The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 20 July 2020

by S Edwards MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 October 2020

Appeal A Ref: APP/C1760/Y/20/3249962
East Anton Manor Farm, East Anton, Andover, Hampshire SP11 6AB

- 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 Mrs Laraine Nash against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
- The application Ref 19/00624/LBWN, dated 9 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 January 2020.
- The works proposed are 'expose brickwork above Aga and expose beam above pantry door in kitchen; Paint and repair Victorian grained varnished panelling, minor repairs and redecorate panelling and built in cupboard in sitting room; plaster and insulate between rafters, repair and replace roof timbers and floorboards in attic rooms'.

Appeal B Ref: APP/C1760/Y/20/3250743
East Anton Manor Farm, East Anton, Andover, Hampshire SP11 6AB

- 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 Mrs Laraine Nash against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
- The application Ref 19/00625/LBWN, dated 9 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 February 2020.
- The works proposed are 'repair chimney breast in bedroom 5; replacement window, creation of cover for water tank, repair lime plaster and install wood burner in bedroom 4; addition of hopper and down pipe; repoint East wall; repair panelling and built-in wardrobe in bedroom 1; repair and reinstate panelling in bedroom 2; repair balustrade and replace finial on top of newel post; expose lintel above sink in the kitchen; lime plaster repairs, repair and replace oak panelled door, replace ceiling beams including supports, insulate and create floor in cellar'.

Appeal C Ref: APP/C1760/Y/20/3251687
East Anton Manor Farm, East Anton, Andover, Hampshire SP11 6AB

- 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 Mrs Laraine Nash against the decision of Test Valley Borough Council.
- The application Ref 19/01311/LBWN, dated 20 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 19 March 2020.
- The works proposed are 'remove 1930s fireplaces to expose originals and insert log burner in living/dining, remove modern stud wall and utility area, to create study and a shower room, remove upstairs stud wall and create bathroom, install central heating system'.

Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal C

3. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

4. The descriptions of the works as detailed within the application forms have been amended in subsequent documents. I have adopted the descriptions included on the Council's decision notices, which reflect the extent of the works before me in a more concise and accurate manner. Where the works have already been carried out, I have treated the appeals on that basis.

5. The listing description refers to the appellant's property as East Anton Manor. For the purposes of the appeals before me, this is the term I shall use to describe this Grade II listed building.

6. As the works relate to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

7. The main issue is whether the works preserve or would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed building known as East Anton Manor.

Reasons

Site description

8. The appeal site comprises a substantial two and a half storey farmhouse constructed from brick and flint, and number of ancillary buildings which would have historically been associated with the farmstead. According to the listing details, the property dates from the 18th century and was listed in 1950. The appellant's submissions suggest that the front half of the house was added to an older building, but limited information has been provided to substantiate this statement. The presence of a number of older elements may simply suggest that the farmhouse was partially constructed with reused materials and fittings.

9. Despite some alterations over time, having notably regard to the modern windows to the front elevation, the property retains much of its rich Georgian design and detailing, which includes a strongly symmetrical front elevation, with a central entrance and five window range. The steeply pitched roof is complimented by brick dentil eaves and gable verges prominent chimney stacks on the end walls. Internally, the farmhouse retains many historic features, and the layout remains to a large extent intact.

10. Having regard to the available evidence and from my own observations, I consider that the significance of the listed building derives principally from its architectural interest, with the simple, elegant proportions and detailing which characterise this farmhouse, both externally and internally. It is also of historic interest as a key component of a large, high-status farmstead of the 18th century.

Kitchen

11. In the kitchen, the brickwork of the chimneybreast and the timber lintel over the pantry door have been exposed. Having regard to the available evidence, I find that the partial removal of plaster is causing harm to the integrity of the Grade II listed building, as exposing brickwork and timber lintels would not have been characteristic of the interior style which would have been created when the property was constructed. These works cause considerable harm to the significance of the Grade II listed building.

Sitting room

12. There is no doubt that the floor to ceiling panelling found in the sitting room contributes to the special historic and architectural interest of East Manor Farm. The Council are concerned that the overpainting of the panelling has resulted in the loss of its grained finish (usually to resemble oak), which became a popular finish during the Georgian period and was still carried out at the beginning of the 20th century.

13. The original date of the graining remains uncertain. The appellant relies on markings found inside of one of the built-in cupboards to conclude that the panelling would have originally been left in a natural wood finish, at least until 1880, and the painting would therefore occurred at a later date. However, the fact that the inside of the cupboard remained unpainted does not necessarily mean that the panelling within the sitting room would have also been left with a natural finish.

