

Eunice Huang

From: Ruth Mitchell1
Sent: 04 January 2024 15:56
To: Eunice Huang
Subject: HGY/2023/2819 - 52-60 High Street, Hornsey, London, N8 7NX

Hi Eunice,

52-60 High Street lies within the Hornsey High Street Conservation Area. Hornsey High Street comprises a late-Victorian and early-Edwardian shopping street overlaid onto a medieval street pattern. With a few exceptions, the High Street is largely made up of late 19th and early 20th century buildings, and although retaining only vestiges of its original village character before it was transformed into a bustling local shopping area in the Edwardian period. The green spaces at each end of the High Street add interest to the streetscene and help create the Conservation Areas surprisingly green character.

52-60 High Street is part of a parade (Nos. 34-60) which is locally listed. The parade was built in around 1896 by developer James Edmondson who built several contemporary parades in Muswell Hill and Crouch End. It is built in red brick with stone or cast-cement dressings (mainly painted) and gabled attics with scrolled decoration. The shop fronts are modern but the surrounds, with dentilled cornices and glazed brick pilasters, are largely intact. Above, the canted first-floor bay windows are set within broad segmental arches. The timber casement windows, including those at the development site are mainly original but in poor condition.

The design, access and heritage statement does not identify that the development site is locally listed and does not include a reference to the historic environment record, the minimum set out in paragraph 200 of the NPPF, nor does it discuss the significance of the Conservation Area, the locally listed building nor the impact of the proposed works on the significance of these heritage assets the contrary to local plan policy DM9(b).

The provided sections on the drawings both numbered 202303-HB05 and do not match the elevations on the same drawing, nor the proposed works in the proposed elevations, application form, and design, access and heritage statement. These details appear to be for secondary glazing, not replacement windows.

The existing windows to the front elevation are predominately original timber, casements on the first floor and sash on the second. Some elements have been inappropriately replaced in uPVC relatively recently though there does not appear to be any related planning history for the works.

The existing windows are in poor condition and there is no in principle objection to their appropriate replacement, if they cannot be repaired. However, the design and materials of the proposed replacements should be to match the existing original windows, and the proposed uPVC would be considered to be a downgrading of the materials. The proposed change for timber to uPVC would be a downgrading of the materials on this locally listed building within the conservation area. uPVC windows are not supported in principle as their design and materiality are uncharacteristic of the original design of the host buildings and would detract from its architectural interest and historic character.

Historic England provide a lot of guidance in relation to the inappropriateness of UPVC windows for historic buildings and in heritage setting and state the following:

“although PVCu (unplasticised polyvinyl chloride) rigid plastic replacement windows are popular, their visual character and operational differences make them unsuitable for older buildings, particularly those that are listed or in conservation areas. Because the components used to manufacture PVCu windows are

weaker than their timber counterparts, they tend to be much thicker. This, along with different detailing and opening arrangements, can have a significant impact on the appearance and character of older buildings. For example, in traditional windows the glazing bars (usually wooden or metal) are rigid and separate the panes of glass, whereas in PVCu windows they are often only strips of plastic inserted within the glass sandwich of a double-glazed unit.

The service life of PVCu windows is relatively short (less than 25 years) compared to well-maintained traditional windows (many of which survive for over 100 years). PVCu windows are not maintenance-free, as is commonly believed, and can be difficult to repair. This means they are usually replaced at the end of their service life. Although it is possible to recycle PVCu, this is still not done widely. Therefore, the carbon cost of a PVCu replacement window will be higher than an appropriately upgraded traditional window.”

Additionally, there are no submitted details provided for the replacement windows and doors. The existing windows are consistent and have high quality detailing, albeit in deteriorated condition. Any replacement windows would need to accurately replicate the joinery details of the windows to the front elevation. Without these details there is insufficient information to determine whether or not the proposed joinery details would match the existing and to assess the impact of the proposed works.

The rear elevation, whilst less sensitive to change than the front would still require proposed details.

Overall, there is an in principle objection to the replacement of the front elevation timber windows with uVPC as this would result in the loss of the original windows, and a downgrading of the material quality of the building and would be considered to cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Hornsey High Street Conservation Area and causes harm to the significance of the locally listed building. Separately there is also insufficient information to fully assess the impact of the proposed works as there are no details of the proposed replacement windows and doors. Accordingly, as the application stands Conservation does not support this application, and it should be considered in line with paragraphs 200, 205, 208, 209 of the NPPF and local plan policy DM9(b).

Kind regards,

Ruth Mitchell
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Please note the above opinion represents informal officer opinion only, and does not prejudice to all future formal Council decisions and accompanying procedures.