



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 July 2020

by Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge BA (Hons) MTP MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/L2630/Y/20/3244191

The Lodge, Stubbs Green, Loddon, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 6EA

- 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 Keith Rickman against the decision of South Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref 2019/1677, dated 15 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 October 2019.
 - The works proposed are change wood windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building at The Lodge.
3. The Lodge is listed Grade II and dates from the 18th century. The special interest is derived from its historic interest as a former farmhouse but also in terms of its architectural interest with traditional building materials and details. It is a two storey semi-detached property with a slate and pantile roof and brick chimneystacks. The front elevation is rendered. Internally, the main ground floor room has a large brick fireplace and timber beams on the ceiling. There is two and single storey 1990s extension to the side and rear of similar design and appearance to the historic property.
4. The windows throughout the property are modern single glazed timber casements. They have a relatively slim profile including the glazing bars and the thickness of glass. While they have no historic value, they complement the listed building as features that are appropriate to this age and style of building. This includes those in the 1990s extension given the similar design and appearance. As such, the windows have architectural value and contribute positively to the special interest and significance of the listed building.
5. The proposed replacement windows would be double glazed UPVC casements, specifically Residence 9. They would replicate the grain of timber and have similar dimensions in terms of the frames and glazing bars. The hinges and handles would have a similar appearance. However, the windows would be thicker in profile due to the double glazing, while the glazing bars would be stuck onto the glass on either side rather than running through from one side to the other. UPVC would not be a traditional building material. Thus, the windows would be at odds with the architectural character of the property and result in harm to the special interest and significance of the listed building.

6. The harm to significance would be less than substantial, but still important given the architectural character and consistency. Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires such harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. NPPF paragraph 193 states that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets irrespective of the level of harm.
7. The windows on the front (south) elevation of the property are in a relatively poor condition with areas of decay and mould around the cill and bottom part of the frame both internally and externally. However, they do not appear to be beyond repair completely. The windows to the side and rear elevations are in better condition generally and could be easily repaired and improved where needed. Even if replacement of certain windows is necessary, this could be in timber. Timber windows can last for many years if maintained regularly and properly and the longevity of the property can be achieved. Thus, the public benefits of improved maintenance carry limited weight.
8. The appellant refers to approval in 2015 for double glazed timber units which was never implemented by the previous owner. The details of that approval are not before me, so I cannot compare with the proposed works.
9. The appellant has suggested that the windows on the front elevation of the historic part of the property could be replaced in timber. Notwithstanding that they are not necessarily beyond repair and that I do not have details of any timber replacements, this would still result in UPVC windows on the 1990s extension. Given the similar appearance of the extension to the historic property, compared to a more contemporary or modern extension, the difference in window types would lack architectural consistency. The adjoining property has a mix of timber and metal windows in varying states of repair. However, this does not justify a mixed approach to the appeal property. The amount of UPVC capping on the extension dormer window is small and does not support the wider use of this material.
10. The appellant cites the retention of UPVC windows at a listed property in Wymondham that were allowed, in part, at appeal¹. The Inspector did not allow their retention on the historic part of the property but did allow them to be retained on the two storey side extension built towards the end of the 20th century. In doing so, the Inspector made an exception based on the design of the extension and the detailing of the UPVC windows. I do not have the full details of this property and its windows to properly compare to this appeal. Nevertheless, I have found that it is important to have consistency in window design across the property, while the detailing of the proposed replacements do not match the narrower existing windows. Therefore, I give little weight to the Wymondham decisions.
11. Allowing this appeal would not necessarily set a precedent as each case would need to be determined on its own merits. The principle of replacing the windows has been accepted by the Council. The appellant is seeking to improve and enhance the property, including replacing the cement render on the front elevation with lime render. However, the proposed replacement windows would result in harm. The public benefits and other considerations put forward by the appellant in this case are insufficient to outweigh this harm.

¹ APP/L2630/F/12/2181864, APP/L2630/E/12/2181848 and APP/L2630/E/12/2181856

12. In conclusion, the proposed works would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building and so there would be conflict with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The works would harm the significance of the listed building without adequate public benefits, contrary to NPPF paragraphs 193 and 196. I have also had regard to Policy DM4.10 of the South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document 2015 which, amongst other things, requires proposals to sustain and where possible enhance and better reveal the significance of heritage assets. For the above reasons, I find that the appeal should be dismissed.

Tom Gilbert-Wooldridge

INSPECTOR