



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 August 2020

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/T3725/Y/20/3252994

3 Hatton Green, Hatton Green, Warwick, Warwickshire CV35 7LA

- 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 Le Tocq against the decision of Warwick District Council.
 - The application Ref: W/19/2113/LB dated 20 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 March 2020.
 - The works proposed are installation of 'aluminium with shingle effect' roof over conservatory to replace existing glass roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the appeal form and decision notice as it is more succinct than that shown on the application form.
3. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the Grade II listed building, 'Arden Cottage' (Ref: 1139037), or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. The building comprises two cottages and a wing that have been amalgamated into a single dwelling. At the building's core is a two storey, timber framed cottage which dates from the seventeenth century or possibly earlier. This was encased in red brick in the eighteenth century. It has gabled ends with exposed timber framing. The right hand brick wing and left hand adjoining brick cottage date from the nineteenth century. The building has a plain, reddish-brown tiled roof. To the rear are later additions in the form of a single storey extension and conservatory. There is a detached garage to the south.
6. The building has evidential, historical and aesthetic value as an example of Warwickshire village cottage architecture from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, which illustrates the use of a range of different historic building materials and techniques.

7. Given the above, I consider the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to this appeal, to be primarily associated with the dominance and legibility of its pre-twentieth century architectural core, which is formed by the merged cottages and the wing.
8. The proposal is to replace the glass roof of the conservatory with a brown coloured aluminium tile roof, and skimmed plasterboard ceiling. Together, these elements would result in a noticeably chunkier and more solid roof form to the conservatory. This would add to the solid modern bulk to the rear of the building, further distracting from the latter's historic core.
9. The above effects would be noticeable from within the building, the conservatory and the rear garden. 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.
10. Furthermore, given its modernity, artificiality and potentially different weathering properties, compared to the building's plain clay roof tiles, the proposed aluminium 'shingle-style' covering would distract from the traditional materiality of the historic core of the building and introduce a highly incongruent, alien fabric.
11. Taking the above together, the combination of incongruent bulk and material would distract from the historic form and character of the building. Consequently, the over-dominant, alien addition that is proposed would further erode the historic legibility of the building. 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.
12. 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 extent of the changes, I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
13. 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.
14. The application form states that the glass conservatory roof has been 'poorly installed' and leaks. A conservatory consultant reports 'bad design and poor materials' and advises 'a more substantial roof construction'. Valleys to the sides of the conservatory's gable, and seals along muntin bars between glass panels are cited as the source of leaks. The appellant considers that the pitch and south-west orientation of the roof expose it to the elements and movement, such as to render it beyond repair.
15. However, glass roofing, as used in conservatories, is an established construction technology that is repeatedly used to construct watertight

structures in my experience. I do not doubt the fact that two companies, that have since gone out of business, have been unable to deliver a watertight structure. In the absence of a structural engineering report by a suitably accredited individual, I am not persuaded that a watertight roof design solution, which utilises the more translucent and less intrusive quality of glass, could not be found. Moreover, I observed that the existing structure is not in a particularly exposed position, given its moderate height and the shelter provided by mature vegetation and other buildings that are present on the site.

16. The appellant has suggested that the proposed roof would be more energy efficient and this benefit would apply to 'the only room large enough for family and other gatherings and various recreational activities', that occur throughout the year. However, the thermal performance benefit would be limited by the scale of the proposal. Also, the usability of the room is a private benefit with no wider significance other than suiting the lifestyle of the present occupiers.
17. As such, I find that the continued viable use of the property as a dwelling is not dependent on the proposed works. Accordingly, I find that there are insufficient public benefits to outweigh the harm I have identified to the heritage asset.
18. Given the above, 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, as well as relevant local policies insofar as they apply.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

William Cooper

INSPECTOR