



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 July 2018

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 3 August 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/P1425/D/18/3200442

18 St John's Terrace, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2DL.

- 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 Mr Nick Cooper against the decision of the South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref SDNP/17/06152/HOUS, dated 27 November 2017, was refused by notice dated 12 February 2018.
 - The development proposed is for the replacement of basement bay window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The appeal property is located in the Lewes Conservation Area. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of such areas. I consider therefore that there is one main issue in this appeal which is the effect the proposal would have on the property and the street scene and thus whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Lewes Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property, 18 St John's Terrace, is a mid-terrace two-storey town house over basement. Neither the house nor terrace is listed but are located in the Lewes Conservation Area.
4. The appellant has replaced the three sliding sash windows in the masonry bay window at basement level facing the street with double glazed uPVC vertical sliding sashes.
5. Although the new windows are located in the basement light-well and below the general street scene, they are nevertheless still visible from the public domain. From my observations on site, with the exception of one property in the terrace all the other houses have retained traditional painted timber sliding sash windows.
6. As I saw the new windows appear different to the retained timber windows in a number of respects: the frames are marginally larger and of a profile to accept double glazing; the frames have a more shiny and reflective finish when

compared to painted timber; and modern window furniture has been fitted. Further, because the windows are formed of standard components their section and detail, in terms of mouldings, would be unlikely to have replicated those of the existing windows now removed.

7. For all these reasons, although small in themselves, the uPVC windows as installed detract significantly from the architectural integrity of the host building, the terrace of which it is part and, thereby, the appearance of the Lewes Conservation Area.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) (the Framework) requires great weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, which include conservation areas. It draws a distinction between substantial harm and less than substantial harm to such an asset. For the latter, which applies here, the test is that the harm should be weighed against public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use.
9. The replacement of the basement windows would provide some limited economic benefit. However, given the harm that has been identified I conclude that the public benefits would not outweigh this harm, or the conflict the works would have with the objectives of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Framework and saved Policies ST3 and H5 of the Lewes District Local Plan (2003) and Policy CP11 of the Lewes District Joint Core Strategy Part 1 (May 2016) as they relate to the quality of development, the preservation of the setting of listed buildings, and the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Other matters

10. The appellant has drawn to my attention his concerns relating to a lack of communication with the Council during its consideration of the original application for planning permission. This is however not relevant to my consideration of the planning merits of this appeal.

Conclusions

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

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR