



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 24 March 2021

by A A Phillips BA(Hons) DipTP MTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th June 2021

Appeal A: APP/J1915/D/20/3263083

Keepers Cottage, Knights Hill Farm, Westmill, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9LX

- 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 Claire Davey against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref: 3/20/1566/HH, dated 20 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is a new gable end roof (1.5m in length) to garage and replacement of a window to side elevation of garage with replacement matching fenestration.
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Appeal B: APP/J1915/Y/20/3263078

Keepers Cottage, Knights Hill Farm, Westmill, Buntingford, Hert SG9 9LX

- 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 Claire Davey against the decision of East Hertfordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref: 3/20/1567/LBC, dated 20 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 22 October 2020.
 - The works proposed are a new gable end roof (1.5m in length) to garage and replacement of a window to side elevation of garage with replacement matching fenestration.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a new gable end roof (1.5m in length) to garage and replacement of a window to side elevation of garage with replacement matching fenestration at Keepers Cottage, Knights Hill Farm, Westmill, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9LX in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 3/20/1566/HH, dated 20 August 2020, 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 plans: Block Plan @ 1:500, Front and Side Elevation – Existing, Rear and Side Elevation – Existing, Proposed Rear Elevation Shown Over Existing Roof Line, Proposed Rear Elevation – Showing New Roof Line, Proposed Front Elevation – Showing New Roof Line, Proposed Side Elevation Showing New Gable End and Rectangular

Casement Black Timber Window and Proposed New Window for Gable End.

- 3) No development shall commence until details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the new gable end roof hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These shall include the proposed new window for the gable end and other external facing materials. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and samples.
- 4) No development shall take place until a scheme for the protection of all retained trees, shrubs, natural and historic features during the course of site works shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Such scheme shall be in accordance with paragraphs 5.5 and 6.1 of British Standard BS 5837: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations (or in an equivalent British Standard if replaced) and no development shall commence until all trees, shrubs, natural and historic features to be protected are fenced off in accordance with the approved scheme. Such fencing and protection shall be maintained during the course of works on site. No unauthorised access or placement of goods, fuels or chemicals, soil or other materials shall be placed in the protected area during site works.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for a new gable end roof (1.5 m in length) to garage and replacement of a window to side elevation of garage with replacement matching fenestration at Keepers Cottage, Knights Hill Farm, Westmill, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9LX in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: 3/20/1567/LBC, dated 20 August 2020 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 works shall commence until details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the new gable end roof hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These shall include the proposed new window for the gable end and other external facing materials. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and samples.
 - 3) No works shall take place until details of the design of the new and/or replacement timber frame including details of specific dimensions at a scale of not less than 1:5, details of the timber to be used and the method of jointing or connecting the timber, shall 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) The materials to be used for making good disturbed internal or external surfaces shall be of matching composition, form and finish to those of any adjoining original fabric.

Preliminary Matter

3. I have taken the description of the proposed development and works from the Council's decision notices because it more succinctly and accurately describes the scheme before me.
4. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). In addition, when considering whether to grant listed building consent I have had special regard to the provisions of section 16(2) of the Act.

Main Issues

5. With respect to both appeals the main issue is whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, Keepers Cottage, and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

6. The appeal building is a two storey T-plan detached Grade II listed building, which was listed in January 1984 and as an early nineteenth century or earlier house. The property was renovated in 1913 as indicated by the heraldic date panel over the main front door. The property has roughcast external walls, probably on a timber frame and the upper part is red tile hung with decorative panels of scalloped tiles. The roof is also banded with red scalloped tiles. It has particularly tall octagonal red brick chimneys; two on each end and three on the rear wing. The main frontage of the house is symmetrical with two windows to each floor and a central timber door. There are small gables over the first floor windows. The windows are three light flush casements with Gothic cast iron casements. The main central front door is panelled with two bullion lights and a heavy doorcase with carved trusses to a small flat hood.
7. It is my understanding that the property was remodelled in 1998 and a timber clad garage was added in 2006, which is linked to the main house via a single storey glazed walkway. The low hipped roof of the garage was specifically designed to ensure that the structure remained subservient to the original building and did not encroach or obscure the space between the house and the garage.
8. The property has undergone alterations and extensions in the past, including in 1913 when it was being used as a gamekeeper's cottage for the Coles Park Estate which I understand was broken up in the 1950s when individual estate buildings and houses were sold. The particular interest of the property is as an isolated former gamekeeper's cottage associated with the wider estate, surrounded by relatively open fields and woodland accessed by a single lane. Furthermore, the original building possesses several features of special architectural quality and interest, including decorative tiled upper walls, decorative tiled roof, prominent decorative chimneys, symmetrical frontage to the main house frontage and gables above the first floor windows.
9. The proposal is to remove the southern hipped roof of the existing garage to create a full height gable end facing the southern boundary of the property. The gable would be finished in black weatherboard to match the rest of the external walls of the garage. A new window on the south west elevation of

the new gable would be in hard wood timber within a 20mm clear double glazed unit to the same specification of some windows on the rear elevation of the garage. The appellant states that main objective of the proposal is to provide additional ventilation to the space above the garage and a more usable means of escape. It would also alleviate existing problems with water ingress which the appellant states is exacerbated by the existing hipped roof arrangement and triangular shaped south west facing window.

