



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 November 2002

by Elaine Gray MA(Hons) MSc IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P2935/Y/22/3307477

**Broomhaugh Farmhouse, Broomhaugh, Riding Mill, Northumberland
NE44 6EG**

- The 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 Neville Furness against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00042/LBC, dated 6 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 27 June 2022.
 - The works proposed are described as 'Some 35 years ago, 6 Georgian 12 panel (6 in upper window, and 6 in lower window) sash windows were replaced by 6 double glazed 12 panel casement windows with plastic dividers inset in double glazing. These windows now need replacing. We had hoped to replace them with 12 panel double glazed sash windows, but 4 of the windows have the original Georgian interior working shutters, The new windows are of a thickness which would require significant alteration to the shutters, and we are not prepared to do that, as the shutters would be spoilt, We now propose to replace the 6 windows with similar casement windows, but with wooden rather than plastic dividers, and seek permission to do this. A detailed specification of the windows is attached'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed works on the character or appearance of the grade II listed building.

Reasons

Significance

3. Broomhaugh Farm is a dwelling with origins as a late 16th/early 17th century bastle house which was enlarged and remodelled in the mid-18th century. It stands at two storeys in height, with rubble walls and a slate roof. The older bastle section to the right of the front door has a mix of fenestration including multi-paned casements on the ground floor and replacement windows on the first floor which are designed to echo the character of six-pane over six-pane sliding sash windows.
4. In the front and side facades to the right of the doorway, the window openings are set more regularly, with the first floor windows aligning with the ground floor windows below. This more ordered pattern is typical of the later date of this part of the building.

5. The appeal site is an attractive example of a modest dwelling which derives great significance from its earlier origins, and from its gradual evolution over later centuries. Despite some less sympathetic later changes, its original form, dimensions and appearance remain apparent, as do the subsequent built phases. I note that the whale bone cited in the list description is still on site. These factors all contribute to the significance of the listed building.
6. The existing windows that are the subject of the appeal were installed in the 1980s. The bottom casements are fixed, and the top casements are top-hung and outward opening. Whilst the frames are timber, the casements include interstitial plastic dividers to give the appearance of Georgian six-paned sashes. These windows are obvious later additions that do not make a positive contribution to the character or history of the listed building. Nonetheless, the painted timber frames remain relatively unobtrusive in appearance.

The effect of the proposed works

7. The Council accepts the principle of the replacement of the existing windows, and I have no basis on which to take a different view. However, the key question in this appeal is whether the detailed design of the proposed new windows would preserve or enhance the significance of the listed building.
8. The appellant describes the replacement windows as similar wooden double-glazed units with wooden inserts in place of the plastic dividers. He also raises the matter of the internal shutters which are present at four of the six windows. He understandably does not want to have to alter the shutters in order to accommodate new windows.
9. He estimates that conventional sash windows would be too thick, at around 175mm, requiring around 50cm to be removed from the shutters and their housing. He has sought advice on slimline sash windows, but was told that these would be around 145mm deep, and so would also be too large. Conversely, he states that the proposed casement windows would be around 120mm, and so would not need any change to the shutters.
10. A proposed specification, dated 28 October 2010, was submitted with the application. The casement shown on page two is a square window with a fixed light and a side hung opening light, which is evidently not correct for the window openings that are the subject of the appeal. Whilst I understand that these are sample drawings, it is important that proposals affecting listed buildings be accurately represented.
11. I saw on my visit that whilst the existing windows are double-glazed, the gap within the glazing units is unusually narrow. From the cross sections on page three of the specification, it appears that the dimensions, including the gap, of the new glazed units would be substantially thicker than the existing. Even a modest increase in the size of the frames or other elements would result in replacements that would appear more bulky than the existing windows, and therefore out of keeping with the appearance of the listed building.
12. Furthermore, important details such as the type and dimensions of the proposed new wooden glazing bars to replace the plastic dividers are missing. It is therefore unclear if these would be interstitial, as existing, or stick-on bars, or structural bars which would function to hold the glazed panels in place.

Each of these options would notably change the overall character and appearance of the new windows.

13. The appellant contends that the installation of wooden casement windows with wooden dividers would be barely distinguishable from sash windows of similar design to most persons passing. In the absence of fully scaled drawings of the proposed and existing windows, it is difficult to be certain of the exact effect the proposed scheme would have on the character and appearance of the building.
14. Nonetheless, the notable increase in size of the proposed frames and the new glazing units indicated in the specification is enough for me to conclude that the new windows would be unacceptably detrimental to the architectural and historic character and significance of the listed building.
15. Accordingly, in view of the harm I have identified, the proposed works would conflict with the overarching statutory duty as set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which must be given considerable importance and weight, and with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In addition, the appeal scheme conflicts with Policy ENV 7 of the Northumberland Local Plan, which seeks to ensure the conservation of the significance of heritage assets.
16. Although serious, the harm to the heritage asset in this case would be less than substantial, within the meaning of the term in paragraph 195 of the NPPF. Paragraph 196 requires that, where there is less than substantial harm, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the works.
17. I recognise that energy efficiency is important, and the NPPF sets out a clear need to address climate change. However, any wider public benefit in terms of energy efficiency would be marginal, due to the small scale of the appeal site. There would be benefits in terms of, for example, the ease of use of the windows, but these would be purely private. Moreover, all these benefits might be achieved through more sympathetic proposals that would better preserve the listed building.
18. I therefore find that insufficient public benefits have been identified that would justify or outweigh the harm I have identified to the heritage asset. The scheme therefore conflicts with the NPPF, which directs, at paragraph 193, that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Other matters

19. The appellant makes reference to the modern homes and office complex that have been built in the vicinity of the appeal site, whilst the Council have, in his view, taken an overly dogmatic approach to his proposal. However, each proposal is to be considered on its own merits, and so the presence of the other buildings referred to can have little bearing on my assessment.
20. I have also taken into account the representation of support for the proposal, but this has not led me to a different conclusion on the main issue of the appeal.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons above, I conclude that the harm to the heritage asset would be unacceptable and contrary to the development plan as a whole, and so the appeal should be dismissed.

Elaine Gray

INSPECTOR