



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 8 June 2021

by William Cooper BA (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M9496/Y/21/3270329

Carpenters Cottage, Main Street, Winster DE4 2DJ

- 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 Chris Payne against the decision of Peak District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref: NP/DDD/1120/1077, dated 16 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 5 February 2021.
 - The works proposed are installation of replacement windows and repairs/modification to some window openings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposal relates to a listed building and is in a conservation area, I have had special regard to section 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. Since the Council's decision, a new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in July 2021. The substance of Framework policy, insofar as is relevant to the main heritage matters in this case, remains broadly the same. I shall determine the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the Grade II listed building 'Pair of Houses to the West of Vernon House' (Ref: 1109371), or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. The listed building is located within the Winster Conservation Area (CA). The CA covers an area of this historic Peak District village that is centred around its Main Street axis. It is characterised by traditional Peak District stone architecture, comprising typically two or three storey buildings. From what I saw during my site visit, the CA's significance, insofar as it relates to the appeal, lies in the historic townscape which reflects Winster's evolution as a Peak District village from around the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. This includes the architecture of limestone and gritstone houses on and around the Main Street axis.
6. The two storey listed building has rubble limestone walls, gritstone dressings, quoins, a coped east gable and pitched slate roof. It has group value which

derives from its historic architectural unity. Furthermore, its central location within a row of old stone buildings fronting directly onto the pavement on the north side of Main Street, at the heart of the village and its CA, contributes to the building's prominence and historic significance. Accordingly, the listed building has historic, evidential and aesthetic value as part of the traditional architecture at the centre of Winster village. The building's eighteenth century architectural style and elements contribute to this. As such, the building is a significant component of the traditional village centre architecture of the CA's Main Street axis. The above are among the valued characteristics of the building.

7. 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 historic legibility of its facades, in illustrating eighteenth century Peak District village architecture.
8. Window openings and their design are a key architectural component of the fabric and appearance of the facades of the building and those in its vicinity. As such, they have a key influence on how the historic significance of the listed building and CA is experienced.
9. The listed building is fitted with a variety of timber framed window styles. This includes some twentieth century timber casements with leaded lights, in the place of previous two-light flush mullioned windows, according to the listing description. The existing variety also includes some fixed windows, and a range of aperture sizes particularly at the rear of the property.
10. The proposal would entail the replacement of various timber framed windows with single-glazed, leaded light windows with dark bronze casements. Also, mullions would be installed to the front window openings and several at the rear.
11. Judging by the listing description's reference to previous mullions, and the cluster of traditional buildings' front elevations with mullions in the vicinity, the proposed front windows' mullions would be authentic to the building's historic character.
12. However, judging by the National Park's Authority analysis of photographs of a first floor rear window opening and the absence of substantive evidence to the contrary, mullions are unlikely to be authentic at the rear of the listed building. Therefore, the proposed installation of a rectangular cross-section stone mullion in the historic window opening of the middle bedroom, together with the installation of two stone mullions in a window opening in the western elevation of the rear wing would not be authentic to the listed building.
13. While the manufacturer's brochure states that the majority of buildings which feature architectural bronze windows date from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, and that their bronze casement products have been used in many historical building projects, this does not automatically mean that the proposal would be appropriate for the listed building in this case.
14. Even if the dark matt finish of the frames and the kiln distorted glass finish of the proposed windows were to have the claimed assimilating effects, there is no substantive evidence presented of leaded lights having been fitted to the listed building prior to its twentieth century casement windows, nor of bronze casements having been historically fitted at the property.

15. Furthermore, while there is some variety of fenestration in the village centre, including a number of properties with metal framed windows with leaded lights, white painted timber framed sash windows are noticeably the predominant recurring fenestration style among traditional buildings in the centre of the village's CA, including in the vicinity of the appeal building. Also, a cluster of some properties in the vicinity of the listed building has stone mullions in their front elevations. These noticeably recurring sash window and front mullion characteristics contribute to the character and significance of the heart of the CA.
16. In the light of the above, I find that the proposed leaded light and bronze casement window materials and style, and rear mullions would be historically inauthentic to the building's eighteenth century cottage architecture and its historic setting at the heart of the village and the CA.
17. The proposed inclusion of variflow vents, including large vents¹, in a substantial proportion of the building's windows is likely to further draw attention to the lack of historic authenticity.
18. The identified inauthentic elements would distract from the traditional architectural character and fabric of the listed building and its context. This would adversely affect several facades of the building. These include the prominently located front facade that faces onto the village's Main Street, the gable end which is visible from Main Street and the rear elevation which is visible from the listed building's rear garden.
19. Taking the above together, the incongruent material and design of the windows, and the addition of rear mullions would distract from the authentic historic character of the building. Consequently, the proposal would erode the historic legibility of the building's eighteenth century cottage architecture. Given the building's central location and prominent front elevation, the proposal would distract from the authentic character of the heart of the CA.
20. That an alternative scheme of proposed works including timber casement windows has been granted consent at the appeal property² does not negate or justify the inauthentic impacts of the appeal proposal.
21. Therefore, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building, and the character and appearance of the CA. I give this harm considerable importance and weight.
22. Paragraph 199 of 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 200 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.
23. Under such circumstances, paragraph 202 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.

¹ As per Informal Estimate 105088.

² Listed Building Consent Ref: NP DDD/0119/0015.

24. The installation of locally sourced gritstone mullions at the front of the listed building would be historically sympathetic. The removal of relatively recent leaded light casement windows would also have some benefit in authenticity terms. To the rear of the building, locally characteristic stonework would replace reconstituted stone blocks, a decaying timber lintel and damaged jamb. The proposed bronze material would have durability.
25. However, these benefits would be modest in scale and not outweigh the harm that would result from the inclusion of significant inauthentic elements in the proposal. Furthermore, I find that the continued viable use of the property as a dwelling is not demonstrably dependent on the proposed works. Accordingly, I find that there are insufficient public benefits to outweigh the harm I have identified to heritage assets.
26. Given the above, I conclude that, on balance, the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building, and the character and appearance of the CA. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 202 of the Framework. Whilst of limited relevance to an appeal made under section 20 of the Act, it would also conflict with Policies GSP3 and L3 of the Peak District National Park Core Strategy, and Policies DMC3 DMC5, DMC7 and DMC8 of the Peak District National Park Development Management Policies which together seek to ensure that proposals respect, conserve and where appropriate enhance designated heritage assets and the historic environment.

Conclusion

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

William Cooper

INSPECTOR