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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 June 2017

**by A Jordan BA Hons MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 3 July 2017**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/Y/16/3161655**

**Dove Syke, Eaves Hall Lane, West Bradford, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 3JG**

- 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 Miss Emma Whittingham of McDermott Windows against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 3/2016/0279, dated 3 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 27 May 2016.
  - The works proposed are described as "to replace existing windows and porch door with a suitable timber alternative. Proposed materials: Residence 9 Flush casement window system and Residence 9 Solidor composite door".
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. The listing refers to the dwelling as Dove Sike, whereas all other documentation refers to the property as Dove Syke. I am satisfied that the listing relates to the same property.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the impact of the proposal on the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building known as both Dove Sike and Dove Syke.

### Reasons

4. S16(2) and S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. There is no statutory requirement to have regard to the provisions of the development plan for decisions on applications for listed building consent and the Council have not referred explicitly in its decision notice to any relevant local plan policies. Nevertheless, the supporting reports refer to policies EN5 and DME4 of the *Ribble Valley Core Strategy* (Core Strategy), which both seek to ensure that listed buildings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. Policy DMG1 of the Core Strategy also seeks development which is sympathetic in terms of appearance, including the use of appropriate building materials. These broadly reflect the statutory duties defined in the Act.

5. Dove Syke is a Grade II listed building. The listing describes it as dating from 1827 with earlier remains. It is constructed in sandstone with deep sandstone window surrounds and the original structure has a broadly symmetrical appearance, which to rear is now distorted by the addition of a large conservatory. The regular shape and spacing of the window openings to the front and rear contributes much to the attractive appearance of the original building. The significance of the building as a heritage asset is in part derived from the antiquity of parts of its fabric and in its appearance as an attractive example of vernacular architecture from its period.
6. The windows on the property are timber. The listing describes the building as having modern imitation sash windows. However I noted on site that the front windows were side opening casements with a horizontal emphasis, and those on the rear were top opening casements with a 6 x 2 arrangement. The windows on the rear appear more obvious as modern replacements due to the top opening, which along with the modern conservatory has a negative effect on pleasing symmetry of the simple rear elevation.
7. The proposal comprises the removal of the existing timber double glazed windows on the property and its replacement with a upvc double glazing system. A sample of the proposed "Residence 9" windows was available for inspection on site. This provided a reasonable approximation of a painted timber window when closed and viewed from a distance. The profile was well defined and the surface of the material was similar to painted timber. Nevertheless, when open the plastic interior would be evident and on close inspection the texture of the material would not have the same patina as painted wood. Neither would it be likely to weather or bed down in the same way as timber, and so over time the synthetic nature of the material would become more apparent and would appear more incongruous. This effect would also be evident in relation to the finish of the proposed door.
8. I take into account that the existing windows already represent a departure from the form of windows which would originally have been on the building. However, I have not been provided with details of the exact form of the proposed windows, and so in the absence of any other information must assume that the proposed replacements seek to replicate the formation of those on the building at present. In this regard I cannot take account of any potential beneficial effect a more sympathetic configuration might have on the appearance of the building. It follows that the replacement of the timber windows with a plastic alternative, even those of the quality proposed, would have a small but nonetheless harmfully erosive effect on the appearance and historic character of the heritage asset.
9. The proposal would affect only part of the building and so the harm caused to its significance as a heritage asset would thus be less than substantial. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) directs that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. I therefore attribute considerable importance and weight to this harm, which the Framework also indicates should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.
10. The appellant considers that the proposed windows would be more thermally efficient than the existing units, that they would be low maintenance, and

would be more secure. I have been provided with no information of the thermal efficiency of the existing double glazed units with which to compare the new windows, or any evidence that timber windows would be less secure, or would require unreasonable amounts of maintenance. I therefore have no convincing basis for concluding that the proposal would be beneficial to the wider housing stock and attribute no weight to these matters as public benefits. As such it cannot outweigh the harm the proposal causes to the special interest of the listed building and to its significance as a heritage asset. It follows that the proposal fails to comply with national policy outlined in the Framework. It also fails to comply with the policies EN5 and DME4 of the Local Plan outlined above.

11. Therefore, for the reasons outlined above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal be dismissed,

*A Jordan*

INSPECTOR