



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 October 2024

by A Dawe BSc (Hons), MSc, MPhil, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 October 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y3940/Y/24/3344214

14 Frome Road, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1LE

- 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 Adam Furse against the decision of Wiltshire Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2024/01084.
 - The works proposed are to widen door opening within 1no internal masonry wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted to widen door opening within 1no internal masonry wall at 14 Frome Road, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1LE in accordance with the terms of the application Ref PL/2024/01084 and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following condition:
 - i) The works authorised by this consent shall commence not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed works would preserve the significance of the Grade II listed building known as 14 Frome Road (Ref: 1036052) (the LB), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

3. The LB derives its significance from being an early 19th century, late Georgian property, including its ashlar front elevation and sash windows and an historically symmetrical and cellular plan form. It also has significance through its association with the adjacent canal, whereby I understand it to have once been a lock keepers house. Works relating to relatively recent extant planning and listed building consents, that are well advanced, have resulted in various alterations and extension to the LB. Nevertheless, it appears to retain a high degree of historic fabric and some remnants of the historical plan form.
4. The consented works that have occurred include the creation of a large open plan space formed following a single storey extension to the rear of the LB. This encompasses one of the original rear ground floor rooms and replaces what I understand was a previously altered wall opening and largely modern and utilitarian structures. That open plan form has also included removal of a similar amount of the associated passageway wall as is now proposed for the wall opposite. The remaining three rooms on the ground floor retain their cellular form, accessed via single timber doors. The first floor also currently

retains four separate rooms albeit with consent to form a single master bedroom from the existing two rear bedrooms. Furthermore, consented widened openings have been created in the basement to create an open plan layout across what were originally the two rear rooms, albeit retaining some of the walls, indicating how they were historically laid out.

5. It is disputed as to the age of the door and associated architrave proposed to be removed. Based on the submissions and my observations, I cannot be certain as to the age. Nevertheless, the proposed works would inevitably result in the loss of existing historic fabric comprising at least a large part of that wall, and more so were those doorway features to have historic significance. This would also create a completely open plan layout across the whole of the rear part of the LB's ground floor.
6. However, as for the rear part of the basement, the wall concerned would not be completely removed, with some retention either side of and above the proposed opening, thereby providing an indication as to the original layout. Such an opening would be similar to that opposite into the ground floor kitchen. I understand that the latter related to a greater previous level of alteration of that space, albeit I have no details of the extent of that.
7. Importantly, the front ground floor rooms would maintain that original cellular form and layout to provide evidence of that actual historic compartmentalised layout, as is the case in the basement and proposed for the first floor. Added to this would be that proposed retention of at least an indication of that layout across the rear part of the house.
8. In terms of the character of the room itself, that would be opened up, it currently retains much of its historic character and features, albeit diluted to some extent by the recent insertion of two modern doors in the rear elevation. The proposal would inevitably change that contained characteristic to one of open plan. Nevertheless, apart from the consented rear doors, the room would still retain other historic features such as the fireplace, flanked by recesses, and the large sash window. Together with the proposed degree of retained existing wall on the passageway side, the room would maintain some evidence of its historic nature.
9. I do not consider there to be any clear evidence to indicate the rear room concerned to be of any lesser significance than the front rooms. Furthermore, I acknowledge the importance of retaining as much historic fabric as possible. However, in the context of the consented works already or intended to be carried out, albeit noting the Council's point about differing circumstances, and for the above reasons, the proposal would not in this case tip the balance towards causing harm to the special interest of the LB.
10. In light of the above, the proposed works would preserve the significance of the LB and features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses. The proposal would therefore satisfy the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Furthermore, for the same reasons, they would accord with Core Policy 58 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy which states, amongst other things, that designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance. The proposal would also accord with paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework which highlights,

amongst other things, the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

Other Matter

11. I have had regard to the statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Bradford on Avon Conservation Area (the CA). However, due to the proposed works being solely to the LB's interior, the effect on the wider CA would be neutral such that its character and appearance would be preserved.

Conditions

12. The Council has not suggested any conditions in the event of the appeal being allowed. However, for certainty, I have included the standard time limit condition.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

A Dawe

INSPECTOR