



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2022

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/L5240/W/21/3282651

Flat 4, 7A Vermont Road, Upper Norwood, London SE19 3SR

- 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 Kate Anstey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Croydon.
 - The application Ref: 21/01293/FUL dated 3 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is installation of a replacement uPVC window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Appellant submitted further information at the appeal stage, including brochures on the type of UPVC windows proposed which I have taken into account in my consideration of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and on the Harold Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is an attractive, large house divided into a number of flats on the south-east side of Vermont Road and on the corner with Orleans Road, within a predominantly residential area. The appeal property and other properties within Vermont Road lie within the Harold Road Conservation Area, but most properties in Orleans Road are excluded.
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 such areas.
6. The significance of the designated heritage asset of the Conservation Area is the quality of the generally regularly spaced and well-preserved collection of late Victorian houses as exemplified by most of the houses in Vermont Road, including the appeal property. The Council's Harold Road Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document (CAAMP SPD) indicates that the appeal property and most of the houses in Vermont Road are locally listed.

7. The large detached buildings within Vermont Road and the Conservation Area, many of which are divided into flats, have attractive detailing including elaborate timber porches. Whilst there are some examples of UPVC windows, the majority of windows remain with traditional wooden windows. This includes the appeal building and, in my view, the traditional timber windows contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The CAAMP SPD also refers to timber sash windows being a key architectural feature within the Conservation Area.
8. The proposal seeks to replace the timber sash rear windows to one of the flats, Flat 4, at roof level with UPVC sash windows. One of the windows is a bay window. Although I have taken into account the mature trees at the rear, I do not agree with the information presented by the Appellant; in my view, the rear elevation is readily seen in street scene views.
9. I appreciate that the quality of UPVC windows and their similarity to the proportions and form of timber windows has improved over time. However, the Council's policies and guidance is clear that replacement windows should match existing windows, in terms of proportions, details and materials. I have taken into account that the existing windows may not be original but nonetheless they are timber framed and their proportions and detailing have a traditional appearance found on other timber windows and they respect the character and appearance of the host building. Although the details provided demonstrate that the proposed UPVC replacement would have a number of features in keeping with a traditional timber window I cannot be satisfied on the information before me that they would, particularly in terms of detailing and materials, fully replicate the traditional sash windows.
10. The existence of other UPVC windows on other buildings within the Conservation Area are very apparent, and in my view detract from the character and appearance of the individual buildings and of the Conservation Area. They do not therefore persuade me that more should be permitted.
11. I have no reason to dispute that the existing windows are in need of renewal but there is no information submitted as to why this could not be with traditional timber windows as sought by policy and the CAAMP.
12. I do not consider that it would be appropriate to grant permission subject to a condition, requiring further details. It would be necessary for all details to be available at the time of determination to ensure that the proposed windows would preserve the character and appearance of the existing building and of the Conservation Area.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposed replacement windows would harm and would not preserve the character and appearance of the appeal property and of the Harold Road Conservation Area This would conflict with Policies SP4, DM10 and DM18 of the Croydon Local Plan 2018, the Suburban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2019 and Policy D3 of the London Plan as well as the CAAMP SPD, all of which amongst other things seek for a high quality of design which respects the local context and contributes to the significance of designated heritage assets.

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

L J Evans

INSPECTOR