
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 June 2019

by A A Phillips BA(Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J1915/Y/18/3214346

Tudor Cottage, St Marys Lane, Hertingfordbury SG14 2LX

- 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 Chris Neal and Mrs Katie Neal against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref: 3/18/0338/LBC, dated 15 February 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 April 2018.
 - The works proposed are a single storey extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. I have noted that the appeal against the associated refusal of planning permission was submitted after the time limit. Therefore, this decision is limited to dealing with the matters at conflict with regard to the refusal of listed building consent rather than any wider issues and policies that may have been identified in the refusal of planning permission.

Preliminary Matter

3. As the proposal relates to a listed building I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the Grade II listed building, Hertingfordbury Park, and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. Tudor Cottage forms part of Hertingfordbury Park which is a Grade II listed building which was first listed in 1950. The core of the building is a country house which dates back to the seventeenth century. The use and the form of the building have evolved over time. It was used as a convent and then a home for the elderly before being converted into separate residential properties earlier this century. It is an imposing red brick building with Flemish bond, Dutch gables, stone mullioned windows and prominent chimney stacks.

6. Substantial extensions were added to the property in the nineteenth century with cross wings at either end creating an H-plan. Further extensions were added during the twentieth century. The existing extensions are generally sympathetic to the original house and have not harmed its special interest. All of the above features contribute to the significance of the heritage asset.
7. Tudor Cottage is part of the central rear portion of the building and has access from the rear. It comprises a three storey wing of the building that projects into the rear garden. It also has a small single storey rear projection which is currently used as a dining room. Of particular architectural significance with respect to the rear elevation of this part of the building is the three storey Dutch gable which is a visually prominent feature and significant in terms of its dominance of the rear elevation of the building.
8. The existing windows in the rear elevation of the appeal site are large segmented openings with lattice glazing and are a key focus of the elevation. The windows are set in the property's two visually prominent red brick gables, including the important Dutch gable, which are key architectural features. Other significant features on the rear of the property include an ornate hopper head on the existing single storey gable.
9. The proposed works are to create a single storey rear extension which would accommodate a new entrance porch and dining room. It would be a contemporary addition to the historic building, constructed of red brick with Flemish bond external walls and window surrounds with feature stucco, a black painted door with lattice glazing, refurbished and relocated existing door, dark grey aluminium bi-fold doors and dark grey flat clay tiled roof. The windows would be dark grey metal framed with lattice pattern divisions. A large roof light feature is also proposed within the main roof area.
10. The proposed works would extend between the existing three storey gable to the boundary with the adjacent property which is known as The Cloisters. The extension would incorporate a pitched roof entrance porch and would extend rearwards from the wall of the existing study, providing a small courtyard area. The proposed extension has been designed to ensure the retention of the building's historic fabric.
11. As a consequence of its projection across the rear of the three storey gable the development would overlap the south facing three storey projection and would block views of the ground floor of the architecturally important Dutch gable. As a result, the way in which the rear elevation of the building is read would materially change. Its visual appearance would change because part of the significant three storey Dutch gable would be obscured. Moreover, even though the proposed extension is single storey, when looked at as a whole, the elevation would be dominated by the ground floor addition.
12. The roof form of the extension, which includes a standing seam metal roof, areas of flat clay roof tiles, a large modern roof light and a pitched roof section above the proposed entrance porch would result in a relatively complex arrangement and variety of materials which would generate a rather awkward and incoherent rear elevation, drawing attention away from the Dutch gable. Whether or not the extension is visible in public views, the siting, form and massing would harm the special interest and significance of the listed building.

13. The roof light and bi-folding doors are unsympathetic modern features which have a poor relationship with the architecture of the existing building. The bi-folding doors relate poorly in terms of the size and detailing of the existing windows on the rear elevation, creating relatively large expanses of glazing which are at odds with the established pattern of glazing. The use of dark grey metal framing is also at odds with the materials used elsewhere on the listed building and would create an uncomfortable and unacceptable relationship. The roof light would introduce a flat area of glazing to the roofscape within a metal roof canopy area which fails to respect the existing roof of the building in terms of form and materials. As such these features do not respond successfully to the high standard of design demanded by such an important elevation. As such, these features would be harmful to the character and appearance of the building and therefore would be harmful to the heritage asset.
14. Some efforts have been made to preserve the listed building. However, while well-intentioned, moving the decorative hopper to the left hand side of the proposed extension compromises its historic significance and its relationship to the building. I also understand that the extension has been designed to protect the property's historic fabric including openings and associated stone mullion surrounds, for example by providing a courtyard area between the existing rear elevation and the proposed ground floor extension. Notwithstanding the attempts to reduce impacts, I find that the works would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. Consequently, I give this harm considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of this appeal.
15. Paragraph 193 of the Framework advises that, when considering the impact on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. It goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets. Given the poor relationship of the proposed extension to the rear elevation of the listed building with respect to the projection across the three storey Dutch gable, the roof form and modern features such as bi-folding doors and a roof light I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
16. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The appellant is of the opinion that due to the continued use of the property for residential purposes, the relevance of being able to demonstrate public benefit in this case is problematic. It seems to me that the development would not result in any significant public benefits to outweigh my conclusions with respect to the effect of the works on the character and appearance of the listed building.
17. Given the above, I conclude that the proposed works would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 192 of the Framework.

Other Matters

18. My attention has been drawn to other extensions to Hertingfordbury Park and in particular those that can be found at the adjacent property, The Cloisters and Park House. I can see that the extension to the Cloisters is a well-

designed modern single storey extension which makes use of modern materials in a minimalist style. As such, it is respectful of the historic building. As a result of it being linked to its host property by way of a glazed link it preserves the original rear elevation of the property. It does not alter views of the Dutch gable to a significant degree whereas the works before me would have a significant and harmful impact on the significant architectural and historic feature. In addition, the original rear elevation of the Cloisters has a simpler form and design to Tudor Cottage and therefore was more receptive to the modern extension that has been built.

19. I am also aware of an extension to the rear elevation of Park House which was approved in 1997. I can see that the extension has changed the elevation including the Dutch gable. However, I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to that extension being approved. In any case, with respect to comparisons with other nearby extensions and other matters, I have considered this appeal on its own merits. Furthermore, any harmful additions that may have been built previously do not justify further harm that may result from the works the subject of this appeal.

Conclusion

20. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A A Phillips

INSPECTOR