
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 20 August 2019

by S J Papworth DipArch(Glos) RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 August 2019

Appeal A: APP/J1915/W/19/3225977

Knoll Farm, Standon Green End, High Cross SG11 1BP

- 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 D Carter against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/18/2694/HH, dated 7 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 12 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is new front porch.
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Appeal B: APP/J1915/Y/19/3225896

Knoll Farm, Standon Green End, High Cross SG11 1BP

- 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 D Carter against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 3/18/2695/LBC, dated 7 December 2018, was refused by notice dated 12 February 2019.
 - The works proposed are new front porch.
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Decisions

1. I dismiss both appeals.

Main Issues

2. The property is listed Grade II and the main issue in both appeals is the effect of the proposals on the architectural or historic significance of the listed building and its setting.

Reasons

3. The District Plan was adopted in October 2018 and Policy HA1 seeks the preservation, and where appropriate, the enhancement of the historic environment, while Policy HA7 is specific to listed buildings; extension will only be permitted where the proposal would not have any adverse effect on the architectural and historic character or appearance of the interior or exterior of the building or its setting; and would respect the scale, design, materials and finishes of the existing building, and preserve its historic fabric.
4. These policies are in-line with the requirements of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which require special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it

possesses. Paragraph 193 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.

5. The porch would be placed to the front elevation to provide room and shelter outside the front door, and the listing description refers to the timber framing that was evident from an inspection of the lobby and two adjoining rooms, and to the front elevation as having had the ground floor rebuilt in plastered brick with 'drip-board' over. The appellant's Heritage Statement expresses the view that the whole of the front elevation was totally demolished and rebuilt in the 1950s at which time the pargetting was replaced by cement render with a distinct bell moulding at first floor level; the front door and windows are said to all date from the rebuilding.
6. Notwithstanding this difference in the information provided, the front elevation above the window and door heads displays a high level of architectural significance, the pargetting with smooth margins being a local vernacular feature. The use of a cement render replacement erodes much of the historic significance, and whether or not the whole front elevation was replaced does not alter those findings on significance. The ground floor front elevation, windows and doors are of limited significance although they appear to retain the historic pattern of solid-to-void. The front door in particular is modern and the frame appears poorly provided-for with a small rebate depth to the stops, no weather-stripping and no overhanging external drip to the threshold, although the door and frame are respectively fitted with a weather-board and weather-bar. There is sign of decay at the foot of the frame where water may have penetrated the end grain.
7. The proposed porch would disrupt the 'drip-board' moulding, which is not the case with the existing flat canopy, and would add what would essentially be another room to the house, the width being proportionate to that of the dwelling and not adversely affecting the previously mentioned solid-to-void arrangement, but the depth would be a disproportionate addition, with the solid construction and limited glazing further emphasising that excessive depth.
8. The addition would detract from the architectural significance on the listed building by the massing of the roof over the depth proposed, although the historic significance would not be so badly affected through the use of materials and taking account of the provenance of the front wall. Nevertheless, the overall massing of the house retains interest as part of the one-time farm complex and the deep addition would appear out of place and less like a porch than a habitable extension. Whilst not causing real harm to the setting of other listed buildings, the harm to the appeal building is real.
9. The level of harm would be 'less than substantial', a differentiation required between paragraphs 195 and 196 of the Framework. In this case the latter applies and this states that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
10. Having mind to the size of the dwelling and its location, there does not appear to be any risk of the building falling out of its optimum viable use as a dwelling, the function for which it was built, for want of the porch. The up-keep of listed buildings by private owners is a public benefit and the front door and its frame are clearly vulnerable to driving rain, although that could be rectified by

appropriate replacement. Some smaller form of porch would also solve those shortcomings and the effect on the 'drip-board' moulding could be justified by such benefits, as the harm would be lower down the long 'less than substantial' scale than is the case now. The balance for the appeal proposal lies in the deep porch causing harm that is not outweighed by the benefits.

11. To conclude on both appeals, the proposal would cause harm to the designated heritage asset, and there are no benefits of sufficient weight to overcome that harm or otherwise justify the works, so that the proposal fails to accord with the Development Plan and national policies on the treatment of a designated heritage asset, and would not accord with the statutory tests in the 1990 Act. For the reasons given above it is concluded that both appeals should be dismissed.

S J Papworth

INSPECTOR