

Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Appeal Decision

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 05/09/13

Site visit made on 05/09/13

gan Kay Sheffield BA(Hons) DipTP
MRTPI

by Kay Sheffield BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Dyddiad: 04/10/13

Date: 04/10/13

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/A/13/2200665

Site address: 57 Ruabon Road, Wrexham, LL13 7PL

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mrs Fiona Hawkrige against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
- The application Ref P/2013/0086, dated 5 February 2013, was refused by notice dated 5 March 2013.
- The development proposed is a replacement front door.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Fairy Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site lies within the Fairy Road Conservation Area in a predominantly residential area where the properties vary in age, design and size. The two storey terrace within which the appeal property is located is built directly at the back of the footway except where it turns the corner into Belmont Road where the end property is set back a short distance behind a front boundary wall. The appeal property is located at the junction of Ruabon Road and Belmont Road and although it has elevations facing both roads the main front elevation faces onto Ruabon Road and includes the door which is the subject of the appeal and which has already been installed.
4. The Conservation Area is the subject of an Article 4(2) Direction, the effect of which is to require planning permission for the change of materials to the external walls of a dwelling, which includes external doors. The terrace is not identified in the Fairy Road Conservation Area Assessment, 1999 as being an important townscape group but it is the only terrace within the Conservation Area which fronts directly onto the pavement. The Assessment recognises that many buildings in the area have been altered and that unsympathetic alterations have a particularly detrimental impact upon the appearance of the Conservation Area but considers that the changes are reversible.

5. The Council has commented that although the design of the previous door to the property was not historically accurate, it was a traditional timber door with a painted finish. The Council considers the replacement door which is the subject of the appeal to be prominent within the streetscene and that it compromises the character of the building and the terrace.
6. Alterations to the properties in the terrace have changed its appearance over time and whilst the appeal property and its immediate neighbours are of brick, others in the terrace are rendered. Other differences include the style of the windows, the appeal property having windows with large lower panes and small top opening lights whereas the adjoining properties have sliding sashes. The design of the doors also differ and whilst several appear to be the original timber panel doors with detailed timber surrounds and painted finish, replacements have been fitted to others some of which have an element of glazing within them.
7. From its external appearance it would appear that significant changes have been made to the appeal property. This is particularly apparent from differences in the brickwork, the large concrete lintel and the arrangement of the door and window openings which differs slightly from the regular pattern seen on neighbouring dwellings. Although the character of the property is not of the same quality as its neighbours, it nonetheless is an integral part of the terrace and it is important that changes to its external appearance do not detract from the terrace as a whole.
8. Whilst there are different styles of doors within the terrace, the brown timber effect uPVC of the replacement door and its design with a central glazed panel with arched head and sections of relief moulding is out of character with others in the terrace. The appellant contends that the door is similar to the one it has replaced. However the only evidence I have is the brief description given by the Council and in any event there has been a significant change in the material from which the door is constructed.
9. I acknowledge that the design and finish of the doors to other properties in the area vary greatly and this is particularly noticeable in the terrace on the opposite side of Ruabon Road to the appeal site. However, I am not aware of the planning history of these properties and I am therefore unable to draw any comparison between them and the appeal proposal. Nevertheless, the presence of a variety of styles of doors in the area does not overcome my concerns regarding the harm caused by the replacement door installed at the appeal property in relation to the terrace within which it is situated. The condition of the previous door and the appellant's desire to provide better insulation and improve security are acknowledged. However, there is no substantive evidence that replacement doors which are of traditional materials would not offer the same level of insulation and security.
10. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, it is therefore concluded that the development would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the Fairy Road Conservation Area, contrary to Policies GDP1 and EC7 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, 2005. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

Kay Sheffield

Inspector