
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 29 December 2020

by Gareth W Thomas BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 18 February 2021

Appeal A - Ref: APP/C1625/Y/20/3250477

Grey Cottage, Marle Hill, Chalford, Stroud GL6 8EJ

- 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 Thomas Grayling against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.20/0010/LBC, dated 18 December 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2020.
 - The works proposed are for the erection of a single storey extension to the north west elevation of Grey Cottage.
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Appeal B - Ref: APP/C1625/W/20/3250475

Grey Cottage, Marle Hill, Chalford, Stroud GL6 8EJ

- 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 Mr Thomas Grayling against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref S.20/0009/HHOLD, dated 4 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2020.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of a single storey extension.
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The following decisions are issued in accordance with Section 56(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and supersedes the decisions issued on 13 January 2021.

Decisions

1. Appeal A: The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for the erection of a single storey extension to the north west elevation of Grey Cottage in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: S.20/0010/LBC, dated 18 December 2019, and the plans and details submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
 - 2) No work shall take place on the external surfaces of the buildings hereby permitted until samples of materials (including coursing of natural stone) to be used in the construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Works shall take carried out in accordance with the approved details.

- 3) Before any works commence in the attic, details of the method of protecting the historic window in the gable end shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Those works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details.
 - 4) All internal plaster to be used in the attic shall be traditional lime-based plaster finish to match the existing historic plaster.
 - 5) No works shall commence until full details, including scaled drawings and sections, to an agreed scale, of the proposed windows and doors to include details of the design, construction, materials, surface finish and method of glazing have been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and samples.
2. Appeal B: The appeal is allowed and planning permission granted for the erection of a single storey extension in accordance with the terms of the application Ref S.20/0009/HHOLD dated 4 April 2019 subject to the following conditions:
- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings: 01D; 192019-8, and; 192019-9.
 - 3) No construction site machinery or plant shall be operated, no process carried out and no construction related deliveries taken or despatched from the site except between the hours 08:00 and 18:00 on Mondays to Fridays, between 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.
 - 4) Prior to any above ground development, a Construction Method Statement (CMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and include details for the parking of all vehicles of site operatives and visitors, details for the loading and unloading of plant and materials, provide for wheel washing facilities and for the storage of plant and materials used in the construction. The approved CMS shall be adhered to throughout the construction period.

Procedural Matters

3. The decision notices in respect of both appeals fail to include a description of the proposal to restore and extend the small privy building. It is clear from the drawings and the evidence of the parties that this is what was intended and I have considered both appeals on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues in both appeals are:
 - a) whether the proposed works and development would preserve the Grade II listed building known as Grey Cottage or any features of special architectural interest that it possesses and
 - b) whether they would preserve the character and appearance of the Chalford Hill Conservation Area.

Reasons

Special architectural interest and significance

5. The appeal property comprises a substantial detached house located behind high stone walls in an elevated hillside location, which along with other houses of similar design and provenance dates from the late 17th century origin with later additions when the local woollen and cloth trade was at its peak. Houses in this area are in the Cotswold vernacular, being built of local Cotswold stone with steep sloping roofs. Grey Cottage has an imposing presence built within a substantial plot and having a massive and rather austere gable end with strong ridge stacks, narrow two light chamfered mullioned leaded iron casements to the front and side elevations and a rear wing with catslide roof. Within the garden area there is a modest curtilage building of stone with a tin roof. Once a privy, the modest structure is presently in a dilapidated state.
6. The appeal property has seen alterations over a period of a century and a half and is characteristic of its location occupying a steep escarpment overlooking the Frome valley and serviced from a narrow, enclosed winding lane, which is a key feature of the Chalford Hill Conservation Area (CHCA). The appeal property and those of its neighbours hold considerable special architectural interest, most evidently expressed in their restrained and austere elevations which are simply articulated, though this is undoubtedly supplemented by further attributes internally such as plan form, structural carpentry and decorative detail, which in terms of the host property include two spiral staircases adjacent to fireplaces.
7. The CHCA is characterised by the informal arrangement of dwellings occupying relatively flat patches of ground on the steep scarp edge and arranged alongside narrow winding lanes that run between high stone retaining walls. The appeal property itself forms a part of this characteristic villagescape and makes a strong and positive contribution to that character.

The proposals

8. The works and development proposed seek the erection of a single storey extension to the north-west elevation of Grey Cottage which would include a glazed pentice along the north-east rear elevation that would provide the necessary connection between the existing house and the extension. In order to create the link, the scheme would see the removal of a three-light chamfered stone mullioned window containing narrow cross-glazing bars. The single storey extension would be of narrower form and butt against the north-west facing gable of the property. It would be built of natural stone with a gable ridge stack and three-light mullioned window fronting the lane to replicate the traditional form found elsewhere at this property and others in the area.
9. In addition, the existing small privy, which is in a near derelict condition and located in the north-western end of the garden and some distance from the house itself, would be restored and extended using weatherboarding and corrugated iron to match the existing structure. It is accepted that the privy is a curtilage building for the purposes of listed building legislation.

Effect on special interest and significance

10. The key element at issue in terms of the extension is its introduction butting the relatively narrow north-western gable and the loss of historic fabric comprising the removal of the mullion window to form the entrance doorway into the pentice. The Council does not object to the minor works and alterations to the interior and I would agree with their assessment in this regard. The critical area of objection by the Council here is that this new structure would break up the austere character of the appeal property's tall, narrow gable end and its distinctive rectilinear frontage, element that are accentuated to a substantial degree by the elevated nature of Grey Cottage itself. This objection, both in terms of its effect on the special interest and significance of the listed building and its effect on the character and appearance of the CHCA, is its intermittent visibility from the adjoining lane where the property together with the adjoining listed buildings of France Cottage and Halsted are seen as a distinctive grouping.
11. As a matter of fact, I agree that the high north western gable has an austere quality that is highly distinctive, especially when viewed from the western approaches to Grey Cottage. However, the degree of visibility would in my view be rather limited due to the presence of a high rubble stone wall alongside the lane. As the Council rightly admits, this is a well-designed extension that would normally be supported where it not for the particular circumstances found here. I do not accept that the potential difficulties of sourcing materials would necessarily be problematical or that it should form an impediment to supporting the proposal.
12. Although I accept that the property's monolithic appearance combined with its elevated nature contributes both to the special architectural interest and the character and appearance of the CHCA, the uncomplicated detailing of the extension and glazed prentice, along with the use of traditional walling and roofing material would complement the proportions and vertical emphasis of the house. Whilst the proposed extension would inevitably have some impact on the character and visual appearance of Grey Cottage, this would not amount to material harm. Neither would it be harmful to the settings of France Cottage to the east or Halsted to the north.
13. Turning to the privy, again, I would agree with the Council that this small building is a characterful little structure and its continuing deterioration has a negative visual impact on Grey Cottage itself. It is though partially sunk into the ground, which slopes down towards the lane. Due to the presence of the high stone boundary wall to the lane, the structure is not particularly prominent. The extension to this building would be modest, utilising appropriate contrasting materials and provide a purpose for its re-use. The extension would not harm the architectural or historic interest of the privy. Neither would it harm the setting of the adjoining listed buildings.
14. I have taken account of the guidance set out in Historic England Advice Note No.2 'Making Changes to Heritage Assets' and the ambitions set out in the Chalford Parish Design Statement. These documents do not preclude the introduction of appropriately designed extensions and other alterations to listed buildings. I have not found conflict with these guidance notes.
15. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposed works and development would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, the

desirability of which is fully anticipated by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act) and to which the Courts have directed is a matter of considerable importance and weight. For the same reasons, I conclude that the proposals would accord with paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which anticipates great weight being given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

Effects on the conservation area

16. For all the reasons set out above, I also conclude that the proposals would preserve the character and appearance of the CHCA so according with the expectations of section 72 of the 1990 Act and with paragraph 193 of the Framework. Insofar as local development plan policy applies to the development proposed in this context, I also consider the proposals accord with policy ES10 of the Stroud District Local Plan, which seeks to ensure heritage assets are either preserved or enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and settings.

Conditions

17. The appeals being allowed, I have attached conditions in respect of both cases. With regards to Appeal A, I attach conditions requiring approval of samples of all external materials, submission and approval of details for the protection of the attic window and type of plastering of the attic room and details and specification of all windows and doors, all to fully safeguard the special architectural interest of the listed building. In respect of Appeal B, I have attached a condition specifying approved drawings to provide certainty. In addition, conditions are attached that limit the hours of construction, the undertaking of any processes, and when construction related deliveries or despatch can occur, so that the living conditions of occupiers of adjoining residential properties are reasonably protected. A condition is also attached requiring the submission and approval of a CMS, also for the same reason. I have not attached the suggested condition preventing the installation of further windows as this would be contrary to the approved drawings and would require separate listed building consent in any event.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above and having considered all other matters raised, I conclude that both appeals should be allowed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR