
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2016

by Cullum J A Parker BA(Hons) MA MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 18 November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X2220/Y/16/3153210

Molland House, Molland Lane, Ash, Kent, CT3 2JB

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs T Matcham against the decision of Dover District Council.
 - The application Ref DOV/16/00025, dated 14 December 2015, was refused by notice dated 29 April 2016.
 - The works proposed are described as '*extension to rear of building to form porch*'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. This decision deals solely with listed building consent, and does not consider whether planning permission is required for the proposed porch, or indeed whether such permission would be forthcoming. Such issues are a separate matter between the main parties.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building.

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of Molland House and its grounds, which are operated as a B&B, with the building separated internally into residential and B&B elements. Molland House is a Grade II listed building, which the listing description identifies dates from the 16th Century, with additions in the 17th and 18th Centuries.
5. The front elevation faces Molland Lane to the east, with the building perpendicular to a single lane track that leads to the property on a broad east-west axis. In practice, this means that the proposed porch would be situated on the rear elevation of the building. The significance of the listed building, as a designated heritage asset, derives from its architectural appearance, with the objective observer able to see how various elements of the building have evolved over time, with clear visual clues in the form of differing window styles, roof forms (including gables and hips), and brick colours and textures, for example. There is also a strong linear form to the building, with it principally running on an approximate north-south axis.

6. The proposal seeks the erection of an oak timber framed gable roofed porch located in front of the rear door serving as the primary private access to the residential part of the building. This would measure about 2.93 metres in depth and 3 metres in width, as shown on drawing 05/47/2015. The width of the proposed porch would extend over parts of the eaves (where they are part of a catslide style roof) and parts of the elevation of a full two storey element. There is an existing small flat roofed porch; which is possibly lead or zinc topped, above the rear door. It is not clear as to whether this would be retained, or whether it contains any important heritage value.
7. Nevertheless, the proposed porch, with its glazed gable end and six casement depth would be a visually assertive addition to the rear elevation of the building. This is partly due to its depth, width and height, partly due to the heavy oak frame, and also partly due to the juxtaposition the design of the porch would create compared to the mainly brick built, hipped roof, white painted timber window building it would be attached to. The combination of these factors would result in a large and incongruent addition to the property which would detract from its overall linear form and architectural interest; including obscuring elements of the rear elevation which are currently seen.
8. The proposal would therefore result in a negative impact on the listed building and would fail to preserve its special architectural and historic interest, as sought by Section 16(2) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, as amended. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) indicates degrees of harm being 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'¹. In this case, given that the majority of the building would remain unaffected and conditions could be used to retain the internal door, for example, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset.
9. Considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, which I have given here. No public benefits have been cited in this case, as specified in Paragraph 134 of the Framework. I note the appellant's point made in the Officer's Report of the preference of a porch over thermal insulation of the 'ill-fitting' door, for example. However, I have not been provided with any detailed evidence which demonstrates that such solutions are not feasible or suitable in this instance. In any case, this does not alter my findings in respect of the unacceptability of the porch proposed in this case. The proposal would therefore be contrary to the policies set out in Framework, which include conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
10. Taking into account all of the matters raised, given both the less than substantial harm and the failure to preserve the listed building I have found, I conclude that the proposal should be dismissed.

Cullum J A Parker

INSPECTOR

¹ Paragraphs 132 to 134, the Framework