



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 May 2020

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th June 2020

Appeal A: APP/P4605/D/20/3249045

268 Monument Road, Birmingham B16 8XF

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Colin Mountain against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref: 2019/10376/PA, dated 16 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2020.
 - The development proposed is a first floor rear extension.
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Appeal B: APP/P4605/Y/20/3249050

268 Monument Road, Birmingham B16 8XF

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Colin Mountain against the decision of Birmingham City Council.
 - The application Ref: 2019/10399/PA, dated 16 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 February 2020.
 - The works proposed are a first floor rear extension.
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Decision

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed and listed building consent is refused for a first floor rear extension.

Preliminary Matter

3. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building, '268 and 269 Monument Road' (Ref: 1219585), or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. The building comprises an early nineteenth century, semi-detached pair of two-storey dwellings with stucco coated walls and a slate roof with wide eaves.

- There are three windows at the first floor level of each dwelling, as well as two-storey outriggers projecting from the rear elevation. The outrigger associated with the host property has a number of unsympathetic, later additions, and a further addition has been proposed that is the subject of these appeals.
6. During my site visit I observed that the gable ends of each outrigger remained intact and the historic form of the building was clearly legible, despite subsequent changes to the host property. The form and fabric of these structures attest to the historic design of the building, and consequently embody both evidential and aesthetic values. Whilst significantly eroded, the host outrigger nevertheless contributes to the symmetry of the rear elevation and thus its aesthetic value.
 7. Given the above, I consider that the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to these appeals, is primarily associated with the historic legibility, intact fabric and architectural symmetry of the gable ends of the rear outriggers.
 8. The proposal's mass, blank rear elevation, mono pitch roof and obscuring of approximately a third of the outrigger's western elevation would, together, increase the accumulation of extensions of different architectural styles, and visual clutter, at the rear of the building. The proposed extension would further distract from the building's historic and visually consistent pattern of first-floor fenestration. Furthermore, the doorway to the en-suite bathroom would result in loss of part of the gable wall of the outrigger, which is part of the historic fabric of the building.
 9. The appellant considers that the proposed extension would enhance the building by 'masking' the existing late twentieth century, first-floor bathroom extension. However, the combination of factors described above would further obscure and distract from its historic form. This would add to the existing harm by further eroding the building's historic legibility and architectural symmetry.
 10. From what I saw during my site visit, the adverse effects identified would be visible from the rear gardens of the host pair of dwellings and, in part, from within the dwelling. The appellant suggests that the proposal would not harm the listed building because it would not be more widely visible. However, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest, irrespective of whether or not public views of the building are available.
 11. Proposed use of reclaimed bricks to match the existing as far as possible would not outweigh the harm caused by the loss of historic fabric. Moreover, the fibre cement roof tiles would not match the existing slate material on the main roof of the building, which would add to the harm that I have already identified, through the introduction of incongruent, alien material.
 12. Taking the above together, the combination of incongruent massing, design and material would distract from the historic form of the building. Consequently, the over-dominant addition that is being proposed would further erode the historic legibility of the building and lead to a loss of fabric.
 13. Therefore, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. I give this harm considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of these appeals.

14. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 194 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets, and that this should have a clear and convincing justification. Given the limited extent of the proposal and the fabric that would be affected, I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
15. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against public benefits of the proposal, including any contribution to securing optimal viable use of listed buildings.
16. The appellant has suggested that an additional, en-suite bathroom would be one such benefit. However, this is a private benefit with no wider significance other than a convenience to the lifestyle of the present occupiers. Moreover, the continued viable use of the appeal property as a residential dwelling is not dependent on the proposal, as the building has an ongoing residential use that would not cease in its absence.
17. Given the above and in the absence of any defined public benefit, I conclude that, on balance, the proposal would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 196 of the Framework. It would also conflict with Policies PG3 and TP12 of the Birmingham Development Plan (2017) and saved Paragraph 3.14D of the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (2005), that together, seek to ensure proposals complement local distinctiveness, including through conservation of heritage assets. As a result, the proposal would not be in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

William Cooper

INSPECTOR