
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2025

by **B Phillips BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/Y/25/3363323

127 York Road, Montpelier, Bristol, BS6 5QG

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Ms Claire Humphreys against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/10245/LB.
 - The works proposed are works to both front and rear windows to incorporate vacuum glazing, replacement of cement render to rear facades with insulated lime render including reinstatement of absent window cills.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site forms part of the Grade II listed building known as '127 and 129 York Road' which is located within the Montpelier Conservation Area (CA). In reaching my decision, I have considered the statutory duties under sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990 (the Act).

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are whether the proposed works would preserve the listed building, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, and would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Montpelier CA.

Reasons

4. The listed building consists of a pair of mid terraced 19th Century 2 storey (with attic and basement) properties, which were originally 1 property and were listed in 1977. Both properties are finished in limestone ashlar, with brick stacks and a pantile mansard roof, and sit behind a high stone wall facing York Road. The rear of No 127 is finished in concrete cement render. Each house has a rusticated ground floor, pilasters, frieze, cornice and parapet, and No.127 has a left-hand semicircular-arched doorway with rusticated voussoirs, fanlight and 6-panel door with margin lights. The listing description¹ describes No.129 as having a half-rendered ground floor with a C20 doorway; late C19 casements, a wrought-iron balcony to first-floor windows, and 2 dormers. No 127 has a 1970's rear extension,

¹ List Entry Number:1202731

partly rebuilt after permission granted in 2013², and there have been numerous alterations to the fenestration and internal layout.

5. Having regard to the above, I find that the special interest and significance of the listed building to be mainly derived from its architectural and historic interests in exemplifying a fine 19th century vernacular domestic property which has evolved over time. Important contributors in these respects which allude to the building's phased development, are its use of traditional materials, surviving historic fabric and pleasing architectural form and design, including key features and detailing.
6. As one half of the pair, No 127 makes a valuable contribution to the architectural consistency of the building and is integral to the special architectural and historic interest, and group value, of Nos 127 and 129 as an entity.
7. Pertinent to the appeal, no historic windows to No 127 remain, the windows have either been replaced (the submitted details set out from 1970's to 2010) or were inserted/uncovered after 2000 - a photograph in the submitted Heritage, Design and Access Statement from 2000 shows no upper floor window to the rear facade.
8. Whilst the windows are therefore not historic, the timber sash windows to the front and rear are of a form, design, materials and finish that are in keeping with the age and style of this part of the property. They provide a degree of authenticity to the fenestration. This includes glazing bars to the windows of both Nos 127 and 129, which ensure that the proportion and detail of the windows are historically appropriate. In these respects, the fenestration contributes in a positive way to the architectural integrity of the property and therefore its special interest and significance.
9. The appeal site is located within the Montpelier CA. The character and appearance and therefore the special interest and significance of the CA are mainly derived from its village like atmosphere, high quality domestically scaled Georgian and Victorian properties, and its unique aspect out across the city. The significance of the Upper Montpelier element of the CA in part derives from its quiet predominantly terraced streets, and consistent scale and material palette, including, as set out in the Montpelier Character Appraisal (2008), timber sash windows.
10. As a fine example of a high quality domestic 19th century terraced dwelling with retained traditional materials, the listed building makes contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.
11. The Council raise no issue with the proposed reinstallation of window cills to the rear and west façade and the removal of cement render at the rear, and its replacement with insulated lime render³. The replacement render would be a breathable insulated lime cork render. Given that the rear north and west façades lack any heritage features, and the cills to the existing windows to the north are currently either absent or not projecting sufficiently to be effective, I have no reason to disagree in this respect.
12. The windows to the front facade were replaced with timber sash windows⁴, however, the heritage statement sets out that the softwood timber has required

² Application references 13/02088/LA & 13/02087/H.

³ Diasen Diathonite.

⁴ Application reference 00/04139/LA

extensive refurbishment over the last 20 years and is no longer fit for purpose. From what I observed, I also have no reason to disagree with this assessment. Moreover, the Council accept that the rear second floor sash window, the smaller front casement window to the second floor and the rear side window to the upper ground floor are all perished and are required to be replaced.

