

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 November 2019

by Mr JP Sargent BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 December 2019

Appeal A: APP/C1625/W/3233378

Rose Cottage, Haw Street, Coaley, Gloucestershire GL11 5AY

- 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 James Godbeer against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.19/0425/HHOLD, dated 27 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is the replacement of the modern conservatory with a single storey extension.
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Appeal B: APP/C1625/Y/3233444

Rose Cottage, Haw Street, Coaley, Gloucestershire GL11 5AY

- 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 James Godbeer against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.19/0426/LBC, dated 27 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2019.
 - The works proposed are the replacement of the modern conservatory with a single storey 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 with these appeals is the impact of the works on the special architectural or historic interest of this Grade II listed building, and their effect on the building's significance as a designated heritage asset.

Reasons

4. Rose Cottage dates from the late 16th or early 17th Centuries and is built of roughly coursed limestone. It was originally a small, humble 1½ storey cottage for a rural worker. On its rear is an extension, also 1½ storeys high, that was added in the 1990s just before it was listed. This modern addition was built in a broadly sympathetic manner but it is nonetheless relatively large when compared to the original cottage and does, to some degree, change its

character to that of a more substantial dwelling. However, despite this, the original smaller part of the house is still discernible due to its plan form, scale and detailing, and it is this aspect that contributes to the building's special architectural and historic interest, and to its significance as a designated heritage asset.

5. A modern conservatory has also been added to the side elevation, which has a stone plinth and end wall, but otherwise has little regard to the historic nature of its context. Beyond the conservatory, across a small courtyard, is a detached single-storey outbuilding that has been converted to a bedroom and bathroom. I understand this was present in 1948 and so is part of the listed building by reason of being in the curtilage of Rose Cottage.
6. The proposal is to remove the conservatory and erect a larger flat-roofed single-storey extension linking the outbuilding to the side wall of the original cottage. One side of this would abut Haw Street and would involve raising the boundary wall, while the opposite elevation facing into the site would be glazed.
7. I have no objections to the raising of the boundary wall, providing it was suitably detailed. It is on a corner where, because of its height and closeness to the carriageway, it is already imposing, and so the increase would not be harmful in this regard. Moreover, it would mean the extension would not be unduly apparent behind when looking from the public domain, with any sight of it being restricted to glimpses only. I am also aware that the extension would harm no historic fabric, and to remove the conservatory would be beneficial.
8. However, my concern rests with its size. The overall effect of the proposal would be to increase the scale and nature of the dwelling still further, not only as a result of the footprint of the extension itself but also by the way it would draw in the outbuilding. As a result, even though of a modern appearance, it would lead to the property being notably larger and more sprawling, taking it further away from the original simple cottage and making its historic origins harder to appreciate. I therefore consider it would cause harm, albeit less than substantial, to the significance of this designated heritage asset, and would erode its special architectural and historic interest.
9. In making this assessment I accept it would offer a glazed, 'unfussy' elevation to the garden. However, it would not result in the extension being transparent as it would have a solid wall behind. Whilst other glazed additions have been highlighted, the design is not, of itself, a concern, and I am unaware of the contexts to those cases. As such they do not lead me to a different view.
10. I also recognise the building was listed with the rear extension attached. However, not all elements of a building at the time of its listing necessarily contribute to its historic significance or to its special architectural or historic interest. Therefore, when considering the effect of the proposal to my mind it is more appropriate to focus on the size and scale of the original element where, in my opinion, the significance of the building lies, rather than how it stood after the modern extension was added.
11. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework) says that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (presumably whether substantial or less than substantial) should require clear and convincing justification. Great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. It adds

that where less than substantial harm would be caused to a designated heritage asset this harm should be weighed against the public benefits.

12. The property is said to have poor heating, only a single bathroom/toilet (which is upstairs), and a small kitchen, while the conservatory undergoes extreme temperatures. The proposal is to rectify these deficiencies. Bringing a listed building up to a modern standard and so securing its long-term use and maintenance could be a public benefit, even if the main beneficiaries of the works are to be those who live there. However, I am unclear why this work is needed to address the problems of heating. Moreover, whilst the existing kitchen is by no means spacious it is not unduly small, and so that does not justify the extension in the light of the harm. Similarly, the inadequacies of the conservatory do not in themselves justify this work.
13. The works would establish a ground floor toilet by allowing internal access to the existing bathroom in the outbuilding. I am not satisfied that, of itself, a single bathroom with toilet means a house is unsuited to family life, as many older properties have that level of provision. However, the only toilet being upstairs limits the use of the property for those with mobility impairments (whether resident or visiting), and so in reaching my decision I have had due regard to the aims of the Equality Duty that arise from the *Equality Act 2010*. Balanced against this though I am aware that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and I have not been shown that this is the only way of addressing that problem. In these circumstances, the benefit of providing internal access to a downstairs toilet does not outweigh the harm I have identified to the heritage asset.
14. It was also said that the outbuilding was vulnerable to neglect if it had no beneficial use. However, it seems to be well-maintained at present as a guest suite and I have no reason to consider decay would occur if the appeals were to be dismissed.
15. Accordingly, and I conclude that the scheme would fail to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of this listed building, and would cause less than substantial harm its significance. In the absence of any public benefits to outweigh this harm, it would conflict with Policy ES10 of the *Stroud District Local Plan* and guidance in the Framework.

J P Sargent

INSPECTOR