
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 July 2019

by H Porter BA(Hons) MScDip IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/Y/19/3219979

Church Place Cottage, Eversley Cross, Eversley, Hook RG27 0NP

- 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 Mrs Louise Hayes against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/01215/LBC, dated 12 May 2018, was refused by notice dated 1 August 2018.
 - The works proposed are demolition of internal walls between kitchen and utility and demolition of wall between kitchen and conservatory.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for demolition of internal walls between kitchen and utility and demolition of wall between kitchen and conservatory at Church Place Cottage, Eversley Cross, Eversley, Hook RG27 0NP in accordance with the terms of the application REF 18/01215/LBC dated 12 May 2018, and subject to the conditions in the Schedule attached to this decision.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed works on the architectural and historic significance of the Grade II listed building.

Reasons

3. Church Place Cottage is a Grade II listed two-storey detached dwelling situated in the Eversley Cross Conservation Area. I am mindful of my statutory duties in regard to both as designated heritage assets. The list description identifies the building as being circa 16th century and formerly four alms houses that were re-fronted and extended in circa 1900 to form one dwelling. Though clearly much altered over time, the various phases in the building's developmental history are still apparent from its overall form and surviving historic fabric.
4. The significance and special interest of the listed building are derived in large part from its considerable age, its form and its fabric, including how this has been modified over time in support of its residential use. The principal, earliest range, where the original timber frame survives largely intact, and the building's frontage, with its symmetrical layout and architectural detailing announcing its significant age, are of particular architectural and historic interest. The legibility of the building's evolution as it has been incrementally extended and adapted to its use as a single dwelling is also of special interest.

5. In support of the appeal, the appellant has submitted a thorough heritage statement that elucidates upon the building's development and adaptation. Indeed, although the statutory list description refers to a phase of extension in c.1900, the assessment within the heritage statement confirms my own observations made on site that the two-storey rear wing likely dates from the mid-1920s. That is not to say that this rear wing is without significance. It reflects how the rear of the building has been extended over time and adapted to suit domestic use according to changing social norms.
6. The proposal is to remove walls that currently partition the utility room from the kitchen and the kitchen from the conservatory in order to create an open-plan kitchen. The works would affect fabric in what is a 20th century phase of the building's development and a part of the dwelling that has undergone significant alteration and adaptation over the building's developmental history. Taking out the wall between the kitchen and the conservatory would involve the loss of a timber casement window. However, this, is of no specific historic or architectural significance. It is proposed to include nibs and a downstand beam so that it would still be possible to ascertain a sense of separation between the earlier kitchen wing extension and the later 20th century conservatory.
7. I note the Conservation Officer's concerns that removal of the internal southern kitchen wall would affect a former chimney. However, even had there been a chimney in the southern kitchen wall, it has evidently been removed during the building's evolution and its extension in the early part of the 20th century. I do not consider the retention of the recess within the kitchen walls is crucial to the significance or special interest of the listed building. Indeed, the phase of compartmentalising of the rear portion of the building during a time when it was in use as ancillary service spaces would remain legible within the retained nibs and downstands. Related to this phase of the building's domestic evolution, the electric bell box is a feature of historic interest. However, provided this was re-instated and located within the 20th century extension, I do not consider its relocation would cause harm.
8. The proposed works would affect part of the appeal building that evidence suggests has been subject to significant alteration and modification over time. The works would be low-key, allowing legibility of the extent of the 20th century element to be clearly legible whilst also enabling the building to evolve for domestic functions more appropriate to the present day. Allowing further pragmatic adaptation would not harm legibility of the historic evolution or undermine the integrity of the listed building. I am therefore not persuaded that the works proposed would cause harm to the significance of this particular heritage asset or detract from its historic importance.
9. The Council has raised concerns with regard to the potential impact the works of underpinning would have on the extant structure. In my opinion, the structural works are capable of resolution provided a detailed treatment and methodology are submitted to the LPA to demonstrate the structural interventions would harm neither the historic fabric nor the integrity of the listed building.
10. I conclude therefore that the proposed works would not cause harm to the special interest and significance of the listed building, which, it follows would be preserved. The character and appearance of the Eversley Cross Conservation

Area would also be preserved. Consequently, no conflict arises with the local and national planning policies that seek to preserve designated heritage assets.

Conditions

11. I have considered the Council's suggested conditions and agree that conditions specifying a time limit for the works and the approved plans are necessary to provide certainty. Conditions requiring details of a structural survey and, separately, a method statement for the structural works, are also necessary to ensure the works do not have a detrimental impact on the stability or fabric of the listed building. I have also added a condition concerning the service bell, which is necessary to ensure that this feature is appropriately re-located and the special interest of the listed building is preserved.

Conclusion

12. I conclude that the proposed works would preserve the architectural and historic significance of the Grade II listed building. For the reasons given above, and having considered all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

H Porter

INSEPECTOR

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
- 2) The works authorised by this consent shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Structural layout drawing RL18174/01; alterations details RL18174/02; underpinning drawing RL18174/03, block plan, site location plan.
- 3) No works shall take place until a structural survey of the relevant parts of the building that would be affected by underpinning have been carried out in accordance with a methodology which shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The results of that survey shall be made available to the local planning authority before any works take place.
- 4) No works shall take place until details and a method statement relating to carrying out any works of underpinning, foundations, piling or drainage have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the approved method statement.
- 5) No works shall take place until a method statement for the works to the service bell have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The method statement shall include the timing of the removal and reinstatement, the position of its re-location and method for re-wiring, as well as measures to be taken to secure and protect the feature against accidental loss or damage during the course of the works. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved method statement and retained thereafter.