
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 18 November 2019

by Vicki Hirst BA (Hons) PG Dip TP MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21 January 2020

Appeal A Ref: APP/Y9507/W/19/3225879

Appeal B Ref: APP/Y9507/Y/19/3225881

The Granary, Greatham Lane, Greatham, RH20 2ES

- Appeal A is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - Appeal B 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 Ian Eldred against the decision of South Downs National Park Authority.
 - The applications Ref SDNP/18/00489/FUL and SDNP/18/00490/LIS, dated 26 January 2018 were refused by notice dated 30 November 2018.
 - The development and works proposed are conversion and extension of existing timber framed agricultural barn and associated outbuildings to form a part two storey 4 bedroom dwelling and 3 bedroom guest accommodation.
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Decisions

1. Both appeals are dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. A combined application form was used for the works and development proposed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. As set out above, there are two appeals before me which I have considered on their individual merits. However, to avoid duplication I have dealt with the two together except where otherwise indicated.
3. Since the South Downs National Park Authority (the Authority) issued its decision the Authority has adopted the South Downs Local Plan (the Local Plan) and a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) was published in February 2019.
4. The parties were consulted on the Local Plan and its implications for these appeals and I have taken it into account in reaching my decisions.
5. I am satisfied that the revised version of the NPPF does not make any material difference to the main issues in these cases and I have had regard to it as a material consideration in reaching my decisions.

6. At the time of my site visit it was evident that some work had been carried out on the Granary building. This had resulted in the external weather boarding being removed and much of the external walls were covered with protective sheeting. As a result, it was not possible to fully inspect the external walls. However, I am satisfied from my observations on site and the evidence that has been provided I am able to fully understand the significance of the building and its relationship with its surroundings and reach my decisions.

Main Issues

7. The main issues are:

- whether the works and development would preserve the listed buildings or their settings, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess,¹ and whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Greatham Conservation Area²; (the heritage assets).

Background

8. The appeal buildings are listed as Grade II. They comprise a late 18th or early 19th century barn, later converted to a granary store and cart house stable (the Granary) and its associated outbuildings. The latter are described as hovels and the east and west barn range in the listing description. It is understood the western range was the dairy. The group was originally part of the farm associated with the adjacent Greatham Manor which is listed separately as Grade II.
9. The south west side of the Granary is built of yellow brick in English bond with the remainder being timber framed and clad in weather boarding with a peg-tiled roof. The structure comprises of nine bays with cart entrances on each side of the third and seventh bay. A full height partition divided the southern six bays from the northern three bays. The six southern bays have a raised floor suspended on stone and concrete saddle stones. The three northern bays have unfinished pole struts supporting a second higher row of side-purlins to the roof structure. The listing description states that there is no evidence of a raised flooring in these three bays with access points in the middle of the side walls which suggest that this formed the "Cart Horse Stable" and which is shown in the 1875 plans.
10. The Granary is located to the south west of the Manor and to the south of Manor Cottages which are listed as Grade II. It lies to the west of Greatham Church which is listed as Grade I and a former parlour is located to the east and which has now been converted into residential use. Manor Farm and Greatham Lodge are situated to the south. The whole group is designated as Greatham Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).
11. Planning permission and listed building consent have previously been granted for the conversion of the Granary and associated buildings into residential use. The parties agree that these are extant permissions. The proposal, the subject of these appeals, relates to the conversion and extension of the buildings to residential use, but essentially seeks amendments to that previously approved. The extant permissions represent a fallback position should I find against the

¹ Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

² Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

current proposals and work is taking place on site. As such, my decisions have focussed on the main changes to the approved scheme rather than those elements of the proposal that have already gained planning permission and listed building consent.

12. The main parts of the proposal that do not have the benefit of an extant permission are additional windows and rooflights on the western range, additional windows and a mezzanine level in the Granary and additional glazing on the northern elevation of the link building between the Granary and the western range and an increase in its height. The proposal would omit a gallery at the southern end of the Granary that is part of the extant permissions.

