
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 November 2016

by I Jenkins BSc CEng MICE MCIWEM

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

Decision date: 29 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G0908/D/16/3159361

8 Longthwaite Grove, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 9PH

- 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 G Jelly against the decision of Allerdale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2/2016/0243, dated 13 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 June 2016.
 - The development proposed is change current timber sliding sash windows to uPVC tilt and turn on front of property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider that the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Wigton Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The section of Longthwaite Road to the northeast of Nos. 33 and 12 falls within the Wigton Conservation area. This includes No. 8, which is a mid-terrace house that fronts onto the southeastern side of that section of road. This part of the Conservation Area is characterised by a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached residential properties. The windows contained within the front elevations of the properties in the terrace that includes No. 8 are of a sliding sash design. The same can be said of almost all of the properties in the adjacent terrace, to the southwest. The traditional sliding sash design adds to the heritage value of those groups of dwellings and the positive contribution that they make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst some of the other properties along that section of Longthwaite Road also have sliding sash windows, the majority do not.
 4. Section 72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)* requires special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
 5. The proposal involves the replacement of the existing front windows of No. 8 with windows of a tilt and turn design, which appear to have been installed at the back of the property. The proposed windows, which would comprise a single, hinged sash, would have a much more modern appearance, clearly distinguishable from the dual sliding sash arrangement of the front windows of
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the adjoining properties. The proposal would detract from the traditional character and appearance of the frontage of No. 8 and the terraced row of which it forms part, diminishing the positive contribution that it makes to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, given the variety of window designs along Longthwaite Road, which have diluted the historic significance of this part of the Conservation Area, the proposal, although harmful, would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area.

6. Policy S27 of the *Allerdale Local Plan (Part 1), 2014* (LP) indicates that only proposals which do not harm any positive qualities of the heritage asset will be approved, unless there is a clear and convincing public benefit to the proposal that will outweigh the harm caused to the asset. This is in keeping with the approach set out in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework), which indicates that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a Conservation Area, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. However, in this case the appellant has not identified any benefits that would result from the proposed development.
7. I conclude that the proposal would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, contrary to the aims of LP Policies S4, S32, S27 and DM15, which between them seek, amongst other things, to safeguard the distinctive character of an area as well as protect and enhance the historic environment.

Other matters

8. I note that the Town Council did not object to the proposal and residents of one local property indicated their support for the scheme. However, neither this, nor any other matters raised are sufficient to outweigh the considerations which have led to my conclusion on the main issue.

Conclusion

9. I conclude that the proposal, which would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, would conflict with the Development Plan taken as a whole and there are no other material considerations to indicate that the appeal should nevertheless be allowed. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

I Jenkins

INSPECTOR