



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2025

by J Heppell BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/W/24/3349852

Flat 4, 17 St. John's Road, Bournemouth, BH5 1EQ

- 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 Roxana Ciciu against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application reference is 7-2024-10629-D.
 - The development proposed is replacing windows with UPVC of the same colour.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the street number rather than a house name for the site address, as the application and appeal forms give different names for the property.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Boscombe Spa Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. 17 St John's Road is a semi-detached property dating from the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, constructed of brick and tiles, with a prominent gable projection at the front incorporating a double height bay window. The architectural detailing of the property includes a rendered plinth, bands of render above and below the bay windows, and brick corbal detailing below the eaves. Other properties in the street exhibit similar design characteristics.
5. Flat 4 is a first floor bedsit located at the rear of the property. Along with the first floor flat at the front, it retains white painted timber sash windows, whilst white UPVC windows have been installed in the ground and second floor flats. The timber sash windows of the appeal property are in a poor state of repair, which I was able to see for myself on my site visit. The appellant wishes to replace them with white UPVC windows.
6. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on decision makers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. The appeal site lies within Boscombe Spa Conservation Area, based on the Boscombe Spa Estate which was developed between around 1870

and 1910. The significance of the Conservation Area derives from its fine examples of Victorian and Edwardian villas, which possess a wealth of architectural detail and design. 17 St John's Road is one such example which, together with other properties in the same road, exhibits period details including timber sash windows.

7. Timber sash windows are an important traditional element of the building, and whilst those on the rear of the property are not visible from public vantage points, they can be seen from a number of nearby properties both within and outside the Conservation Area. Whilst the proposed UPVC windows would be of the same colour as the existing windows and have comparably sized window panes, they would be recognisably UPVC windows in appearance and design, and consequently would be out of character with the Conservation Area. I have attached considerable importance and weight to the harm that would be caused to the Conservation Area as a whole, and so whilst parts of the host property and other properties in St John's Road already contain UPVC windows, particularly to the rear, this does not justify further erosion of the Conservation Area's character and appearance.
8. I have sympathy with the appellant's desire to improve the performance of their windows in order to eliminate condensation and draughts, reduce heat loss, and address security fears resulting from the difficulty of locking the windows. Fear of crime can be a material consideration, and the appellant has provided evidence of high crime rates in Boscombe. However, although the windows need to be repaired or replaced as a matter of urgency, I am in agreement with the Council that alternatives to UPVC windows need to be actively considered, and I therefore attach moderate weight to these considerations.
9. Taking all these matters into account, I find that the public benefits of improved security, performance and energy efficiency fall short of outweighing the less than substantial harm that would be caused to the significance of the Boscombe Spa Conservation Area. As a result, the proposal would fail the test set by paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the statutory test. As such it would be contrary to Policy 4.4 of the District Wide Local Plan, Policies CS39 and CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy, and Policy BAP2 of the Boscombe and Pokesdown Neighbourhood Plan, which together seek quality design and the protection of designated heritage assets from, amongst other things, inappropriate alterations.

Conclusion

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

J Heppell

INSPECTOR