



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 May 2024

by Helen O'Connor LLB MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 May 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F1610/Y/23/3329867

**Camperdene House, High Street, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire
GL55 6AT**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr David Gabb against the decision of Cotswold District Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/01973/LBC.
 - The works proposed are the replacement of a shop door (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposed works relate to a Grade II listed building referred to as The Little House in the listed building register (List Entry Number: 1078403). The appeal site is also located within the Chipping Campden Conservation Area (CA). Accordingly, I have borne in mind my statutory duties in respect of sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
3. The appeal seeks to regularise works that have already taken place to replace a shop door to the passageway of the listed building. Elevational drawings and details of the former or replacement door have not been provided. However, the information before me includes photographs of both. I have made my assessment in relation to those, the other information provided and my own observations.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed works on the Grade II listed building, The Little House, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses; and whether the character or appearance of the CA would be preserved or enhanced.

Reasons

Significance and special interest

5. The CA covers a large part of Chipping Campden but its focus is the historic linear High Street. This reflects the medieval origins of the settlement, whereby the grain of the streets, buildings and spaces are legible in the deep and comparatively narrow plots lining it. Although there is some variety in the architectural style and heights of buildings, the consistent and prevalent use of distinctive honey coloured Cotswold stone and the immediate presence of the

- buildings lining the main thoroughfare, makes the town synonymous with Cotswold architecture.
6. Therefore, the significance and special interest of the CA is derived in large part from the beauty and harmony of its historic townscape along the High Street, which has a very high concentration of listed buildings. Many of the buildings reflect Cotswold vernacular architecture. Further heritage value is derived from how the buildings and spaces reflect how the market town evolved and prospered over time, largely owing to the woollen trade.
 7. The appeal building comprises one such listed building which contributes positively to the rich architectural heritage found lining the High Street. Hence, it adds to the special interest and significance of the CA as a whole.
 8. It is a two and a half storey property built in Cotswold limestone, with a Cotswold stone roof. The list description indicates it was originally an 18th century house that was remodelled in the mid 19th century. It forms part of a terrace with a series of other listed buildings on the south side of the Lower High Street. As such, its special interest and significance is primarily derived from its architectural and aesthetic interest both individually and as part of a wider group. Owing to its prominence and immediate presence in the street, it follows that the architectural qualities and features in the principal elevation of the building make the greatest contribution.
 9. Therefore, the distinctive local materials, vernacular form of the building and detailing reflected in the principal elevation are intrinsic to its aesthetic value. There is a simplicity and honesty in the composition and execution of the architecture and detailing which allows the quality of the local materials to take precedence. Hence, the presence of largely unadorned fenestration which reflects an obvious functional purpose are an important and consistent part of the aesthetic appearance of the building.
 10. The photograph of the previous ground floor doorway shows a traditional design of a timber painted ledged door to the passageway, comprised of two unequal leaves both of which could be opened. The Cotswold Design Code contained in the Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031, August 2018 (LP) describes key qualities of distinctive Cotswold vernacular architecture. Solid timber boarded doors¹ are listed amongst them.
 11. Although the appellant describes the previous doors as being of modern construction and beyond economic repair², the limited available information is sufficient to show that its solidity, vertical boarding and finish were consistent with, and sympathetic to the vernacular architectural aesthetic of the listed building. This is further reinforced by the specific mention of a 'Ledged door' in the list description entry. The fully opened door would have revealed a passageway leading deeper into the plot, which is also a characteristic of the grain and nature of the buildings lining the historic High Street. Hence, the previous door contributed positively towards the building's special interest and significance.

