



Appeal Decisions

Site Visit made on 6 April 2021

by A Tucker BA (Hons) IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 April 2021

Appeal A, APP/Y3940/W/20/3260847

The Old Priest House, 18 West Street, Aldbourne SN8 2BS

- 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 & Mrs Gardner against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/03140/FUL, dated 6 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 July 2020.
 - The development proposed is demolition of existing outbuilding and garage, construction of new extension, new sheds and refurbishment and repair works to Listed Building.
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Appeal B, APP/Y3940/Y/20/3260845

The Old Priest House, 18 West Street, Aldbourne SN8 2BS

- 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 & Mrs Gardner against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref 20/03674/LBC, dated 6 April 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 July 2020.
 - The works proposed are demolition of existing outbuilding and garage, construction of new extension, new sheds and refurbishment and repair works to Listed Building.
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Decision - Appeal A

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for demolition of existing outbuilding and garage, construction of new extension, new sheds and refurbishment and repair works to Listed Building, at The Old Priest House, 18 West Street, Aldbourne SN8 2BS, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 20/03140/FUL, dated 6 April 2020, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Decision – Appeal B

2. The appeal is allowed, and listed building consent is granted for demolition of existing outbuilding and garage, construction of new extension, new sheds and refurbishment and repair works to Listed Building, at The Old Priest House, 18 West Street, Aldbourne SN8 2BS, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 20/03674/LBC, dated 6 April 2020, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

3. The appeals relate to the same scheme under different legislation. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning.

Main Issue

4. The main issue for both appeals is the effect of the proposal upon the significance of the grade II listed building, known as The Priest's House, and the character and appearance of the Aldbourne Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA) requires the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Additionally, Section 72 of the LBCA requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
6. The appeal building is a vernacular cottage dating from the 15th and 16th centuries, constructed in stone with long thatched roof slopes that extend down to a low eaves to give a modest overall scale. Its simple linear historic form is easy to appreciate despite the presence of a substantial extension at the front. It contains significant historic fabric including a fine ceiling as referred to in the list description. It also has some associations with a priest's chantry that existed in the village until the early 16th century. Its simple vernacular appearance, surviving historic fabric and its ecclesiastical associations give the building its architectural and historic significance.
7. The appeal building stands within the Aldbourne Conservation Area (ACA). The ACA comprises a rich range of historic buildings, mostly constructed in locally available materials such as stone, thatch and clay tiles. Many are listed. The core of the settlement is tightly packed to the south of the Church and along the main transportation routes. The ACA extends to include some surrounding open land and farm buildings, which contribute to the rural character of the settlement. The appeal building is set away from the core of the settlement and a significant distance back from the road, with open agricultural land to the west from where it can be easily seen from a nearby footpath. From the footpath and where glimpsed from the road to the south the traditional form of its thatched roof can be seen. It is thus an important contributor to the significance of the ACA.
8. The proposal would see the existing summer house replaced with a further extension, to the south of the existing single storey extension. Historic England advice submitted with the appeal suggests that an extension that projects to the front of a building is rarely appropriate. However, in this case the existing single storey front facing extension that occupies almost all of the front of the original building, and extends along the garden boundary, and the existing summer house at the front mean that the front of the historic building has already been radically altered.
9. The Council suggests that the existing summer house is not permanent. However, there is no evidence before me to support this position. The summer house is a large building that occupies most of the area between the end of the existing extension and the southern boundary. It received planning permission in 1989 and at my visit I found it to be in reasonable condition. Furthermore, there would appear to be nothing to prevent the ongoing repair and maintenance of the building. I am therefore not satisfied that as a timber building its existence should carry any less weight than if it were masonry built.

10. The listed building is approached from the south along a narrow width of land, where views are directed towards the principal historic building and its prominent thatched roof. From this perspective the proposed extension would be set to one side and not prominent to view. It would occupy a similar position to the existing summer house and would be similarly scaled.
11. The proposed extension would be separated from those parts of the listed building that have architectural and historic interest by the existing extension. Although it would still appear as a modern addition to the building, the pitched roof form and glazed link would give it some visual separation from the existing extension. I consider that this would be similar to the current relationship between the existing extension and the existing summer house.
12. In terms of the impact of the proposal on more distant views of the listed building and the wider character of the ACA, the proposed extension would be difficult to view from the road to the south. From this perspective, the significance of the historic building would be unaffected. There would be some modest benefits arising from the removal of the existing garage as this would open up what is most likely an historic view towards the front of the principal building from the road to the south.
13. The extension would be visible from the open land to the west and the nearby footpath. From these perspectives it would be seen as separate from the principal historic building. It would have a low scale that would be similar to that of a garden outbuilding, to the extent that the historic form of the original building would remain dominant.
14. I do accept that the proposed extension would not have a particularly traditional form, and neither would it replicate the existing flat roofed extension. However, it would have a simple and understated appearance, with finishes and detailing that would be appropriate for its context subject to suitably worded conditions. It would also be tucked into the corner of the garden where it would not be prominent to view.
15. With regard to the other elements of the proposal I give significant weight to the fact that these have been subsequently approved by the Council¹. The proposal would see a new window inserted into the side boundary wall, looking out over the adjacent field. This would affect an area of wall that has already been altered as a result of the existing extension. The surrounding stone sections of wall would still identify it as an older boundary structure, pre-dating the extension, and it would remain distinct from the principal gable. Furthermore, I am satisfied that the new opening could be made good in a satisfactory manner, subject to an appropriately worded condition.
16. I am not satisfied that the proposed lantern light would result in any harm as it would be viewed in the context of the existing flat roof extension which is distinct from the historic building and has no historic significance.
17. In summary, taking these factors into account, I am satisfied that the proposal would not harm the listed building or the character and appearance of the ACA. It would not cause harm to the simple vernacular appearance of the building, its surviving historic fabric or its historic associations, all of which are the primary contributors to its architectural and historic significance. It would thus

¹ Council References: 20/06894/FUL & 20/07404/LBC

accord with the requirements of the LBCA and paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. It would also accord with Policies 57 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which together seek to ensure that proposals are designed to a high standard and protect and conserve the historic environment.

Other Matters

18. With regard to the comments submitted about a potential reduction in parking spaces, the plans demonstrate that parking provision at the site would be made no worse by the proposal.

Conditions

19. I have had regard to the planning conditions suggested by the Council. I have considered the conditions against the tests in the Framework and the advice in the Planning Practice Guidance. I have imposed a condition specifying the approved plans as this provides certainty. I have imposed additional conditions to ensure that the proposal is appropriately detailed and finished to avoid causing harm to the special interest of the listed building.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons above, appeal A and appeal B should be allowed.

A Tucker

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

Appeal A Ref: APP/Y3940/W/20/3260847

- 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 plans: EG-892-01 Rev B, EG-892-02 Rev D and EG-892-03.

Appeal B Ref: APP/Y3940/Y/20/3260845

- 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
- 2) No work to the extension or outbuildings shall be carried out above ground level until details (including samples) of all external materials have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 3) No new joinery shall be fitted until full external joinery details (scale 1:10, to include sections, depth of reveal, and lantern details), and other details such as the making good to surrounding areas of masonry, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4) All new rainwater goods for the extension hereby approved shall be cast metal and provided with a black finish and maintained as such.
- 5) No external plumbing or vents, including soil pipe vents, shall be fitted until details of such fittings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.