



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 29 March 2022

by Jonathon Parsons MSc BSc(Hons) DipTP Cert(Urb) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th May 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/Z1510/W/21/3277857

Griggs Farmhouse, West Street, Coggeshall, Essex CO6 1NT

- 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 Andy McManus against the decision of Braintree District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01023/HH, dated 10 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey extension.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/Z1510/Y/21/3277860

Griggs Farmhouse, West Street, Coggeshall, Essex CO6 1NT

- The appeal is made under section 20 of Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Andy McManus against the decision of Braintree District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01139/LBC dated 10 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 2 June 2021.
 - The works proposed are a two-storey extension.
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed. Appeal B is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. These decisions address both planning and listed building consent appeals for the same site and the same scheme. The remit of each regime is different, and the main issues below relate either to the planning appeal (Appeal A), or the listed building appeal (Appeal B), or both. To reduce repetition and for the avoidance of doubt, I have dealt with both appeals together within a single decision letter.
3. The emerging Braintree District Local Plan Section 2 (emerging LP) is at an advanced stage of plan preparation, with hearings held in January this year. However, it is not clear from the evidence before me, whether there have been any objections to the policies cited by the Council and if this is so, how these issues have been resolved. As emerging LP policies cited are not part of the development plan, they have limited weight and they do not alter my conclusions.

Main Issue - both appeals

4. The main issue is whether the works and development would preserve the Grade II listed building, known as Griggs Farmhouse, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

Reasons

5. Griggs Farmhouse is a two-storey building situated on the south side of West Street on the outskirts of the small village of Coggeshall. The statutory list entry (Lit Entry Number; 1337921) identifies Griggs Farmhouse as being timber framed, plastered with some painted brick, and roofed with handmade red plain tiles. Having 17th century origins, with 19th and 20th century additions, the building has evolved over three principal phases comprising a 17th century 4-bay range; an early 19th century 3-bay range with two stacks; as well as 20th century single-storey extension to the front of the 4-bay range.
6. The appeal building is a well-preserved rural farmhouse, which, in spite of changes over time, continues to be experienced as an historic vernacular dwelling within a rural, edge-of-village setting. Surviving historic fabric, traditional detailing, rectangular plan form and layout are amongst the features that underpin the listed building's architectural and historic interest. So too does the legibility of the building's origins within what was a wider farmstead context and its built evolution and adaptation underpin its interest and significance.
7. The proposal is to add a two-storey extension to the rear of the 3-bay 19th century range, providing a ground-floor family room off the existing sitting room and entrance hall, and a master bedroom at first-floor level. The proposal would utilise existing external openings which would minimise disturbance of historic fabric. Of itself, the extension would be constructed of high-quality materials and feature traditional detailing, such as purpose made joinery, handmade brickwork plinth, lime render and matching timber windows.
8. Although the fabric of the original building would remain largely unaffected, there would be a substantial increase in the footprint of new works in relation to the listed building. Indeed, the size of the family room and master bedroom would introduce rooms of equal size if not larger than the rooms within the extant dwelling. As a consequence, both the simplicity and modest proportions of the building's traditional form would be weakened. Together with its overall size and scale, this would cumulatively result in a lack of subservience and an overly dominant feature.
9. Planning permission and listed building consent have already been granted for a two-storey extension to Griggs Farmhouse. The overall form, fenestration and material detailing would be similar to the current proposal. However, the extension before me would have an even larger footprint, volume and overall bulk. The depth of the proposed extension would be similar to that of the main listed building, while its roof ridge would extend markedly beyond the principal structure. In my judgement, the additional size of the proposal would cause further departure from the extant building's strongly rectilinear form, with unbalancing, and dominating effect. Therefore, the proposed

extension would weaken the integrity of the listed building's original form and layout, to the detriment of its significance and special interest.

10. A lack of visibility does not equate to a lack of harm. In my judgement, utilising contrasting brick or cladding to better define the evolution of the building or a slight setting back from the building's gable end would not overcome its adverse impact. For these reasons, I consider that the proposed works and development would fail to preserve the listed building and cause harm to its special interest and significance.
11. The degree of harm to the significance of the listed building, as a designated asset, would, in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), be less than substantial. In accordance with paragraph 202 of the Framework, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viable use.

Heritage and planning balance

12. Providing additional accommodation for a growing family, the proposed extension would be largely satisfying the private wants and needs of the appellant, which are not public benefits. I note the argument that the proposal would help sustain the listed building through maximising its viable use as a dwelling. However, the appeal site is already in use as a single-family residence, and the building appeared to be in sound overall condition and at no obvious risk. The proposal would realise some investment into the fabric of the listed building, which would be a public benefit. Even cumulatively, the sum of public benefits is relatively modest and attract moderate weight in favour of the proposal.
13. Moreover, given the consents have already been granted for a two-storey extension to the appeal building, many of the benefits purported by the appellant, including realising additional accommodation, could be achieved through their implementation. This undermines the justification for the harm identified in this case and reduces the weight I attach to the benefits associated with it. In light of the foregoing, I do not find the sum of public benefits sufficient to outweigh the harm to the designated heritage asset and the great weight this carries.

Conclusions

14. In considering whether to grant planning permission or listed building consent, the s66(1) of the Act requires decision makers to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building. The proposed development and works would fail to preserve the listed building in conflict with s66(1) of the Act. There are no public benefits sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm identified, conflict therefore arises with historic environment protection policies of the Framework.
15. The development would result in conflict with saved design and heritage policies of the RLP90 and RLP100 of the LPR, which amongst other matters, seek to ensure development is sensitive to the need to conserve features of architectural and historic importance and do not result in the loss of elements of special importance to listed buildings. No material considerations indicate

that the planning appeal be determined other than in accordance with the development plan.

16. For all these reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that Appeals A and B should be dismissed.

Jonathon Parsons

INSPECTOR