
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2016

by J J Evans BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 10 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B1225/Y/16/3160294

114 East Street, Corfe Castle, Wareham, Dorset BH20 5EQ

- 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 C Lehman against the decision of Purbeck District Council.
 - The application Ref 6/2016/0268, dated 29 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2016.
 - The works proposed are the installation of attic stair and dormer window. Replacement first floor gable window.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. 114 East Street is a grade II listed building within the Corfe Castle Conservation Area. As required by Sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 I have paid special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
3. The application form requested both planning permission and listed building consent. However, the appellant's appeal form makes it clear that the appeal is against the Council's refusal of listed building consent only. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeal with regard solely to the consideration of whether listed building consent should be granted.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed dormer would preserve a grade II listed building and any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses, and linked to that whether the works would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Corfe Castle Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. 114 East Street is a mid-terraced cottage positioned within a long row of historic buildings. The cottage was probably constructed in the eighteenth century and has coursed rubble stone walls under a thatched roof. Although there are a variety of ages and styles of extensions to the rear of the house, the historic part of the property has a one-and-a-half storey structure with a half dormer to the front. The simple form of the cottage, the modest
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- proportions of its historic core, and the use of thatch as a roofing material, is part of the special interest and significance of this listed building.
6. A distinctive feature of the historic cottages within the terrace is their construction from mostly coursed rubble stone under stone slates. The homogeneity of the materials, the similar sizes and simple vernacular forms of the row of cottages is an attractive feature of the conservation area. The presence of the thatched roof on the appeal property is noticeably different to the nearby cottages and consequently draws the eye, both when viewed from the street scene and from the public rights of way within the fields to the rear of the property.
 7. The proposed dormer would be within the rear roof slope and whilst it would be positioned to avoid the provision of an eyebrow cover, it would nevertheless be an intrusive interruption of the bold sweeping planes of the thatch. The presence of the window high above the eaves would be an alien addition to the cottage, contrasting with the modest simplicity of the historic core of the building. Whilst there are other dormers within dwellings, of those within the thatched properties in the village, most are positioned close to the eaves thereby necessitating an eyebrow within the thatch. The proposed dormer would not only be at odds with the roof form of the listed building, but would also conflict with the local vernacular found within the village.
 8. Moreover, the presence of a lead cill and the use of Slimlite double glazing would exaggerate the harm I have found. The detailing of the conversion works has not been provided in any detail and it is not clear how deep the cill would be. Notwithstanding this, a lead cill would be an overly contrived and incongruous addition to the simple form of the thatched roof.
 9. Even with a timber frame, the use of double glazing for the dormer window would have a discernibly modern appearance. The presence of visible spacers and the double register of the panes of glass would be noticeably apparent, and would be clearly identified as a non-traditional modern fixture to the building. This would be at harmful odds with the historic form and vernacular materials of the roof in which it would be positioned.
 10. The appellant has pointed out that the building has been much altered and extended, with replacement rafters and joists in the roof, and that neither the dormer nor the proposed stair would result in the loss of historic fabric. There were new timbers apparent within the roof space, but nevertheless some historic timbers remain and moreover the thatched roof has retained its simple historic form. The provision of the dormer would not only harm the special interest of a listed building but would fail to respect the local vernacular tradition that is an attractive part of the character and appearance of the conservation area.
 11. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that where a proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The works would result in less than substantial harm due to their relatively small size compared to that of the building and conservation area as a whole. The additional living accommodation provided by the proposal would be a personal benefit for the appellant, and thus would not be a public benefit that would outweigh the harm I have found.

12. The Framework requires that when considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This applies in all cases as the Act requires the preservation of a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses irrespective of whether the proposal would affect only the rear of a building. Despite the complexity of the form of the extensions to the rear of the cottage, the dormer would be harmfully prominent within the thatch.
13. I therefore find the proposed dormer would neither preserve the special interest of a listed building, nor would it preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area. The Council have drawn my attention to Policies D and LHH of the Purbeck Local Plan Part 1 (2012), and the guidance in the Purbeck District Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2014). Development plan policies and supporting guidance are not determinative in listed building cases. However, I have taken those cited by the Council into account as a material consideration. The proposed dormer would conflict with them, as these policies require, amongst other things, that development conserves and enhances heritage assets, and positively integrates with its surroundings, thereby reflecting objectives of the Framework.

Other Matters

14. The appeal scheme also proposes a replacement double glazed timber window for the rear bedroom. Although the Council's Design and Conservation Officer has objected to the use of double glazing in the bedroom window, these concerns were not included within the Council's decision notice. Nevertheless, for the reasons given above with regard to the use of double glazing within the dormer, the use of Slimlite units in the replacement bedroom window would also unacceptably harm the special interest of the listed building. However, as I am dismissing the appeal for other reasons, this matter has not been decisive.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

J J Evans

INSPECTOR