



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: 9th March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/Y/21/3278922

17 Royal Rd, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9LE

- 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 J Barrett against the decision of Thanet District Council.
 - The application Ref L/TH/21/0646, dated 25 April 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 June 2021.
 - The works proposed are internal refurbishment.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for internal refurbishment and reconfiguration of floor layout on five floors at 17 Royal Rd, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9LE in accordance with the application Ref: L/TH/21/0646, dated 25 April 2021 and the plan submitted with the appeal, described as 'finished project as built', received on 13 July 2021.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal form gave more precise details of the works than the application form. It described them as: 'internal refurbishment and reconfiguration of floor layout on five floors'. This is consistent with the description on the Council's decision notice. I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. An amended plan was submitted with the appeal showing smaller en-suite facilities inserted into the second and third floors. The appeal process should not normally be used to evolve a scheme. However, on my site visit I saw that the works had already been completed in accordance with this amended plan. The Council had an opportunity to comment on the alternative layout and reiterated its objection. In these circumstances I am satisfied that no party has been prejudiced by my acceptance of the revised layout. I have assessed the scheme accordingly.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the works have preserved the Grade II listed building, No 17, and any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

Reasons

Significance

5. No 17 is the end of a terrace of 4 properties which were listed as group in February 1988. The terrace was built in 1830 and comprised single dwellings with three stories in addition to a basement and attic accommodation in the roofspace served by dormer windows. Each property in the terrace displays the

same hierarchy of principal rooms on the ground and first floors. There are bay windows at ground floor level, and verandahs at first floor level enclosed by iron railings and served by French doors. Pairs of sash windows serve the front rooms at second floor level.

6. Many of the distinctive internal historic features that would have been part of No 17 were removed in the early 20th century. However, high skirtings and cornices are present within the principal rooms on the ground and first floors. One original marble fireplace has been retained within the lounge; elsewhere all the fireplaces have been lost and only the chimney breasts are apparent. Nevertheless, the original layout remains clearly legible with two rooms on each floor, a staircase to one side of the house and a small rear projection.
7. Various internal alterations undertaken during the house's nearly 200-year history were made to accommodate changing sanitary arrangements. When first built there was no inside toilet; an outside toilet was installed in the latter part of the 19th century. Between the wars a brick addition on top of the rear scullery provided a bathroom. Later another small room above the rear projection provided an additional toilet. After purchasing the house in 1972, but prior to the building being listed, the appellant installed basic en-suite facilities on each floor enabling it to be occupied as 5 small flats. These facilities are shown on the 'existing floor plans' submitted with the application.
8. The significance of No 17 is therefore derived firstly from its distinctive external architectural features, particularly the windows and first floor verandahs. Secondly, its significance is appreciated from the hierarchical layout with principal rooms on the ground, first and to a lesser extent, second floors and subsidiary ones in the basement and attic. However, when families no longer had live-in servants, the house's status and fortunes declined, historic fabric was lost and inappropriate alterations were undertaken to sub-divide the property which affected its historic significance.

Assessment of scheme

9. The works that have now been completed have restored the house as a spacious and comfortable single family dwelling. The basement is a refurbished kitchen/breakfast room. The principal rooms on the first and second floors have been restored, preserving the limited historic features and fabric that remain. The rear projection accommodates a new bathroom and utility areas. However, the layouts of the second and third floors have been altered to provide en-suite facilities to the refurbished bedrooms.
10. The master bedroom on the second floor has a small shower room inserted into a corner of the room. The recess to the left of the chimney breast has therefore been lost. However, although the fireplace is no longer there, the insertion is not disproportionate to the size of the room. Similarly, the shower room serving the other bedroom on this floor has been kept commendably small, occupying the recess to the right of the chimney breast. As this floor had no original skirting or cornices, there has been no obvious loss of historic fabric and the original wall between the two rooms has been retained.
11. Within the attic the 'Jack and Jill' arrangement of the shower room has ensured that the smaller rear bedroom has retained its original size and shape. The only change is the insertion of a door within the wall separating the two rooms to provide access to the shower room. There is a notable reduction in the size of

the front attic bedroom with the en-suite occupying the depth of the room that has a full height ceiling and leaving part of the room solely beneath the slope of the roof. However, the original shape of the room is still legible and its residual floor area and ceiling height ensures that the insertion does not appear overly large for the size of the room. The alterations on this floor have not resulted in the significant loss of any historic fabric and most the original wall dividing the attic into two rooms has been retained. In my view it would have been more difficult to insert an en-suite into the rear room without it appearing disproportionate.

12. From what I saw throughout the house, the renovations have been implemented to a high standard and the house's significance as a comfortable, spacious family home has been enhanced.
13. For all these reasons I conclude that the internal refurbishment and reconfiguration of floor layout on five floors 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 17, 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

14. As the works have already been implemented, no conditions are necessary. However, for the sake of clarity my formal decision refers to the amended scheme submitted with the appeal as the approved plan.

Conclusion

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

Sheila Holden

INSPECTOR