



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 December 2022

by Matthew Jones BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/F0114/Y/22/3294157

2 Lambridge, London Road, Bath BA1 6BJ

- 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 Stuart Jackson against the decision of Bath & North East Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 21/05096/LBA, dated 15 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 13 January 2022.
 - The works proposed are described as *'a revised proposal to redevelop the mews building at the rear of 2 Lambridge. The proposal mainly involves changes to the ground floor, in particular the demolition and rebuilding of a ground floor extension and a reduction in garage space. Other minor changes are proposed to improve the quality of the accommodation and provide private outside space for the dwelling'*.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The dwelling 2 Lambridge forms part of the Grade II listed building '1, 2 and 3 Lambridge and attached walls and gatepiers'. The works relate to an historic former mews outbuilding (No 2A) at the rear of No 2's grounds, with a frontage onto Lambridge Mews. As was well rehearsed in appeal decisions at the site in 2021¹, the former mews building predates 1948, is within the historic curtilage of, and is therefore included within the ambit of the listed building.
3. The main issue to be considered, therefore, is the effect of the proposed works on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Reasons

4. As with many of the other buildings along Lambridge Mews, No 2A was altered in the 1980s. It has experienced changes to its fenestration and large scale internal renovation and fabric removal. It has two single storey 20th Century rear extensions side by side. These extensions use roof tiles and Bath Stone, are fairly innocuous and are not manifestly harmful. Equally, the building's original mass, scale and stonework seems to be largely preserved. The essence of its plan remains the same, with garaging below living quarters.
5. Given such, No 2A remains legible as an historic mews building and allows us an interesting insight into the high status of the dwellings incorporating the listed building and the manner in which 2 Lambridge, in particular, functioned. It therefore makes a clear contribution to the significance of the listed building.

¹ Appeal Decisions APP/F0114/W/20/3262066 and APP/F0114/Y/20/3263578

6. Evidence is before me which I understand was not available with the previous appeals. Significantly, historic mapping indicates that No 2A was extended in the 19th Century to the rear at a depth similar to that now proposed. This is corroborated by the presence of a sloping length of wall adjacent to No 2A which the extant rear extension abuts; its stonework and profile indicate that it likely formed the side of a previous structure. Its coping further suggests that it may have incorporated a raised verge similar to the treatment of No 2A's east elevation, and which is a prevalent feature elsewhere along the mews.
7. This evidence now supports the argument that No 2A once tolerated and could again tolerate a larger rear extension whilst maintaining due deference to 2 Lambridge. Moreover, I do not agree with the Council that the proposed internal layout of the extension would be harmfully contrived, given that No 2A was permitted to be severed from 2 Lambridge in 1982, and thus a degree of internal partition is to be expected and indeed already exists.
8. However, the design of the extension would be poor. Particularly, the sections indicate that the extension would form an awkward junction with the lower end of the preserved wall. The drawings do not make clear how this would be dealt with. The fenestration includes a disproportioned set of French doors with an ambiguous, possibly astragal, glazing bar arrangement. The slack, relatively long roof would appear contrived. The angle of the surviving flank wall again illustrates that such an arrangement is unnecessary. In fact, given the evidence of what was likely here before, a commitment to retaining visibility of the stonework in No 2A's rear wall becomes somewhat arbitrary and should not come at the expense of the design integrity of the extension itself in my view.
9. The appellant has referred me to other rear extensions which have taken place along the mews and the recent permission for such a scheme at 5 Lambridge Mews under Ref 21/01392/LBA. However, each case must be assessed on its own merits, and particular site circumstances, with specific regard to the listed building in question.
10. The proposed works would it follows, in the parlance of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building. There is a strong presumption against works that would have such harmful impacts through the workings of s.16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Paragraph 199 of the Framework explains that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 202 requires decision makers to weigh any less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset against the public benefits of the scheme, including securing its optimum viable use.
11. The works would improve the thermal efficiency and structural integrity of No 2A and thus reduce the risk of its long-term deterioration. However, it seems to me that such improvements and the safeguarding of the building may alternatively be delivered through general maintenance. The living conditions for existing and future occupants would be improved. There would also minor enhancements to No 2A such as new rainwater goods and a garage door.
12. Overall, these would be small public benefits that do not outweigh the considerable importance and weight I attribute to the harm to the listed building. This finding also draws the scheme into conflict with Policy HE1 of The Placemaking Plan for Bath and North East Somerset (adopted 2017).

Other Matters

13. The site is within the Bath Conservation Area (the CA) and the City of Bath World Heritage Site (the WHS). Despite the harm that would be caused to the listed building I do not find that the proposal would be detrimental to the character or appearance of the CA. This is because the works that would be harmful to the listed building would not be clearly visible from the public domain and only have limited prominence from the private domain. Unlike listed buildings, the significance of a CA is dependent upon how it is experienced. There is also no clear evidence that the proposal would harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons outlined above, and taking all other matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Matthew Jones

INSPECTOR