



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2019

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3rd September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/D/19/3228143

4 Wallis Road, Basingstoke RG21 3DW

- 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 Bianca Eissner-Povey against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 18/00719/HSE dated 9 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 14 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing aluminium windows and installation of wood replica Evolution Flush Casement windows of a matching design to no 2 Wallis Road (the other half of the semi).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing building and on the designated heritage asset of the Fairfields Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a semi-detached residential dwelling on the north side of Wallis Road, within a predominantly residential area and within the Fairfields Conservation Area. I am advised that the Conservation Area is subject to an Article 4 Direction removing certain permitted development rights.
4. Although there has been more recent infill development, the significance of the Conservation Area relates to its attractive streets and groups of Victorian and Edwardian buildings. The appeal property and its adjoining semi-detached pairs of villas on both sides of the road are a very attractive and distinctive grouping of late Victorian dwellings with their two storey bays under gables and shared architectural features; I understand that this group is identified as 'notable' buildings within the Fairfields Conservation Area Appraisal.
5. The house as existing has aluminium casement windows and is seeking permission to replace the front facing windows with wood replica Evolution Flush Casement Windows. There would be no objection in principle to replacement windows of appropriate material, design and details to preserve the character and appearance of the dwelling, the group of buildings and wider Conservation Area. The traditional material is timber casements with single

glazing although there is some variety within the group, particularly in terms of the pattern of glazing bars and it is not clear to me which is more closely aligned to the original pattern of fenestration.

6. I appreciate that the proposal would not require changes to the overall window openings. Furthermore, the proposal has sought to put forward replacement windows which have comparable features with the traditional windows and to match the adjoining window pattern at No 2 which is the other 'half' of the semi-detached pair.
7. However, on the basis of the limited information before me which is primarily computer generated specifications rather than details showing the proposed windows in relation to the existing property, I am not satisfied that the proposed replacement windows would blend with the detailed proportions and dimensions of traditional windows. Quite small differences to the detailed specification of windows can have a marked impact on the appearance of the windows and the and so detract from the character and appearance of the existing dwelling, the group of dwellings and the Conservation Area. Whilst UPVC is not a traditional material for period properties, I acknowledge that technological advances have enabled materials to be developed which have a very close appearance to traditional wood frames. However, in this particular case, the proposed double glazing units of 28mm thickness, together with the indicated frame dimensions would result in the windows appearing more bulky and heavy than traditional windows and even than the existing windows at the property. I consider that as a result the windows would be an overly heavy and dominant feature which would materially harm the character and appearance of the property, the group of dwellings and the Conservation Area.
8. I therefore conclude that the proposed replacement windows would not preserve the character and appearance of the host property, the group of dwellings and the Fairfields Conservation Area. This would conflict with Policy EM11 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan 2011-2029; Design and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document, the Fairfields Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document, and the draft Heritage Supplementary Planning Document as well as the National Planning Policy Framework and in particular Section 16, all of which seek, amongst other things to conserve and enhance the historic environment.
9. I have sympathy with the objective to replace the existing windows and that thermal efficiency and cost were considerations influencing the proposed solution. However, I am not persuaded that the proposed replacement windows could not have been detailed in a more sympathetic manner in keeping with the period design of the existing house and surrounding houses. I appreciate that there are other examples of non-traditional windows in close vicinity of the site. However, each proposal and development must be judged on its individual merits and the existence of other non-traditional windows does not persuade me that more should be permitted, given the harm I have concluded.
10. Paragraph 196 of the Framework sets out that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including where appropriate securing its optimum viable use. No public benefits have been advanced, although the greater energy efficiency secured with the replacement windows may be considered as a modest

economic and environmental benefit. Whilst the harm to the designated heritage asset of the Conservation Area would, in my view, be less than substantial, I do not consider that there are public benefits sufficient to outweigh that harm.

11. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, including in representations, I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR