



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2024

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/24/3345779

23 Abbotsleigh Road, Streatham, London, SW16 1SW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Keith Penfold against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2023/4673.
 - The development proposed is the installation of UPVC windows to front, rear and side elevation at all levels.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the installation of UPVC windows to front, rear and side elevation at all levels at 23 Abbotsleigh Road, Streatham, London, SW16 1SW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 2023/4673, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans: Site Location Plan at scale 1:4000 and Drg Nos 3608/SD01 and 3608/SD02 (Masterframe Heritage Option).

Procedural Matters

2. I have used the description that was given by the Council on their decision notice and which was repeated by the appellant on the appeal form. This accurately and succinctly describes the proposal in favour of the lengthy explanation and technical description that appeared on the application form.
3. The planning application included two options for the proposed replacement windows. The Council's decision was taken having regard to Drg No 3608/SD02 (Masterframe Heritage Option). I have considered the appeal based on these plans.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the wider Streatham Park Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached, two-storey dwellinghouse dating from the 1920s and set within the Streatham Park Conservation Area (CA), a fairly small three-limbed area comprising an eclectic range of mainly detached and semi-detached properties dating from the 1920s and 1930s. The appeal property's front elevation is part brick, part rough-cast render and symmetrical around a central vertical axis with a centrally positioned door and a triple light window above, with two-storey bow window bays mirrored to each side. The fenestration to the front elevation appears to be original. Windows to other elevations are a mix of original and replacement. The property is a pleasant example of its type and, together with its contemporaries, contributes positively to the area's special character, derived partly from the cohesive relationship of the period dwellings, and their placement within a leafy suburban setting.
6. The proposal would involve substantial replacement of existing windows to all elevations. The Council is concerned that those to the front would be out of keeping by reason of their material and detailed design, and thereby visually harmful to the character and appearance of the property and the wider CA.
7. The Council's *Streatham Park Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Strategy* (SPCAAMS) was approved in 2009. It describes most houses within Abbotsleigh Road as having timber or steel casement windows. Nevertheless, during my visit I saw a significant mix of window types, some replacements, others were original, of which not all were necessarily well maintained or positive contributors. Regardless, given the setting of the houses behind garden frontages, I found window details in most cases to be reasonably subordinate defining features. Most replacements were sympathetic and only noticeable as such with deliberate scrutiny. Indeed, I note that whilst the SPCAAMS encourages the reinstatement and replication of original window types, it says that UPVC windows only usually fail to replicate original details sufficiently and are therefore not recommended on this basis. It is significant that the SPCAAMS does not entirely rule them out as a material of choice.
8. The Council has stated that the proposed windows would not accurately replicate the fine leadwork and detailing of the timber windows but there is no substantive evidence to support this view. The proposed plans show that the replacement windows would directly replicate the style of those existing. In fact, elsewhere within the officer's report the Council admits as such, where it states, *'The windows would be replaced with white UPVC double glazed windows that contain the same window detail as the existing'*. I am mindful also of the appellant's efforts to source windows that would be sympathetic. I have no reason to doubt assertions made that the proposed replacements would have a woodgrain-effect finish with the lead-light design of the top lights to the front facing casements faithfully replicated.
9. Given the replacement windows that are proposed, the recessed setting of No 23 within the street scene, and the context of Abbotsleigh Road within the wider setting of the CA, where replacement windows are not uncommon, I am satisfied that there would be no harm to the character or appearance of No 23. It follows that the character and appearance of the CA would be unharmed. Its significance as a designated heritage asset would therefore be unaffected. In these circumstances, I find no conflict with Policies LP1, LP3 or LP5 of the

Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038, adopted in 2023, as far as between them they seek to ensure that development displays a high level of physical integration with its surroundings, including the detailing of host buildings, and which conserves features that contribute to a heritage asset's significance. Although also referenced within the Council's reason for refusal, I have not been directed to conflict with any specific part of the *Housing Supplementary Planning Document*, adopted in 2016.

Conditions

10. A condition specifying the relevant plans is necessary as this provides certainty. Given my findings, I do not consider further details of the proposed replacement windows to be necessary.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above and in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR