
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 February 2020

by David Murray BA (Hons) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/20/3245405
105 West Street, Harrow, London, HA1 3ES

- 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 London Building Renovation against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref. P/4379/19, dated 7 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 12 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is replacement sash windows to front elevation (Timber sash windows with slim double glazing and correct period details).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for replacement sash windows to front elevation (Timber sash windows with slim double glazing and correct period details), at 105 West Street, Harrow, London, HA1 3ES, in accordance with the terms of the application Ref. P/4379/19, dated 7 October 2019 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing No's 0001 & 1400.
 - 3) The replacement windows hereby permitted shall be of timber frame construction and painted white, and shall be retained in that form thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the replacement windows on the character and appearance of the host property and its setting in the Hill Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

Background

3. The appeal site comprises a two storey mid-terraced residential property which is sited on a rising street on the eastern edge of Harrow on the Hill and forms part of the Conservation Area. The building has 'two over two' timber sash windows at ground and first floor at the moment and it is proposed to replace

these with similar sash windows in the same opening but the windows would be glazed with slim line double glazed units painted white.

Effect on character and appearance

4. The Harrow on the Hill Village Conservation Area Appraisal sets out the main significance of this heritage asset where the lower part of West Street provides short distance views of the street scene/views of character. Moreover, the Appraisal highlights the domestic style of properties in West Street and makes specific reference to the importance of architectural elements present in this heritage asset including sliding timber sash windows. The importance of such windows is also recognised in the Article 4 Direction which applies to properties locally including the appeal site and results in alterations and replacement of windows to require planning permission.
5. In considering this issue I have borne in mind the general advice and guidance produced by Historic England - Traditional Windows Their Care, Repair and Upgrading (2017), as also referred to by the Council.
6. At my site visit I noted the existing sash windows in the property but they have not always been in this form. The appellant has provided photographs of when the ground floor of the property was a shop with a large shop window. There is also an (undated) old photograph of this window being reduced in size but having a bow window with small panes. Likewise, a further (undated) photograph shows the first floor window as a sash but with each of the sliding elements subdivided into 8 small panes. Also provided is a copy of the planning permission granted in 1997 under ref. WEST/497/97/FUL for alterations to the front elevation of the property including a new window and partial rendering.
7. It is therefore clear to me from the evidence submitted that the existing sash windows are not 'original' but have evolved over time with significant changes to their size, proportions and overall design. With this background, even though the existing windows may be relatively sound, I see no policy objection in principle to replacement timber sash windows being installed.
8. While the Council now recognises that the windows are not original, the Council raises objection to the units being double glazed as it says even the slim line units may disrupt the uniformity of character of the buildings in the street. However, it appears to me that the units proposed would have and maintain a traditional form. The detailed cross-section of the windows shown on the submitted plan – drawing 1400 – 'Window detail' indicates a traditional form of sash window where in particular the glazing fits into the glazing bars which are solid and the latter are not an afterthought applied to the glass as is sometimes proposed.
9. Although the new windows are proposed to have insulated glass units, the ones proposed are specified to have a very slim line form. I am satisfied that the details put forward indicate a normal thickness of timber sections and glazing bars and the photographs submitted of the use of such windows do not show that there would be an uncharacteristic reflection in the windows.

Planning balance

10. Overall, I am satisfied that the timber sash windows proposed as a replacement would respect the historic and architectural character of the building and its setting within the conservation area. The proposal would thus

preserve the character and the appearance of the conservation area and not harm this heritage asset. I find no conflict with the provisions of Policies 7.4B 7.6B or 7.8C & D of the London Plan or stated policies in the Draft London Plan; Policies CS 1B and CS1D of the Harrow Core Strategy or policies DM1 and DM7 of the Development Management Policies DPD. This finding is not outweighed by any other consideration and this indicates that planning permission should be granted.

11. The Council advises that in addition to the standard conditions on 'the commencement of the development' and 'accordance with the approved plans', a further condition is recommended to ensure that the new windows are painted white. This is reasonable and necessary to preserve the special character and appearance of the conservation area and I will impose it.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

David Murray

INSPECTOR