



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2025

by **A James BSc (Hons) MA MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E2205/Y/24/3353134

Knock House, Knock Hill, Stone, Tenterden, Kent TN30 7JX

- 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 Richard Gibbs against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application reference is 21/01381/AS.
 - The works are described as 'replacement of inappropriate first floor bedroom window in northern elevation with window to match others in that elevation. Reinstatement of ground floor external door to replace window. There had been a door in the location previously as evidenced by door frames internally and the lintel. The door used was found in a corridor in the property complete with exterior door furniture and was most likely the original door from this location (again in the northern elevation).'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The works have already been carried out and this appeal seeks retention of the works.
3. As the works relate to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).
4. Since the Council issued its decision notice, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been revised, with the latest version published on 12 December 2024 and amended on 7 February 2025. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to this appeal remain unchanged. As a result, I have not sought further submissions on the revised Framework and I am satisfied that no party has been prejudiced by my approach.
5. The Council raises no objection to the reinstatement of the door. Based on my site visit and the evidence before me, I find no reason to reach a contrary conclusion to the Council on this matter.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is whether the replacement window preserves a Grade II listed building, known as 'Knock House' (Ref: 1106242) and any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

Reasons

7. Knock House is a timber-framed, two storey dwelling with accommodation in the roof, which dates back to around the 17th century. The rear elevation of the property, in which this appeal relates is finished in red brick. Tile hanging is present on other elevations. The property has a tiled roof. Knock House has a variety of window sizes and designs, including casement and sash windows, some of which feature leaded-lights.
8. Based on my site visit and the evidence before me, I find that the listed building's special interest insofar as is relevant to this appeal is derived from its historic and architectural interest as an illustration of domestic architecture from around the 17th century. The building's surviving historic fabric, its pleasing architectural design and the presence of traditional materials and fenestration make important contributions in these regards.
9. The window replaced a three light casement window, which was double glazed in thick plate glass. The previous window was a modern addition and contained no historic fabric. The appellant argues that the previous window was likely to have been installed prior to the listing of the building in 1979. However, there is no compelling evidence before me to confirm that this is the case. Double glazing did not fully take off in Britain until the 1980s. Furthermore, modern double glazing only has a limited life span and may not have lasted from the 1970s until when it was replaced in 2021. Based on the evidence before me, I am not fully convinced that the previous window was in situ at the time of listing. As a result, I give this argument very limited weight in my decision.
10. This appeal seeks consent for a heritage style, double glazed window, which has applied lead on the outward facing side. While the window frame consists of high-quality, moulded, timber joinery and features slim-line double glazing, it has different reflective qualities to single glazing. I observed the different reflective qualities on my site visit and this is also evident from the photographs in the appellant's Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement. In addition, the applied lead fails to appear authentic and is not in keeping with the architectural style of the building.
11. While I observed other four pane windows on the building, these are not as elongated as the appeal window. Neither do they utilise double glazing or have applied lead. The window, which is the subject of this appeal, has a horizontal emphasis and results in an incongruous addition, which is at odds with the other windows on this part of the building. Even if the size of the opening pre-dates the date of listing, the provision of double glazing with applied lead results in an unsympathetic pastiche, which fails to preserve the special interest of the listed building. Consequently, the appeal scheme fails to accord with Historic England guidance (as quoted by the appellant).
12. I appreciate that the window is sited on the rear elevation of the building and is not visible from the road. Nevertheless, listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest irrespective of whether or not public views of the building can be gained.
13. Paragraph 212 of 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 213 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 appeal scheme results in less than substantial harm; however, this should not be equated with a lesser planning objection and is still of considerable importance and weight.

14. Where a scheme leads to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme, including, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
15. I appreciate that the double glazed window helps to improve the thermal efficiency of the property and contributes to the government's goal of achieving net zero. However, there is no compelling evidence before me that similar benefits cannot be achieved with a more appropriately designed window, including one that utilises secondary glazing. Accordingly, I give this environmental benefit limited weight as a public benefit. I also acknowledge that the window is north facing. However, any increase in light from the wider window is a private rather than a public benefit.
16. The appeal scheme has resulted in investment into the property, which has a small economic benefit, which I give limited weight in my decision as a public benefit. There is no compelling evidence before me to suggest that the use of the building would cease in the absence of the appeal scheme. As a result, I do not find the appeal scheme necessary to secure the viability and long-term conservation of the building.
17. Overall, I give the public benefits limited weight in my decision. Consequently, in attributing great weight to the harm that has been caused to the significance of the designated heritage asset, I find that there are insufficient public benefits arising from the appeal scheme to outweigh this harm.
18. Given the above, I conclude that, on balance, the appeal scheme fails to preserve the special interest of the listed building. Accordingly, it fails to satisfy the requirements of the Act and the historic environment policies of the Framework. The appeal scheme conflicts with Policy ENV13 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030, adopted February 2019. This policy among other things seeks to preserve or enhance the heritage assets of the Borough, sustaining and enhancing their significance.

Conclusion

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

A James

INSPECTOR