
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 December 2019

by J Gibson BUEP MPIA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/W/19/3237209

2 Parkside, Vanbrugh Fields, Blackheath, London SE3 7QQ

- 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 Ms Victoria Hall against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 19/0569/F, dated 3 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 May 2019.
 - The development proposed is for the retention of one UPVC window and the proposed installation of five UPVC replacement windows and one door.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The above description of development has been taken from the Council's decision notice. It is considered to more accurately describe the various components of the development proposed.
3. The UPVC window in the Study has already been installed and I am therefore considering this component of the development retrospectively.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the existing and proposed replacement windows and door upon the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, having regard for the Blackheath Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

5. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. The appeal property is located within the Blackheath CA which is strongly characterised as a residential area with a rich architectural built form in excellent condition. The Council's Management Strategy and Conservation Guidance for Blackheath CA notes that erosion to the character and architectural detailing of buildings is an ongoing threat to the CA.
6. The appeal property forms part of a larger residential complex of buildings referred to as 'Parkside'. These buildings are described as having a neo-georgian style with uniform design features that enhance the overall

- contribution of the complex to the surrounding character and appearance of the area and the CA on the whole. Specifically, the use of timber framed sash windows and doors are considered key unifying features. The appeal property is located on the ground floor adjacent the main entrance to the building.
7. The existing UPVC replacement window appeared visibly different to the predominant timber framed window design which characterises the host building. The narrower frames and a projecting vent on the UPVC replacement window appeared out of place, disrupting the harmonious timber framed detailing of the building facade. The ground floor location of the appeal property means that the replacement windows would appear prominent from the street scene at pedestrian level and perceptibly different. Consequently, the installation of similarly designed UPVC windows and a door throughout the appeal property would further detract from the architectural character and detailing of the building, harming the uniformity of the buildings within the complex and their positive contribution towards the Blackheath CA.
 8. Accordingly, I find harm to the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area, neither conserving nor enhancing the CA. In accordance with Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) I consider the harm to the CA as a designated heritage asset to be less than substantial. Therefore, I have had regard to whether the appeal proposal would offer any public benefits which may outweigh this harm.
 9. I note that the UPVC windows and door may improve living conditions for the appellant and that it has been suggested that UPVC windows and doors would require less maintenance and upkeep compared to timber framed windows, therefore representing a more sustainable option. Limited evidence has been provided to support these claims. Notwithstanding this, I do not consider these potential benefits to outweigh the harm to the CA as a designated heritage asset in this instance.
 10. Consequently, the appeal proposal conflicts with Policies DH1, DH3 and DH(h) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy (adopted July 2014), Policies 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (adopted March 2016), and the Greenwich and Blackheath Conservation Areas: Management Strategy and Conservation Guidance (adopted 2010). These policies and guidance seek, amongst other things, to ensure that development achieves a high quality design which preserves or enhances the character and appearance of conservation areas.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has made reference to examples of similar replacement windows within the 'Parkside' complex in support of the appeal proposal. No details have been provided as to whether these examples have been lawfully carried out or permitted. I am therefore unable to attribute meaningful weight to these examples. Notwithstanding this, my assessment of the appeal proposal is based on my observations during my site visit and on its own merits.
12. Based on the evidence before me the supporting appeal decisions referenced by the appellant are not considered comparable to the appeal proposal before me. The Maple Court case involved the replacement of all windows and doors to be of a consistent UPVC design, maintaining the uniform appearance of the building. The Lyncroft Gardens decision was based on the existing windows being of a mixed design and material, to which UPVC replacement windows

were considered appropriate within that context. The appeal proposal seeks to install UPVC replacement windows and a door where the original detailing and composition of the building façade comprises of traditional timber framed sash windows. The proposal under this appeal would result in a discordant outcome which would disrupt the unified appearance of the host building which contributes positively to the CA. I have therefore given limited weight to the cases put forward by the appellant.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Gibson

INSPECTOR