



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 7 January 2020

by Thomas Shields MA DipURP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 27th February 2020

Appeal A: APP/X2410/W/19/3223293

Rose Cottage, 1259 Melton Road, Syston, Leicestershire, LE7 2EN

- 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 Ms Sophie Puljic against the decision of the Charnwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: P/18/1692/2, dated 14 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 4 December 2018.
 - The development proposed is one, two and three storey extensions to rear of dwelling including alterations to fenestration and the insertion of roof lights.
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Appeal B: APP/X2410/Y/19/3223294

Rose Cottage, 1259 Melton Road, Syston, Leicestershire, LE7 2EN

- 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 Ms Sophie Puljic against the decision of the Charnwood Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: P/18/1784/2, dated 22 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 4 December 2018.
 - The works proposed are one, two and three storey extensions to rear of dwelling including alterations to fenestration and the insertion of roof lights (Listed Building Consent).
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed development and works on the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building No. 1259 Melton Road, and whether they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Syston Conservation Area. In terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (NPPF) this can be defined as the effect of the proposed scheme on the significance of the designated heritage assets.

Reasons

3. In reaching my decisions I have had regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(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, and to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

4. The building's listing description (Ref:1361176) is for identification purposes only. It refers to the main three storey two bay house as being early C19, constructed in brick with Swithland slate roof, having two 16-light sash windows to ground and first floors with flat arched brick heads, and 8-light sashes to the attic storey. Also, plain wood eaves, cornice, and gable end chimney stacks. Not mentioned in the listing are two and single storey elements off the rear elevation. Other than the Georgian brick frontage the whole of the rest of the building's exterior has been covered in roughcast render.
5. In setting out the building's evolution and significance it has been suggested, and indicated in the Heritage Statement¹ (HS) as comprising four historical phases. For the sake of clarity I shall refer to the same. Phase 1 is described as the Georgian frontage, as briefly described in the listing. Phase 2 is a single and two storey element to the rear of phase 1, and phases 3 and 4 are the linear single storey elements further to the rear. There is no dispute between the parties, and I agree, that the more recent single storey additions in phases 3 and 4 are of relatively little architectural or historic merit and contribute little, if any, value to the building's significance.
6. There is some difference of opinion between the parties as to whether the two storey element in phase 2 predates or postdates phase 1. I saw during my inspection that the rear dining room, different to the rooms in the Georgian frontage, had a lower ceiling and rougher hewn timber beams which could potentially be indicative of an earlier period. Beams of similar form and appearance were also present at first floor. The Council also refer to the exposed chimney stack on the east facing gable as indicating an earlier period.
7. If the Council's argued chronology is true, it would not be inconsistent with other recorded examples around the country of Georgian frontages being added to older buildings. On the other hand, it might simply be the case that phase 2, if secondary, was regarded as less important than the grandeur of the frontage, and constructed as an addition to phase 1 as described in the HS, possibly even using reclaimed materials. The use of welsh slate on the phase 2 roof is a material associated with a later period, however this is not conclusive as to chronology given that it could be a later replacement of an older roof. Since the older fabric between phases 1 and 2 is largely concealed, due to external render and more recent internal renovation works, and in the absence of convincing evidence from a more detailed investigation than that already undertaken, I am unable to conclude on this point.
8. Notwithstanding the above, and assuming the appellant's best case scenario that phase 2 followed phase 1, I consider that phase 2 is nonetheless legible as a distinct element of the building's history. Hence, the massing, form and fabric of phase 2 and its relationship with phase 1 is integral to the evolution of the listed building as a whole. As such, phase 2 thereby contributes greatly to its significance.
9. The proposed works include the demolition of phases 2, 3 and 4 followed by single, two and three storey extensions to the rear of phase 1. Given my

¹ Appellant's Heritage Statement, Figure 1: Suggested Phasing of Development

findings in respect of phase 2 above the proposed alterations would result in a considerable loss of historic fabric, harmful to the significance of the listed building. Furthermore, in the contextual scale of phase 1 the replacement scheme would result in an overly dominant addition. That, together with the integration of the roof with the existing rear slope, would result overall in a blurring of the two elements, such that a clear understanding of the building's historical development and evolution would be more difficult to appreciate. For these reasons I consider the proposed scheme would add some further harm to the harm I have previously identified resulting from loss of historic fabric.

10. I do not share the Council's aversion to the vertical emphasis of proposed windows. Potentially, in a more acceptable scheme, the use of such overtly contemporary detailing could serve to differentiate and contrast between the historic and modern elements, and I am satisfied that appropriate materials and detailing could be secured by planning conditions.
11. Given the location of the proposed works to the rear and the very limited degree to which the proposed scheme would be visible within the public realm, I consider that the resulting harm to the character and appearance of the Syston Conservation Area would be slight.
12. The totality of all of the harm I have identified would be *less than substantial* in terms of paragraph 196 of the NPPF². Accordingly, the harm should be weighed against any public benefits arising from the proposal. In this regard restoration of the building to its optimum viable use as a dwellinghouse would secure its long term conservation and thus be a public benefit, and I acknowledge that would only be achievable with significant financial investment. However, I consider that a different scheme of redevelopment, more sensitive to the significance of the listed building, could be equally achievable at similar costs, and without resulting in the harm I have identified. Consequently, this reduces the weight I attach to the public benefit of optimum viable use that would result from this current proposal.
13. The submitted structural survey found *no clear signs of progressive movement but some of the historic movement would give concern for the long term structural stability of the property*. Thus there is no immediate risk of structural failure apparent. The current condition of the building therefore does not add any significant weight in support of allowing the appeal.

Conclusion

14. I conclude overall that the proposed scheme would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building at 1259 Melton Road. Harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets would not be outweighed by public benefits. It would thus conflict with the Act, the NPPF, and Policy CS14 of the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan.
15. For all the above reasons, and taking account of all other matters raised, the appeals are dismissed.

Thomas Shields

INSPECTOR

² The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)