



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 February 2020 by Thomas Courtney BA(Hons) MA

Decision by Andrew Owen MA BA(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/D/19/3241670

8 Park Road, Chislehurst, BR7 5AY

- 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 Paul Fellows against the decision of the London Borough of Bromley Council.
 - The application Ref DC/19/02771/FULL6, dated 24 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 September 2019.
 - The development is a ground floor front bow window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural matter

3. The application was submitted retrospectively, and I have considered this appeal on the same basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Chislehurst Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area. In this respect, national policy on heritage assets, which includes conservation areas, is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At paragraph 192, it sets out matters which should be taken into account including sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
 6. The appeal property comprises a two-storey mid-terrace Victorian dwelling located on the southern side of Park Road within the Chislehurst Conservation Area (CCA). The CCA covers a large area between Chislehurst Railway Station and the Sidcup by-pass incorporating a diversity of forms of development and
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open space. The CCA Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) divides the conservation area into sub-units with the appeal site being located in sub-unit 4 which is characterised by Chislehurst High Street acting as a central community node surrounded by streets containing typical late nineteenth century terraced and villa housing.

7. Park Road is characterised for the most part by terraced properties displaying common historic Victorian features such as vertically sliding timber sash windows with rubbed brick headers, Flemish bond brickwork, arched lintels over front entrances and small front gardens. The ground floor front bow window that the appellant seeks to retain is larger than the original front ground floor period window openings prevalent on Park Road and features a prominent white plastic uPVC header that has replaced the original brick header. Park Road is not highlighted specifically in the CCA SPG, but its terraced housing is referred to and this, I find, makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CCA.
8. In my view, the bow window appears as a discordant addition to the host dwelling and disturbs the architectural consistency of the terrace of properties of which it forms part. It is noticeably wider than the front ground floor windows of the dwellings directly adjacent and the thick white plastic header and window joinery stands out in the street scene. These elements appear overly dominant and detract from the attractive Victorian character of the street. Although only a small proportion of the properties on Park Road have retained their original vertical sliding timber sash windows, most have retained the original size of the ground floor front window opening and distinctive brick header. The appeal dwelling's prominent front bow window therefore contrasts with the underlying historical features prevalent on Park Road. For this reason, the proposed retention of the bow window would have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the street scene.
9. I acknowledge the specific reference to No. 13 which features a similar bow window however this does not alter the fact that the vast majority of the properties on Park Road have retained their originally sized windows and headers. The bow window at No.13 thus appears as an anomaly in the street scene and does not justify the proposed retention of the development.
10. Furthermore, the CCA SPG clearly states that original window and door proportions, materials and detailing should be retained and that insensitive replacement windows made from uPVC are visibly inappropriate and should be discouraged. Although the appellant refers to paragraph 4.22 of the CCA SPG which suggests that some adjustments to buildings in conservations areas may be acceptable, I find that, in this instance, the bow window significantly detracts from the character and appearance of the CCA owing to its bulky and incongruous appearance. As a result, the proposed retention of the development would cause harm, albeit less than substantial, to the significance of the CCA.
11. Given the above, the development therefore conflicts with Policy 41 of the Bromley Local Plan (the 'local plan'), the CCA SPG and the NPPF which all seek to ensure heritage assets are preserved and enhanced. The development also fails to accord with local plan Policies 6 and 37 and Policy 7.4 of the London Plan which together aim to ensure proposals are well designed and respectful of their contexts.

12. As I consider the harm to the CCA is less than substantial, I need to weigh any public benefits against that harm. The appellant asserts that the bow window was integral to the renovation of what was a run-down dwelling which detracted from the street scene. However I have no evidence of the appearance of the house previously and whilst, no doubt, renovation work has resulted in a better quality house, I consider the benefit of this to the housing provision in the Borough to be negligible and the contribution a single window made to this to be minimal. Therefore, these factors do not outweigh the harm to the significance of the CCA.

Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Thomas Courtney

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR