

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 22 January 2018

by Kenneth Stone BSc Hons DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.

Decision date: 5 February 2018

Appeal A: APP/K0235/W/17/3180401

Maye Cottage, 53 Woodhouse Lane, Duloe PE19 5HR

- 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 Rod Thompson against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00653/FUL, dated 7 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 May 2017.
 - The development proposed is a replacement outbuilding and erection of an extension.
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Appeal B: APP/K0235/Y/17/3180377

Maye Cottage, 53 Woodhouse Lane, Duloe PE19 5HR

- 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 Rod Thompson against the decision of Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 17/00654/LBC, dated 7 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 May 2017.
 - The works proposed are a replacement outbuilding and erection of an extension.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed

Main Issue

3. The main issue in both appeals is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as Maye Cottage (listed as 53 Woodhouse Lane) or any features of special architectural interest that it possesses.

Reasons

4. Maye Cottage is described in the statutory listing description as an C18 cottage constructed of colour washed rough cast with some brick over a timber Frame with a thatched roof. The original building has a 2 room plan form is one storey with rooms in the attic. There are a number of extensions that have been added to the property including additions at either side of the original building. One on the southern-most side in rough cast with a tiled roof and one the northern-most end, which is described in the listing description as a C20

garage addition, but at the time of my visit had been converted to accommodation. There is also a modern flat roofed rear addition.

5. Maye cottage derives its significance from its architectural form as a small thatched timber framed cottage of likely C18 origins. The size, scale and form of the building associated with the local materials used in its construction contribute to its significance as a vernacular building of the locality. The later additions whilst representative of the buildings evolution do not contribute to the special interests of the building and therefore its significance.
6. The proposal would include minor internal alterations to the original cottage including the introduction of partitioning in the attic accommodation to include en-suite accommodation. This would obscure the original plan form of the building and therefore harm the simple internal arrangement of the building. The works could be reversible and could be undertaken without significant effect on original fabric. The effect on the significance of the building would be limited, however still harmful and I would categorise this as less than substantial harm in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).
7. The proposed extension would be attached to the rear flat roofed single storey extension and the northern side extension to the cottage. The physical attachment to the structure would be by a glazed link to create a degree of detachment from the existing building. Neither of the existing extension elements to which the extension would be attached contribute to the significance of the building and do not contain historic fabric. There would be no direct intervention to the historic fabric of the listed building in this regard.
8. The proposed extension would be single storey and off set to the rear of the existing building. It would have a footprint greater than the original main cottage and comparable to the scale of the existing extended building. The depth of the footprint is significantly greater than that of the original cottage and the proportions of the footprint do not reflect the form of the original building. When associated with the modern heights of the pitched roofs and the substantial gable ends the structure size and scale of the proposed extension would be a substantial addition which in my view would not appear as a subservient addition but a forceful, assertive and large attachment to the building, the shape of which pays little attention to the proportions, scale and form of the original cottage. Whilst the proposed materials have a vernacular basis in the weatherboarding, the slate roof and significant elements of modern glazing add to the degree to which the proposed extension would conflict with the rustic simplicity of the original cottage.
9. The proposed extension would in my view dominate the listed building and detract from its special architectural interest as a small vernacular cottage. The harm would in my view be less than substantial in the context of the Framework. Consequently the proposal would conflict with Policies CP21 and CP23 in the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan 2008 (Core Strategy), Policy BE19 in the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 and the guidance in the Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Development Supplementary Planning Document which collectively seek high quality development in scale with the original property and which protects the significance of listed buildings.

Other matters

10. The proposals include the demolition of existing outbuildings and their replacement with a detached outbuilding. This removes existing relatively dilapidated buildings and improves the general surroundings of the plot. Given the separation of the proposed building from the cottage and the replacement of existing buildings it does not affect the setting of the cottage or its significance.
11. There is a further Grade II listed building close by, the Dovecote at number 49 Woodhouse Lane. It is in a poor state of repair. There is no visual or associative connection between the two buildings other than they were both constructed in the C18. Given the degree of separation, proposed locations of the extension and outbuilding, intervening buildings and fencing I am satisfied that the proposal would have no effect on the significance of the Dovecote.

Overall conclusions

12. I have concluded that the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of Maye cottage. Paragraph 134 of the Framework requires that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
13. The appellant contends that the building provides modest accommodation that does not fulfil modern living needs. It is further contended that the proposed extensions are the minimum necessary to accommodate the family's needs, one of whom is registered disabled. It is contended that change is required for the asset to have a sustainable future as a family dwelling and this represents a significant public benefit. It is suggested the proposal would bring benefits through the removal of unsightly extensions and regeneration of the cottage as a modern dwelling.
14. The proposal does not result in the removal of any of the existing extensions, rather, it further adds to those. This may well mask particularly the flat roofed rear extension but it is not removed. The substantial increase in floor space would add to the habitable space of the accommodation and increase the space for future residents. But the cottage is a diminutive historic asset which has been significantly compromised in the past. The further addition would add to that level of harm and overwhelm the original building resulting in harm to the significance of the listed building. The Cottage has an existing viable use as a dwelling of a small scale. The proposals seek to significantly increase the scale of that accommodation beyond what is reasonably necessary to provide for the necessary accommodation to enable the use of the building to be maintained as a dwelling and in an optimum viable use. I therefore conclude that the harm would not be outweighed by public benefits, including securing its optimum viable use.
15. For the reasons given above I conclude that both the appeals should be dismissed.

Kenneth Stone

INSPECTOR