



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 November 2020

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Z1510/Y/20/3247063

Hope Cottage, Cripple Cottage, Pebmarsh CO9 2NX

- 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 David Stocker against the decision of Braintree District Council.
 - The application Ref: 19/01481/LBC, dated 12 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 30 September 2019.
 - The works proposed are windows replacement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. 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

3. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the Grade II listed building, 'Hope Cottage' (Ref: 1338103), or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

4. The building comprises a single-storey cottage with attics. Its timber-framed core dates from the seventeenth century and has a thatched roof and plastered walls. Twentieth and early twenty first century extensions with plaster and timber clad walls adjoin the rear of the building's core. The building's windows are a mixture of seventeenth and eighteenth century wrought iron casement windows, and later painted timber casement windows. The windows are predominantly flush fitting. A timber framed conservatory with double glazed windows is fitted to one of the gable ends of a later extension.
5. The building has evidential, historical and aesthetic value as an example of rural cottage architecture dating from the seventeenth century, which illustrates the use of a range of different historic building materials and techniques. 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 legibility of its seventeenth and eighteenth century architecture.

6. Double glazed timber windows in the later extensions to the building would be replaced by softwood timber casement windows, with thicker framed, 28mm deep double glazed units and surface-mounted glazing bars.
7. The proposed double glazed windows would be of a noticeably bulkier appearance than traditional style wrought iron and timber-framed flush fitting casement windows in terms of frames and glazing.
8. Given the age of the building's core I would expect traditional, high quality window materials of appropriately lightweight and elegant appearance in the later extensions. However, the proposal would fail to take the opportunity to utilise historically more sympathetic elements in the form of spacer bars, puttying and flush fitting of windows with their frames.
9. The proposed windows would be similar in style to the more modern double glazed conservatory. This accentuation of modernity would exacerbate the proposed works' discordance with the traditional architectural character of the building's historic core, including its seventeenth and eighteenth century wrought iron casement windows.
10. The above together would increasingly emphasise the modern type of windows in the building's extensions. This would visually jar with and erode the traditional architecture of the historic core of the cottage. These effects would be noticeable within the building and on the building's exterior.
11. Following the Council's decision, the appellant states that they have contacted another supplier who would 'make the windows as close to the original (modern) windows as possible, reducing the gap of the double glazed units and puttying the sealed units into the frames'. The above does not constitute the proposal for which listed building consent was sought, that was consulted upon and which I am therefore assessing. Nonetheless, the suggested type of changes point to the proposal's deficiency in terms of style and bulkiness.
12. Taking the above together, the incongruent style and bulk of the windows would distract from the historic fabric and character of the building's core. This would 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.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. The appellant sets out that the proposed works would provide a higher level of security and thermal efficiency than the existing windows. This would be a small public benefit, bearing in mind it only relates to a single dwelling. 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.

16. 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. Whilst of limited relevance to an appeal made under section 20 of the Act, it would also conflict with saved Policy RLP100 of the Braintree District Local Plan and Policy 9 of the Braintree Core Strategy which together seek to ensure that proposals conserve designated heritage assets and the historic environment.

Conclusion

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

William Cooper

INSPECTOR