
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 February 2021 by A J Sutton BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

by R C Kirby BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/W3710/D/20/3262820

10 Manor Park Road, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV11 5HR

- 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 Daniel Large against the decision of Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 037263, dated 29 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 12 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Replacement front, wooden, single glazed sash windows, on both ground and first floor with like for like double glazed, sash uPVC windows.'
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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.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect the proposed development would have on the character and appearance of the Abbey Conservation Area.

Reasons for Recommendation

4. The appeal property is one of paired Edwardian dwellings which contribute to the attractive residential enclave towards the end of Manor Park Road within this part of the Abbey Conservation Area. The appeal property falls within the Earls Road (West) section of the Conservation Area which is characterised by semi-detached Edwardian villas of consistent form, scale and materials. The long vista of groups of buildings down the straight line of Manor Park Road is an attractive feature of the Conservation Area. Whilst No 12 has a substantial extension to the side the historic façade of both it and the appeal property appear relatively unaltered and a positive feature in the street scene.
5. S72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires when determining proposals in conservation areas that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. At paragraph 192 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework), 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 replacement windows to the side and rear elevation of the appeal property have not affected the historic symmetry evident at the front of the dwelling. The proposed replacement windows would however be of a material alien to the original character of the property and would contrast unsympathetically with windows on the paired dwelling. Whilst similar in appearance to traditional frames, the homogenous 'machine-made' appearance of uPVC would lack the distinctive subtleties and texture of painted timber, particularly when viewed from the immediate proximity of the public realm.
7. Consequently, the proposal would not make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and would significantly erode the contribution that the host property would make to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and its significance as a designated heritage asset; a matter to which I give great weight.
8. In reaching this view I am mindful that there are numerous examples of uPVC replacement windows close to the appeal site, which has diminished the period character of the respective properties. Such examples do not justify the further harmful erosion of the historic fabric of the area. I also note that the loss of historic detailing and materials are identified as a negative factor affecting the Conservation Area.¹
9. The harm identified to the significance of the designated heritage asset would be less than substantial and in accordance with paragraph 196 of the Framework, should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
10. In this respect, the property did not seem in a particularly poor state of repair, but it is accepted that renovations could enhance the dwelling's contribution to the street scene. However, this could be achieved using a type and material of windows that respect the existing property and locality and this limits the weight I give to this matter. Moreover, no compelling case has been presented which would necessitate the use of uPVC because alternative sympathetically designed schemes could address the concerns regarding security and energy efficiency. The absence of objections from nearby occupiers and Historic England is a neutral matter which weighs neither in favour nor against the proposal. Accordingly, I find therefore, that the public benefits advanced carry limited weight which do not outweigh the identified harm.
11. It is therefore concluded, that the proposed development would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Abbey Conservation Area and would be contrary to Policies BE3 and BE4 of the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan 2011-2031, which collectively state that proposals must be designed to a high standard and make a positive contribution to the designated heritage asset's character, appearance and significance, and the statutory test.

¹Reference Abbey Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals 2008

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

A J Sutton

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and concur that the appeal should be dismissed.

R C Kirby

INSPECTOR