The Significance of the Heritage Assets

13. Much of the Granary's significance and special interest is derived from its architectural interest as a timber framed structure with rubble stone plinth and its southern end unusually finished in brick. Its floor to roof open characteristic is one of its defining features and its raised floor is a significant feature of some rarity. It also has historical value through its historic functional association with the adjoining Manor and church and, despite its poor state of repair prior to works commencing, its value is still very much evident.
14. The buildings to the west are also of significance due to their historical association with the farmstead and Manor and have architectural value through their design as a traditional brick dairy. Some elements of the group are missing, particularly the link between the Granary and the dairy at the northern end of the site and parts of the building in the south west corner. At the time of my visit much of the perimeter wall that contained the northern, western and eastern range was evident although some parts were in poor condition. Nonetheless, the overall layout and relationship of the buildings with each other and the Manor and church is still highly legible, and they have considerable group value.
15. The appellant's heritage statement of case finds the significance to be reduced by virtue of the age of the Granary that is considered to originate in the 19th century rather than the 18th century as described in the listing description, further modifications that were carried out in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the alleged missing hay loft at the northern end. Nevertheless, I find the Granary and its associated buildings to have much architectural and historic value to which I afford high significance.
16. The Granary and buildings are also a large part of the designated Greatham Conservation Area. This is tightly drawn around the Manor, church and former farmstead. I have not been provided with a detailed appraisal of the Conservation Area but from the evidence before me and from my own observations on site its significance lies in the relationship of the church with the manor and its originally associated farmstead and cottages. Features of particular importance are the various historic buildings and their vernacular architecture and their functional relationship with each other and their visual relationship with the rural surroundings.

The effect of the proposed works and development on the heritage assets

17. The proposal would introduce a new mezzanine level in the two northern bays of the Granary and which would accommodate a bedroom and en-suite. The

appellant contends that the later alteration to provide a cart horse stable at this end of the building would have been likely to have included a hay loft at first floor level and he claims this is substantiated by first floor windows in both the northern end of the building and an east facing opening with a hinge pin indicating the possibility of a higher level door or shutter. Furthermore, a letter from the granddaughter of previous occupants of the Manor recalls a mezzanine hayloft in this end of the building.

18. Whilst I acknowledge these factors, the letter is largely anecdotal and the comments in regard to the presence of a first floor hay loft are based on assumption and conjecture rather than historic evidence. Although the listing description identifies the addition of unfinished pole struts supporting a second higher row of side-purlins to the roof structure, this is not conclusive in itself of any historic first floor level. In the absence of more conclusive evidence that the three northern bays had an upper level I am unable to conclude that the inclusion of a first floor level would reflect the building's historic form and function. The open floor to roof nature of the Granary is one of its features of special interest and the introduction of a mezzanine level in the northern part of the building would be harmful to its appearance and its architectural and historical significance and evidential value.
19. The appellant states that the proposal would be a less harmful approach than that previously granted. It is stated that it would remove the mezzanine level approved in the more significant southern portion of the barn and which requires the removal of collars to the intermediate trusses to make the space useable and which would result in harm to the fabric of the building. Furthermore, the current proposal would retain the single volume space particularly near its entrance which is an important feature of the building.
20. Whilst the appellant's evidence suggests that the proposed mezzanine would be formed under the tie beams enabling the main roof to remain untouched and would also assist in strengthening this end of the building, I do not have sufficient structural detailing to fully explain how the mezzanine would be accommodated or the associated effect on the fabric of the building. Furthermore, I have not been provided with any substantive evidence that the southern approved first floor level could not be provided without the associated harm that the appellant alleges. Whilst I acknowledge that the current proposal would retain the open space near the proposed entrance, it would merely move the mezzanine to a different position within the building. Furthermore, I am not persuaded that the insertion of a mezzanine floor is the only solution to strengthening the northern end of the building.
21. In any event, the scheme to include a mezzanine at the southern end of the building has been approved and has been accepted as an appropriate scheme with its associated effects on the listed building. I do not find that the now alleged harmful effects of the approved scheme is sufficient justification to allow the harmful introduction of a mezzanine level at the northern end of the building.
22. The proposed link building between the Granary and the western range would be provided with a higher roof than previously proposed and include additional glazing on its northern side. I am satisfied that, although no longer evident, there was historically a link between the Granary and the dairy. From the photographs that have been provided, the proposed ridge height would be

largely consistent with its former height. Its finish with clay tiles would be in keeping with other buildings on the site. I am satisfied that the proposed changes to the roof would be acceptable and would not be harmful to the listed building.

