
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 8 November 2016

by Joanna Reid BA(Hons) BArch(Hons) RIBA

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

Decision date: 21 November 2016

Two Appeals at Yard Farm House, St John's Road, Wroxall, Isle of Wight PO38 3AA

- The appeals are made by Mr Jim McGovern against the decisions of Isle of Wight Council.
 - The development and works proposed is first floor family bathroom.
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Appeal A Ref: APP/P2114/W/16/3152873

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The application Ref P/00386/16, dated 16 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2016.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/P2114/Y/16/3152877

- 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 application Ref P/00387/16, dated 16 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2016.
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Appeals A and B: Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Appeals A and B:

Main issue

2. The appeal dwelling (the listed building) is listed in Grade II as 'Yard Farmhouse'. With this in mind, the main issue in these appeals is whether the proposed development and works would preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

Reasons

3. The stone with red brick dressings pitched roofed 2-storey listed building includes a C18 main range with later additions, including a pair of 1½-storey gabled rear outshuts at about right angles to the main range, which meet to form a valley at roughly ground floor eaves level. The simple pitched roofed form, historic features and mainly traditional building materials contribute positively to the special architectural interest of the listed building, and to its significance as a historic farmhouse.
4. Due to the lower ridge height of the rear outshuts and the depth of the valley between them, the robust form of the back of the main range of the historic dwelling, including its largely uninterrupted rear roof slope, eaves and stone

back wall, can be appreciated in views from the back garden of the listed building. The simple form of the main range and the subservient character of the later outshuts at the back contribute positively to the character and significance of the listed building, so it is desirable to preserve them.

5. The proposed gabled first floor extension would be sited at the back of the main range, over the valley between the outshut roofs, and its ridge would be about the same height as their ridges. The extension would not be as deep as the existing outshut ranges, so it would be set back from their back wall.
6. However, due to its form and siting, the extension would enclose the stone wall and eaves line of the main range of the historic dwelling between the outshut roofs, and it would harmfully intrude into the important main range roof slope. Due to its considerable bulk and its prominent first floor siting, the extension would be an unacceptably intrusive and discordant addition. Moreover, because the extension would look squeezed-in between the long slopes of the outshut roofs, the resulting complex roof form at the back of the main range would be unacceptably at odds with the form of the listed building, and it would harmfully diminish the subservient character of the existing later additions.
7. Some of the roof timbers in the listed building are said to have been replaced and its probably thatched, then slated, main range roof is now tiled. However, much of the back wall of the main range, which is one of the oldest parts of the listed building, has endured. As a new opening would be formed through this historic wall, the proposal would also cause a damaging loss of historic fabric, even if the stone were to be re-used.
8. Whilst the first floor family bathroom would be convenient for the present occupiers, there are 5 bedrooms on the first floor, including one with an en-suite bathroom, a generous attic space in the main range, and a number of ground floor rooms. So, there would be ample scope within the existing building to provide a family bathroom, say, at first floor within a later outshut, where routes for services would be less likely to damage the most historic fabric. This would leave a reasonable number of rooms for bedrooms and/or home offices over the 3 floors, so the scheme would not be necessary to keep the asset in active use as a dwelling. Also, whilst the Council says that some of the other works that were drawn to my attention have not been authorised, none of them are part of the proposal before me, so they attract very little weight. Thus, the scheme would provide almost no public benefits.
9. The proposal would not be readily visible from the public domain. However, it would be seen from the back garden by its occupiers, and by occupiers of the surrounding countryside within the wider setting of the asset, so that would not be a good reason to allow this damaging scheme. Furthermore, many heritage assets are similarly in private hands, and the exercise of my statutory duties is not dependent on the ability of the public to access or experience them.
10. In the terms of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Framework), the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the asset. Framework paragraph 134 explains that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

11. The listed building would stay in the same use, so its optimum viable use is not relevant, and as almost no public benefits have been put to me, they would not be enough to outweigh the less than substantial harm that the proposal would cause. Moreover, insufficient clear and convincing justification has been put to me to show that the proposal would be necessary to conserve the asset in a manner appropriate to its significance as a historic farmhouse.
12. Therefore, I consider that the proposed development and works would fail to preserve the special architectural interest of the listed building. They would be contrary to Policy DM2 of the *Isle of Wight Council Island Plan* (LP) which seeks high quality design and to preserve heritage assets, LP Policy DM11 which aims to conserve heritage assets, the thrust of LP Policy SP5 which aims to conserve historic environments, and the Framework which aims to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.
13. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeals fail.

Joanna Reid

INSPECTOR