



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 July 2019

by M Chalk BSc (Hons), MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A1530/W/19/3227152

14 Vint Crescent, Colchester, Essex CO3 3QQ

- 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 John Baker against the decision of Colchester Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 183120, registered 15 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as change metal windows and doors to same design and colour.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to replacement windows. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the replacement door and planning permission is granted in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 183120, registered 15 January 2019 so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted.

Procedural matter

2. I note that the application was submitted after the replacement of the front door but before the replacement of any windows. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect that the windows would have and the door has on the character and appearance of the property and the wider Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site lies within Colchester's Conservation Area 2. As such I am mindful of my statutory duty under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Vint Crescent comprises 6 blocks each of 4 flats facing onto a landscaped green set back from Lexden Road, and is included in Colchester's adopted Local List. The listing description specifically refers to the metal windows and Art Deco doors, and that 'the original character of the buildings has survived remarkably well'.
5. The blocks have a uniform appearance of cream painted exteriors with crittal windows, rainwater goods and doors finished in turquoise, albeit with some variety apparently arising from weathering. The consistency in materials and appearance makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the properties within the street scene and the Conservation Area.

Replacement windows

6. No information has been submitted with the appeal to allow assessment of the proposed replacement windows, other than that they would be PVC and matching in colour. As there is a wide range of styles, colours and other details available for uPVC windows the onus is on the applicant to present details of their proposal for the Council to assess. Consequently in the absence of such details there is no reasonable way to assess what the impact of the proposed windows would be on the character and appearance of the property and wider Conservation Area.
7. The character of the appeal property and the wider Vint Crescent group derives in significant part from their uniform appearance, of which the windows are a prominent feature. I must determine the appeal upon the basis of the information before me, and therefore it would not be appropriate to impose a condition requiring details of windows to be submitted and agreed as doing so would remove the opportunity for public consultation on these details.

Replacement door

8. Of the 24 flats that comprise the properties on Vint Crescent, 12 have front doors that face onto the street. At the time of my site visit 11 of these doors were visible from the street. The appearance of these doors was largely uniform in terms of form and appearance. Each door is finished in the same colour with five horizontal panels of similar size, of which either all five or the top four are glazed, with the lower panel being solid in some cases.
9. The door to no 14 is similar in proportions and appearance to the door it replaces and those in neighbouring properties with five glazed panels and a turquoise finish in keeping with the colour used throughout Vint Crescent. The change from wood to PVC as the main material of the door does not result in a significant change in appearance or proportions in comparison to front doors at other properties in Vint Crescent. While the door does include an additional panel at the bottom for the letter box, I note that there are differences in the door fittings throughout the street and the difference is minor and not a prominent feature.
10. The replacement of the wooden door with a PVC door does not result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the appeal property, the wider group of properties that comprise Vint Crescent, or the Conservation Area. The replacement door is therefore acceptable having regard to policies DP14 and DP1 of the Colchester Borough Development Policies (adopted 2010, amended 2014) and policy UR2 of the Colchester Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted December 2008).

Conditions

11. The Council have suggested a condition requiring that the development subject of this appeal be retained in its current form. I consider that this is not necessary, as the Council will need to grant planning permission for any significant alterations to the doors and windows of the property.

Conclusions

12. Given that the door and windows are physically and functionally independent of one another, the two elements of the appeal development are clearly severable. It is therefore appropriate in this instance to issue a split decision,

dismissing the appeal in so far as it relates to the replacement windows, and allowing the appeal in so far as it relates to the replacement door.

M Chalk

INSPECTOR