14. There is no substantive evidence before me which establishes with certainty that the panelling would have been grained as far back as the 18th century. Nevertheless, and even accepting that it may have been carried out at a later date, I share the concerns raised by the Council in respect of the loss of the graining, by reason of its intrinsic significance as a traditional form of decoration used to enhance the social status of the property. Consequently, and in the absence of substantive evidence to the contrary, I find that the overpainting has had a detrimental effect on the special interest of this designated heritage asset.

Attic

15. There are two rooms within the roofspace, which are accessed by the main staircase rising to the attic, are served by small windows sited within the end walls and have fireplaces. The size of the farmhouse and land which would have historically been associated with it, as suggested by the parties, indicate that the attic would have in all likelihood provided bedrooms for live-in labourers or servants. The presence of windows and fireplaces, amongst other things, further indicate that the rooms within the roof were intended to be used as habitable space. Accordingly, and in the absence of substantive evidence to

the contrary, it is likely that in a Georgian property of this status, these rooms would have historically been largely plastered.

16. The appellant's submissions indicate that the lath and plaster were removed from the ceilings and walls in the attic bedrooms by the previous owner, and works were carried out, notably to address water ingress and Death Watch Beetle infestation issues. The works carried out by the appellant have left the rafters and other timbers prominently exposed, whilst the areas between the rafters and ashlar pieces have been insulated and finished in rough-plaster. Timber supports, joists and skirting boards have also been added. These works detract from the historic significance of the listed property, as they fail to reflect the Georgian character and appearance of these traditional attic rooms.

17. I have not been presented with further information, for example in the form of detailed survey work carried out by a suitably accredited professional. Consequently, I am unable to establish whether the infestation remains active and if so, whether the reintroduction of lath and plaster would indeed prejudice the effectiveness of the treatments required to address the damage caused by the insects, as alleged by the appellant. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, these are considerations which can only be afforded limited weight and do not justify the works proposed.

Hopper and down pipe

18. An additional hopper and down pipe are proposed to be installed to the western elevation of the appeal property, using reclaimed cast iron. I have been presented with limited information regarding the proposed works, particularly in respect of the precise location of the hopper and down pipe. By reason of the lack of detail in respect of this aspect of the proposal, the effect of the works on the special interest of the listed building cannot be ascertained.

Works to bedroom 1

19. The appellant has carried out repair works to a small area of panelling within bedroom 1, as well as sections of panelling inside one of the built-in wardrobes and to its ceiling, due to the damage previously caused by water ingress. The repair works to the panelling are considered acceptable, and do not harm the significance of the listed building.

20. The submitted information indicates that the works to the ceiling have been carried out with a piece of plasterboard and finished with a white natural plaster. However, without the benefit of additional information regarding the previous finish for the ceiling, it is not possible to determine whether these works may have caused harm to some of the listed building's historic fabric, to the detriment of its significance.

Works to bedroom 2

21. Works have been carried out in bedroom 2, including repairs to sections of panelling situated to the side and underneath the windows. Having regard to the information provided by the appellant and my own observations, I am satisfied that these particular works do not harm the special interest of the Grade II listed building.

Works to bedroom 4

22. The appellant is also seeking listed building consent for repair works and the installation of a small log burner within the fireplace to bedroom 4, the principle of which is considered acceptable. However, in the absence of further details regarding this aspect of the proposal, I am unable to confirm with any degree of certainty that the works would not cause any harm to the building's historic fabric, which could subsequently be detrimental to its special interest.

Cellar

23. The appellant is also seeking listed building consent for works and repairs to the cellar, most of which have already been carried out. An oak floor has been installed to the underside of the stairs, using timber resting on oak rafters, and a small section under the stairs has been plastered. Furthermore, works have been carried out to some of the beams which were either missing or had collapsed. The appellant's submissions explain that these have included treatment works against insect/rot damage and construction of brick pillars to support the beams where required, whilst insulation has been added between the rafters, and covered with plasterboard.

24. The extent of the works may be acceptable in principle. However, as they have already been carried out, it is not possible, having regard to the submitted evidence, to ascertain whether they have resulted in the loss of historic fabric and, accordingly, whether the repair works are suitable. Limited information has also been provided in respect of the works to the oak panelled door and the false floating floor on top of the historic brick floor to create an even level across the cellar. In the absence of adequate information to show the extent of the works, the proposed materials and the method of fixing, I cannot be assured that these would be like-for-like repairs or appropriate works, which hence would not adversely impact the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Fireplaces and wood burners to the ground floor reception rooms

25. The appellant is also seeking listed building consent to remove the 1930s fireplaces to the ground floor reception rooms and insert log burners. There is no objection to the removal of the existing 1930s fireplaces, as it would better reveal the historic features which would have previously been the focal point of these reception rooms. The condition of the historic features which lie behind the 1930s brick chimney pieces is however currently unknown and, to that effect, the Council consider that a two-stage condition would be necessary to ascertain the extent of the works required to the fireplaces, following the removal of the 1930s structures.

