
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2020

by G Pannell BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/D/19/3240946

20 Bentfield Green, Pennington Lane, Stansted CM24 8HX

- 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 Mrs Gail Hogg against the decision of Uttlesford District Council.
 - The application Ref UTT/19/2128/HHF, dated 28 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 23 October 2019.
 - The development proposed is partial cladding to front elevation of dwelling.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for partial cladding to front elevation of the dwelling at 20 Bentfield Green, Pennington Lane, Stansted CM24 8HX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref UTT/19/2128/HHF, dated 28 August 2019, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 020.001 Existing Location & Site Plans; 020-009 Existing and Proposed South Elevations; 020-010 South Elevation Visuals.
 - 3) Details of the cladding hereby permitted, including its colour, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to its installation. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the significance of nearby designated heritage assets in respect of their setting.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located outside of but directly adjacent to the Bentfield Green Conservation Area (CA) and its boundary runs along both the side and front boundaries of No 20. The site is adjacent to the Grade II listed building 16-18 Bentfield Green (shown as 18 on the submitted Location Plan) and to 26 – 44 Bentfield Green which are identified as buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area.
4. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the

- significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
5. Paragraph 200 of the Framework requires new development within the setting of a Conservation Area to enhance or better reveal its significance. The Framework defines the setting of a heritage asset as "the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced".
 6. The Council has referred me to the following Grade II listed buildings: Laundry Cottage, 4 Bentfield Green; 45-47 Bentfield Green; 46 Bentfield Green; 49 Bentfield Green; 51-53 Bentfield Green and the Village Pump. However, there is a sufficient level of separation between them and the appeal site and therefore the appeal site does not form part of their setting.
 7. Bentfield Green Conservation Area reflects the varied developments of estate buildings, domestic dwellings and agricultural buildings centred around two small triangular greens. The Conservation Area has undergone a number of changes, including the 20th century housing development at Wetherfield, the entrance of which is opposite the appeal site. These are considered within the Bentfield Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Draft Management Proposals, 2014 (CAA) to have neutral impact on the Conservation Area.
 8. The character of the Conservation Area is therefore contributed to by the mix of housing styles but its significance is derived from both the designated and non-designated heritage assets which are identified within the CAA. Central to this space is the triangular green which is dominated by the modern estate of Wetherfield, with the rear elevations of these properties being highly visible. These exhibit a range of materials, including the use of modern horizontal cladding.
 9. The Grade II listed 16-18 Bentfield Green, is a 15th-16th Century timber-framed and plastered house with jettied upper storeys. It is located between two modern properties and sits within a spacious plot set behind the frontage of No 20. This spaciousness contributes greatly to its setting. The asset is appreciated when viewed across the triangular green.
 10. Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the LBCA Act') requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The proximity to No 20 and the visual relationship between them, when viewed across the green, means the appeal site is within the setting of 16-18 Bentfield Green.
 11. The appeal site is a large rendered detached dwelling, which by virtue of its design, is clearly modern compared to the more historic dwellings within the adjacent Conservation Area. The building due to its overall scale and appearance, including its triangular window feature in the front gable, is a prominent structure visible from within the Conservation Area. However, the building is a modern property and has not been identified as a building which makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.
 12. The proposed partial cladding with vertical boarding would help to articulate the front elevation of the building which has a number of different projections and would reduce the large expanse of render. It would add visual interest and

soften the appearance of the dwelling. Overall, it would result in a visual improvement.

13. I accept that featheredged weatherboarding would be a traditional feature on timber framed buildings such as sheds, barns and cartlodes, and that the proposed cladding in this instance serves no structural function. However, for the reasons above the cladding would look acceptable and it would be in keeping with the other modern elements displayed within the front elevation, such as the feature glazing.
14. The proposed development would help to better reveal the significance of the Conservation Area by reducing the prominence of the host dwelling and therefore directing attention towards the historic buildings which form such an important part of the Conservation Area. The introduction of cladding to No 20 would not detract from the openness which contributes to the setting of No 16-18 and it would continue to appear as a modern property, in close proximity to the listed building. As a result, the proposed development would not harm the setting of both designated heritage assets and as a result there is no harm to their significance.
15. In conclusion, I consider that the development will not result in any harm to the listed building or its setting and would not harm the significance of the adjoining Bentfield Green Conservation Area. The development would therefore accord with policies GEN2 and ENV1 of the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 which states that development should reduce the visual impact of structures and it should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of a Conservation Area.

Conditions

16. The Council has suggested conditions which I have considered against the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. As well as the standard implementation condition, I have imposed a condition to ensure that the proposal is built in accordance with the approved plans to provide certainty and a condition in respect of materials to safeguard the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

G. Pannell

INSPECTOR