13. The proposal seeks to replace the timber sashes (frame and boxes retained) to the 3no. windows to the upper ground and first floor of the front elevation and incorporate Fineo vacuum glazing. The glazing bars and arrangement would be to the same style but the horns would be omitted. The 1no. casement window to the second floor front elevation (behind parapet) would also be replaced with a new casement window to the same style but again incorporating Fineo vacuum glazing.
14. Finally, it is proposed to replace the frame and sashes to 3 windows to the rear west and northern facade with Fineo vacuum glazing. Again, glazing bars and arrangement would be to the same style but the horns would be omitted.
15. Given its limited depth, 7.7mm with a 0.3mm vacuum spacer, the proposed vacuum glazing would have the appearance of single glazing given the imperceptible change to the reflections in the windows. However, given that they would be double glazed and have applied glazing bars/ and appear to have 'timber planted beads to the external glazing bars rather than putty', they would not reflect the construction of traditional windows.
16. Moreover, unlike the historic and current windows, surface applied 'stuck on' glazing bars with timber planted beads are proposed. This is because, the according to the appellant, the use of through glazing bars is not feasible with Fineo glass due to the required thickness of the getter by the seal rebate, which sits 10mm in to 2 sides of the pane. This means that the getter would be visible if a through glazing bar was used.
17. Historic England⁵ advises on the appropriate approach to improving energy efficiency and supporting carbon reduction of historic buildings. Paragraph 82 indicates that in the case of windows which contribute positively to the building's special interest these should not be replaced, although their panes could be replaced within the existing frames. It continues to advise that stuck-on or applied glazing bars rarely replicate the character of historic windows and are unlikely to be acceptable.
18. Whilst more modern materials may reduce concerns regarding long term durability and the potential for them to sag or buckle over time for example, and the glazing bars would be the same 16mm width as those existing, the wholesale use and provision of applied bars would in this instance be disingenuous and fail to be authentic because they have no structural function, they depart from the historic construction method found in traditional timber windows. At close inspection, they would not replicate the finesse of historic joinery, making them stand out as poor imitations. Overall, in this instance, the proposed windows would not match the merit of the existing windows, alter their character and would erode the authenticity and integrity of the listed building.
19. The appellant points to numerous examples of vacuum glazing being consented in different authorities. Limited details are provided of these consents, which prevents

⁵ Advice Note 18 Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency

direct comparison of the details of the consented schemes, policy context and the significance and special interest of the application properties. The drawings provided of consented window details⁶ also do not provide the wider context of the works in this respect.

20. I conclude that the proposed works would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building, 127 and 129 York Road and would harm its significance as a designated heritage asset
21. The above harm to significance would result in some residual harmful effect to the character and appearance of the CA. It would not therefore preserve the character and appearance of the CA as a whole and would harm its significance as a designated heritage asset.
22. Given the fairly localised nature of the works relative to the building and CA as a whole, I find the harm to both heritage assets to be, individually and cumulatively, at a minor level of 'less than substantial' but nevertheless is of considerable importance and weight.
23. There are aspects of the scheme that would undoubtedly be positive and of public benefit. Heritage benefits would accrue from the breathable insulated lime cork render and the installation of missing cills, as this would be more historically and visually appropriate.
24. This element of the scheme would, of themselves, sustain and enhance the listed building and preserve the character and appearance of the CA in which it sits.
25. It is not demonstrated that the proposed scheme is the only way of achieving improvements in relation to matters such as thermal or draught proofing performance, sound insulation, security and from improved maintenance with more appropriate fenestration. As such, these benefits carry modest weight in favour of the appeal.
26. There would be some economic benefits brought about through the investment into the property and the construction phase. Also, social benefits would be gained through improvements to the local housing stock. Given the scale of development, these benefits would be small. There is no substantive evidence before me that the development and works are required to secure the optimum viable use of the listed building.
27. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) indicates that, when considering the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation irrespective of whether any harm amounts to less than substantial harm to significance. Overall, the weight I ascribe to the public benefits is not sufficient to outweigh the considerable importance and weight I attach to the harm to significance I have found.
28. Consequently, the harm identified to the significance of the designated heritage assets has not been supported by clear and convincing justification. The works and development therefore would conflict with the statutory presumptions set out in sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Act and fail to satisfy the historic environment conservation and enhancement policies of the Framework. There is also conflict

⁶ 11 Lambridge Place, 14 Marlborough Buildings & 13 Caroline Buildings

with Policies BCS22 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014) and DM31 of the Local Plan (2014), which amongst other matters, requires development proposals to safeguard or enhance heritage assets.

Conclusion

29. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Phillips

INSPECTOR