

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2017

by S J Papworth DipArch(Glos) RIBA

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

Decision date: 29th November 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/Y/17/3180062

Granby Place, 1 - 3 High Street, Northfleet, Gravesend DA11 9EZ

- 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 Clifford Dawe against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20170063, dated 24 January 2017, was refused by the Council by notice dated 6 April 2017.
 - The works proposed are to insert a small, contemporary wall plaque highlighting dated and cost of rebuilding wall.
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Decision

1. I allow the appeal and grant listed building consent for a wall plaque at Granby Place, 1 - 3 High Street, Northfleet, Gravesend DA11 9EZ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 20170063, dated 24 January 2017 and the plans submitted with it.

Reasons

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the works on the architectural or historic significance of listed buildings and their setting within the Hill Conservation Area. The buildings as described in the list are 1 and 2 Granby Place; 'circa 1830. A pair of semi-detached, 2-storey houses in yellow brick with hipped slate roof. Six sash windows. Two round-headed doorways with reeded pilasters, semi-circular fanlights and doors of 6 moulded and fielded panels' and the garden wall and gate piers to numbers 1 and 2; 'C19 yellow brick garden wall with capped gate piers, forming the front boundary of Nos 1 and 2 Granby Place.'

3. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72(1) of the same Act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

4. These duties are reflected in Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies TC2 and TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy concerns good design. The policies of the Development Plan are a material consideration only in this listed building consent appeal.

5. Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. The courts have determined that considerable importance and weight should be given to harm found to the significance of listed buildings.

6. There appears some confusion over the status of the wall, albeit that a listed building consent application was made and decided, and the present appeal made. The Listing Casework Team at Historic England consider the wall to not be included within the listing, it having been completely rebuilt, and on 2 May 2017 the listing description was amended to that set out above, inferring that it is the wall forming the front boundary of 1 and 2 Granby Place and not the garden wall that is listed. The map of listed buildings attached to the Conservation Area Character Appraisal shows only 1 and 2 Granby Place. The appellant states acceptance that the garden wall is curtilage listed, but even that is not clear-cut as a recent listing description would be more explicit on this account, making clear what was included and what was excluded. The inference again is that the wall may not be curtilage listed at all even though joined to the listed wall.

7. The fact of the rebuilding appears central to Historic England's findings and often a rebuilt replica loses its listed status. Whilst as much original brickwork as was available was re-used, and similar bricks re-claimed from elsewhere were intended to make up for any shortfall, the wall now in place has lost much of its evidential value by this now being a replica, although there remains a high level of aesthetic and historic value within the conservation area, as replicating the boundary treatment and privacy of the one-time garden to the house. That value is however diluted by the boundary being to a car park.

8. As a result, it is the expanse of the wall and the role it performs in the conservation area and the setting of 1 and 2 Granby Place that is of significance, rather than any individual part of it, as the bricks may or may not be the same as previously, almost certainly they are not in the same location as previously,

and the workmanship and mortar is entirely new. The fact of the rebuilding and the cost are now part of the history of the wall and the conservation area.

9. The plaque is small within the expanse of wall and is clearly a modern intervention that could not be mistaken for an original feature. Unlike in the advertisement control regime, content is an issue, but the facts are spelt out and the type-face and materials are appropriate to the date of placement. The cost may well be an interesting fact in years to come. As a visible record of the history of the wall, the plaque does not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area nor the setting of listed structures.

10. It is concluded that the statutory tests in the 1990 Act are satisfied and the aims of Policies CS19, CS20, TC2 and TC3 are accorded with. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

S J Papworth

INSPECTOR