



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2017

by H Butcher BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 29th September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/D/17/3180716

16 Station Road, Kintbury, Hungerford, Berks, RG17 9UR

- 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 R Marshall and Mrs S King against the decision of West Berkshire Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01170/HOUSE, dated 21 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 7 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is replacement windows and door (Residential property) Conservation Area.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the replacement windows and door on the character and appearance of the host property and whether they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Kintbury Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. 16 Station Road is a detached red brick property with a slate roof. It is part shop, part residential property, and occupies a prominent location in the middle of Kintbury Conservation Area. The conservation area here contains a number of historic buildings many of which retain original details such as timber sash windows. The appeal building itself is also of some age, constructed circa 1885-1895, and has many original timber sash windows with narrow glazing bars. The appeal property and the other historic properties in the immediate area make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of Kintbury Conservation Area.
4. It is proposed to replace the windows and door in the residential part of the property. This would include replacing the original timber sash windows currently in the front, side and rear elevations with uPVC windows. Although the replacement windows and door would mimic the existing, uPVC is not a material traditionally associated with a building of this age. uPVC also tends to be chunkier and shinier, particularly in relation to window frames and glazing bars. Furthermore, casement windows are proposed which operated in an entirely different manner to sash windows. The overall effect would therefore be unsatisfactory and not a good match given the historic character of the host building and the conservation area in which it is situated.

5. The appellant argues that a large number of buildings in the area have uPVC windows and doors. However, I observed a number of original timber sash windows on properties in the immediate area surrounding the appeal site during my site visit. This does not, therefore, justify the further loss of such features. I note a single storey rear extension to the shop was recently permitted (ref 17/00829/FUL) and that this included uPVC windows. However, these windows are at ground floor and to the rear of the property, largely out of public view. This does not, therefore, alter my findings above.
6. I therefore find that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the host property and would also fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Kintbury Conservation Area. The proposal would therefore conflict with Policy CS19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy (2006-2026) which seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
7. In terms of the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 134 the harm to Kintbury Conservation Area would be 'less than substantial' affecting only its immediate surroundings. However, that would still represent a harmful impact, adversely affecting the conservation area's significance. I acknowledge that the replacement windows would improve energy performance at the property and therefore improve living conditions for its occupants, as well as improve safety in terms of, amongst other things, unlawful entry and fire escape. However, there are alternatives to uPVC such as new double glazed wooden sash windows which could provide similar benefits. Consequently, I find that, even taken together, the public benefits would not outweigh the harm to Kintbury Conservation Area.
8. The absence of letters of objection is not a determining factor. This appeal has been determined on whether there would be unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the host building and Kintbury Conservation Area. For the reasons outlined above the proposal would result in such adverse effects. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Hayley Butcher

INSPECTOR