
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 7 June 2022

by Benjamin Webb BA(Hons) MA MA MSc PGDip(UD) MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 June 2022

Appeal A: APP/B1740/W/21/3287739

Lower Farm, Fordingbridge Road, Whitsbury SP6 3PZ

- 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 and Mrs Gray against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/10999, dated 26 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is a two storey rear extension.
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Appeal B: APP/B1740/Y/21/3287740

Lower Farm, Fordingbridge Road, Whitsbury SP6 3PZ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Gray against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/11000, dated 26 March 2021, was refused by notice dated 8 September 2021.
 - The works proposed are a two storey rear extension.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a two storey rear extension at Lower Farm, Fordingbridge Road, Whitsbury SP6 3PZ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/10999, dated 26 March 2021, and subject to the conditions set out in the schedule at the end of this decision.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for a two storey rear extension at Lower Farm, Fordingbridge Road, Whitsbury SP6 3PZ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 21/11000, dated 26 March 2021 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the conditions set out in the schedule at the end of this decision.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the significance of designated heritage assets, and more specifically: whether the scheme would preserve a Grade II listed building and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, and whether the scheme would preserve or

enhance the character or appearance of Whitsbury Conservation Area (the Conservation Area).

Reasons

4. Lower Farm is a Grade II listed building, and thus a designated heritage asset. Whilst the Act sets out the desirability of preserving listed buildings, paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) makes clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.
5. Insofar as it is relevant to these appeals the special interest and significance of the listed building chiefly resides in the 3-bay original C17th structure which makes up the majority of the main street facing part of the building. This features vernacular construction comprising a timber frame with brick infill panels and thatched roof.
6. The building otherwise shows a past history of extension which already appears to have seen its overall size at least double. Most of the additional fabric is relatively modern. This comprises 2-storey and single storey extensions attached to either end of the original building, and a substantial 2-storey wing attached to the rear of the original central bay. Within the angle between the original building and rear wing a large flat roofed extension has also been added. The 2-storey additions each seek to reflect the appearance of the original building, albeit with varying success, whilst the design of the flat roofed extension is wholly unsympathetic. Its incongruity is accentuated by the fact that it now forms the main point of entry.
7. From external view the scale, extent and manner of past extension is such that the design, form and identity the original building can now only be clearly appreciated from directly in front of it. Both the original side elevations have been lost or obscured, and only the rear elevation of one end bay remains exposed. As such, views from the side and rear are principally of modern built form.
8. At present the length of the street facing part the building, comprising the original building plus an added bay, is greater than the length of the rear wing. As this is not apparent in views from the front, it has no bearing on appreciation of the special interest and significance of the listed building from this key vantage. Differences in length can be perceived by moving fully around the building. However, there is little clear sense of hierarchy in views from the side and rear given the existing scale and dominance of modern additions within these views, as too the reorientation of the building for entry from the rear. In practice therefore, the fact that the street fronting part of the building is currently longer than the rear wing has little bearing on appreciation of the special interest and significance of the listed building.
9. Within this context the scheme would entail the attachment of a 2-storey extension to the end gable of the rear wing, generally matching the latter, but excluding the crude imitation timber frame. This would see the overall proportion of modern built form further increased, and the rear wing elongated relative to the front. However, only modern fabric would be affected, and key views from the front would be unaltered. The physical and visual presence of the rear wing would clearly be increased within views from the side and rear. However, given the baseline as set out above, this would not undermine

appreciation of the original part of the building. As such the special interest of the listed building would be preserved, and its significance would be conserved.

10. The listed building is located within the Conservation Area. Insofar as it is relevant to these appeals the significance of the Conservation Area resides in the layout of the historic settlement, the historic buildings and spaces that it contains, and the interrelationship between. The original part of the building forms an important component of the historic settlement, and its C17th frontage is both clearly visible from the lane and forms an attractive component of the streetscene. As such the listed building makes a positive contribution to the character, appearance and significance of the Conservation Area.
11. As established above, the scheme would have no effect on the views from the lane, and would not otherwise harm the significance or special interest of the listed building. As such the scheme would conserve the contribution made by the listed building to the significance of the Conservation Area. The character and appearance of the latter would thus be preserved.
12. For the reasons set out above I conclude that the scheme would conserve the significance of designated heritage assets, preserving both the special interest of a Grade II listed building, and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In relation to Appeal A and insofar as it is relevant to Appeal B the scheme would therefore comply with saved Policy DM1 of the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014 which supports the above objectives.

Other Matters

13. The site is also located within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), within which there is a duty to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty. Paragraph 176 of the Framework further states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty, and cultural heritage within AONBs. In the latter regard my findings above indicate the acceptability of the scheme in relation to cultural heritage. The increase in built form would not otherwise be perceived beyond the immediate setting of the site or give rise to any obvious sense of intrusion within the broader open landscape. The landscape, natural and scenic beauty, as too the cultural heritage of the AONB would therefore be conserved.

Conditions

14. In relation to both Appeals A and B I have imposed standard conditions setting out the timescale for commencement of development/works, and, in relation to Appeal A, the approved plans. This is for sake of certainty. No authority exists to impose a plans condition on a listed building consent. I have however made reference to the plans within my decision. For the avoidance of doubt, the plans are the same as those listed in relation to Appeal A.
15. I have imposed a further condition in relation to Appeal B requiring prior detailed agreement of construction materials and details. This is in order to ensure compatibility with the existing building. There is no need for this condition to be duplicated in relation to Appeal A. As these details were not required to establish the acceptability of the scheme, I am satisfied that in this particular case the condition is appropriate.

16. The Council has additionally requested a pre-commencement condition requiring a bat survey. Here Circular 6/2005 states that surveys should only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances. However, no exceptional circumstances have been identified in this case, and I have not been provided with any reason to believe that bats would be affected. That being so, I have not imposed the condition.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above I conclude that Appeal A and Appeal B should be allowed.

Benjamin Webb

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

Appeal A

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: MBN RG/3A; MBN RG/4.

Appeal B

- 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.
- 2) Prior to the commencement of works above slab level details of all materials and components to be used for the external construction of the extension shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall include specification of:
 - a) all walling and roofing materials, including brick bond, and detailing of the chimney stack;
 - b) sill and lintel construction; and
 - c) joinery and glazing designs for all new external windows and doors.