

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 September 2022

by J Bell-Williamson MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 October 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/22/3300979

30 Reed Pond Walk, Romford RM2 5PB

- 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 Jake Marshall against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P0266.22, dated 21 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 April 2022.
 - The development proposed is 'replacement of rotten window at front of house, with like for like hard wood double glazed window'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed replacement window would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Gidea Park Conservation Area, in which the appeal property is located.

Reasons

3. The conservation area comprises a large part of the residential suburb known as Gidea Park, with the estate established by the 1910/11 and 1934 Gidea Park Exhibition houses. No 30 Reed Pond Walk is a detached two storey dwelling that is a Class I house constructed as part of the 1910/11 Exhibition. It displays an unaltered original appearance and, as such, it makes a positive contribution to the wider character of the conservation area.
 4. The proposal involves the replacement of the ground floor living room window with a hard wood double glazed window. As I saw at the inspection and from the photographs provided, internally the window is in a relatively poor state of repair. The appellant provides evidence that the condition of the frame means that it would need to be replaced rather than repaired.
 5. The appeal property appears to include original casement windows to the front elevation as a whole, which are prominent within the street scene and are an important element of the overall original character and appearance of the appeal property. While pictures of the intended replacement window have been provided, these appear to be generic and there is insufficient detail from
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the pictures and the application form to appreciate fully the effects of the changes proposed. In particular, the width of glazing bars and the thickness and appearance of the glazing itself are unclear. As such, it is not possible to conclude on the basis of the information provided that the replacement window would preserve the appearance of the property compared to the original window currently in situ. A replacement window that introduced a more modern or materially different appearance would be particularly apparent and incongruous due to the contrast with the remaining original windows in the front elevation.

6. Therefore, for the above reasons, I find that the proposed replacement window would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Gidea Park Conservation Area. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation¹. Based on the above findings, I consider the harm to be less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
7. Under such circumstances, the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal². Therefore, I have had regard to the benefits put forward by the appellant, which relate to the need to replace the window due to its poor state of repair and the improved thermal efficiency of a replacement window. I have also had regard to the representation from an interested party raising the same matters in support of the proposal. However, I have found that there is insufficient information to assess these benefits against the effects on the conservation area and, therefore, these matters cannot outweigh the harm that would occur.
8. Therefore, for the above reasons, I conclude that the replacement window would not preserve the character and appearance of the Gidea Park Conservation Area. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to Policy HC1 of The London Plan 2021 and Policy 28 of the Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 (2021), which concern the effects of development on heritage assets; and to Policy 26 of the Local Plan, which includes the requirement for high architectural quality and design.
9. In reaching this conclusion I am particularly mindful of the statutory requirement that in exercising planning functions in conservation areas special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area³.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should not succeed.

J Bell-Williamson

INSPECTOR

¹ Paragraph 199.

² Paragraph 202.

³ Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.