



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 8 October 2024

by A James BSc (Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 October 2024

Appeal A: APP/E2205/W/24/3347414

Fayre Acre, Church Hill, Charing, Kent TN27 0BU

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Pollard against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application reference is PA/2024/0269.
 - The development proposed is described as 'demolition of existing modern out-building extension to the rear elevation; a proposed single-storey rear extension which provides a new kitchen with access to the garden, and a dining room in the existing kitchen; demolition of existing modern front porch; a new, re-located front porch and entrance door (as per location in previous application PA/2023/1971 & PA/2023/1712); lowering the cill of the existing window in the kitchen to provide an entrance into the extension; new rear entrance door to the utility room to replace existing internal door (after the demolition of existing modern extension).'
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Appeal B: APP/E2205/Y/24/3347416

Fayre Acre, Church Hill, Charing, Kent TN27 0BU

- 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 & Mrs Pollard against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application reference is PA/2024/0293.
 - The works proposed are described as 'demolition of existing modern out-building extension to the rear elevation; a proposed single-storey rear extension which provides a new kitchen with access to the garden, and a dining room in the existing kitchen; demolition of existing modern front porch; a new, re-located front porch and entrance door (as per location in previous application PA/2023/1971 & PA/2023/1712); lowering the cill of the existing window in the kitchen to provide an entrance into the extension; new rear entrance door to the utility room to replace existing internal door (after the demolition of existing modern extension).'
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Decisions

1. Appeal A is dismissed.
2. Appeal B is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. The Council raises no objections to the demolition of the existing porch and lean-to and the construction of a new porch. Based on the evidence before me and my site visit, I see no reason to reach a contrary conclusion to the Council on these matters.

4. As the appeals relate to a listed building, I have had special regard to sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

5. The main issue is whether the proposed rear extension would preserve a Grade II listed building, known as 'Fayre Acre' (Ref: 1070773), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

6. Fayre Acre is a two storey, timber-framed, detached dwelling, which lies within a spacious plot. It is a Grade II listed building, which dates back to the 18th century. The building has a rectilinear plan form and is generally one room deep. It has a hipped Kent peg tiled roof with pentice to the east and west. The rear elevation has a ragstone plinth, with red brick above, which is laid in Flemish bond. There is a small, lean-to on the rear elevation, which is constructed of red brick and has Fishtail roof tiles. The lean-to is a later addition to the property.
7. Based on my site visit and the evidence before me, I find that the listed building's special interest, insofar as is relevant to these appeals is derived from its historic and architectural interest, as an illustration of 18th century domestic architecture. The building's simple, rectilinear plan form, its use of traditional materials, modest sized window openings and its pleasing architectural style and design make important contributions in these regards.
8. The proposal seeks to demolish the existing lean-to and construct a new single-storey rear extension, which would be attached to the listed building by a glazed link. The proposed extension would be significantly larger than the existing lean-to. I appreciate that the proposed extension would be subservient in terms of its height to the existing building and its width would be similar to the width of some of the existing rooms. However, the depth of the proposed extension, including the glazed link would exceed the depth of the historic part of the building. This would result in an extension that would appear out of proportion with the historic part of the building and would harmfully erode its simple, rectilinear plan form.
9. The bulk of the roof form would be set away from the listed building to help minimise its visual and physical impact. The proposed roof pitch and materials would match the existing building and the proposed roof mass would not appear out of proportion when compared to the roof mass on the listed building. However, the provision of a barn hip and gable, with large apex window would fail to respect the existing roof form and would result in a disjointed and incongruous addition to the rear of the property.
10. I appreciate that the glazed linked would provide a visual break between the extension and listed building, which would help to reduce its overall massing and ensure readability. However, the glazed link by reason of its contemporary form and use of modern materials, would harmfully discord with the relatively small, domestic openings and traditional materials found on the listed building.
11. The proposal seeks to introduce a large, oak framed apex window in the rear elevation and oak framed French doors on one of the side elevations. While the use of oak would help to differentiate the extension from the host building,

the size of the proposed window and door openings and use of oak would harmfully contrast with the more modest size, white painted timber frames, which are characteristic of the existing building.

12. The proposal would utilise traditional and high quality materials to complement the materials found on the listed building, including red brick in a Flemish bond, ragstone and Kent peg roof tiles. The proposed extension would be largely finished with ragstone, with brick quoins. While the existing building has a ragstone plinth on the rear elevation, the building is predominantly finished in red brick. The extent of ragstone proposed and the introduction of quoins fails to respect the architectural detailing on the listed building.
13. The proposal seeks to enlarge an existing window on the rear elevation to facilitate access to the new extension. The appellants advise that the window and lintel were installed in the early 20th century and the brickwork below is likely to date back to the late 19th/early 20th century. While it was evident on my site visit that repointing has taken place around this window, the bricks themselves appear to be of some age. Even if the brickwork is not original, it appears from the appellants' evidence that the bricks are over 100 years old and are therefore of historic merit. The proposal would also result in the loss of part of the ragstone plinth below the window. Consequently, the proposal would result in the loss of historic fabric, which would be harmful to the special interest of the listed building.
14. The proposal by reason of its size and siting would partially obscure views of some of the historic fabric, including views from the garden of one of the first floor rear windows. I appreciate that the proposed extension would be sited to the rear of the property and would be screened from public views by the existing built form and boundary treatment. Nonetheless, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained.
15. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. I give this harm considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of these appeals.
16. Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 206 advises that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets and that any such harm should have a clear and convincing justification. I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
17. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 208 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
18. The proposal would provide a new larger kitchen and a separate dining room. The proposal would help to adapt the property for modern living standards and meet the needs of the appellants' growing family. However, these are solely private benefits.

19. The repositioned porch would improve the symmetry of the front elevation of the building. The proposal would remove later additions, including the existing porch and lean-to, which exhibit more modern red bricks, feature a different brick bond and have different roof tiles. While the proposal would result in the removal of later additions, the existing porch and lean-to are both modest in size, utilise traditional materials and do not discord with the character of the listed building. As a result, I give these matters limited weight in my decision as a public benefit.
20. The proposal would result in investment into the property, which would have a small economic benefit, which I give limited weight in favour of the proposal as a public benefit. There is no compelling evidence before me that the use of the building as a residential dwelling would cease in the absence of the proposed changes and I do not find them necessary to secure the viability and long-term conservation of the building as a result.
21. Overall, there would be limited public benefits from the proposal. Consequently, in attributing considerable importance and weight to the identified harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, I find that there would be insufficient public benefits arising from the proposal to outweigh the harm that I have identified.
22. Given the above, I conclude that, on balance, the proposal would fail to preserve the special historic interest and significance of the listed building. The proposal would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and would be contrary to the historic environment policies, set out within Section 16 of the Framework. The proposal would also conflict with Policy ENV13 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030, adopted February 2019. This policy among other things requires that proposals preserve or enhance the heritage assets of the Borough, sustaining and enhancing their significance.

Other Matters

23. While the appellants advise that the proposed scheme is smaller in scale and mass than a scheme previously refused by the Council, there are limited details before me of the previously refused scheme. Nevertheless, I am required to determine the appeal scheme upon its own merits.

Conclusion

24. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that both appeals should be dismissed.

A James

INSPECTOR