



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 March 2020

by Gareth Wildgoose BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/20/3247056

18C Abbey Road, Enfield EN1 2QL

- 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 & Mrs David Todd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 19/03348/HOU, dated 9 September 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is replacement of existing bay window to front on first floor; replacement of front door; replacement of small window to right of front door.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for replacement of existing bay window to front on first floor; replacement of front door; replacement of small window to right of front door at 18C Abbey Road, Enfield EN1 2QL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 19/03348/HOU, dated 9 September 2019, and the details 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: location plan (100030848) & AG 001/1 (dated 23 October 2019).

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building and the area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the significance of Bush Hill Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Bush Hill Park Conservation Area is historically significant as part of the development of the Borough of Enfield and includes physical evidence of the transformation from a largely rural area to a suburban one in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Bush Hill Park Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA), February 2015, also identifies other factors which contribute to its special interest including the high-quality, well-built properties with a variety of architectural styles and quality of detailing and materials, set in a park like context. Other characteristic features include abundant street greenery and a spacious feel provided by wide roads, recessed building lines and relatively consistent building sizes and heights.

4. The appeal property falls within the core area of the Conservation Area on Abbey Road and comprises an end terrace within a row of four that lies adjacent to bungalows and semi-detached properties. There is also a rhythm of detached and semi-detached properties opposite with characteristic hipped roof designs and some of the buildings include distinctive front gable outriggers.
5. The terraced row of which No 18C Abbey Road (No 18C) forms part, of itself, incorporates a clear rhythm and harmony of features including ground floor integral garages and recessed entrances with a door and small window, first floor flat roofed bay windows and dormer windows within a gambrel style roof. However, whilst the Georgian style of bay windows and the use of glazing bars within the terrace are reflective of original features of surrounding properties, it is evident that the building is a modern addition (i.e. after 1960) which lacks the quality of architectural detailing of older properties nearby, has a differing form and a less spacious feel due to its higher density and predominance of hardstanding given over to off street parking. In that respect, the CACA identifies that its presence has a negative impact on the Conservation Area and based upon my own observations, No 18C and the adjoining properties in the terraced row contribute little to its overall significance and special interest.
6. The proposal seeks to replace the existing front timber bay window at first floor level of No 18C and the timber framed side window at ground floor level with a similar design of flush casement windows albeit utilising uPVC materials. In addition, the existing timber door would be replaced by a uPVC door with two glazed panes in the upper section.
7. The CACA indicates that there is an issue in the Conservation Area in terms of loss of original details from older properties and specific mention is made to the effect of uPVC windows on the appearance of properties and the gradual erosion of their character. Furthermore, I acknowledge that in most cases the use of uPVC as opposed to timber can be harmful upon the overall appearance of an individual building and have a cumulative effect on the character of the Conservation Area. However, in this case, I am mindful that Policy DMD44 of the Enfield Development Management Document (DMD), adopted November 2014, indicates that the design, materials and detailing of development affecting heritage assets or their setting should preserve the asset in a manner appropriate to its significance. As previously mentioned, the property and the surrounding terrace contribute little to the Conservation Area in that respect.
8. Having regard to the above, I also noted during my visit that uPVC windows are a common feature of the terrace including for upper floor dormers, neighbouring first floor bay windows and notably in terms of the presence of a uPVC door and side window in the recessed entrance of the neighbouring No 18B. I also observed that although some of the older properties along Abbey Road retain timber windows, the majority have now been replaced with uPVC windows. Whilst I don't have the full details before me of the circumstances which led to the replacement windows, there are many examples which appear well-established and there is no substantiated evidence that the Council is pursuing further action to facilitate their removal.
9. In the case of the property subject of this appeal, its dormer window has already been replaced using uPVC to match the other three in the terraced row and the new bay window would similarly match those of the three neighbouring properties. The uPVC window would consist of a design which would largely

mimic the dimensions and features of the original timber bay, the condition of which has visually degraded at some edges of the frame, and it would be more energy efficient. Furthermore, whilst the front door and side window are likely an original feature of the modern building, they are not particularly prominent in their recessed positions relative to the integral garage door. In that context, the uPVC door with upper glazed panes would not look out of place in the terraced row in circumstances where the other designs differ and there are already examples of partial glazing. The submitted details also indicate that a similar colour of door could be used. Consequently, as uPVC materials are already a common feature of the terraced row - its use in this case would not be particularly conspicuous or noticeable, other than from a close inspection.

10. When taking account of the varied use of materials at the appeal property, the surrounding terrace and in the properties beyond and that No 18C forms part of a modern building that does not positively contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area, I am satisfied that the proposal would not have a harmful impact on the host property or its immediate surroundings. My finding in this case is finely balanced with the influential factor being the particular circumstances of the property and its surroundings, given that the cumulative effect of replacement uPVC windows and a lesser proportion of uPVC doors has already eroded a significant proportion of the original architectural features in Abbey Road. It is also influenced by the quality and design of the replacement front door and windows as indicated in the submitted details and their ability to assimilate appropriately with those that exist in the wider terrace.
11. I, therefore, conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and the area, and would preserve the significance of Bush Hill Park Conservation Area. The proposed development, therefore, would not conflict with Policies CP30 and CP31 of the Enfield Core Strategy, adopted November 2010, Policies DMD37 and DMD44 of the DMD or Policies 7.4 and 7.8 of the London Plan - March 2016. In that respect, I have had regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the designated area. I have also had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the great weight to be given to the asset's conservation when considering the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the designated heritage asset.

Conditions

12. The Council has put forward a total of three conditions to be imposed should I be minded to allow the appeal, which I have considered against the tests of the Framework and advice provided by the Planning Practice Guidance. In that respect, the standard time limit for the permission and a plans compliance condition are imposed in the interest of certainty of the permission granted. However, a materials condition is not necessary when taking account of the application details and submitted plans.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that this appeal should be allowed.

Gareth Wildgoose

INSPECTOR