
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2017

by Paul Jackson B Arch (Hons) RIBA

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

Decision date: 26 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/Y/16/3161955

Underriver House, Underriver House Road, Underriver, Kent TN15 0SL

- 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 Mr Antony Stack against the decision of Sevenoaks District Council.
 - The application Ref SE/16/02105/LBCALT, dated 7 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 September 2016.
 - The works proposed are replace existing external doors and windows where marked on the documents. Install new, matching doors and windows with slim-line glazing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for the replacement of existing external doors and windows where marked on the documents and installation of new, matching doors and windows with slim-line glazing at Underriver House, Underriver House Road, Underriver, Kent TN15 0SL in accordance with the terms of the application Ref SE/16/02105/LBCALT, dated 7 July 2016 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
 - 2) Before any works take place to the windows subject of this application, horizontal and vertical sections through the proposed windows and doors including the heads, sills, jambs, meeting stiles, glass and separating beads at a scale of not less than 1:10 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
 - 3) The replacement windows and doors are to replicate exactly the existing units in terms of sight lines and glazing areas.
 - 4) Before any works take place to the windows subject of this application, elevations of the proposed windows and doors at a scale of not less than 1:20 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The works shall be implemented in accordance with the approved elevations.
 - 5) No replacement of folding internal shutters and their boxes is to take place. The replacement windows and doors shall not inhibit the operation of the existing internal shutters in any way.
 - 6) The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 789/101J, 789/201B, 789/202F, 789/203F.
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Reasons

2. The application relates to the replacement of existing ground floor doors and windows in a mid-19th century addition to a circa 1700 Queen Anne house listed at Grade II. The extension is attributed to Sir George Gilbert Scott. The double glazing is to be with new matching sealed units of the 'slimline' type.
3. The design and condition of the existing windows and doors that are to be replaced in the extension suggest a much later date than the mid-19th century, at which time polished plate glass technology was in its infancy. The glazing shows no perceivable surface distortion or obvious faults which indicates modern float glass. The origin of the timber sub-frames is less certain, as there is photographic evidence for a similar arrangement in 1907. However, all the ironmongery has been replaced relatively recently. No dendrochronological evidence has been submitted. The sections are not 'delicate' in construction. I consider that there is little of particular heritage interest about the mouldings or construction of these doors and they could be replicated in terms of external and internal appearance without harming heritage interest.
4. I accept that there would be difficulties draft-proofing doors and windows of this size effectively using conventional retro-fit methods. Moreover, the improvement in U-value that would occur due to utilising up to date slim double glazing units of around 12 mm thick, whilst not affecting overall heat loss substantially, would make a noticeable difference to the perceived level of comfort in these large rooms, improving the likelihood that they will be used in colder months. It is desirable that older buildings of architectural interest should be used for their original purpose and that may include insulation to reduce carbon emissions and adaptations to allow for the needs of the modern day occupier, providing that the building's existing special interest is not compromised.
5. The proposed 'slimline' double glazed units in this case would not appear significantly different to the existing glazing. I do not consider that the difference between existing small pane single glazing on the first floor and the double glazed units on the ground floor would be readily perceived. The increased rebate depth and width necessary would not appear out of place in units of the size proposed. The proposed replacement painted doors and frames would not harm the special architectural character or historic interest of the building. Accordingly the works would not conflict with the heritage protection aims of policy EN4 of the 2015 Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan or the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed works would not harm the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building having regard to the statutory requirements of Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act.

Conditions

6. Conditions are imposed to require approval of the exact appearance and construction of the replacement units, to ensure that the special interest of the building is retained. The existing shutters appear to be of an earlier date and replacement of the windows and doors should not compromise their fabric or operation. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved drawings, for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of good planning.
7. I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Paul Jackson

INSPECTOR