26. I have sympathy for the appellant, who is concerned that the removal of the 1930s fireplaces could deprive the listed property of an important source of heating and to some extent leave it exposed to the elements, until details for their replacement are agreed with the Council. That said, without sufficiently detailed information regarding the condition of the historic fireplaces and chimneys, and the extent of the works which would have to be undertaken to restore them, I am unable to ascertain whether the proposed works would preserve the significance of East Anton Manor.

Study/Shower room

27. The appellant seeks to convert the existing study and utility room situated at ground floor level into a shower room. The stud wall which was constructed using modern materials is proposed to be removed and re-instated to create a smaller room, the historic beams would be exposed, and the brick flooring would be retained. Having regard to the available evidence, I am satisfied that there would be no loss of historic fabric, and the proposed works would not cause harm to the significance of the listed building. The imposition of a suitably worded condition could effectively control the detailing of the proposed works.

Upstairs toilet and airing cupboard

28. The proposed works include the removal of a stud wall between the upstairs toilet and the airing cupboard to create an additional bathroom. The stud wall was notably constructed using an old piece of wood panelling, which the appellant proposes to repair and reuse as the back wall for the new bathroom. The existing toilet door would be retained to provide access to the new bathroom, whilst a new wall would be erected onto the landing area.

29. The removal of the polystyrene tiles and the existing cupboard door are not objected to as, based on my own observations, the risk of historic fabric loss would be low. However, the appellant's submissions also suggest that the airing cupboard was formed out of the space of a back stairway, which historically would have connected the ground floor to the first floor landing area. As this is not substantiated by further evidence, I am unable to assess the effect that the proposed works could have on the listed building's significance.

Central Heating

30. There is no objection to the installation of a central heating system, which would improve the living conditions of existing and future occupiers of the property, whilst helping to sustain its long term future. Although the appellant's submissions indicate the location of the proposed cast iron radiators and pipework, the effect of the proposed works on the significance of the listed building remains unclear. In particular, little information has been presented to show, in detail, how the pipework would run throughout the building. Accordingly, I am unable to ascertain the degree of harm which would be caused to the historic fabric of the listed building, and thus to its significance.

Heritage Balance

31. The appeal scheme causes and would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of East Anton Manor. In such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Some of the works sustain or would sustain the significance of the listed building. I also accept that some of the works, including the installation of a central heating system and log burners, would improve the living conditions of existing and future occupiers of the property and thereby sustain its long term use as a designated heritage asset. These works could therefore be reasonably regarded as public benefits. However, there is limited evidence before me demonstrating that the proposed works could not be carried out without causing harm to the significance of the

listed building. For each appeal, the harm which I have identified would not be outweighed by the public benefits derived from the works subject to these appeals.

32. Accordingly, I find that the works fail and would fail to preserve the Georgian architectural and historic character of the listed building and subsequently conflict with the overarching statutory duty set out in the Act, which must be ascribed considerable importance and weight. Furthermore, the appeal schemes would not accord with Policy E9 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan[1] which, amongst other things, permits development and works that would make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing the significance of the heritage asset taking account of its character, appearance and setting.

Other Matters

33. Although this is not included within the description of the proposed works, the appellant's submissions refer to the lead flashings, which would need to be replaced around both chimneys on the front section of the house. Additional pointing repairs to both chimneys would also be required. Again, limited information has been provided to detail the present arrangement around the chimneys and the extent of the proposed works. Listed building consent would not be required to replace a failed mortar fillet, as long as the repair works are carried out on a like-for-like basis.

Conclusions

34. As noted above, the Council consider that some aspects of the works seeking listed building consent would make a positive contribution to sustaining the significance of East Anton Manor, or would be acceptable subject to the imposition of conditions requiring further details, and I find no reasons to differ with this approach. However, whether to issue a split decision is a matter for the Inspector and in view of the difficulties to clearly separate the acceptable works from the unacceptable ones, I have decided not to pursue this course of action which, moreover, has not been requested by the appellant.

35. Accordingly, for the reasons detailed above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeals should be dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR

[1] Adopted in January 2016.