23. However, the proposal would introduce additional glazing on the northern side of the link. Given the glazing on the southern side this would enable views to be obtained through the building to the surrounding countryside. I find this to be at odds with the original form of the farmyard. From the evidence before me and from my observations on site, the farmyard was largely enclosed by a perimeter wall. Views would have been contained to within the yard itself. The introduction of a large amount of glazing allowing views through would be alien to the enclosed nature of the yard. Furthermore, it would introduce a very domestic appearance to the traditional appearance and agricultural architecture of the surrounding buildings. I find this to be harmful to the significance of the group.
24. Similarly, the introduction of additional windows and rooflights in both the Granary and the western range would further add to the domestic appearance of the buildings. Whilst I note the appellant's contention that there would be no net gain in glazing from the previous scheme, I find the proposed glazing in a domestic form would further contribute to the harm to the significance of the individual buildings and the group.
25. Turning to the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the Council and the appellant's Landscape Visual Impact Assessment finds that whilst there are views through the access towards the site, it is not prominent from this location and hedgerows largely provide screening. Apart from a short section of footpath between Greatham Lane and the church, and which I viewed on my site visit, wider public views of the site are limited. From my own observations I have no reason to disagree.
26. Nonetheless, I consider the significance of the Conservation Area is largely derived from the vernacular architecture of the buildings within the designated area and their association with each other. Taking the contained size of the Conservation Area and the small number of buildings within it most of which are heritage assets in themselves, I find that it is highly sensitive to change. I have found that the proposals would be harmful to the Granary and its associated buildings and having regard to the very important contribution that these buildings make to the Conservation Area, I find the proposal would harm the legibility of the historic and functional relationship of the appeal buildings with other buildings within the designated area. As such I find the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
27. I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed buildings and their settings and the special architectural and historic features that they possess. It would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. It would result in harm to the significance of both assets. Having regard to the context of the test in the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) I find this harm to be less than substantial.

28. As such, the NPPF states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of an asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum viable use³.
29. The appellant contends that the site has suffered from significant neglect and decay over a long period of time and is on the buildings at risk register. Therefore the complete restoration, preservation and enhancement of the listed buildings and Conservation Area is essential for the public benefit. The appellant claims that the scheme now proposed draws on the historic evidence so that the original form is reflected and replicated as far as is practically possible. It is stated that a residential use would be the most viable use.
30. The restoration of the listed buildings to a residential use has already been secured by the planning permission and listed building consent that have been granted. Works are advancing on site and from my observations on site the Granary is no longer in a derelict state of repair. Whilst I note the appellant's claim that the proposed scheme draws on historic evidence as to its original layout and form, I have not been provided with convincing justification that this is the case. I have found that the scheme in its own right would be harmful to the special interest of the listed buildings and Conservation Area. Whilst the restoration of the site is clearly in the public interest, I am satisfied that the current extant permissions would equally be in the public interest and would conserve the buildings in a manner appropriate to their significance. I do not find that any public benefits put forward outweigh the harm that I have identified would arise from the proposal before me.
31. As such the proposal would not meet the statutory requirements set out in Sections 16(2), 66(1), and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It would not be in conformity with policies SD12, SD13 and SD15 of the South Downs Local Plan which require amongst other things that proposals conserve and enhance the historic environment and preserve and enhance the significance of listed buildings, their settings and the special architectural or historic interest and character or appearance of conservation areas. It would be in conflict with the NPPF and the requirements within it to give great weight to the conservation of heritage assets' conservation and for them to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance⁴.

Conclusions

32. I have taken into account all other matters raised including those of both supporters and those in opposition. I find no matters that outweigh the harm that I have identified.
33. For the above reasons I dismiss both appeals.

VK Hirst

INSPECTOR

³ Paragraph 196, National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019

⁴ Paragraphs 184 & 193, National Planning Policy Framework, February 2019