
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 April 2024

by Les Greenwood MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/24/3337165

33 Chestnut Avenue, Edgware, Harrow HA8 7RA

- 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 James Compton against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref P/2377/23, dated 15 August 2023, was refused by notice dated 26 October 2023.
 - The development proposed is cladding on the exterior of the house for insulation and rain protection.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for cladding on the exterior of the house for insulation and rain protection in accordance with the terms of the application Ref P/2377/23, dated 15 August 2023.

Preliminary matter

2. The proposal is retrospective in that the walls of the house have already been clad in external insulation with a white render finish. I saw this in place at my site visit.

Main issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Canons Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

1. 33 Chestnut Avenue is a semi-detached house within the conservation area. The Council's *Canons Park Estate Conservation Area & Management Strategy* (CAA) states that the conservation area is outstanding for its landscaping, openness and high quality architecture. It advises that this is a formally planned Metroland estate largely in a Tudor Revival design.
2. Chestnut Avenue is a residential cul-de-sac mainly built up between 1915 and 1950, containing a variety of designs and materials including a number of rendered and part-rendered houses, some with decorative timbering. No 31,

- adjoining No 33, retains its red brick frontage, with a rendered feature bay at the front and a pebble dash finish to part of the side and the whole of the rear.
3. No 33, as rendered, sits comfortably within this mixed street scene. It is not in a particularly prominent position, near the end of the street, and is not of special architectural quality. I note the concern in policy HC1(C) of the London Plan (LP) about the cumulative impacts of incremental change, but there is a capacity for some change within the varied architectural character of the street.
 4. For much the same reason I see no particular need for these 2 houses to be mirror images of each other. The rendered finish of No 33's walls still reflects the render of No 31's bay, helping it to blend into the street scene. It does not stand out as being at all remarkable or incongruous. The depth of the new insulation stands a bit proud of the brick walls next door and creates deep reveals around the windows, but these aspects are hardly noticeable except under scrutiny and have no significant visual impact.
 5. I am required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. In this case I conclude that the proposal preserves the character and the appearance of the conservation area. It accords with the heritage protection provisions of LP policies D3(D11) and HC1(C), Harrow Core Strategy policy CS1(B and D), Harrow Development Management Policies DM1 and DM7, the Supplementary Planning Document *Residential Design Guide*, the CAA and the National Planning Policy Framework.
 6. The proposal's aim to improve energy efficiency weighs in its favour, but is not crucial to this decision as I find no harm in heritage terms. Likewise, I note the Council's concern about the breathability of the rendered walls and its suggestion that improved insulation might be achieved in other ways, but these factors do take away from my assessment of the main issue.
 7. The Council does not suggest a need for any planning conditions. As the development has been carried out acceptably, I also see no need.
 8. I find that the proposal accords with the development plan. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Les Greenwood

INSPECTOR