



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 May 2025

by **Ian McHugh DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W2845/D/25/3362621

Marmalade Cottage, 93 Northampton Road, Brixworth, NN6 9DX

- 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 Jack George Buck against the decision of West Northamptonshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/0301/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of two front elevation windows.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the replacement of two front elevation windows at Marmalade Cottage, 93 Northampton Road, Brixworth, NN6 9DX in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 2025/0301/FUL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Elevation Drawings dated 24 January 2025.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Brixworth Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a mid-terrace dwelling, which is constructed of honey coloured stone with a slate roof. The windows on the front elevation are timber casement windows, with 6 panes on each window section. The CA covers the historic core of Brixworth and its character is mixed in terms of building ages, styles, and materials. However, the terrace, of which the appeal property is a part, is a distinctive and prominent feature that contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, notwithstanding the fact that some original and traditional features have been changed or altered.
4. The appeal property is the subject of an Article 4 direction, which means that planning permission is required for replacement windows on the front of the dwelling. The appellant proposes to replace the timber openings with uPVC windows. The Council considers that the use of uPVC to be unacceptable in principle, as they do not match the appearance of timber and because of its uniform character.

5. It is a statutory requirement that decision makers have regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas when determining planning applications. This requirement is reflected in Policy ENV7 of the Daventry Local Plan, Policy BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, and Chapter 16 of The National planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
6. In reaching my decision, I have also considered the contents of the Brixworth Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2017. This states that if replacement windows are necessary, they should be sensitive to the original style and 'generally' timber or metal casement. It specifically states that uPVC is 'generally' not an appropriate material for use in an historic property. Whilst I note the strong presumption in favour of traditional materials, the use of the word 'generally' in the Council's Management Plan indicates to me that some flexibility can be applied to decision making.
7. The Council acknowledges that other properties within the terrace have installed uPVC windows on the front facing elevations. It states that these were installed without planning permission and prior to the Article 4 Direction. Notwithstanding, these windows exist and, as a result, the terrace has an established, mixed appearance and character, in terms in terms of window materials and colours. In my opinion, it is likely that this mix will remain in the longer term and the appeal property would not appear at odds or out of character in the terrace should the uPVC windows be installed. Furthermore, whilst the replacement windows would be uPVC, they would closely resemble the style of the existing windows and those on other dwellings in the terrace.
8. I have noted the counter arguments over the environmental sustainability of using uPVC, but this was not used a reason for refusal in the Council's decision notice, which relates solely to character and appearance.
9. In view of the above, whilst there is some conflict with the Council's Management Plan, I am not persuaded that the proposal would result in any harm to the character or appearance of the property, the terrace, or the wider CA. Therefore, the proposal would not conflict with the provisions of the Development Plan or the NPPF, as referred to above.

Conditions

10. The Council has suggested conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed. Conditions relating to the period in which to commence the development and the listing of the approved plans are necessary and imposed.
11. In addition, the Council has suggested that a condition be imposed that the proposed windows shall be constructed with materials of the same type, texture, and colour as those proposed within the window specification details document 13389-v1. However, that document shows the windows to be coloured Chartwell Green, whereas the plans and the planning application form states light grey. Consequently, I consider the plans and application form to be an accurate description of the appellant's proposal.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, it is concluded that the appeal be allowed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR