
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 2 July 2019

by H Porter BA(Hons) MScDip IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/W/19/3223747

Stoney Cottage, The Bury, Odiham, Hook, RG29 1LY

- 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 & Mrs Osmond against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/02353/HOU, dated 10 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2018.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing timber conservatory and enlarged opening in non-original rear wall of house. Ground floor extension to rear and side.
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Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/W/19/3223746

Stoney Cottage, The Bury, Odiham, Hook, RG29 1LY

- 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 & Mrs Osmond against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 18/02354/LBC, dated 10 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 December 2018.
 - The works proposed are demolition of existing timber conservatory and enlarged opening in non-original rear wall of house. Ground floor extension to rear and side.
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Decision

1. Appeal A is dismissed. Appeal B is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in both appeals are whether the proposed works and development would preserve the Grade II listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses; and whether the character and appearance of the Odiham Conservation Area would be preserved or enhanced.

Reasons

3. Stoney Cottage is a Grade II listed building within the Odiham Conservation Area (CA). The statutory list description identifies the building as being 16th century and modern, two-storeys, with an exposed timber frame and jetty to the front, curved braces, red tile roof and red brick and rendered infill. Its significance and special interest lie in its preservation of the authentic qualities of a modest timber-framed dwelling of that period. The building's overall form, layout, surviving historic fabric and degree of historic integrity are therefore aspects that underpin that special interest.

4. During the late 20th-century a two-storey brick extension and single-storey conservatory were added to the rear of the building's principal range. These later extensions have already increased the size of the listed building considerably. Even so, the internal ground-floor plan form of the listed building remains legible. Moreover, the later extensions taper in width as they project into the rear garden and, while they are architecturally unremarkable, they are low-key and unobtrusive in terms of their scale, materials and form.
5. The CA designation covers the historic core of the town, where there are a number of high-quality buildings of some significant age. The well-preserved qualities and integrity of Stoney Cottage, which is in a prominent location on one of the town's earliest street and close to the historic market place, provide a link with the area's early built development. Consequently, Stoney Cottage contributes both aesthetically and historically to the character and appearance of the CA as a whole and to its significance as a designated heritage asset.
6. The proposals would extend at ground floor out and to the side of the 20th century extension. Although the fabric of the original building would be unaffected, there would be a substantial increase in the footprint of new works in relation to the original extent of the listed building. Indeed, the open-plan layout proposed would effectively create one room that would be disproportionately large in comparison to any within the extant building. As a consequence, both the simplicity and modest proportions of the building's original form would be weakened.
7. I do not object to the contemporary design approach proposed per se. However, the extent of undeveloped space around the building would be lessened by wrapping around the existing two-storey extension. That is not to say that the original part of the building would be obscured, but that the bulk of the extension where it wraps to one side would have an awkward relationship with the host dwelling. Together with the form and scale of the proposed extension, the proposed stained oak cladding and dark zinc coping would emphasise the disparity between it and the materials within the existing structure. As a result, the proposed extension would lack architectural subtlety and be an unduly dominant and incongruous feature.
8. It is also proposed to partition the extant ground-floor kitchen to facilitate the creation of a ground-floor WC. This would affect a portion of the historic, if not original, building, undermining the legibility of its plan form, and would cause harm. While there is no policy objection to the principle of a ground-floor extension, the ground floor extension, as proposed, would fail to preserve the special interest and significance of the Grade II listed building.
9. With respect to the impact on the listed building and the CA, the proposals would not comply with the objectives of Saved Policies CON 13 and CON 17 from the Hart District Local Plan (Replacement) 1996 - 2006, insofar as these seek to ensure extensions to listed buildings do not materially change the scale of the building and that the design is appropriate to the character and setting of the building. So too would there be conflict with Policy 5 of the Odiham and North Warnborough Neighbourhood Plan 2014 - 2031, June 2017, which requires extensions to existing buildings respect the significance of heritage assets.
10. Whilst the rear of the appeal property is not prominent from public vantages, the proposal would be visible from a number of neighbouring properties. In

any event, a lack of visibility does not equate to a lack of harm. The listed building contributes to the character and appearance of the CA. Owing to the harm to the special architectural interest of the listed building, there would inevitably be some residual harmful effect on the character and appearance of the CA as a whole.

11. I consider that the harm to the significance of the listed building and the CA in this instance would be less than substantial, within the meaning of the term in the National Planning Policy Framework, Revised February 2019 (the Framework). This requires that, in the circumstances, the less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
12. The proposals are predicated on improving usability and increasing the living space to create a more generous kitchen/dining space. Even if the existing kitchen and conservatory are considered small and cramped, this does not justify allowing the harm to the integrity of a listed building, which is of very great importance. Moreover, the harm identified would not secure the building's optimum viable use as a single dwelling; a use it is already in. Ultimately, meeting the private wants and needs of the appellants do not amount to any wider public benefit sufficient to outweigh the considerable importance and weight that even less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset carries. This runs contrary to the historic environment protection policies within the Framework.

Other matters

13. I have had regard to the other extensions to listed buildings cited by the appellants in support of the appeal scheme. I do not know the individual buildings referred to and in the cases of The Close Cottage and Hallams, whether, like the appeal building, these have already been substantially extended. In the case of Oak Tree Cottage, the Inspector found that the overall size of the building would increase only modestly; this is not a conclusion I have found in relation to the scheme before me. In any event, as each listed building is unique and the precise nature and extent of the proposals are inevitably nuanced, I have assessed these appeals on their own merits.

Conclusions – both appeals

14. In considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, and to pay attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. I have found that the proposed works and development do not pass the statutory tests within sections 66(1) or 72(1) of the Act. For the reasons given above, I conclude that both Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

H Porter

INSPECTOR