
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 3 December 2024

by A James BSc (Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 December 2024

Appeal A: APP/E2205/W/24/3345065

Rose Farm, Rose Farm Road, Pluckley, Kent TN27 0RG

- 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 Ms Catherine Sherrin against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application reference is PA/2024/0141.
 - The development proposed is rear extension.
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Appeal B: APP/E2205/Y/24/3345066

Rose Farm, Rose Farm Road, Pluckley, Kent TN27 0RG

- 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 Catherine Sherrin against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application reference is PA/2024/0153.
 - The works proposed relate to a rear extension.
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Decision

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

Preliminary Matters

3. 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

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, known as 'Rose Farmhouse' (List Entry Number: 1071425) and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

5. Rose Farmhouse is a timber framed, detached dwelling, which has a rectilinear plan form. It is single storey in height, with accommodation in the roof. It is constructed of red brick with black headers, which is laid in Flemish bond. Tile hanging is present on the upper part of one of the side elevations and part of the modern rear gable. The appeal property has been extended to the rear and has a catslide roof, which features a dormer window and two rooflights.

6. The listing description states that the building dates from the 17th century. However, it appears from the evidence before me and the features I observed on my site visit that part of the building originally formed part of a late medieval hall house and is of an earlier origin. The building has been altered and extended over the centuries and at one time was divided into two separate cottages. It is estimated that the building returned to a single dwelling around the mid-20th century.
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 a medieval hall house, which has evolved over the centuries. 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 construct a single storey extension to the rear of the building to provide a new kitchen. The proposed extension would be lower in height than the existing gable and subservient in terms of its height to the existing building. The proposed kitchen would be a similar size to other rooms within the dwelling. The proposed external materials, windows, doors and half hip roof design seek to respond to the design and external materials on the host dwelling. The proposal would also be attached to a modern part of the building and would not affect the historic core of the building or any historic fabric. In addition, it would help to rectify issues with the existing roof slope and tiled valley.
9. While the proposal is likely to be read as a modern addition to the dwelling, it would extend some distance into the rear garden. The proposal would create an 'L' shape plan form, which would harmfully erode the building's simple rectilinear plan form. The proposed extension would be a similar depth to the historic core of the building and result in a further addition to the rear of the building, which would appear out of proportion with the historic part of the building and the dwelling as a whole.
10. I appreciate that the proposal would be sited to the rear of the property. However, given the orientation of the dwelling in relation to the road, views of the proposal would be available from the public realm, particularly during the winter months when the trees are not in leaf. 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.
11. While the appellant argues that there was possibly a historic, rear projection to the property, there is limited evidence before me of such a projection. Nevertheless, this is illustrated as being in a different position within the appellant's Heritage Statement. As a result, I give this argument limited weight in my decision.
12. 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 clear and convincing justification. I find the harm to be less

than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.

13. 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.
14. The proposal would result in investment into the property, which would have a small economic benefit, which carries limited weight in favour of the proposal as a public benefit. The proposal would also help to rectify issues with the existing roof slope and tiled valley, which I give limited positive weight as a public benefit.
15. The existing kitchen is narrow and has restricted headroom. Access to the back door is via the kitchen, which has constrained space. The dwelling also lacks utility space. The proposal would improve the quality, layout and functionality of the residential accommodation, which are private benefits.
16. The appellant contends that the proposal would secure the optimum viable use of the listed building. However, I have no evidence before me to suggest 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.
17. Overall, there would be limited public benefits from the proposal, with the majority of the benefits being private benefits. Consequently, in attributing great weight to the harm that would be caused to the significance of the designated heritage asset, I find that there would be insufficient public benefits arising from the proposal to outweigh this harm.
18. While I note that the appellant is happy to omit the rooflights and condition finer details of the extension, I do not find that the removal of the rooflights or a condition requiring further design details would mitigate the harm that I have identified.
19. 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 paragraph 203 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

20. The neighbour support for the proposal has a neutral effect on my decision and does not outweigh the harm identified above.

Conclusion

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

A James INSPECTOR