



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 June 2021

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/P2114/D/21/3268463

Shishford Cottage, Calbourne Road, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO41 0TZ.

- 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 Mark Shotter against the decision of the Isle of Wight Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01857/HOU, dated 22 October 2020, was refused by notice dated 2 February 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as *replace main roof superstructure and change of roof covering from water reed thatch to clay tile.*
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposal on the Shishford Cottage, a non-designated heritage asset and thereby the special character of the area.

Reasons

3. Shishford Cottage, identified by the Council as a non-designated heritage asset, is a modest detached cottage located in a small rural hamlet. The roof of the original cottage is thatched. However, a variety of materials, including hand and machine made clay tiles, slate and EDPM, have been adopted to cover the various subservient single story additions.
4. I consider the significance of the non-designated heritage asset to be its setting in the rural hamlet, its scale, vernacular form and palate of traditional construction materials and detailing.
5. The appellant proposes removing the existing thatch and while maintaining the existing pitch and dormer window replacing the superstructure and then recovering the roof with machine made double camber plain clay tiles.
6. The National planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires the significance of a non-designated heritage assets to be taken into account in determining an application. It also requires the decision maker, in weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage asset, to make a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

7. As I saw there are examples of plain clay tile roofs in the area and therefore, subject to very careful selection of the tile to be used, a plain clay tiled roof would not, in itself appear wholly incongruous. However, a tiled roof by reason of the necessary changes in the thickness of the covering and architectural detailing at the eaves, verges, junctions, abutments etc and the formation of the inset dormer would all result in a significant change in the form, character and appearance of the roof. Such that it would, in comparison to the existing thatched roof, appear hard and angular. In my judgement this would cause significant harm to the architectural integrity of this non-designated heritage asset.
8. As I observed there are a number of thatched cottages in the surrounding local area. Accordingly, and although there are only limited views of the cottage from adjacent bridleway, the loss of the thatched roof here would nevertheless serve to denude part of the established character of the area.
9. I understand from the appellant that, although the cottage is currently thatched with water reed, long straw rather than water reed was the traditional thatching material adopted here. If it sometime in the future the cottage were to be re-thatched then it would be preferred to use the historically correct material. Although the current thatch may not be correct, to all but the most casual of observers, it is, in my judgement, a more appropriate covering than the proposed plain clay tiles.
10. I note from the evidence that the Council have permitted the roofs of other thatched properties nearby to be reclad in tile. Whatever the background to those cases, they are not an appropriate justification for permitting another here, which I am required to consider on its own merits.
11. I appreciate the appellant's concern in respect of fire. However, today there are any number of ways to reduce the risk of fire in thatched roofs.
12. I note that the appellant wishes to replace the roof to improve its thermal Insulation and to facilitate the installation of solar panels. In my opinion although the thatch is already a good insulant there are other less destructive ways of improving the insulation of the roof. Similarly, although the drawings do not include a north point, it may well be possible to sight solar panels other than on the main roof of the cottage to achieve the same desired result.
13. The appellant has suggested that the stripping of the roof and recovering it in a lightweight material could be undertaken as permitted development by virtue of the provisions of the GPDO. However, I have seen nothing to suggest he would genuinely pursue this option if the appeal failed. As such, it is a matter of negligible weight.
14. Having taken all the foregoing into account, I conclude that on balance, that they do not outweigh the substantial harm to the non-designated heritage asset and thereby the character and appearance of the area that would ensue from the proposed development.
15. To allow the proposal would therefore be contrary to the objectives of the Framework and Policy DM11 of the Island Plan – Isle of Wight Core Strategy (including Waste and Minerals) and Development Management Development Plan Document (Adopted March 2012) (LP) as they relate, along with other

things, to the conservation and enhancement of the Island's heritage assets and public realm.

Conclusions

16. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, including the support from the Parish Council, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Willmer

INSPECTOR