

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2017

by R Barrett BSc (Hons) MSc Dip UD Dip Hist Cons MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 17th February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1760/Y/16/3154221

17 The Abbey, Romsey Hampshire SO51 8EN

- 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 and Mrs Collins against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00723/LBWS, dated 23 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 24 June 2016.
 - The works proposed are 'retrospective listed building consent for replacement rear door'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appeal works have already been carried out in part. I also note that the appellant's description of works above includes 'retrospective replacement of rear door'. However, the appeal plans before me include other works that have not been carried out. I am therefore determining this appeal in accordance with those appeal plans.

Main Issue

3. 17 The Abbey is a grade II listed building. Having regard to the statutory requirements of section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the main issue in this case is whether the proposed works would preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the grade II listed building.

Reasons

4. The appeal property includes a semi-detached, two storey, early nineteenth century house, with white walls under a shallow pitched slate roof. It is similar in design and detailing to its attached neighbour, No 19 which is also listed. Despite alterations and some rebuilding, particularly at the rear of the pair of listed buildings, their general similarity adds to their significance as heritage assets.
 5. A striking feature of the appeal building is the timber painted windows and prominent front door, which gives the property a generally cohesive character and appearance. The window openings are rectangular in their shape with a vertical emphasis, generally regular in their pattern and modest in their size in relation to the elevation in which they sit, such that the property has a
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- generally solid appearance. The painted, traditionally designed timber sash and casement windows, recessed within their openings are notable features, which contribute to the significance of the listed building as a heritage asset.
6. The proposed glazed double doors would result in a large area of glazing, which would diminish the generally solid appearance of the main elevations of the listed building. It would include double glazed oak timber doors, with a painted finish. However, their detailing, including the proportions of the lights within the doors, would be different to most other windows on the appeal property, which would appear out of place. The use of double glazing with applied glazing bars would not have the same three dimensional quality as a traditional single glazed window as seen on most windows in the rest of the appeal building. Details such as the prominent hinges and the trickle vents above the glazed doors would be modern features that would appear odd when seen against the traditionally designed windows. Furthermore, the proposed doors would not be recessed within the opening, which would add to my concern. In addition, the applied 'V' groove panelling to enclose the side lights and the slate panel to cover the fanlight above would appear as crude additions that would fail to successfully replicate the quality of workmanship of the appeal property generally. For all these reasons, the proposed doors would appear out of place and would erode the cohesiveness of the fenestration on the listed property and adversely affect its significance as a heritage asset.
 7. In coming to this conclusion, I have noted that the appeal building has been altered through time at the rear and that a single door, which was a modern insertion, was previously roughly in the same position. However, those matters do not materially affect my findings, as the previous door was a smaller opening with different detailing and I am making my conclusions on the basis of the listed building as altered.
 8. I conclude that the appeal proposal would fail to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the grade II listed building and would fail to accord with Policy E9 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2011-2029). That policy seeks for development/works affecting a heritage asset to make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing its significance.
 9. Whilst not raised in the Council's reason for refusal, I note that the appeal site sits within the Romsey Conservation Area (RCA). That Conservation Area comprises the historic town with its rich variety of historic buildings set within the traditional street pattern. The appeal building, being one of the historic buildings sited close to Romsey Abbey, positively contributes to the rich variety of historic buildings within the RCA and thereby its character and appearance. As I have found that the appeal works would fail to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the grade II listed appeal building, it follows that as that building positively contributes to the character and appearance of the RCA, it would also fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the RCA. I have made this judgement mindful of the fact that the appeal proposal would not be within the public realm and would not be prominently sited within the RCA.

Public Benefits

10. In accordance with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I accord great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets. I consider that the harm to the significance of the listed

building and the RCA would be less than substantial, a matter to which I attach considerable importance and weight. However, in this case, no public benefits, as identified in paragraph 134 of the Framework, are before me, which would outweigh that harm. In coming to this conclusion, I have had regard to the security benefits and necessity for urgent maintenance brought to my attention.

Conclusion

11. For the above reasons, and taking all other matters raised into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Barrett

INSPECTOR