

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 July 2019

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/19/3229618
7 Princes Road, Penge, London, SE20 7JN

- 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 Sean Illing against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/19/00810/FULL6, dated 13 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2019.
 - The development proposed was described as the installation of replacement uPVC window on the front elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the installation of replacement uPVC windows and door on the front elevation at 7 Princes Road, Penge, London, SE20 7JN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref DC/19/00810/FULL6, dated 13 February 2019, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location Plan at scale 1:1250, Drg No PRNC-A102, Window Schedule 'A', Window Schedule 'B', and details of the door on 'C'.

Procedural Matter

2. The original description of the development referred simply to the replacement of a window on the front elevation. The decision notice includes reference to replacement of the front door, which is also part of the proposal. For the record, the proposal is to replace the ground and first floor windows and the front door on the front elevation of the appeal property. This is reflected by the description that I have used in my formal decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Alexandra Cottages Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a mid-terraced, two-storey dwelling set within the Alexandra Cottages Conservation Area (ACCA), a compact estate of mid-late Victorian cottages. According to the information provided to me the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for the ACCA remains in draft form. It describes the area as a "model" estate from the second half of the 19th Century that helped to establish new approaches to social housing that were later adopted more widely in the construction of council houses in the 1920s and '30s. It was constructed by the "Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrious Classes", a society founded to provide rented accommodation for labouring men and their families. The SPG identifies that much of the historical interest of the estate is derived from its approach to estate layout and housing design. The area is the subject of a Direction under Article 4 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. This removes certain permitted development rights, including replacement doors and windows, and brings such development under planning control.
5. The ACCA comprises principally parallel roads of semi-detached cottages built on generous plots. The vast majority of these are identified by the Council as Locally Listed Buildings. The terraced houses on Princes Road run perpendicular to the semi-detached cottages and were erected later in the 1880s. It is significant that none of these are identified as being locally listed.
6. Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework recognises that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. The houses in Princes Road are important because of their historical links with the Metropolitan Association but I saw little of the harmony that otherwise characterises the remainder of the estate. The layout and form of these dwellings is markedly different to the other cottages, much of any original detailing to the terrace has been lost, and the properties display a mix of finishes, with original brickwork and roof tiles to many altered in a variety of ways over the years. There is little cohesion to the terrace along Princes Road, exemplified best by the array of replacement windows and doors that can be seen. From my own observations I saw that only 6 of the 23 properties that line just the one side of Princes Road displayed windows that resembled anything like the original sashes, with fewer still displaying anything closely resembling a period front door.
7. The appeal property already has replacement windows and front door. The windows have aluminium frames with diamond leaded glazing. The front door is equally unsympathetic to the period of construction. The proposed PVCu door would follow the simple design of the historic doors and in this regard, it would comply with the draft SPG.
8. The draft SPG states that the Council will encourage the removal of later inappropriate windows that do not make a positive contribution to the character of the area. It goes on to state that any replacements should copy

the original designs closely using traditional materials and finishes and should be set back into the brickwork and that to ensure accurate historic detailing single glazing will be required on replacement windows.

9. The proposed window frames would be heritage style, slim profile PVCu sash windows. They would be recessed behind the facing brickwork and would follow the designs of the original. I accept that neither the material, nor the use of double glazing, would be traditional. However, mindful of the existing window pattern, and the overall lack of unity to the terraced properties along Princes Road, there would be an obvious benefit from the works to the overall appearance of No 7. I have been presented with no clear evidence to suggest that the proposed windows would not match the proportions or mouldings of the original windows.
10. In my assessment, the value of the buildings within this terraced group would be unaffected by the proposed works and therefore I find overall that there would be no harm to the established character or appearance of the Alexandra Cottages Conservation Area. As such there would be no conflict with the aims or objectives of the draft SPG, or with Policies 37 or 41 of the Bromley Local Plan 2019 insofar as they relate to the quality of design for new development and respect for existing buildings and spaces, including the need to preserve and enhance the characteristics and appearance of a conservation area.

Conditions

11. A condition specifying the relevant drawings is necessary as this provides certainty. The Council has suggested a condition that would require the materials of construction to match the existing but given the nature of the proposal this would be unreasonable.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given, and in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR