



Officer Report

Application Number:	HGY/2024/1103
Application Type:	Full planning permission
Address:	Kestrel House School, 104 Crouch Hill, Hornsey, London, N8 9EA
Proposal:	Replacement of existing external windows and doors
Case Officer:	Eunice Huang
Valid Date:	20/05/2024
Applicant:	Mr Darren Russell
Agent:	Mr Ian Watts

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

1. CONSULTATION RESPONSE

The following consultation responses were received:

1) LBH Conservation: Objects to the proposal.

Kestrel House School is considered to positively contribute to the significance of the Crouch End Conservation Area as a prominent Victorian Villa which retains its architectural details and original form.

It is noted that the window precedent given on the plans is not located within Haringey, and is not within a conservation area, nor does there appear to have any planning history associated with the replacement of windows.

There is no heritage statement provided and it is unclear if the existing windows to the original building are original, but they would appear to be so. Original windows should be retained where possible, particularly where their detailing is hard to replicate, as is the case on this site.

The proposed replacement windows raise significant concerns in their design and materiality. The proposed elevations and sections do not show details that match the existing windows, which have consistent and high quality detailing. Any replacement windows would need to accurately replicate the joinery details of the windows to the front elevation.

The change from timber to uPVC windows would be considered to be a downgrading of the materials within the conservation area. uPVC windows are not supported in principle as their design and materiality are uncharacteristically of the original design of the host building and would detract from its architectural interest and historic character. uPVC windows have thicker frames, lack definition of detailing and do not have details associated with the joinery and instead tend to have mitred joints. uPVC also has poorer long-term weathering characteristics.

Historic England provides the following guidance:

“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.”

The proposed replacement windows would be considered to cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Crouch End Conservation Area. As the Crouch End Conservation Area is a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and any harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification and should be weighed against public benefits. Any necessary harm should be reduced where possible through alternative methods of achieving the same benefits.

The maintenance of timber windows can be programmed similar to any other aspect of a school's maintenance plan. If toughened glass is required for the school, then this could be accommodated within the existing window frames, or accurately detailed replacement timber framed windows.

2. LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

The application has been publicised by way of press advert, site notice and letters. No representations were received.

3. REASONS FOR REFUSING PERMISSION

The application site is a school located on the eastern side of Crouch Hill Road, with a secondary frontage to Cecile Park. The building, originally Cecile Park, is a yellow stock brick late-Victorian villa of three storeys plus a semi-basement, originally five windows wide beneath a hipped slate roof. New side wings in yellow stock brick with hipped slate roofs are set back from the main elevation and one storey lower. The existing extension windows have been designed to faithfully mimic the host building windows. The rear façade is readily visible from Cecile Park.

This is an application for the replacement of all existing external windows and doors at Kestrel House School. The application states an intention for the replacement windows and doors to match existing.

The planning and enforcement history of the site has been taken into account when coming to this decision.

The existing timber windows are consistent and have high quality detailing. The proposed replacement windows would be composed of uVPC. UPVC would be a downgrading of the materials on this building which positively contributes to the conservation area. The materiality of

uPVC windows provide a visual character that is discordant with the original design of the host building. Furthermore, uPVC windows tend to be thicker and have detailing that deviates from original timber windows, impacting on the appearance of the host building.

Any replacement windows would need to accurately replicate the joinery details of the windows to the front elevation. The proposed elevations and sections do not show details that match the existing windows. The existing first and second floor windows have a curved top rail (segmental, rather than round) which is clearly shown in the elevations. However, the proposed elevations show these changing to a flat top rail, which would not be considered as it would considerably downgrade the quality of the built form. Furthermore, the proposed section also demonstrates that the proposed replacements would not be a faithful recreation, or well designed. The existing frames are set behind to the front brickwork, with the top rail and frame as thin sections. The proposed section does not show this and would create a much thicker frame in an inappropriate material. The submitted details thus do not demonstrate that the joinery details of the replacement windows will satisfactorily match the existing windows. The uPVC material constrains window detailing; with thicker frames, lack of definition of detailing, lack of detail associated with joinery, and typically with mitred joints.

In relation to replacement doors - there have been no details submitted on the joinery details, materials, etc. Without these details there is insufficient information to determine whether or not the replacement doors would match the existing, and to assess the impact of the proposed works.

The proposed replacement windows and doors would be considered to cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Crouch End Conservation Area. As the Crouch End Conservation Area is a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and any harm caused to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification and should be weighed against public benefits. Any necessary harm should be reduced where possible through alternative methods of achieving the same benefits.

The applicant has argued that the purpose of the proposal is to ensure a robust and safe environment for students at the school, which provides Specialist Education, Care and Therapy for children and young people with Autism and complex needs. They contend that higher maintenance materials and fittings create risk of failure. Thus, the change to uPVC materials is intended to reduce maintenance of the windows, which will also maintain a more consistent appearance of the building façade. However, as described above, the proposed scheme would harm the appearance of the building. Alternatives should be considered to preserve the conservation area, while recognising the needs of the school – e.g. if toughened glass is required for the school, then this could be accommodated within the existing window frames, or accurately detailed replacement timber framed windows.

In respect of the window precedent at Brookthorpe Hall provided on the plans – this is not located within Haringey, and is not within a conservation area nor a listed building. Furthermore, the planning history associated with the site has not included any specific reference to the replacement of windows.

To conclude, the proposal has failed to demonstrate that it would not materially harm the character and appearance of the host buildings and Crouch End Conservation Area. It does not satisfy Policies DM1 and DM9 of the Development Management DPD 2017, and Policy SP11 and SP12 of Haringey's Local Plan Strategic Policies 2017. The proposed development does not accord with the relevant policies of the London Plan 2021 and the NPPF.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Planning permission should be refused for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION

4. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE PERMISSION for the following reason(s):

Refusal Reasons:

The replacement windows will not reflect the form, material or appearance of the original windows and would have an incongruous design harmful to the character and appearance of the Crouch End Conservation Area. There is also insufficient information to ensure that the replacement doors would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area. As such the proposal does not accord with the design and conservation aims of policies DM1 and DM9 of the Haringey Development Management DPD (2017) and policies SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan Strategic Policies (2017).