
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 January 2017

by Elaine Benson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 03 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A3010/Y/16/3158900

Bothamsall Hall, Church Lane, Bothamsall DN22 8DN

- 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 Riggott against the decision of Bassetlaw District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/00661/LBA, dated 9 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 5 July 2016.
 - The works proposed are painting of the extension render.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and listed building consent is refused for painting of the extension render.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed works on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and its setting.

Reasons

3. Bothamsall Hall (the Hall) is an ashlar, red brick and render Grade II listed building of Victorian Gothic style standing in the Bothamsall Conservation Area. The list description states that the original building dates from around 1845 with later 1906 and 1926 extensions. It was originally built as a vicarage to the nearby Church of St Peter and St Mary, before its extension and use as a large country house which continues today. The recently cleaned stonework comprises cream coloured Permean magnesian limestone.
 4. The extensions to the Hall are significant additions with a pebbledashed finish. They were built in the Arts and Crafts style and are clearly distinct from the original building in terms of design and materials. The historic plans of the extensions do not indicate their original external materials or finish. The extensions have strong architectural features and detailing including long, low slung roofs, steep roof pitches, front facing gables, tall decorative chimneys, and mullioned casement windows with lead glazing bars and hood moulds.
 5. The evidence provided and my observations made at the site visit are sufficient to provide an understanding of the Hall's special historic interest and character and for an evaluation of the impact of the proposed works on its significance to be undertaken.
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Proposal

6. The appellants consider that the colour of the pebbledash is unattractive and does not complement the main house. It is proposed to paint the exterior of the extensions in a heritage shade of white which has been used across the Hall's site, including on the Hall's rainwater goods and a number of timber features within the grounds. Whilst I understand the appellants' approach to the aesthetics of the building, it is necessary to consider the effect of the proposed works on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and its setting.
7. Pebbledash render was often used during the Arts and Crafts Movement and is regarded as a traditional craft technique that uses natural materials. It is typically known for its stippled and un-painted finish allowing the colour of the pebbles to show through. An earlier variant, roughcast render, comprises smaller and finer pebbles mixed with the render material to produce a softer and finer finish. Roughcast walls were almost always lime-washed or painted to give a decorative finish.
8. There is no dispute that the pebbledash on the walls of the extensions is not original, but was applied either in the late 1970s or the early 1980s. The appellants believe that the pebbledash covers or replaced a previous rendered finish thought to be roughcast render. This view is supported by a section of roughcast render around the stairs leading to the boiler room in the 1926 extension. Furthermore, a small sample of the roughcast finish was compared to the stonework of the main house and found have a similar colour. In the appellants' view this demonstrates that the extensions were roughcast rendered to produce a uniform appearance which was similar to the colour of the original building, with a softer texture than that seen today. They argue that the extensions were intended to be in keeping with the original building rather than to contrast with it, and that this would align with the Arts and Crafts Movement philosophies. Whilst acknowledging that it is not usually historically appropriate to paint pebbledash, the appellants feel that their proposal would return the external appearance of the building back to the originally intended finish.
9. Although roughcast render was used in the boiler room area, I am not persuaded that it had a wider use on both of the extensions. The evidence does not rule out the possibility that the extensions were originally roughcast rendered and later pebbledashed. However, there are no sample panels from the extensions or any other evidence to categorically support this assertion. Furthermore, there is no convincing evidence to support the appellants' view that the exteriors of the extensions were intended to match the original building. But in any event, even if painted roughcast render were found to be the original covering, this would not justify painting the pebbledash, irrespective of its age. Such works would produce a different appearance and texture to painted roughcast render and would be a historically inaccurate approach toward pebbledash.
10. The Council has raised no concerns about the existing finish of the extensions. Whilst I accept that the current finish is not original, I do not share the appellants' view that the pebbledash harms the character and appearance of the Hall as a whole. Moreover, painting the extensions would produce a stark and flat contrast with the stone of the main Hall which contains natural

variations. I concur with the Council that painting the exterior white would diminish the prominence of the extensions' architectural features. This view is supported by my assessment of the areas of wall which were painted to demonstrate its effect.

11. As it stands, the pebbledash is in keeping with the age and design of the extensions and therefore preserves the building's character. I conclude that to paint the extensions would harm the special architectural and historic interest and significance of Bothamsall Hall. The proposed works would also harm the long established character and appearance of the listed building as it is viewed in the wider locality, thereby failing to preserve the character and appearance of the Bothamsall Conservation Area.
12. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) indicates in Paragraph 132 that as heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. I conclude that the appellants' preference to paint the pebbledash for aesthetic reasons is not of sufficient public benefit to outweigh the harm that would be caused to the listed building. There are no other public benefits sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets that I have identified.

Other Matters

13. The upkeep of the existing pebbledash is minimal due to its hard wearing nature, whereas painting the exterior walls would need regular maintenance to sustain its appearance. Whilst I have no doubt that the appellants would keep the building in good decorative order, this might not be the case with future occupiers for whom the external painting would create an ongoing burden.
14. The Council indicated its support for the removal of the pebbledash and its replacement with painted roughcast render. However, the appellants have indicated that they would not wish to remove the intact pebbledash, noting that this process would be problematic and costly. The Council are content with this approach and there are no reasons to disagree.
15. A number of buildings in the region with a painted render finish were brought to my attention. Some have a roughcast finish whilst others are pebbledashed. I observed those in nearby Perlethorpe during my site visit. They are said by the appellant to illustrate a painted finish similar to what is proposed in this appeal. However, the Council states that these buildings are architecturally distinct buildings which are not representative of the Arts and Crafts Movement and are examples of stucco render and not the pebbledash finish at Bothamsall Hall. In any event I found that the Hall has its own architectural qualities which are different to those in the identified examples. The appeal proposal has been determined on its individual merits.

Conclusion

16. I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses and have had special regard to its location within the Bothamsall Conservation Area. Having considered all of the evidence with this appeal I conclude that the proposed works would not sustain or enhance the significance of these heritage assets and would conflict with the objectives of

the Framework to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and the similar aims of Policy DM 8 of the Bassetlaw Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.

17. For the reasons given the appeal is dismissed.

Elaine Benson

INSPECTOR