



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 October 2023

by E Worthington BA (Hons) MTP MUED MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 November 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/A4710/Y/23/3316687

Thornhill House, Towngate, Hipperholme, Calderdale, Brighouse, HX3 8JB

- 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 Robin Lockwood against the decision of Calderdale Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00946/LBC, dated 21 October 2022, was refused by notice dated 20 December 2022.
 - The works proposed are replacement windows and doors.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for replacement windows and doors at Thornhill House, Towngate, Hipperholme, Calderdale, Brighouse, HX3 8JB in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 22/00946/LBC, dated 21 October 2022, subject to the conditions in Annex A.

Procedural Matters

2. Since the proposed works relate to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. Although different from that stated on the application form, as it more accurately describes the proposal, I have taken the description of the works from the Council's decision notice.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve a grade II listed building, Thornhill House (Ref: 1133789) and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

The listed building

5. Dating to the late 18th century, Thornhill House is a handsome three storey residential property built of hammer dressed stone over three storeys with a slate roof. The symmetrical front elevation has raised quoins, bands, and a moulded cornice. The listing refers to five bays of large sash windows with jambs and sills projecting and a central gabled porch which dates to the late 19th century. The building stands in a prominent and elevated corner position in a predominantly residential area.
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6. The building underwent considerable alterations during the 20th century including the replacement of all the doors and windows and the introduction of a roller door to the garage. Despite these, the building retains its authenticity as a good example of a relatively high status house typical of its type and period in the area. Its imposing historic form, pleasing proportions, characteristic pattern of openings and traditional materials remain legible.
7. Thus, from the listing description and the other evidence before me, insofar as it relates to this appeal, I find that the special interest of the listed building is drawn from its traditional appearance and well proportioned form as well as from its remaining historic fabric and architectural features which are typical of the local vernacular. All these elements are important overall to the special interest of the building in terms of this appeal.

The effect of the proposed works

8. Notwithstanding the reference to sash windows in the listing description, the existing windows are modern top hung casements. Although the wooden framed double glazed units are arranged in a sash style, they are hinged in the middle to allow the windows to pivot or swivel. They do not accurately reproduce the appearance or function of sash windows. Additionally the two ground floor windows to the building's west flank elevation are UPVC.
9. The proposed works seek to replace all 27 windows and two doors. They would introduce new Georgian style sash windows comprising six smaller panes to each upper and lower section of the window. These would be quickslide UPVC double glazed units finished in white. The two existing timber entrance doors would be replaced with composite doors of a similar design finished in black gloss. The Council accepts the principle of replacing the windows and the Georgian design proposed, but objects to the use of non-traditional materials.
10. Historic England's guidance¹ states that traditional windows and their glazing make an important contribution to the significance of historic areas. It advises that they are an integral part of the design of older buildings and the surviving joinery should be conserved and repaired wherever possible. That said, in this instance the existing windows at the appeal property do not form part of the historic fabric of the building or contribute to its significance. They are relatively modern insertions with low evidential value.
11. Section 6.1 of the same guidance seeks to encourage the retention of windows that contribute to the significance of listed buildings. However Point 4 of the guidance recognises that where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building.
12. I accept that UPVC and composite are not traditional materials and note the Council's preference for timber to be used. However, in contrast to the existing windows, the replacement windows would be of a sympathetic historic design and pattern commensurate with the age and architecture of the listed building.

¹ Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading, Historic England, 8 February 2017

13. In terms of the detailed design of the windows, although they would be fixed to the external surface of the glazing, the astragal bars would be accompanied by back to back spacer bars inside the double glazed unit. I am content that this would give the appearance of separate panes of glass, rather than the bars appearing tacked on. Whilst I note the Council's concerns regarding the sash horn features, and have seen nothing to demonstrate that they were original features of the appeal property, I am satisfied that they are a traditional detail used in the Georgian era to strengthen window joints.
14. Although the proposed windows would be double glazed and some 24mm in thickness, I am mindful that the existing units are also double glazed. Additionally I am aware of the evidence submitted by the appellant which indicates that the proposed units would be similar in profile to replacement double glazed timber units. Whilst the Council refers to the refined delicacy of original sashes of late 18th and early 19th century, these have long since been removed at the appeal property. In this context, I am not persuaded that the proposed replacement windows would look particularly bulky or cumbersome.
15. Having regard to all these factors, and taking a pragmatic approach given the particular circumstances of this case, I am satisfied that the listed building's traditional appearance, and its architectural form, features and proportions, as well as its remaining historic fabric, would not be diminished as a result of the appeal scheme. I therefore conclude on the main issue that, on balance, the proposed windows and doors would preserve the listed building and the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.
16. For these reasons, the proposed works would satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). They would also accord with Policy BE14 of the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan which is permissive of alterations to listed buildings where it does not have an adverse effect on the architectural and historic character and appearance of the building, and it respects the individual details of the building including the form, design, scale, methods of construction and materials, as well as internal features, which contribute to the character of the listed building.

Conclusion and Conditions

17. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all the other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.
18. The Council has suggested conditions which I have considered in light of the advice in the Framework regarding conditions. I have amended the Council's wording in the interests of precision and brevity. The standard time limit condition is necessary in the interests of clarity. To ensure certainty, I have attached a condition which refers to all the plans and details considered in this decision. A condition is also required to ensure that specific further details relating to the windows and doors, including their frames and construction, are submitted to and approved by the Council. This is necessary in order to preserve the special interest of the listed building.

E Worthington

INSPECTOR

Annex A

- 1) The works hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/details: Current Scale Elevations, Images of current windows and doors and proposed doors, Proposed scale elevations, Proposed Quickslide sash windows, Quickslide legacy brochure, and Quickslide cross section.
- 3) No works shall take place until details of the elevations, sections, manner of opening, degree of recess, materials, treatment and colour of the windows and doors hereby permitted, as well as details showing the inset of the door and window frames from the face of the wall of the building, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.