
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 October 2020

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/D/20/3248966

214 Gunnersbury Avenue, Acton, London W3 8LB

- 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 Mrs Jovanka Kilibarda against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00535/214/P2, dated 13 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 February 2020.
 - The development sought is the change of windows and front door from single glazed metallic to double glazed white in line with surrounding residence.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the change of windows and front door from single glazed metallic to double glazed white in line with surrounding residence at 214 Gunnersbury Avenue, Acton, London W3 8LB in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 00535/214/P2, dated 13 December 2019.

Procedural matter

2. The replacement windows and door that are the subject of this appeal are in place. I have assessed the development on that basis.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 2-storey mid-terrace house within the Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area (CA). The CA derives its significance as a designated heritage asset primarily from the open land, gardens and historic buildings within the Park itself. The Gunnersbury Park residential estate, to which No 214 belongs, is also a positive contributor to the character and appearance of the CA. With its rows of short terraces and semi-detached properties formally laid out as a residential estate, this interwar housing area has a broad cohesion and general consistency to its built form that is locally distinctive.
5. According to the Gunnersbury Park Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), the continued pressure for uPVC, double-glazing and insensitively proportioned replacement windows are among the weaknesses and future threats to parts of

the CA. To address this concern, the Gunnersbury Park residential estate is subject to an Article 4(2) Direction that removes certain permitted development rights so that remaining original features are protected. The Direction notes that uPVC replacements are not usually considered appropriate.

6. The single glazed, aluminum casement windows and door in the front elevation of No 214 have been replaced with white uPVC double-glazed units, as have two windows in the upper rear façade. From the photographs provided, the replacements generally have thicker frames and separating bars and some windows include additional panels compared to their original counterparts. Nevertheless, the simple unfussy design is retained. To my mind, the new windows and front door also blend in with the white painted brick, render and half timbered front façade that are distinctive characteristics of the appeal property and features that unify the appearance of other properties that address the same side of Gunnersbury Avenue as No 214.
7. From what I saw, many buildings within the Gunnersbury Park residential estate include windows with white uPVC frames with no obvious style or size prevailing. Along Gunnersbury Avenue, I observed that properties with white uPVC framed windows and doors are widespread. Notwithstanding the Council's policy to generally resist uPVC replacements, this type of material now forms part of the area's visual character.
8. When seen from the road, the appeal windows and door are not conspicuous nor look out of place because the context within which No 214 is visually 'read' includes many properties with similar features that do not match the originals. In those circumstances, the use of uPVC is in keeping with the character and appearance of many other properties within the CA.
9. In reaching this conclusion, I do share the Council's concern that the installation of uPVC window frames and doors is often inappropriate and that alterations that remove original features on buildings within heritage assets should be resisted. However, in this case, the fenestration of No 214 reflects the prevailing type and style of windows and doors in the area generally and along Gunnersbury Avenue in particular. I also recognise that change to the character and feel of an area can result incrementally from small-scale decisions consistently taken over time. However, changes have already taken place to the extent that uPVC windows and doors are now commonplace and this form part of the area's character.
10. Overall, I conclude on the main issue that the appeal windows and door do not significantly alter the character or appearance of the appeal property or the CA, which are preserved. Therefore, I find no conflict with Policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and SC7 of the Council's Local Plan 2015-2030. These policies seek to ensure that residential alterations complement the original building and that new development promotes high quality design and conserves if not enhances the features or qualities that contribute to an area's character.
11. These objectives underpin the principles of the CAA and the advice within the Council's Supplementary Planning Document, *Residential Extension Guidelines*, (SPD) with which the development would comply. The SPD notes that the Council will normally refuse replacement windows where the new materials, design, proportion and finish would differ from the original prevailing types. The development also accords with the policies of the National Planning Policy

Framework insofar as they relate to the quality of design and the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

12. The appellant states that the previous windows and front door were in a state of disrepair and that the replacements have boosted a feeling of safety and security after a recent burglary at the property. Reference is also made to the benefits of double-glazing in providing better insulation from the noise of passing traffic. However, these benefits could be achieved in ways other than by introducing windows and a door, as sought. As such, these matters do not, in themselves, significantly weigh in support of the appeal.

Conditions

13. The development is complete and, for the reasons given, the materials used are appropriate. Consequently, the standard time limit condition and requirements to comply with the approved plans and for matching materials, as suggested by the Council, are unnecessary. No other conditions are required.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR