



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2022

by S M Holden BSc (Hons) MSc CEng MICE CTPP FCIHT MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7th March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/Y/21/3269802

27 Adelaide Gardens, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9HH

- 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 Sharron Cove against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref L/TH/20/1681, dated 15 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2021.
 - The works proposed are described as 'repairs and replacements of sash windows/frames and removal of walls to provide open plan living'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for the removal of a wall in the basement at 27 Adelaide Gardens, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9HH in accordance with the application L/TH/20/1681, dated 15 December 2020 and the plans submitted with it.

Preliminary Matter

2. The application sought to regularise works that have already been undertaken at the property. The Council was satisfied that the replacement windows were sympathetic to the listed building and has separately granted permission for their retention, Ref: F/TH/20/1730.
3. The Council's decision notice therefore only referred to the removal of walls within the basement. However, the appeal form gave the description of the works as 'a retrospective application for Listed Building Consent for the removal of a wall within basement'. For clarity, I have therefore only addressed the issue of the removal of one wall in my decision.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the removal of the wall has preserved No 27, a Grade II listed building, and any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

Reasons

Significance

5. No 27 is a Grade II listed building dating from about 1830. It is a small, three-storey, mid-terraced house with a basement. It is painted brick with a slate roof, sash windows serving the basement and second floor, and bay windows serving the ground and first floors. The front door is approached by a flight of 8 steps. The house is part of a terrace of 8 similar properties, but which differ from one another in the details of their design, particularly in relation to their fenestration. There is little sense of uniformity within the group and only 4 of

the 8 are listed. It is noted that the building was listed in February 1988 and that no internal inspection took place at that time.

6. Limited information has been provided about the history of the house and its likely original internal layout. It may well be that there were separate front and rear rooms in the basement with another wall separating them from a narrow hallway between the lower entrance door and the staircase. However, the submitted drawing marked 'existing' shows only one room and a wall separating that room from the hallway. The 'proposed' layout is consistent with what I saw on my visit. There was no plan submitted showing the layout of the ground floor, but I saw that it comprises two rooms, one to the front and the other to the rear. The front door opens into a small internal porch partially enclosed by wooden panelling. The remainder of the room is an open plan sitting room with the base of the staircase approximately in line with the wall separating the living room from the smaller room at the back of the house.
7. From what I have seen and read I consider the significance of No 27 derives primarily from it being a typical example of a modestly sized townhouse whose principal rooms are served by good sized bay windows. The location of chimney stacks on one side of the house and a staircase on the other party wall are also typical features of houses of this era. The original internal layout is likely to have comprised two rooms on each floor, although there is no definitive evidence to suggest that there was a separately enclosed hallway on the ground floor. Nevertheless, the original layout of the house and the arrangement of its key features, which contribute towards its significance, are readily apparent. This is the case even though some historic fabric, such as original doors and fireplaces, have been lost.

Assessment of scheme

8. The appellant's family has owned the house for several generations. She states that the wall in the basement between the hallway and the living room was removed by her father prior to the property being listed in 1988. There was no substantive evidence to verify this claim. However, in the absence of any applications for listed building consent for internal works since the house was listed, the Council has not had any reason to inspect the property internally to establish its internal layout. It only did so in connection with concerns about the unauthorised replacement of the windows referred to earlier.
9. The basement now comprises a new kitchen in what would have been the small room at the back of the house. The remainder of the basement is a modest, open plan room which could be used as a living or dining area. I saw that the room had been recently decorated. However, wooden panelling adjacent to the staircase has been retained and the height and profile of the skirting board throughout the rest of the room is consistent with the style used in an early 19th century property. From what I saw it was not possible for me to know if this is original or a replacement. However, there is no evidence before me to suggest that the wall was removed recently.
10. The removal of the wall has resulted in the loss of some historic fabric to one side of a small hallway which previously may have linked the area between the lower front door and the staircase. However, a 'corridor' in that area is likely to remain unobstructed to allow movement through that part of the house. Consequently, although more open, the usable area of the rest of the room is not significantly larger than it would have been in the past. To my mind the

bay window and the brick feature that now occupies the site of the original fireplace continue to be the focal points of the room. In addition, a clear distinction between the front and rear rooms of the basement has been retained even in the absence of any wall between them. The overall layout of the basement therefore retains the legibility of the original plan form of two rooms with a corridor along one side. It also has similarities with the open plan layout of the larger of the two rooms on the ground floor.

11. Taking all of the above into consideration, and in the light of the significant uncertainty around when the wall was removed, I conclude that the loss of the wall has not caused material harm to the significance of the Grade II listed building. In avoiding such harm, the scheme has preserved the special architectural and historic interest of No 27, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. I am also satisfied that there would not be any conflict with paragraph 199 of the Framework which states that great weight should be given to conserving a designated heritage asset's significance.

Conditions

12. As the works have already taken place, no conditions are necessary.

Conclusion

13. I conclude that the scheme is acceptable and that the appeal should be allowed.

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR