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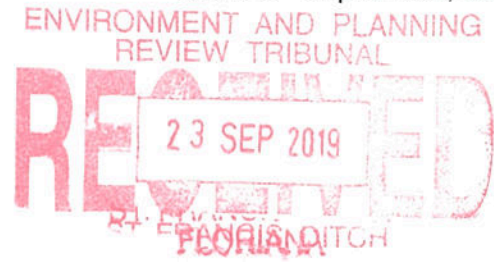
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Our ref: PIMIG/R/PA1

Your ref: PA1922/19

Date: 6th September, 2019

The Environment and Planning Review Tribunal
PO Box 172
MARSA



REF: To demolish existing building, to excavate site and to construct basement garage, class 4B unit, three apartments and penthouse – site at 78/79, Triq I-Isptar San Giljan, Fontana

Request for appeal

I refer to the refusal decision on this application taken by the Planning Commission. I am appealing from this decision and respectfully request a revocation of this decision for the following reasons:

Demolition of facade

The two reasons of refusal revolve around the demolition of the existing façade. The application was recommended for approval by the Planning Directorate. The Planning Commission did not agree with this recommendation and asked us to retain the existing façade. For reasons outlined below, we do not believe the façade, especially in its context, merits retention and the application was refused.



Malta Architect Awards:
Award in Urban Design 2017
Special Commendation in Innovative Design, Rehabilitation and Conservation 2017
Double Special Commendation in Public Open Spaces 2018

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Site is located outside UCA

The site in question is located outside the Urban Conservation Area of Fontana and it is therefore not even within a zone which is classified as worthy of some form of retention as in local plan map 14.9F. In this particular local plan map, as in other local plan maps classifying UCAs, the map shows classification of streetscapes in grades A, B and C. C is the lowest grading given to UCA streetscape and is considered for replacement. Sites outside UCA are not given any form of grading. There is therefore no reason why the façade of this site should not be considered for demolition.

Site does not form part of a conserved streetscape

The site in question is not located within an area where there is a conserved streetscape. The only other building which has similar characteristics is the adjacent building. There have been various replacement buildings and newly developed site within the street in question, on both sides of the street.

Effect on streetscape and value of façade if additional floors are added on retained facade

When considering the height limitation allowed within the area in question, a hypothetical situation whereby the existing building is conserved and other floors added upon it would result in a streetscape whereby the retained façade would lose completely its value, making the retention of the façade as something without any scope, given that it is not part of a conserved streetscape. The Planning Commission did not object to the proposed additional floors – the Commission was actually prepared to allow an increase over the maximum height limitation to consent for the same number of floors while retaining the façade. However, no particular attention was given to this point – that retaining the façade while adding 2 + 1 floors above it would result in a worthless retained façade.



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Accommodation of proposed development vis-à-vis retention of facade

Our proposal caters for a basement garage, a ground floor shop and apartments above. Therefore the ground floor would have to cater for the garage door entrance, the common parts entrance and the shop entrance. I am quite confident that the Tribunal acknowledges that carrying out alterations within the existing façade would render it worthless considering its symmetrical proportions and considering the two arched doors at ground floor. It is therefore impossible to retain the façade while proposing the development we are catering for. However, it is worth noting that the two reasons of refusal revolve solely around the issue of the retention of the façade and not of the details of the other components of the proposed development.

For the above reasons, I kindly require that the Tribunal revoke the refusal decision and that the proposed development is approved.

Yours truly,

Edward Scerri, A & C E



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