



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 January 2025

by N Robinson BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/D/24/3347026

17 Sandford Road, Hotwells, Bristol BS8 4QG

- 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 Lawrence Eskell against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/01335/H.
 - The development proposed is Installation of replacement double glazed windows in the front of the house.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area including the City Docks Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises an attractive 2-storey Victorian terraced dwelling set within a street scene of similar properties on Sandford Road. There is a general consistency of architectural design to ground and first floors within the road, with the rhythmical pattern of window openings and bays being a particular feature. Within Sandford Road, front windows are of identical sash design, many in original wooden frames, with some having replacement windows in uPVC.
4. The appeal property is located within the City Docks Conservation Area (CA) which covers the area that formed the working heart of Bristol's dock and commercial activities. The association with the docks and their role in the development of Bristol as a thriving merchant harbour appears to form part of the significance of the CA. The site is located within the Poole's Wharf character area, as set down in the City Docks Character Appraisal & Management Proposals (2011) (CACA), which comprises the late Victorian terraces and late 20th century residential developments to the north of the floating harbour. As part of a coherent group of buildings with a uniformity of design features, the appeal property makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of this part of the CA.
5. The appeal proposal relates to the replacement of the existing timber framed sash windows with double glazed windows to the front of the house. The CACA identifies the use of unsympathetic materials, especially uPVC in replacement windows, as a weakness and a threat to the Poole's Wharf character area. The

appellant contends that the replacement windows would appear very similar to the wooden windows that they would replace.

6. I have not been provided with full details of the proposed windows. There is therefore limited detail before me regarding their colour and form, the thickness of the frames, the depth of reveals, how far the windows would project from the façade and whether they would have a reflective sheen. In the absence of this detail, I cannot be assured that the windows would be a faithful replication of the windows they are replacing or if they would be readily apparent as modern replacements, discernible from the sash windows which characterise the appeal property and the surrounding area. Given this I cannot be assured that the windows would not cause a noticeable and harmful change to the character and appearance of the host building, combining to erode an important part of the character of the area that would detract from the significance of the CA.
7. I have taken account of the mix of window materials, including uPVC, used on other buildings in Sandford Road and Oldfield Road, including the suggestion that the Council have failed to enforce against these installations. However, I have limited information before me to be able to draw any comparisons between these installations and the appeal proposal. In any case, the existence of these other examples does not justify development that could harm the character and appearance of the CA. In the absence of detailed information of the proposed windows I cannot be assured that the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
8. Unsympathetic window replacements would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA. The Framework sets out that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The development would bring benefits including improved energy efficiency and sound proofing and it is stated that the windows would be more cost-effective. Cumulatively these primarily private benefits do not outweigh the potential harm to the CA.
9. It has not been demonstrated that the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the appeal property and the surrounding area, that it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA or that it would not cause harm to the significance of this heritage asset. Conflict therefore arises with those aims of policies BCS21 and BCS22 of the Bristol City Council Core Strategy (2011) and policies DM26, DM28, DM29, DM30 and DM31 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014) which seek to ensure that development proposals safeguard or enhance heritage assets.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

N Robinson INSPECTOR