



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 September 2025

by **B Astley-Serougi BA(Hons) LLM MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/W/25/3364512

Millbank House, Mill Lane, Wimborne Minster, Dorset, BH21 1LJ

- 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 Ingram and Ayres against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref is P/FULL/2024/03840.
 - The development proposed is replacement of 10 windows from single glazed timber to double glazed upvc.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposal is in a conservation area, I have had special regard to section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. I have used the appellants details cited on the Appeal Form for clarity in the banner heading above.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Wimbourne Minster Conservation Area (the CA) including the character and appearance of Millbank House, a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA).

Reasons

The Significance Of The CA

5. The CA comprises the whole of the central area of Wimbourne and extends northwards along West Borough as far as Walford Bridge. The Georgian buildings in streets and squares result in a strong sense of place. Mill Lane is a short cul-de-sac and is accessed from The Square, and has a significant association with Town Mill. The Mill was once one of three mills that existed in the town. 'Mill Street' is dated from at least 1483.
6. Mill Lane forms an important link in the town centre footpath network given that it connects The Square with public car parks as well as shops. Whilst there are modern buildings on Mill Lane, they have retained its narrow character and are generally subservient to the older buildings, such as the appeal building, which is located at the end of it.

7. Given the historical importance of the relationship between Mill Bank House and the surrounding area, timber windows are a prominent feature which generally provide historical uniformity within the CA. The CA before me, has on balance, retained its historic and architectural fabric.

The Effect Of The Proposed Development On The Significance Of The CA

8. The appeal scheme would include the replacement of a number of the existing timber sash windows of Mill Bank House with uPVC windows on the first floor. The existing timber windows have glazing bars with horn detailing and some of the reflections in the glass externally suggest that it could be Cylinder Glass which was prominent in the 19th Century.
9. I acknowledge that the appellant has endeavoured to find a close match in terms of the detailing and casement between the existing timber windows and proposed uPVC windows. However, to my mind, there remains a difference in terms of the proposed window frames when compared to the existing timber framed windows. The casement for a number of the windows would be slightly heavier in design and when viewed in conjunction with the addition of clearly visible trickle vents, would result in the dilution of the overall historic character of the building. Consequently, the appeal scheme would result in an unacceptable change to the fenestration on the appeal building when compared to the existing timber fenestration which would result in harm to the significance of the CA.
10. I note that a number of windows in Millbank House are now uPVC windows, however I do not know the full circumstances of these windows. Nevertheless, I accept that these are now part of the CA's character and appearance.
11. The application of uPVC can take many forms, and so I raise no objection in principle to its use. However, with regard to the windows subject of this appeal, I consider the use of uPVC to not be positive, especially given the prominent position of the windows at first floor. Consequently, in this instance the presence of other uPVC windows and modern fenestration do not justify allowing additional harm by accepting further windows of inappropriate design and material on a prominent building.
12. Paragraph 212 of the Framework advises that when considering the impact of the development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets or from development within their setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification.
13. The development would fail to preserve the significance of the CA and given its scale, I find the harm to be less than substantial but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
14. The appellant refers to the existing windows being in various states of disrepair and that the appeal scheme would improve sound and thermal insulation as well as the visual appearance of Millbank House. However, the appellant acknowledges that this could be achieved by installing timber windows with secondary glazing. There is limited substantive evidence before me to adequately

demonstrate that the enhancement to Millbank House via the replacement of windows could not be achieved by actions which would not be harmful to the significance of the CA. Thus, a clear and convincing justification has not been provided and the appellant's claimed public benefits attract limited weight.

15. Taking the stated benefits above, the harm that would be caused to the significance of the CA would not be outweighed by public benefits.

Character and Appearance of NDHA

16. The Council has identified Millbank House as an NDHA due to its industrial history associated with brewing and milling close to the River Allen as well as the age, design and material of the remaining timber windows in situ which contribute to historic character and appearance of the NDHA. It dates from circa 1860 and forms part of the group of distinctive industrial buildings at the end of Mill Lane.
17. For the reasons I have identified above, the replacement of the existing timber windows would result in the unacceptable erosion of the historic fabric of the NDHA.
18. The Framework is clear that the effect of an application on the significance of an NDHA should be taken into account and that a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. Consequently, to my mind, the scale of the harm caused by the appeal scheme upon the NDHA is moderate and would not be justified.
19. The appellant has referred to a letter dated October 2012 in which the Council confirmed that provided the installation would not result in substantial or significant change in the appearance of the building, planning nor conservation area consent would be required. Given the date of the letter, this was assessed under a different policy context and therefore does not justify the appeal before me.
20. Given all of the above, I conclude that the appeal scheme would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and would result in harm to the character and appearance of the NDHA. It would therefore conflict with Policies HE1 and HE2 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan 2014 insofar as they seek to ensure the design of proposals do not result in harm to heritage assets including conservation areas and NDHA's.

Other Matters

21. The Grade II Listed building known as Minster Press, 5 Mill Lane¹ is relatively close to the appeal building. The significance of the building derives from its architectural interest and historic fabric. Nevertheless, given the location and extent of the proposed development, I consider that it would preserve the setting of the listed building and the contribution it makes to its significance. A lack of harm in this respect, however, does not alter my overall conclusions.
22. I note reference in the evidence before me to the possibility of a blue shipping container adjacent the site. I do not know the full circumstances regarding it. Consequently, I cannot be certain that it is wholly comparable to the appeal scheme. Nevertheless, each application is determined on its own merits and for the reasons given above, it does not alter my conclusion.

¹ List Entry Number: 1153524

Conclusion

23. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

B Astley-Serougi

INSPECTOR