

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by Debbie Moore BSc (HONS) MCD MRTPI PGDip

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

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/P1133/W/16/3159829

Flat 10, Charlton Court, Bank Street, Teignmouth, South Devon TQ14 8FN

- 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 Mrs Marion Rees against the decision of Teignbridge District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01533/FUL, dated 11 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as: "To replace 6 x existing wooden windows with white upvc windows to Flat 10. Like for like designs. NB The existing windows are deemed to be in a dangerous state. Some do not open which is a fire safety issue. Sash boxes are rotten and some sashes do not fit correctly. Glass is broken. There is a risk that some windows/glass could fall on pedestrians below".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on heritage assets in the vicinity, in particular, the Teignmouth Town Centre Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a self-contained flat on the second floor of a four storey building, which is located within the Conservation Area. This part of the Conservation Area is characterised by development associated with the growth of Teignmouth as a resort town, during the 19th and early 20th Centuries. The area has a unified appearance due to the classical architectural style, which is typified by well-proportioned sash windows, rendered elevations and other decorative features.
 4. The appeal building, which was formerly the London Inn, occupies a prominent corner plot with its main elevation facing onto Bank Street. Bank Street is a relatively narrow street of tall buildings, with shops at pavement level. I saw from my site visit that many of the shop fronts are not traditional in design or materials, and these modern alterations detract from the quality of the area. However, the upper floors are largely unaltered and their classical design is particularly evident from the fenestration. There are several examples where timber sliding sash windows remain, and these make a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area.
 5. The proposal is to replace the existing windows, four of which are within the front elevation facing Bank Street. The windows each contain four panes, which are separated vertically by a moulded glazing bar.
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6. The plans show that the replacement windows would contain four panes of the same proportions as those existing, with the same sized frame and mullion. However, the size and moulding of the glazing bar is unclear from the plans. It appears that the proposed glazing bar would be wider and would be a decorative feature, as opposed to being part of the integral structure of the window. This would significantly affect the appearance of the window. Slender, moulded glazing bars are a typical feature of the historic windows in the area. Whilst the existing windows are not original, their effect on the appearance of the host building and the wider Conservation Area is neutral. In contrast, the proposed replacement windows, incorporating a decorative bar with a flatter profile, would stand out as a harmful alteration. Moreover, upvc would be an uncharacteristic material. The front windows would be visible in views from street level despite being on the second floor.
7. I saw from my site visit that some windows to other properties in the Conservation Area, including one opposite the appeal property, have upvc windows. These windows have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and over time, further alterations of this kind would erode the quality of the area. Previous unsympathetic alterations do not justify a further alteration of this type.
8. I appreciate the issues that the appellant is experiencing with regard to maintenance, and I have considered the safety risks which have been highlighted. However, there are other, more appropriate means of addressing these issues. Overall, the stated benefits are limited and do not outweigh the harm described above.
9. The Council refers to numerous listed buildings surrounding the appeal property. I have not been provided with any details of these and, as a consequence, I am unable to assess the effect of the development on the setting of the listed buildings. Nonetheless, I find that the development would adversely affect the significance of the Conservation Area which is a designated heritage asset. It would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Policies EN5, S2 and WE8 of the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033 (May 2014) (the Local Plan). Also, the development would be contrary to Policies S1A, S1, S21A, of the Local Plan which seek, amongst other things, to secure sustainable development that maintains or enhances the character, appearance and historic interest of the street scene.
10. I conclude that the development would lead to harm, as described above. Whilst, the harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets would be relatively localised, and therefore less than substantial in terms of the national policy, I give great weight to the preservation of the Conservation Area. There are limited clear public benefits that would outweigh the harm in this instance.
11. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Debbie Moore

Inspector