
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 11 November 2020

by Benjamin Webb BA(Hons) MA MA MSc PGDip(UD) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 November 2020

Appeal A: APP/Y3615/W/20/3246888

Lemon Bridge Cottage, 31 The Street, Shalford GU4 8BU

- 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 Mrs Norman against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/P/01813, dated 18 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a garden room.
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Appeal B: APP/Y3615/Y/20/3246891

Lemon Bridge Cottage, 31 The Street, Shalford GU4 8BU

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Norman against the decision of Guildford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 19/P/01814, dated 18 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 December 2019.
 - The works proposed are described as demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a garden room.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

3. As set out above, there are 2 appeals on this site. Each relate to the same scheme but address separate applications relating to planning permission in the case of Appeal A, and listed building consent in the case of Appeal B. I have considered each on its individual merits, however, to avoid duplication I have dealt with the Appeals together, except where otherwise indicated.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is whether the scheme would preserve a Grade II listed building, Lemon Bridge Cottage, its setting, or any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. Insofar as it relates to this appeal, the special interest and significance of the listed building resides in its early nineteenth century date and architectural

character, featuring a robust rendered form, shallow pitched roof, deep overhang at the eaves.

6. The scheme would see the existing modern conservatory attached to the east elevation of the main building, replaced. This stands alongside earlier projections from/attachments to the elevation, which include what appears to be the substantial stump of a chimney stack, and a single storey structure described as a laundry.
7. The conservatory has no historic value. However, it is well-proportioned, and of broadly 'traditional' design. Its modest height and lean-to form are clearly subservient to that of the main building, and its simplicity and transparency further limit the extent to which it obscures or visually competes with either the east elevation or the adjoining laundry. Though its junction with the chimney stack and laundry is made awkward by their differing shapes, viewed alongside these elements, the conservatory does not appear incongruous.
8. The replacement structure would be timber framed, and partly timber clad. It would extend further from the east elevation than the existing conservatory, and feature a tiled half-hipped roof. This would both emphasise its projection from the east elevation, and add height and bulk to the structure. This would in turn be accentuated by the height and extent of the glazing installed in the gable end. The structure would as such appear as a substantial addition.
9. In this regard, the ridge of the structure would break the sill line of the 2 first floor windows in the east elevation of the main building, thus effectively sitting between them. This would appear architecturally intrusive. Combined with solidity of structure, this would also more greatly obscure and clutter the east elevation. Unlike the existing conservatory therefore, the proposed structure would lack subservience and harmony, instead giving rise to visual competition.
10. Whilst the design has evidently drawn upon that of the laundry, the visual differences would be more apparent than the similarities. The proposed structure would be far most physically and visually dominant due to its greater scale, and this would cause the junction between the buildings to appear incongruously awkward. Indeed, viewed alongside the chimney stack and laundry, there would little sense of visual coherence between these structures.
11. The external appearance of the structure would itself have little in common with that of the main building, which features neither visible timber framing nor tiling. Though both are seen on the laundry, they cannot be considered characteristic of the listed building as a whole. Moreover, timber cladding would be an alien feature. This would not be made any less the case by its existence on the neighbouring dwelling, given that the neighbouring dwelling is a separate building. For this and the above reasons the proposed structure would greatly detract from the architectural character and appearance of the listed building. Consequently, the listed building would not be preserved, contrary to the expectations of the Act.
12. With reference to paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), I find that, for the reasons outlined above, the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building. In view of the great weight that paragraph 193 of the Framework states should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, I attach great weight to the harm that would be caused. In accordance with

paragraph 196 it is necessary to balance this harm against the public benefits advanced in favour of the appeal scheme.

13. Insofar as design has been advanced as a benefit, I have considered this above and found the opposite to be true. The structure would otherwise provide a more useable space than the existing conservatory due to overheating of the latter in summer. This would, however, be a private benefit. These considerations do not therefore attract any weight in favour of the scheme. As any broader benefits of the scheme to the local economy would negligible in scale, and thus attract negligible weight, the harm caused to the significance of the listed building would not be outweighed.
14. For the reasons outlined above I conclude that the scheme would not preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building. With regard to Appeal A, and insofar as it is relevant to Appeal B, the scheme would therefore conflict with Policy D3 of the Guildford Borough Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2015-2034, which states that the historic environment will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to its significance; and, with regard to both Appeals, it would furthermore fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act, and heritage policy set out within the Framework.

Other Matters

15. The site is located in Shalford Conservation Area (the Conservation Area). In view of the duty set out in Section 72(1) of the Act, it is necessary for me to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
16. Insofar as it relates this appeal, the significance of the Conservation Area resides in the layout of the historic part of the settlement, which is for the most part linearly arranged along The Street, and the collection and interrelationship of historic buildings and spaces it contains.
17. In this context, Lemon Bridge Cottage is prominently positioned facing The Street, close to its junction with East Shalford Lane. Given its, age, architectural character and prominence it makes a positive construction to the significance of the Conservation Area.
18. Partly obstructed views of the rear of the dwelling are available from East Shalford Lane. However, the only clear views of the proposed structure would be either from within the curtilage itself, or from the adjacent offices. The proposed structure would thus lack public prominence. It would not otherwise affect any identified defining attribute or pattern in the built form, layout or spatial character of the townscape at large. Therefore, and notwithstanding the harm I have identified in relation to the listed building, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole would be preserved, and its significance conserved.

Conclusions

19. For the reasons set out above I conclude that both Appeal A and Appeal B should be dismissed.

Benjamin Webb

INSPECTOR