



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 March 2025

by Neil Pope BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1110/Y/24/3356201

16 Chapel Road, Alphington, Exeter, Devon, EX2 8TB

- 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 Greg Wotton against the decision of Exeter City Council (the LPA).
 - The application reference is 24/0670/LBC.
 - The works proposed are the replacement of an existing shed.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. 6-16 Chapel Road is a grade II listed¹ row of six cottages within the Alphington Conservation Area² (ACA).
3. The replacement shed has already been constructed.
4. As part of the appeal, the appellant has submitted some revised drawings. I understand that these more accurately reflect what has been constructed. The revisions are very minor in nature and the LPA has had the opportunity of commenting upon them. No party is likely to be prejudiced by the revised plans. I shall therefore take them into account in determining the appeal.
5. My attention has been drawn to various development plan policies. Whilst I note the provisions of these policies³, this is not an appeal for a development⁴. Accordingly, the provisions of section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 are not engaged.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect upon the heritage interest (significance) of 6-16 Chapel Road and the ACA.

Reasons

7. The significance of the circa 17th/18th century, two storey 6-16 Chapel Road is primarily derived from its special architectural and historic qualities. These include the building's plastered/rendered cob walls, thatch roof⁵, chimney stacks, long

¹ The provisions of section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are engaged.

² The provisions of section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are engaged.

³ In some instances, these reflect the duties under sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the above noted 1990 Act.

⁴ Given that this is a free-standing structure within the curtilage of a listed building and the provisions of Class E.1(g) of Part 1 of Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, it is unclear to me why an application/appeal has been made under the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Nevertheless, I am required to determine the appeal before me.

⁵ The roof on other parts of this group comprises slates.

curved form/range and as a historic record of a row of simple dwellings for labourers living within Alphington⁶.

8. This listed building has been altered and extended over time and there have been numerous changes within the setting. These include a 1980s single storey pantile roof addition at the southern end of No.16 and 20th century housing developments to the north, south and west. Some of these developments have taken place on former garden land to 6-16 Chapel Road. Nevertheless, this listed row remains a pleasing example of a vernacular building within this part of Devon.
9. The ACA includes the historic core of Alphington centred upon St. Michael's Church. The significance of the ACA is also primarily derived from its special architectural and historic qualities. This includes the contribution made by the various listed and locally listed buildings, as well as the historic interest derived from the layout of buildings, streets and spaces and past associations with the Courtenay family. The ACA comprises an important record of the development and growth of Alphington over many centuries.
10. 6-16 Chapel Road is identified as one of a number of key features⁷ within the Alphington Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan⁸ that was published by the LPA in 2005. This row is described as "*delightful*" and although partially hidden by buildings and hedges, "*makes a significant contribution to both the architectural and historic interest of Alphington*".
11. The replacement shed lies between the end of the single storey garden room on the appellant's house and the fence along the southern boundary of the appeal site. The shed comprises dark green coloured corrugated metal sheeting with a white painted timber glazed door and curved metal roof. The LPA has calculated that it measures 1.8 metres x 3.7m x 2.5m high (highest part). This has replaced a dilapidated timber and felt roofed shed⁹. The new shed is used to store bicycles, tools and garden equipment.
12. I appreciate the appellant's need to safely and securely store items associated with the residential use/enjoyment of his home. During my visit, I also noted the variety of garden sheds/stores within the ACA and surrounding area, as well as the use of corrugated metal sheeting¹⁰ on some other structures. However, the appeal site forms part of the curtilage of a building that is recognised nationally as being of special interest, as well comprising part of the ACA. It is a sensitive site.
13. During my visit, I noted that the gradient of the land rises in a southerly direction towards the fence along the southern boundary of the appellant's garden. This and the height of the replacement shed results in the top of this new building protruding above the rear roof slope and ridge of the single storey garden room¹¹.
14. From a section of the path leading to the rear of Nos 14-16 and the neighbouring bungalow at 22b Myrtle Close, part of the northern flank of this new shed looms above and appears as a visually prominent structure at the end of the listed row and within this part of the ACA. Moreover, when looking towards the appeal site

⁶ The village of Alphington can still be discerned but it is now surrounded by development and lies within the built-up area of Exeter.

⁷ Grimes Field (a community garden/space) to the south of 6-16 Chapel Row is identified as a positive space.

⁸ This document can be given moderate weight.

⁹ I understand that this measured approximately 1.2m x 1.9m x 2m (high).

¹⁰ The LPA appears to be unconcerned by the use of corrugated metal sheeting in the replacement shed. I agree with the appellant that it is an appropriate material for use on sheds and outbuildings within the ACA.

¹¹ The appellant has calculated that the shed is 14cm higher than the garden room.

from the neighbouring Grimes Field, this shed, although set back from the front (east) elevation of the listed building, is clearly visible. By virtue of its height, massing and the contrasting colours of the door and walls, the shed appears as a conspicuous and somewhat 'awkward' addition to this part of the appellant's garden. It 'draws the eye' away from the listed row and intrudes into the setting of 6-16 Chapel Road. To a limited extent, it detracts from an appreciation of the pleasing qualities/significance of this listed building and its contribution to the ACA.

15. In the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the new shed results in less than substantial harm to the significance of 6-16 Chapel Road and the ACA. If there was a sliding scale within this category of harm the impact of the shed would be towards the lower end. However, this does not amount to a less than substantial planning objection. Great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.
16. I note the appellant's claimed public benefits arising from the replacement shed. Even if the appellant is correct in this regard, these are insufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets that I have identified. It is also very far from certain that the increase in biodiversity that the appellant has experienced within his garden is attributable to this shed.
17. I conclude on the main issue that the replacement shed erodes the significance of 6-16 Chapel Road and the ACA.

Other Matters

18. I note the concerns of the occupier of the adjacent bungalow in 22b Myrtle Close regarding the close proximity of the shed to their kitchen window. Although I agree that the width, height and close proximity of the shed to this window is somewhat unneighbourly, this is not a matter that I am able to take into account in determining a section 20 (listed building consent) appeal.

Overall Conclusion

19. Given my finding above in respect of the main issue and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that this appeal should not succeed.

Neil Pope

Inspector