



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2023

by L Fleming BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/C3105/Y/22/3302474

Urina Cottage, Chapel Lane, Adderbury OX17 3LZ

- 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 Peter Vance against the decision of Cherwell District Council.
 - The application Ref 21/03925/LB, dated 6 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 March 2022.
 - The works proposed are single floor kitchen extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The evidence refers to a planning application for the same scheme. However, I confirm that the appeal before me concerns only the application for listed building consent.
3. The description of the development/works is taken from the application form. However, the plans also clearly propose the installation of solar panels which the Council have addressed in its evidence and reasons for refusal. They were also addressed in the appellant's evidence. I have therefore also dealt with the proposed solar panels accordingly.

Main Issue

4. Whether the proposed development/works would preserve the grade II listed Urina Cottage or its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses and whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the Adderbury Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting and any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses. Furthermore, paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
6. The appeal property is a grade II listed dwelling (Urina Cottage) which was previously, listed as part of a row of eight houses including access to the yard of the Royal Oak Public House. Urina Cottage sits between and adjoins

Clematis and Farthing Cottage, both of which are also grade II listed dwellings. However, no harm is alleged to these heritage assets and for the reasons that follow I find no reason to conclude otherwise. I have not therefore considered Clematis or Farthing Cottage any further.

Significance of Urina Cottage and Adderbury Conservation Area

7. Urina Cottage is C17, remodelled in C18 and constructed of ironstone with brick gable stacks. It has a pitched roof which is part concrete plain tiled and part slate which would have originally been thatched. It has some casement windows and a six-panel entrance door. It has a long and narrow elbowed footprint which together with the adjoining neighbouring properties is notable as it wraps around a street corner opposite a small green. This elongated footprint assists to indicate how the appeal property has evolved into a single relatively large dwelling from a number of smaller properties. Therefore, insofar as is relevant to this appeal the significance of Urina Cottage derives from its notable elongated plan form, its relationship with the neighbouring adjoining properties and its simple traditional architectural detailing.
8. The Adderbury Conservation Area (CA) covers the majority of the built-up part of a rural village with archaeological evidence of a settlement in this location dating as far back as the neolithic period. The buildings are of varied scale and pattern. However, they are mainly traditional and finished in local ironstone. Terraced cottages, converted farm buildings, and large detached buildings are noted in the CA alongside varied spaces between buildings, village greens, and glimpsed views of the surrounding countryside. Thus, insofar as is relevant to this appeal, I find the significance of the CA is founded on the variety and quality of the traditional architecture, the positioning and layout of the built form and the historical relationship of the settlement with agriculture.

Effects on Urina Cottage and the CA

9. The proposed solar panels would be fixed to a section of slate roof which forms part of a modern first floor extension. The proposed extension would replace an existing modern extension which is tucked into the corner of the listed building's otherwise obtuse-angled I-shaped elongated footprint. The proposed single storey extension would be significantly visible only from the private outdoor space of the appeal property. However, the proposed extension would be larger than the existing extension and would extend beyond an existing ground floor kitchen window, although this opening would be retained as an internal feature.
10. It is agreed the proposed extension and solar panels would not result in the loss or harm to any historic fabric, I find no reason to disagree. I have considered the examples of other solar panels nearby and note that the appeal property already has solar panels on another part of its roof. I accept the proposed solar panels would be attached to the roof of the first-floor extension which was constructed around 2010. I also accept that the proposed solar panels would not be significantly visible from any public vantage points. I have also considered the comments with regard to the numerous alterations and extensions which have taken place to the appeal property. I have noted the attempt to keep the roofline of the proposed extension as low as possible. I also acknowledge high quality traditional materials would be used in the construction of the proposals including reusing as much as possible.

11. However, the proposed roof panels would have a highly modern appearance and would cover the majority of the large south facing roof slope of the existing first floor extension. Through their scale and highly contemporary appearance they would have a dominant and visually conflicting effect on the listed building. Consequently, the proposed solar panels would have the effect of drawing attention away from the simple traditional architectural detailing of the heritage asset.
12. Furthermore, the proposed extension would have a much larger footprint than the extension it would replace. It would further erode the original long and narrow plan form of the appeal property. Moreover, its roof would have a large lantern, flat roof and hipped roof elements giving it a complicated appearance which would be in stark contrast with the traditional architectural form of the grade II listed building.
13. Thus, for these reasons, the proposed extension and solar panels would harm the significance and fail to preserve the grade II listed building. Furthermore, irrespective of how visible the proposals may be from public vantage points, as incongruous features within the CA, which I have found would be harmful to the significance of a traditional building within the CA, it follows that the proposals would also fail to preserve the character, appearance and significance of the CA as a whole.
14. The harm I have identified to the significance of both heritage assets would be less than substantial. In which case paragraph 202 of the Framework requires the harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, including where appropriate, securing optimum viable use. The proposals would improve the living conditions for the occupiers in terms of additional internal living space. The proposed solar panels would have the environmental benefit of renewable energy generation. However, these combined benefits are modest and even if accepted as public benefits would be insufficient to outweigh the great weight I must attach to the harm I have identified to the designated heritage assets.
15. In reaching these conclusions I have also noted the comments about the Council's handling of the appellant's proposals. However, I confirm I have determined the appeal on its planning merits only.
16. Overall, I find the proposed development/works would fail to preserve the grade II listed building and its features of special architectural or historic interest and would harm the character, appearance and significance of the CA. For these reasons the scheme would fail to accord with the development plan, particularly it would be in conflict with Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 (2015), saved Policy C18 of the Cherwell Local Plan (1996) and Policy AD9 of the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031 (2018) which taken together and amongst other things seek to ensure good design and that proposals do not cause harm to designated heritage assets.

Conclusion

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

L Fleming
INSPECTOR