



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 November 2019

by John Braithwaite BSc(Arch) BArch(Hons) RIBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 25th November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/Y/18/3219032

Orchard House School, 2 Rupert Road, London W4 1LU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Orchard House School against the decision of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00969/2/L8, dated 11 May 2018, was refused by notice dated 20 July 2018.
 - The development proposed is erection of sign at school entrance.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and listed building consent is refused.

Reasons

2. 2 Rupert Road is a Grade II listed building. The application sought the grant of listed building consent for a free-standing sign at the school entrance.
3. Section 16(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act) states that "In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses". The proposed sign, given that it would be free-standing, would not affect the preservation of the building or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.
4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed sign on the setting and significance of the listed building.
5. 2 Rupert Road, along with other listed buildings in the area, form part of the Bedford Park development of 1875-85. The houses, some now in other uses, were designed in the Picturesque style. The appeal building has three storeys, is constructed in red brick under a gable tiled roof with dormers, and, along with other distinctive features, has a shaped gable above the entrance porch. The porch is on the front elevation of the building to Bath Road. In the frontage to the road is an original painted timber gate designed in the same style as the building.
6. The Heritage Statement that accompanied the application states that "The building has significant aesthetic value" and that "The aesthetic qualities of the building are best appreciated from Bath Road...". These statements are true, as is "The evidential, historic and aesthetic values of the building underpin the reasons for its designation as a Grade II listed building".

7. The proposed sign would be 1225mm wide and 525mm high. It would be in transparent glass with etched lettering, would be supported on stainless steel posts, would have the potential to be side lit, and would be positioned just above and behind the fence to the right of the timber gate. The Heritage Statement assesses the effect of the sign and concludes that it "...would have some very slight effect upon the appreciation of the aesthetic value of the listed building's principal frontage from immediately adjacent on Bath Road. This effect would...be harmful, albeit at a very low level of less than substantial harm, and, in the terms of Section 16 of the 1990 Act, fail to preserve the setting of the listed building".

8. The Heritage Statement understates the harm that would be caused. The sign, given its size, materials and position relative to the frontage of the building, would be a prominent, visually intrusive and alien feature that would detract from the 'significant aesthetic value' of the building. The proposed sign would have a more than slight adverse effect on the setting and significance of 2 Rupert Road.

9. The harm to the significance of the listed building would be less than substantial. However, with regard to paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework, there are no public benefits to outweigh the harm that would be caused. Though the Development Plan is not a statutory consideration in matters relating to listed building consent, it is worth noting that the proposed sign conflicts with the thrust of policy CC4 of the Hounslow Local Plan.

Other matters

10. 2 Rupert Road is situated within the Bedford Park Conservation Area. For the reasons given above the proposed sign would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Neither the presence of other signs in the area nor any other matters mentioned in support of the appeal, either individually or collectively, outweighs the main conclusion.

Conclusion

11. The proposed sign would have an adverse effect on the setting and significance of 2 Rupert Road. The appeal has therefore been dismissed.

John Braithwaite

Inspector