
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2025

by **L Fleming BSc (Hons) MRTPI IHBC**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A1530/Y/25/3359478

Great House, High Street, Dedham, Colchester CO7 6HJ

- 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 Mrs Selina Dallas against the decision of Colchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 242163.
 - The works proposed are Second Floor Bathroom 3. Removal of bath and installation of shower with associated modifications.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for Second Floor Bathroom 3. Removal of bath and installation of shower with associated modifications at Great House, High Street, Colchester CO7 6HJ in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 242163 and the plans submitted with it subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The works hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the details shown on the submitted Location Plan and the Second-Floor Bathroom (Bathroom 3) as Proposed Drawing no. 4124 - 05, Bathroom 3 Specifications (Second Floor) drawing no. 4124 - 07 and the Location of slate roof vent grills drawing no. 4124 - 06.
 - 3) Prior to the commencement of any of the works hereby approved, samples of any new marble to be used shall be made available for inspection on site and shall be approved, in writing, by the local planning authority. The works shall thereafter be carried out with the use of marble panels that match the specifications of the approved samples.
 - 4) If hitherto unknown evidence of historic character that would be affected by the works hereby permitted is discovered, an appropriate record together with recommendations for dealing with it in context of the approved scheme shall be submitted for written approval by the local planning authority.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the grade II* listed Great House, High Street, Dedham or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Reasons

3. The proposal would involve mainly internal alterations to the grade II* listed Great House, High Street, Dedham (Great House), a large dwelling built by renowned architect Raymond Erith circa 1937. It has been built in the architect's classical style replacing a Georgian timber-framed house that burned down in 1936. The architect's working drawings and the original detailed specification still exist together with correspondence relating to the commission, building process and costs providing a comprehensive record of the heritage asset and the architects role in building it.
4. The appeal building has been well maintained and as such, has a range of original, high quality classical architectural features. These include finely crafted joinery, regency style marble fireplaces and a main staircase with a continuous mahogany handrail and iron rod balusters.
5. It has three bathrooms, bathrooms 1 and 2 on the first floor and bathroom 3 on the second floor. These have many original features and fittings, particularly, bathrooms 1 and 3, have baths set into arched alcoves panelled in pale grey marble as noted in the detailed listing description alongside other fittings. The floors of all upstairs rooms are laid with narrow oak boards apart from the bathrooms which are finished in teak boards. Thus, insofar as is relevant to this case, the significance of Great House is founded on its traditional classical architectural detailing as well as it being a well preserved historical example of Raymond Erith's architectural style.
6. The proposed works would replace the bathtub and taps with a shower tray, screen and ceiling fixed shower head as well as other associated modifications in bathroom 3.
7. Bathroom 3 is tucked into the northwest corner of the building on the second floor. However, bathroom 1, centrally located between two main bedrooms on the first floor has been recently restored retaining its bathtub set within the marbled alcove with new tap fittings which replicate the original taps. Bathroom 1, lit by the lunette window on the front elevation, is in my view, the main bathroom of the appeal dwelling, as reflected by its positioning in the layout.
8. I acknowledge the bathtub and associated fittings were part of Raymond Erith's original design. However, these are relatively simple architectural features which are replicated elsewhere in the appeal building and are relatively commonly used in other buildings of the same period. Even though these would be removed from bathroom 3 in favour of more modern functional domestic fittings, the proposed shower would be set into the same alcove which would be restored using the same marble tiles and there is no substantive evidence which leads me to believe matching marble tiles could not be sourced.
9. The proposed shower tray, screen and fittings would be discreet, slimline, simple and sympathetic in form. Indeed, they would be set back into the alcove a similar depth to the bathtub which would be removed. The overhead shower would be lightweight and centrally positioned with a digital shower unit mainly concealed in the attic space. The original teak step and bathroom layout would be retained.
10. Thus, with the proposal in place, the alcove, teak step and floor retained, the layout and architectural form of bathroom 3 would be retained, with the alcove remaining fully appreciable as the most important architectural feature of the room. Overall, having regard to the relevant Historic England guidance and the evidence before

me, in my view, given the fittings preserved in the listed building overall, subject to appropriate recording and the agreement of matching marble, the effect of the proposal on the significance of the heritage asset would be neutral and there would be no harm to Great House.

11. For these reasons the proposal would preserve Great House and its features of special architectural and historic interest. It would therefore accord with Policies ENV1 and DM16 of the Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017-2033 Section 2 (2022) which among other things seek to achieve good design and preserve heritage assets.

Other Matters

12. The appeal building is within the Dedham Conservation Area (CA) and Dedham Vale National Landscape (NL). The works mainly comprise internal alterations to a listed building. Neither main party has alleged any effect on either the CA or NL and I agree that the effect of the scheme on the CA and the NA would be neutral.

Conditions

13. The conditions imposed are those which have been suggested by the Council. In addition to the standard timescale condition, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant drawings as this provides certainty. I have also imposed conditions requiring the marble panels to be agreed and any necessary building recording in the interests of safeguarding the significance of the heritage asset.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons set out above, having had regard to all other matters raised, the appeal should be allowed.

L Fleming

INSPECTOR