

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 18 May 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: 7th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/W/17/3170717 (Appeal A)

Hunts Cottage, Munden Road, Dane End, Hertfordshire SG12 0LP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs S and L Nicholson against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/17/0051/HH, dated 17 March 2016, was refused by notice, dated 28 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'proposed single storey rear extension including courtyard area in-filled'.
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Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/Y/17/3170718 (Appeal B)

Hunts Cottage, Munden Road, Dane End, Hertfordshire SG12 0LP

- 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 S and L Nicholson against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/17/0052/LBC, dated 17 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 28 February 2017.
 - The development proposed is described as 'proposed single storey rear extension including courtyard area in-filled'.
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Decisions

1. Both appeals are dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Appeal A and Appeal B relate to the same site. Whilst I have considered each proposal on its own merits, given that they have much in common, and in the interests of brevity, I have dealt with them in one document.

Main Issues

3. Whether the appeal proposals would preserve the special architectural or historic interest of Hunts Cottage, a grade II* listed building, its setting and the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

4. The appeal site includes a grade II* listed building, Hunts Cottage. The listing description includes its neighbour, Burnside, which together with the appeal site formed one house. Its historic core includes a timber framed hall house, of about 14th, or early 15th century origin. Notwithstanding alterations and additions, particularly at its rear where there is a small courtyard, it is possible
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to appreciate its 14th and 15th century origins, historic plan form and evolution. The simple, elongated plan form of its historic core, its prominent roof slopes and its historic fabric, contribute to its significance as a heritage asset. Its close relationship to its attached neighbour, Burnside contributes to its setting, which adds to its significance.

5. The locality generally comprises a mix of dwellings which front onto the streets, set within planted and green plots. With an abundance of trees and planting, the locality has a generally spacious and rural character and appearance. The appeal site, its distinctive historic form and its trees and planting, contribute to that character and appearance.
6. The proposed addition, even though single storey, would cumulatively be large in relation to the historic part of the appeal building and would appear out of proportion to it. It would extend the historic part of the appeal building significantly at its rear and alter its historic elongated plan form. It would diminish the existing small courtyard at its rear, which would reduce an understanding of its history and evolution. Further, it would diminish the gap between the appeal site and its neighbour, Burnside, which would erode the separation between the two, such that an appreciation of their joint history would be adversely affected. Whilst I appreciate that views of the rear of the appeal building are not fully appreciable at present, these proposals would worsen that situation. In making this judgement, I have taken into account that the rear of the appeal site is not open to public view. Whilst the removal of the existing additions would be an advantage of the appeal proposal, that does not outweigh the harm that would result.
7. Further, it would include large areas of flat roof, which would fail to relate appropriately to the prominent pitched roofs of the existing. In addition, the proposed glazed lantern would be large and modern in shape and design, such that it would appear out of place. Further, on the basis of the information before me, I am not convinced that harm to the appeal building would not be a consequence of the attachment of the proposed structure to the historic fabric. This matter adds to my concern. All in all, for all these reasons, the appeal proposals would fail to relate appropriately to the listed building and its neighbour Burnside.
8. I have found that the appeal site and the neighbouring property positively contribute to the character and appearance of the locality. It follows, therefore, that in causing harm to those listed buildings, the appeal proposals would result in harm to the character and appearance of the locality. I consider that conditions attached to the relevant permission and consent could not overcome my concerns.
9. In making these judgements, I have had regard to the additions approved at the adjoining property, Burnside. I have limited information on this matter, but from that before me I note that those proposals relate to the original plan form of that building, with a succession of small pitched roof additions and do not result in the same harm as the appeals would.
10. I conclude that the appeal proposals would fail to preserve special architectural or historic interest of the listed building and its setting and adversely affect the character and appearance of the locality. The appeals would therefore be contrary to the East Herts Local Plan Second Review (2007) Policies ENV1, ENV5, and ENV6. Those policies, together, aim for a high standard of design

and layout to reflect local distinctiveness in extensions. They would also fail to accord with section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which aims to conserve and enhance the historic environment.

Public Benefits

11. In accordance with paragraph 132 of 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 would be less than substantial, a matter to which I attach considerable importance and weight, mindful of my statutory duties¹. However, in this case, no public benefits, as identified in paragraph 134 of the Framework, are before me sufficient to outweigh that harm. In coming to this conclusion, I have had regard to the provision of better living space for the current and future occupiers. No substantive evidence is before me to indicate that the optimum viable use of the appeal site would be materially altered by the appeal proposals.

Conclusions

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

R Barrett

INSPECTOR

¹ section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990