



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 4 July 2022

by S Edwards BA MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 August 2022

Appeal A Ref: APP/N1730/W/21/3287185

Pond Cottage, Darby Green Road, Blackwater, Camberley GU17 0DT

- 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 Mrs Turrell against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01499/HOU, dated 27 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 6 September 2021.
 - The development proposed is replacement of 14 windows and 2 doors.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/N1730/Y/21/3287164

Pond Cottage, Darby Green Road, Blackwater, Camberley GU17 0DT

- 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 Turrell against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/01500/LBC, dated 27 May 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 July 2021.
 - The works proposed are replacement of 14 windows and 2 doors.
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Decisions

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

Preliminary Matters

3. The appeal scheme affects a listed building located in a conservation area, and I have therefore had special regard to sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. As both appeals relate to the same site and some of the issues raised are of a similar nature, I shall consider them in a single document, in the interests of brevity.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are whether the proposal would preserve the Grade II listed building known as 'Pond Cottage' (List Entry Number: 1272230), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses and the extent to which it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Darby Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site comprises a Grade II listed property, which was first listed in 1987 and dates from the 17th century. Although Pond Cottage was originally constructed as a modest two-room dwelling with square-panel timber framing under a thatched roof, it has been subject to numerous alterations and several extensions over the last 100 years. Insofar as it relates to these appeals, the significance of this Grade II listed building resides primarily in its architectural and historic interest, not solely by reason of its age and vernacular character, but also its evidential value of residential living and building techniques since the 17th century.
7. The appeal property sits within a large, verdant plot located within the Darby Green Conservation Area. This designated heritage asset owes much of its special interest to its collection of farmhouses, cottages and larger houses, which are set amidst woodland and farmland, on the edge of the common land areas of Darby Green and Yateley Common.
8. Pond Cottage lies within the 'Northern Green area and its adjoining houses' which, as noted in the Council's Conservation Area Proposal Statement, reflects the rural and traditional form of the settlement. Whilst the property is to some extent screened within the public realm by mature vegetation along the site's western and southern boundaries in particular, this Grade II listed building makes an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Darby Green Conservation Area.
9. The appeal scheme seeks to replace a number of ungalvanised steel side-hung and top-hung casements in timber subframes dating from the 1930s, as well as a timber and glass front door and "Crittall" steel French doors with single glazing. These types of windows and doors reflect the types of steel fenestration which enabled the use of slim glazing bars, and became widely popular during the inter-war period.
10. The existing windows and doors are single glazed, and their relatively simple design, with slim glazing bars and frames, does not harmfully detract from the vernacular character of the cottage. That said, and having regard to the available evidence, they do not appear to be of particular architectural or historic interest, particularly in the context of a 17th century vernacular building.
11. Most of the existing metal windows show considerable signs of decay, and rely on paintwork to limit oxidation and rust. The Council has drawn my attention to paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which stresses that the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision where there is evidence of deliberate neglect. However, there is no substantive evidence before me which demonstrates that the appellant has deliberately neglected the windows.
12. The appellant's submissions are supported by estimates for the repair of the windows and restoration and/or replacement of the timber frames. Taking the condition of the windows into account, the total cost for the repair work and the disruption associated with the project would overall be disproportionate. Overall, the principle of replacing these windows and doors, as well as the 1930s timber sub-frames, is therefore considered acceptable, provided that the replacements are of a sympathetic design. Similarly, I have no objection

regarding the replacement of windows 22 (which dates from the 1960s) and 27, subject to the fenestration details being suitable.

13. The windows and doors are proposed to be replaced with a timber front door, and timber casements and French doors incorporating double glazing. Despite the use of timber, the proposed windows however look distinctly modern, with thicker glazing bars and frames, and these replacements would therefore appear bulkier and chunkier. Additionally, the reflective properties of the new openings would clearly identify them as modern double glazed units, which would not complement the host building's age and style, thereby resulting in harm to the significance of the listed property.
14. In reaching this view, I have had regard to the fact that the Council has previously granted consent for the installation of double glazing but, to a large extent, this was for the replacement of windows sited in the modern extension. In respect of the fenestration details approved within part of the 1930s extension, I understand that this was in replacement of unauthorised windows and a door. This provides no justification for the proposed timber double glazed windows and doors, which are the subject of this appeal.
15. The proposed development and works would not be widely visible within the public realm, as the property is to a large extent screened by existing landscaping. Nevertheless, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained. I therefore afford very limited weight to this consideration.
16. The proposed windows and doors would not constitute sympathetic replacements. As a result, the appeal scheme would be harmful to the significance of the listed building. By reason of the important contribution that the appeal building makes to the Darby Green Conservation Area, it follows that the proposal would also be detrimental to the character and appearance of this designated heritage asset. Again, this would be the case even though public views would be interrupted by the existing vegetation.
17. For the foregoing reasons, the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building and the Darby Green Conservation Area, contrary to the requirements of the Act and Section 16 of the Framework. It would also be in conflict with Policies NBE8 and NBE9 of the Hart Local Plan (Strategy and Sites) 2032 and Saved Policy GEN1 of the Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006, which seek to ensure that development proposals conserve or enhance heritage assets and their settings, taking account of their significance.

Heritage Balance

18. The proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of Pond Cottage and the Darby Green Conservation Area, to which I ascribe considerable importance and weight. In such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework requires the identified harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
19. The appeal scheme would enhance the building's thermal performance and reduce carbon emissions, but the public benefit of any gain would be modest, and thus this aspect carries only limited weight. The proposal could also assist with improving the living conditions of existing occupiers. This would represent

a private benefit, but may also be regarded as a modest public benefit, insofar as it could help securing the long-term future of the appeal property as a designated heritage asset. However, overall, the presented public benefits would not outweigh the identified harm.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons detailed above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.

S Edwards

INSPECTOR