



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on Friday 8 August 2025

by **B J Sims BSc (Hons) CEng MICE MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5900/W/25/3363861

Nos 9 and 11 White Horse Lane, Tower Hamlets, London, E1 3NE.

- 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 Chris Greateorex – Newlon Housing Trust against the decision of Tower Hamlets Council
 - The application Ref is PA/25/00120.
 - The development proposed is replacement of the existing single glazed timber sash and casement windows with new double glazed uPVC windows with openings and fenestration patterns to match the existing; roof replacement with new felt, insulation, fascias, soffits and new natural slate roofing finish to match existing, including replacement of rainwater goods like for like.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed uPVC replacement windows on the character and appearance of Nos 9-11 Whitehorse Lane, in the context of the surrounding Stepney Garden Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. There is no doubt that the refurbishment works proposed to the appeal property would bring about an overall desirable improvement in its appearance and energy efficiency. This carries material weight in favour of the appeal.
4. However, the Stepney Garden CA Character Appraisal and Management Guidelines specifically highlight the disbenefit to the character and appearance of the CA resulting from the installation of modern uPVC windows in place of timber-framed windows.
5. Whether or not the existing windows date from the origins of the building, the change from the use of traditional, single-glazed, timber window frames to modern uPVC units is reasonably to be seen as reducing the heritage value of buildings such as the appeal dwellings, which contribute to the architectural and historic significance of the Stepney Green CA.
6. I accept that the double-glazed sliding sash uPVC windows proposed in this case would, in their general form, replicate the present timber fenestration of the property. However, the applied mock astragals and horns would announce the adoption of non-traditional material in passing views.

7. I recognise that there are many examples of the use of modern replacement windows in the wider area. However, all but one of the examples cited by the Appellants lie outside the CA or relate to comparatively modern buildings or are not the subject of any relevant planning approval. Within the CA, only at No 19 Whitehorse Lane, in the same terrace as the appeal properties, have replacement double-glazed windows been the subject of express planning approval, and these were in timber construction.
8. Properly assessed on individual merit, I consider that the uPVC windows proposed in this case would be unacceptably unsympathetic to the character and appearance of the Stepney Green CA as a whole, which would accordingly not be preserved as required by planning law and policy.
9. I see no harm in the proposed replacement roofing and other elements of the appeal proposal. However, in my judgement, the material advantage of the proposed improvement to the appeal dwellings would not be sufficient to outweigh the significant planning harm I have identified.
10. I note the proximity of Listed Buildings within the CA, including the Grade II St Dunstons Rectory, but I do not consider that the proposed windows would significantly affect their settings.
11. Nevertheless, for the reason explained above, I regard the proposed development as contrary to Policies D4 and HC1 of the adopted London Plan and S.DH1 and S.DH3 of the adopted Tower Hamlets Local Plan. Together, consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, these policies seek good design in new development, in particular to safeguard the historic environment.
12. I conclude finally that development proposed in this case would fail to comply with the development plan as a whole and that therefore this appeal should be dismissed.

B J Sims

INSPECTOR