10. I understand that the garage extension was designed to complement the style of the original house and to appear subservient to, and visually separate from, the listed house. The bulk and massing of the garage, with a shorter ridge than would otherwise be achieved, therefore reduces the potential harmful effect of a single large structure.
11. The proposed roof form would be much simpler than the more complex roof form that would remain on the north east side of the garage. I noted at my site visit that there is a predominance of simple standard gable end features in the locality rather than the design of roof that has been incorporated onto the modern garage extension. Indeed, the main altered house has mainly simple gable features on the front and side elevations rather than complex hipped arrangements that are on the garage.
12. The Council argues that the proposal to raise one end of the garage to a full gable would be unsymmetrical and out of keeping with the host dwelling and the garage, particularly when considering that the two existing ends create a distinctive, sympathetic and subservient aspect when viewed in tandem with the listed house. In my view, occupying a relatively large footprint, the existing black weatherboard garage is a highly prominent structure adjacent to the original house and rather dominates views of the property from the adjacent rural lane. It contrasts greatly with the form and design of the original house and its materials are stark in relation to the pale render, red brick and red tiles of the house. I can see that the proposal would slightly increase the overall bulk and massing of the garage structure, but not to a significant degree. The existing roof form of the garage contrasts with the host house and does not correspond well to other buildings in the locality, whereas the proposed gable would be more in keeping with the dominant roof form on the original house. Whilst the proposal may unbalance the roof of the garage itself and harm its symmetry, I do not agree that the addition would be harmful to the host building as a whole.
13. Instead, I consider that it would rebalance the overall composition of the garage and host house together, creating a well-balanced and complementary roof form. The new gable would sit comfortably with other parts of the property's roof and would be seen against the existing main south west gables of the main house. In addition, the space between the main house and the modern garage would be retained, leaving the intended space between the main house and the ancillary garage structure. As such there would not be harm the historic or architectural integrity of the original listed building.
14. Given the above, I conclude that the proposal would preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building. This would satisfy the requirements of the Act, the Framework and would not conflict with Policies HA1, HA7, DES4

and HOU11 of the East Herts District Plan October 2018. Among other objectives these policies seek to ensure that proposals preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment of East Herts and proposals that would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss. Alterations to listed buildings will only be permitted where the proposal will not have any adverse effect on the architectural or historic character or appearance of the building or its setting. In addition, all development proposals must be of a high standard of design and promote local distinctiveness and extensions and alterations to dwellings should be of appropriate size, scale, mass, form, siting, design and materials. As a result, the proposal would be in accordance with the development plan.

Conclusions and Conditions

15. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that, subject to conditions, the appeals should be allowed.
16. I have considered both the wording and grounds for the conditions suggested by the Council in accordance with the tests set out in the Framework.

Appeal A

17. In addition to the standard time limit condition, a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the plans is necessary to ensure that it is implemented as approved.
18. A condition requiring the submission of samples and the use of materials is necessary to ensure that the appearance of the construction of the new gable end roof is of a suitable high standard.
19. In order to protect trees, hedges and other features and to ensure the continuity of the amenity value afforded to them a condition relating to the protection of such features, in accordance with an agreed scheme, during the period of site works and building operations is required.
20. Since detailed drawings of the new window, including materials and finishes, have been submitted with the application at a scale of 1:20 with a window profile at a scale of 1:1, I do not consider a condition requiring such details is required in this case.

Appeal B

21. In addition to the standard time limit condition, a condition requiring the works to be carried out in accordance with the plans is necessary to ensure that it is implemented as approved.
22. A condition requiring the submission of samples and the use of materials is necessary to ensure that the appearance of the construction of the new gable end roof is of a suitable high standard.
23. To sure the special architectural and historic interest of the building is maintained, details of the works associated with the timber frame are required, including specific dimensions, details of the timber to be used and the method of jointing or connecting the timber. In order to preserve architectural detail a

condition requiring the making good of any disturbed surfaces is also necessary.

24. Since detailed drawings of the new window have been submitted with the application at a scale of 1:20 with a window profile at a scale of 1:1, including materials and finishes I do not consider a condition requiring such details is required.

A A Phillips

INSPECTOR