



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2023

by Jo Dowling BA(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/Y/22/3294701

Wiltshire Cottage Monks Alley, Binfield, BRACKNELL, RG42 5NY

- 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 Lyndon Hedderly against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 220081, dated 11 January 2022, was refused by notice dated 14 February 2022.
 - The works proposed are Application for Listed building consent for the proposed repairs/ replacement of windows to the Grade II listed building.
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Decision

1. This appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development stated on the application form varies from that detailed on the decision notice by providing a detailed explanation of the current issues with the windows. For consistency and efficiency I have used the description as cited on the decision notice.
3. I observed on site that the ground floor bay window and the first floor window in the 1980's extension had recently been replaced. The Appellant confirmed this and advised that the request to replace these windows no longer formed part of the Appeal. In addition the Appellant advised that they were not proposing to replace/ repair the ground floor oriel window and ground and first floor window in the 1980's extension; the dormer window or the two eastern most windows despite these being shown on the plan Windows-South Elevation. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. Whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, Wiltshire Cottage, and any features of architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. The original Wiltshire Cottage likely dates from the 16th Century, however it has been extensively altered and extended over the centuries. At its core it is a timber framed building with brick infill panels, this is more obvious internally although there is some evidence of the framing externally. The cottage is located within a generous sized plot and is set some distance from Monks Alley.
6. The proposal relates to the majority of the windows in the rear (south) elevation. These are single glazed timber casement windows which appear to

predominantly date from the early 20th Century. Whilst the windows vary in proportion and scale they are all constructed of timber and share the same detailing for features such as glazing bars and window furniture. As a consequence I consider that there is a consistency in the appearance of the rear elevation.

7. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that when considering a proposal that would affect a listed building or its setting, special regard needs to be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
8. The Council's Built Heritage Officer is correct that in the first instance repair as opposed to replacement is preferable. However, I observed on site that many of the units are damaged by water penetration and suffering from advanced rot. Numerous glazing bars are rotted through which in at least one window has caused the glazing to fail. As a result I consider that it would probably be very difficult to repair the windows and given that they are not original to the property, in principle, I have no issue with their replacement.
9. However, the information submitted for both the application and appeal does not provide sufficient clarity or detail as to the design of the proposed replacement windows. For example section 3 of the Design and Access Statement states that the windows will have the same appearance as the existing windows but then the next bullet point advises that where there are six panes of glass the proposal is to replace these with four panes of glass.
10. In accordance with the advice contained within paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) I have considered whether this lack of detail could be addressed through the use of a suitably worded condition. However, I consider that without detailed plans showing clearly the design of the proposed replacement window ie whether it would be a like for like replacement or a new window design I cannot make an informed decision as to how they would preserve Wiltshire Cottage, its setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
11. I also note that there are various references within the application and appeal documentation to improving the thermal efficiency of the building. The indication is that this would be done through the use of double glazed units. I acknowledge that double glazed units can have a thicker and heavier appearance than single glazing, can require unsympathetic alterations to frames and glazing bars to accommodate the weight and thickness of the double glazed units and can cause a double reflection. However, depending upon the site specific circumstances, occasionally this can be addressed through the use of, amongst other things, slimline double glazed units, reuse of existing openings, the use of a black internal strip to mimic the shadow gap and appropriate detailing. However, without detailed information, including cross-sections and elevations I cannot make an informed decision about how the use of double glazing would affect Wiltshire Cottage it's setting or any features of architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Conclusion

12. Accordingly, for the reasons set out I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve Wiltshire Cottage and its setting and would therefore be contrary to

Section 16 of the Act, policy CP3 of Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Document (2010), policy TB24 of the Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document Local Plan (2014) and the guidance contained within the Framework which seek to protect and enhance designated heritage assets and their setting.

Jo Dowling

INSPECTOR