¹ Appendix D, Paragraph D.25 (k)

² Heritage Statement dated 15.7.23

The effect on the listed building and CA

12. The proposed works have removed the previous door and replaced it with a glazed timber door and a fixed side light which has altered the appearance of the building in its most public elevation. The appellant generally asserts that the door is in keeping with other entrances to commercial or retail premises. However, there is little evidence to show how a door with a plain timber panel at the bottom with a large single pane of glass at the top reflects or is sympathetic to Cotswold vernacular architecture, or the age of the listed building. Instead, these are characteristics generally associated with later buildings. Furthermore, the fixed side light panel means that the width of the passageway is divided as a full opening cannot be achieved, which disrupts the historic legibility of the building.
13. Consequently, the proposals have eroded a traditional vernacular architectural feature of the building and substituted it with a door which is aesthetically less sympathetic. This undermines an important component of the significance of the listed building, and linked to that, the CA. The prominence of the alteration exacerbates the degree of harm.
14. Therefore, based on the evidence available to me, including my own observations, the proposal has failed to preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building. Conflict therefore arises with section 16(2) of the Act. Furthermore, it represents a small but noticeable incursion into the quality of the traditional townscape along the High Street and has failed to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA as a whole. Consequently, there is also conflict with section 72(1) of the Act.
15. In terms of the Framework, it follows that the proposal has harmed the significance of both the listed building and the CA as designated heritage assets. Given the relatively modest nature of the proposal, the degree of harm to the significance of each asset would be less than substantial. Paragraph 208 of the Framework indicates that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.

Heritage balance

16. Paragraph 206 of the Framework states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification, which is consistent with the requirement of policy EN10 of the LP.
17. The appellant explains that the appeal building accommodates two thriving local businesses, which in total employ sixteen people. He reports that prior to the replacement door being installed, the number of employees was two, and attributes this increase in employment and commercial success as a direct result of the replacement door.
18. There is undoubtedly public benefit in having thriving commercial activity in the centre of market towns. Such benefit is economic, social and also environmental in terms of the vitality of the place. I further acknowledge that wider economic changes have made that context challenging, especially for high street retail concerns.
19. The glazing in the proposed door would allow for glimpses into the passageway, even when closed. As such, the existence of the commercial uses

would be more obvious, and therefore could be more inviting to passers by. Nevertheless, the factors that influence business success or otherwise are many and often complex. Based on the information before me, whilst it may be a factor, I am not persuaded that the replacement door is solely responsible for the economic success and employment expansion described. In part this is because it would have been possible to fully open the previous passageway doors during business hours, thereby reducing physical obstacles to passers by, and allowing them to see into the building.

20. Moreover, it is probable that other means of improving footfall exist that fall short of removing a sympathetic architectural feature. As such, I am not convinced that broadly similar public benefits could not have been achieved using measures consistent with, rather than at the expense of, the heritage value of the designated assets.
21. The appellant points out that the Council has planning policies that seek to encourage business, especially so for retail businesses in traditional market towns. Be that as it may, it also has policies that seek to protect and enhance the built and historic environment. These include policies EN2, EN10 and EN11 of the LP. It is not shown that the objectives of the respective planning policies are mutually exclusive, nor that those that seek to encourage business have paramountcy over the policies or statutory duties that seek to protect listed buildings and conservation areas.
22. These factors lead me to temper the positive weight afforded to this public benefit to a moderate level, even if it has helped to support the viable commercial use of the listed building.
23. It is further asserted that the local parish council's views are consistent with the appellant's approach. However, the case officer delegated report indicates that no comments were received from Chipping Campden Town Council, and I have not seen evidence to the contrary. Hence, this is not a matter that amounts to a public benefit of the proposal.
24. Balanced against the public benefit is the great weight³ carried by the less than substantial harm to each designated heritage asset. Overall, I find that the sum of public benefits would not be sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets identified. Conflict therefore arises with the historic environment protection policies within the Framework.
25. I further find that there would be conflict with policies EN2, EN10 and EN11 of the LP, insofar as these require proposals to accord with the Cotswold Design Code, respect local distinctiveness and seek to preserve, and where appropriate enhance designated heritage assets.

Conclusion

26. I have found that the proposed works conflict with the statutory provisions set out in the Act; the historic environment policies within the Framework; as well as heritage and design policies in the development plan. There are not wider public benefits sufficient to outweigh the harms identified.

³ Paragraph 205, National Planning Policy Framework

27. Therefore, for the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Helen O'Connor

INSPECTOR