

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Application Site
94 Darnley Road, Gravesend, Kent

Proposal

This application seeks permission to replace the existing timber sliding sash windows with new double-glazed uPVC sliding sash units at 94 Darnley Road, Gravesend.

The existing windows no longer provide adequate thermal performance or weather resistance. The proposed replacement windows have been carefully designed to closely replicate the appearance of the existing windows, retaining the same proportions, opening method and glazing pattern while providing improved energy efficiency and long-term durability.

Significance of the Heritage Asset

The property is situated within a designated Conservation Area where the significance of the heritage asset is derived from the collective architectural and historic character of the surrounding buildings and streetscape.

The character of the Conservation Area is defined by the scale, form and appearance of the buildings, together with traditional architectural features such as roof forms, brickwork, boundary treatments and window designs. The property contributes positively to this character through its established appearance and relationship with neighbouring buildings.

Whilst the existing sliding sash windows contribute to the appearance of the building, they are not considered to be unique historic features of exceptional significance in their own right. The significance of the property and its contribution to the Conservation Area is primarily derived from the overall form and appearance of the building rather than the specific window material.

Contribution of Setting to Significance

The setting of the property contributes to the significance of the Conservation Area through the consistent rhythm of residential frontages along Darnley Road and the visual relationship between neighbouring properties.

The windows are visible from the public realm and therefore form part of the building's contribution to the wider street scene. However, the character of the Conservation Area is experienced through the collective appearance of the area rather than through any single building element.

There is also a varied mix of window styles and materials within the immediate vicinity, including examples of modern replacement windows. As such, the Conservation Area already exhibits a degree of variation in window treatments and materials.

Assessment of Impact

The proposed development involves the replacement of existing timber sliding sash windows with heritage-style double-glazed uPVC sliding sash windows.

The proposed windows will:

- Retain the existing window openings with no alteration to their size, position or arrangement.

- Replicate the traditional sliding sash design, including the existing glazing bar arrangement.
- Utilise a heritage-style uPVC system with slimline profiles designed to reflect the appearance of traditional timber frames.
- Be finished in a colour consistent with the existing property.
- Incorporate a flush-fitting heritage design with mechanical joints and external putty-line detailing.

As a result, the proposal will preserve the existing architectural appearance of the building. The overall visual impact will be minimal, with the replacement windows maintaining the established proportions and detailing visible from the street.

Given the close visual similarity between the existing and proposed windows, the proposal is considered to result in no harm, or at most a negligible level of harm, to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Design Measures to Minimise Impact

The proposal has been specifically designed to minimise any potential impact on the significance of the heritage asset by:

- Retaining all existing window openings without alteration.
- Preserving the traditional sliding sash opening method.
- Matching existing window proportions and glazing patterns.
- Using slim-profile heritage-style frames.
- Incorporating traditional detailing including mechanical joints and putty-line finishes.
- Selecting a colour and finish that complements the existing building.

The chosen design ensures that the replacement windows remain sympathetic to the appearance of both the host property and the wider Conservation Area.

Furthermore, the proposed windows have been selected to be more visually sympathetic than some existing modern replacement windows found within the surrounding area, thereby contributing positively to the overall character of the street scene.

Balancing Heritage Considerations with Building Performance Requirements

The proposal seeks to balance heritage considerations with the need to improve the performance and sustainability of the dwelling.

The existing windows no longer provide adequate thermal efficiency or weather resistance. The replacement windows will significantly improve insulation, reduce heat loss and improve occupant comfort, helping to support national and local sustainability objectives.

The proposed double-glazed units will also contribute towards compliance with modern building performance expectations while ensuring that the traditional appearance of the building is retained.

The design approach demonstrates that energy efficiency improvements can be achieved without materially affecting the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Residential Amenity

No objections have been raised by adjoining neighbours in relation to the proposed works, indicating that the development is not considered to adversely affect residential amenity or the local environment.

Conclusion

The proposal represents a sensitive and proportionate upgrade to the property through the replacement of existing timber sliding sash windows with carefully designed heritage-style uPVC sliding sash windows.

The development will preserve the character and appearance of the host property and the wider Conservation Area by maintaining the existing proportions, detailing and traditional sash window design. The proposal will deliver significant improvements in thermal efficiency and weather performance while minimising any visual impact on the heritage asset.

It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with relevant heritage and planning policies relating to development within Conservation Areas, and approval is respectfully requested.