Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 December 2025

by Nicola Davies BA DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M3835/W/25/3369204
Flat 3, 33 Winchester Road, Heene, Worthing, WEST SUSSEX BN11 4DH

- 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 Mr and Mrs R Kassim against the decision of Worthing Borough Council.
- The application Ref is AWDM/0502/25.
- The development proposed is replacement uPVC windows to first-floor north elevation.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The planning application form indicates that the development has already taken place and I was able to view the replacement windows at the time of my visit.

Main Issues

3. The main issues raised by this appeal are the effect of the replacement uPVC windows on the character and appearance of the existing building and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Winchester Road Conservation Area (the CA).

Reasons

4. The host property is a detached two-storey Edwardian building. The building, together with many others within the road, is identified as a Local Interest Building, and is located within the Winchester Road CA. I saw that the CA has a substantial number of unaltered buildings and this contributes to the architectural and historic value and characteristics of the locality and makes the area special, and worthy of CA status.

5. The Winchester Road CA Appraisal specifically identifies the original materials and window design for their positive contribution to the architectural character of the area. As such, the traditional timber windows are an important architectural feature which make a positive contribution to the character of the CA. The original unaltered windows provide the CA with a distinctive quality that contribute to both the character and appearance of the area and gives this area architectural significance. The appeal property falls within the CA and, therefore, forms part of its significance.

6. The local planning authority advises that the replacement uPVC windows that have been installed do not replicate, or even closely match, the frame thickness, proportions, profile or opening style of the former timber sliding-sash windows. I saw that the windows that have been installed are noticeably different in appearance to that of the timber sliding sash bay windows on the ground-floor of the building. The thicker framing and casement design of the uPVC windows that have been installed is not only unsympathetic to the host building but represent a visually jarring element that has unbalanced the visual cohesion of the bay window, which is the main architectural feature of the property. This detracts from the traditional character and appearance of the building.

7. There remains a strong sense of consistency to the windows of buildings within this part of the road. Whilst the appellant contends that there is a myriad of varying styles of windows in this part of the CA, this does not justify the replacement of the windows of a non-traditional type and form. The CA appraisal identifies enhancement opportunities such as retaining the original timber sashes and casements where possible and reinstating them where they have been lost. The harm arising from the proposal undermines the purposes of the CA designation and the incentives set out within the appraisal to retain original windows. I give significant weight to the visual harm created by this development.

8. The local planning authority points out that the central bay window as installed is not accurately reflected on the submitted drawings that supported the planning application that is now the subject of this appeal. Notwithstanding this, the drawings illustrate uPVC windows that would be noticeably different in appearance to that of the former timber sliding-sash windows. As such, the uPVC bay window as shown on the plans would not be more acceptable in regard of their visual appearance and impact upon the CA.

9. I have been directed to windows that have been installed at No.37 Winchester Road (No.37). However, the local planning authority point to there being no planning records pertaining to the first-floor bay windows at No.37. As such, there is no clear indication that those first-floor windows were installed lawfully. Notwithstanding this, it is contended that the replacement windows appear similar to those ground-floor windows that have been granted planning permission (Ref: AWDM/0592/23) at No.37. However, the local planning authority highlight that those uPVC windows are of heritage sliding sash design that have proportions that closely replicate those of a traditional timber sash window. As such, those windows, unlike those installed here, closely matched the design, proportions and opening style of a traditional timber window.

10. I accept that there may be other historic examples of the use of uPVC and/or aluminium to replacement windows within this CA. Whilst this may be so, the existence of other uPVC windows along Winchester Road does not overcome the harm I have identified above or provide justification for further visually harmful development within the CA.

11. Given the size and scale of the proposal in the CA, I consider there would be less than substantial harm to the character or appearance of the CA. In accordance with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I must weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposal would provide double-glazing with associated thermal improvement that would reduce demand for energy and achieve some carbon reductions replacing timber

windows that were beyond repair. However, this would be limited to providing mostly a personal benefit for the appellants. There would be no clear and significant benefit to the public that would sufficiently outweigh the harm identified. I conclude therefore that the proposed development would fail to accord with national policy.

12. For these reasons, I conclude that the replacement uPVC windows would be harmful to the character and appearance of the existing building and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Winchester Road CA. The proposal would, therefore conflict with Policies DM5 and DM24 of the Worthing Local Plan and the provisions of the Framework. These policies seek, amongst other matters, development to respect, preserve, and where appropriate, enhance heritage assets and settings and require development in CAs to be of a high standard of design and materials and to enhance the character and appearance of that area and preserve important features. Policy DM24 identifies the importance of Local Interest Buildings within CAs to the character of an area as a material consideration.

Other Matters

13. The Appellants did not realise that an application for planning permission would be required for installing replacement uPVC windows at the property. The appellants acted in good faith with their installation not knowing that works carried out to neighbouring properties had not acquired the relevant planning permissions as they had been there for many years. It is contended that the local planning authority have not taken appropriate steps to rectify historic issues which must have caused visual harm. However, that is a matter for the local planning authority and is a separate matter to this appeal.

Conclusion

14. Having regard to the above findings, the appeal should be dismissed.

Nicola Davies

INSPECTOR