
Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 20/02/17

gan Joanne Burston BSc MA MRTPI
Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru
Dyddiad: 17.03.2017

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20/02/17

by Joanne Burston BSc MA MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers
Date: 17.03.2017

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/D/17/3167770

Site address: 69 Erddig Road, Wrexham, LL13 7DP

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 Coreen Howell against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/2016/0799, dated 27 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 7 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of wooden framed windows to UPVC windows in front of house (3 windows in total including a bay window).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. Although at the time the planning application was determined edition 8 of Planning Policy Wales (PPW) was in force, it was replaced by edition 9 on the 17 November 2016. I have had regard to edition 9 in my determination of the appeal.
3. I have considered the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act"). In reaching this decision, I have taken into account the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act and I consider that this decision is consistent with the sustainable development principle as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is whether the proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Fairy Road Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is located within the Fairy Road Conservation Area. It consists primarily of two storey conventional brick built houses with distinctive Arts and Craft detailing, set within a spacious suburban setting. This contributes to a pleasant residential environment.
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6. PPW states in paragraph 6.5.21 that *"There will be a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments, including advertisements, which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level."* Additionally, when considering development proposals in such locations there is a statutory requirement to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas such as this¹.
7. As I saw on my site visit the replacement windows are already in place. These replacement windows fail to replicate what is special about the Conservation Area. In particular: the thicker section and proportions of the window elements; and the smooth finish associated with uPVC. In addition, the replacement windows fail to replicate the traditional glazing divisions seen elsewhere in the local area. In this way the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is neither preserved nor enhanced.
8. I acknowledge that the appellant seeks to improve energy efficiency, security and ongoing maintenance. However, I am not persuaded that these benefits cannot be achieved by using replacement timber frames. In any event, these benefits would not outweigh the unacceptable level of harm to the Conservation Area.
9. To conclude on this main issue, the replacement windows fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Fairy Road Conservation Area. Thus contrary to Policies PS2, GDP1 and EC7 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, which seek, amongst other matters, that development: must not materially detrimentally affect townscape character; must accord with the character of the site; and within Conservation Areas the priority will be to preserve and/or enhance those buildings which contribute to the character of the area and alterations to buildings in Conservation Areas must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.
10. In coming to this conclusion, I have taken into account that a number of other properties in the local area, which have had their traditional timber window frames replaced with modern alternatives. As I saw on my site visit many of these fail to replicate the qualities of a traditional window, look out of place and serve to demonstrate the harm that can result from such development. Moreover, I do not know the considerations that were taken into account by the Council in deciding to grant permission, if indeed permission was sought or required in these cases, and they do not therefore justify the appeal proposal.

Overall conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, and taking into account all other matters raised, the appeal should be dismissed.

Joanne Burston

INSPECTOR

¹ s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990