



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 May 2024

by Mr R Walker BA HONS DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/J4423/Y/23/3336137

Hall Farm Cottage, 156 Hollow Lane, Mosborough, Sheffield S20 5DN

- 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 Ms Trish Rundle against the decision of Sheffield City Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/03219/LBC.
 - The works proposed are removal of internal fireplace, opening up of external gable wall to form new external doorway, and replacement of gravel terrace with paved terrace.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published in December 2023. My Decision is made in the context of the revised Framework.
3. Both parties have referred to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act) 1990 (the Act). However, section 66(1) of the Act concerns 'whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting.' As the application and appeal concern 'whether to grant listed building consent for any works', the proposal needs to be assessed against section 16(2) of the Act. I have therefore determined the appeal on this basis.
4. Both sections of the Act require 'special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.' As both main parties have addressed this within their respective evidence, I am satisfied that their interests have not been prejudiced by this approach.
5. The Council raised no concerns regarding the proposed paved terrace and from the evidence before me and my observations on site, I have no reason to take a different view. It would have a neutral impact on the special interest and significance of the Listed Building. I have therefore focused my consideration of the appeal on the removal of the internal fireplace and the opening up of the external gable wall to form a new external doorway.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the Grade II listed building, known as 156 Hollow Lane, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Reasons

Special interest and significance

7. 156 Hollow Lane is a grade II listed former farmhouse dating to the mid eighteenth century. The listing describes how the property has been altered with an early nineteenth century addition and late twentieth century alterations. The listing describes the property as having pebbledash walls. However, any such pebbledash has since been removed to reveal stone and brickwork.
8. It has two gable stacks and a single ridge stack and has a linear plan form. Its elevations and roof slope have a distinctive high solid to void ratio with the gable ends having one small off-centre window between them. There is variation in the size and form of windows and doors in the building but there is an informality to their positioning. These elements, combined with the materials results in the building having a rustic quality. Internally, the sitting room has a low ceiling and timber beams, which combined with the high solid to void ratio results in a somewhat dimly lit room.
9. From the evidence before me, the special interest and significance of the listed building, insofar as it relates to these appeals, is largely derived from its historic and architectural interests as a mid-18th century farmhouse which forms an integral element of the historic townscape in this part of Mosborough. The dwelling's age, plan form, traditional materials, and construction techniques, combined with its rustic appearance make important contributions to the special interest and significance of the listed building.

Appeal proposal and effects

10. The proposal would result in a new double door opening and the loss of the historic internal chimney breast in the sitting room and part of the external wall. This would result in the irrevocable loss of historic fabric, however small in the context of the whole listed building. The loss of fabric would be compounded by the size of the proposed opening which would comprise of a double door. This double door opening would be at odds with the size of the other doors within the property and would appear as an overtly modern intervention.
11. The double door would be positioned prominently and centrally in the room, creating a formal feature opening. Moreover, it would be seen externally below the first-floor external chimney breast. Although not determinative on its own, this would, in my view, appear a somewhat contrived juxtaposition that would confuse the legibility of the historic use of the room and the informality of the historic openings.
12. Overall, the proposed new double door would not harmonise with the more rustic traditional appearance of the property. In reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the different types of doors installed at the property and the materials proposed. However, that does not alter or outweigh my concerns regarding the size of the door openings and its location proposed.
13. The absence of harm in respect of other elements of the scheme, including the removal of the modern internal fireplace, and the replacement of the gravel terrace with a paved terrace, are neutral matters. However, for the reasons given, the proposal would adversely weaken the historic and architectural

integrity of the building and would erode its identified special interest and significance.

14. I have been referred to the large openings on the converted farm buildings to the rear of the appeal property. However, they are detached from the former farmhouse and their historical use, form, proportions, and appearance are distinct from the dwelling. In contrast, the proposal before me would be clearly seen as a physical alteration to the listed house.
15. The change to the elevation would not be prominent within the public realm along Hollow Lane, with only partial and glimpsed views of the opening likely to be seen. Even so, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether public views of the building can be gained.
16. Consequently, the works would fail to preserve, and instead harm, the special architectural and historic interest, and hence significance of the Grade II listed building, known as 156 Hollow Lane. As a result, the expectations of the Act have not been met.

Public benefits and heritage balance

17. Paragraph 205 of the Framework advises that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). Paragraph 206 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting and that this should have clear and convincing justification.
18. With reference to paragraphs 207 and 208 of the Framework, in finding harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. In this instance, the harm would be confined to a small section of the building, which would be seen internally or in the private garden of the appeal property, with only partial glimpsed views from Hollow Lane. As such, the harm to the listed building as a whole would be 'less than substantial' but, nevertheless, of great weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 208 advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. This includes securing the asset's optimum viable use.
19. There would be some economic and social environmental benefits resulting from the alteration works, the general investment into the property and improvements to the local housing stock. However, the nature and scale of the associated public benefits that would flow from the scheme to the public at large would be minimal. Rather, the proposal would principally be of private benefit to any occupier of the property in providing additional natural light and improved access into the garden. As such, the associated public benefits carry little weight in favour of the appeals.
20. The continued viable use of the appeal property as a residential dwelling is not dependent on the proposal as the building has an ongoing residential use that would not cease in its absence.
21. Overall, the weight that I ascribe to the public benefits that would accrue from the proposed works, is not sufficient to outweigh the great weight that I attach to the harm I have found. As such, the works would not comply with paragraph 208 of the Framework. Accordingly, the proposed works would be contrary to

the requirements of both the Act and the Framework in so far as they relate to this main issue.

22. Applications for listed building consent are not subject to section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and therefore development plan policies do not carry the same weight as when considering planning applications. Nevertheless, I find that the works would not accord with Policies BE15, BE17 and BE19 of the Council's Unitary Development Plan when taken together and in so far as they relate to this main issue. These say, amongst other things, that proposals for internal or external alterations which would affect the special interest of a Listed Building will be expected to preserve the character and appearance of the building and, where appropriate, to preserve or repair original details and features of interest.

Other Matters

23. The appellant has made changes to the scheme with a view to finding a solution. However, this or the merits of an alternative scheme are not matters for my consideration as part of this appeal and do not alter the merits of the proposed works before me.
24. The property falls within the setting of the grade II listed building, known as the farm buildings to south and east of farmyard at Mosborough Hall Farm. The farm buildings have been converted to a residential use. Nonetheless, the listed building's significance is derived from its architectural and historic interest as examples of early and mid-nineteenth century farm buildings. The historical associations and physical location of the appeal building as a former farmhouse make a positive contribution to the setting of the listed building and thus its significance. However, given the modest scale of the proposed works, the alterations would not alter the legibility of this historical relationship. Accordingly, I do not find that there would be harm to the setting, and thus the contribution that the setting makes to the significance of the grade II listed farm buildings.

Conclusion

25. For the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

Mr R Walker

INSPECTOR