building and the street scene, contrary to Policy GP1 of the adopted Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan 1997. Furthermore, the development fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Norton Conservation Area contrary to Local Plan Policy EN24 and to Planning Policy Guidance Note 15.

J S Deakin

INSPECTOR