

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 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: 20th June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B9506/Y/16/3161763

Flats 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 16 Northerwood House, Swan Green, Emery Down, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7DT

- 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 Donald Thompson (Northerwood Freeholders Lyndhurst) Ltd) against the decision of New Forest National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 16/00408, dated 2 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is 'replacement of 70 windows in the east and west wings of the property as and when this becomes necessary. The replacement will all be sash windows consistent with those replaced after approval case no. 10/95244. This will involve changing 22 windows in the north elevation from huge windows to sash windows'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the special architectural or historic interest of Northerwood House and its setting.

Reasons

3. The appeal site includes a large country house which has been converted into a number of flats. It has been added to and altered over time, including the addition of side wings, a mansard roof and internal remodelling to accommodate its use as flats. Windows are generally white painted timber sash windows, to a traditional design, with some on the side wings possibly reused from other buildings. Although with a variety of sizes, designs and detailing, some double glazed units and some of different types of timber, the general consistency in the colour, the use of timber, general design elements and detailing of the windows, creates a planned sense of cohesion within the elevations. Notwithstanding any inaccuracies in the listing description, the many alterations over time, and some variation in the detailed design of windows, overall, windows and doors, together with the appeal property's Classical detailing, contribute to its significance as a heritage asset.
 4. It is acknowledged that the windows, particularly on the later side wings, that materially deviate from a traditional sash window, by reason of their opening mechanism, do not contribute to that special interest in some respects. However, generally, the slight variation in the window details throughout the listed building as a whole, such as glazing bars and mouldings, give an
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- indication of the evolution and history of the appeal property and add to its significance.
5. The listed building's primary frontage sits overlooking formal landscaped gardens, which together with the small coach house on its northern side, contribute to its formal rural landscaped and rather isolated setting. That in turn contributes to its significance as a heritage asset.
 6. The appeal proposal would involve the replacement of windows on the later side wings, with timber double glazed units. I am concerned that the wholesale replacement of the windows proposed, in the absence of substantive justification, would erode an understanding of the history and development of the appeal property. Further, some of the windows that would be replaced are single glazed traditional sash windows, which I noted particularly on the side elevations of the later wings. It is suggested that some may be historic windows and therefore their removal and replacement would result in the loss of some historic fabric. Overall, in each case, I do not have a full understanding of the impact of the replacement of the windows proposed and its effect on the significance of the listed building. Whilst I appreciate there would be some benefit in replacing some of the windows indicated, I cannot be convinced that would be the best approach in every case to ensure the preservation of the special architectural or historic interest of the listed property.
 7. Moreover, an example of a double glazed unit installed as a result of a previous consent was pointed out to me on my site visit¹. Assessing this along with the proposed plans, I am clear that the proposed replacements would deviate from some of the single glazed traditional timber sash windows proposed to be replaced. The glazing bars and other elements would be thicker to accommodate a sealed unit and the strip between the glazed elements would be visible. The glass would have a different reflective quality, distinctive to two panes of modern glass in close proximity. All in all, they would have a different appearance to a single glazed traditionally detailed sash window and would fail to replicate their slim proportions and the lively appearance of the glass. Whilst their use may be justified in particular circumstances, the wholesale use of them within the side wings would diminish the architectural qualities of the appeal building. This would be the case, even though it is noted that the side wings are later additions to the main central block.
 8. I am aware that the proposed detailing replicates that approved as part of a previous listed building consent². However, that consent related to the replacement of UPVC windows, which differentiates it from the appeal before me. I have taken into account the energy conservation benefits and the contribution that double glazed units could make to reducing damp and heat loss. However, I am unconvinced that other approaches to address those issues are not possible without causing the level of harm proposed to the significance of the listed building. I am also aware of the personal circumstances of the occupiers of flat 16. However, again, I am unconvinced that any impact on health, due to a damp living environment, could not be addressed in other ways. That the listed building sits in large landscaped grounds and is not readily open to public view does not diminish my concern for the historic fabric, its replacement and the effect of the proposal on close

¹ 10/95244

² 10/95244

range views. I have also taken into account that the proposed replacements may be more durable than the windows they would replace, some would improve the opening mechanism of those they would replace and that a blanket approach to replacement of the windows in the side wings would reduce administration costs for the appellant. However, whilst those would be benefits, together with other benefits identified, they are not sufficient to outweigh the harm that I have identified.

9. As the appeal works would be in the elevations of the listed building, they would not materially affect its setting.
10. I conclude that the appeal proposal would fail to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building although it would not materially affect its setting. For this reason it would fail to accord with Policies DP1, DP6 and CP7 of the New Forest National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy and Development Management DPD (2010). Those policies, together, aim for the highest standards of design and proposals to protect, maintain or enhance nationally important sites and features of the built environment.

Public Benefits

11. 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 would be less than substantial, a matter to which I attach considerable importance and weight, mindful of my statutory duties³. However, in this case, no public benefits, as identified in paragraph 134 of the Framework, are before me sufficient to outweigh that harm.

Other Matters

12. I have noted the appellant's comments regarding the advice it has received from the Authority and the way in which it has dealt with the appeal application. However, that is a matter between the appellant and the Authority, in the first instance and has not affected my decision.

Conclusion

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

R Barrett

INSPECTOR

³ section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990