



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 December 2025

by M J Francis BA (Hons) MA MSc MCIfA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4705/Y/25/3367074

7 Chapel Lane, Esholt, Bradford BD17 7RD

- 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 Stephen Lee against the decision of City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00257/LBC.
 - The works proposed are replacement front and rear doors (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development, reflected in the heading above, indicates that the works have been carried out.
3. Details of the previous front and rear door differ between the written evidence and the drawings. Notwithstanding this, I have based my decision on the evidence and what I saw at the site visit.
4. The proposal relates to a listed building within a conservation area. As required by sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses; and paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are:
 - whether the proposal would preserve the grade II listed building, or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses; and
 - preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Esholt Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

Effect on listed building

6. Holme House is a detached, two-storey dwelling, dating to c.1800-20. Its special interest and significance derive from its historical and architectural interest.

Standing alone, it is surrounded by farmland, with views of trees either side, and set behind traditional stone boundary walls. It has a robust character, with its stone slate roof and sizeable chimneys. The symmetrically designed frontage is constructed of ashlar stone, with a moulded cornice. The front doorway with a rounded, moulded edge and a triangular pediment, provides a sense of grandeur to the building. Reputedly the former manse to a methodist chapel, now demolished, this association adds to its historical interest.

7. The proposal is for the replacement of the front and rear door of the house. Whilst the listing¹ describes the front door as having six flush and shaped fielded panels with original glazed rectangular fanlight, there is no description of the back door. The rear of the building, which is three storeys in height, is reached by a flight of stone steps set between low stone walls with coping stones.
8. The new front door is a modern, hardwood door, with six, standardised panels, in a teal colour. The fanlight has been replaced by a fixed light with 'Holme House' etched on it. I saw that the door had a heritage style brass letterplate, knocker, doorknob and numeral, within a timber frame, stated as being of identical profile to the original. The back door, similarly, in a teal colour, has a lower, rectangular panel, and two glazed vertical panels. It has a replacement black doorknob and knocker. A cat flap has been built into the door.
9. The previous doors have been described by the appellant as having reached the end of their serviceable life. Reference is made to the deterioration of the original joinery because of decay, poor historic repairs and draughts occurring. Whilst the appellant has used experienced joiners to make the doors and referred to the replacements having respected the proportions and detailing of the originals, there is limited substantive evidence of the previous doors.
10. The list entry has a photograph of the front elevation, with the only visible part of the doorway being a section of the fanlight with its glazing bars. This is the only visual evidence of the previous front door, although the appellants refer to the new door being a precise match.
11. Photographs of the previous back door show a small area of the painted woodwork, panels and moulding, a black doorknob and a back door knocker. The new door is termed as being on a like for like basis, however, the existing and proposed drawings do not reflect this. Moreover, the cat flap, with its white surround, is visually dominant. Whilst a fixed light above the door has been retained, this appears narrow because of the thickness of the surrounding frame, which is highly decorative with raised bosses.
12. Whilst the appellant acknowledges the importance of windows and doors reflecting traditional design and providing visual cohesion, based on the evidence before me and what I saw on my visit, there is limited substantive evidence as to the design and appearance of the previous doors. The listing provides only a brief description of the front door and although I appreciate that the previous doors may have deteriorated and the building needs to be secure, I am not assured that the front door reflects what was there before. Moreover, the fanlight, a feature of houses of this period, has been removed from the front elevation and replaced by a glazed panel with the house name. This is significantly different and is not a typical feature of houses of this period.

¹ List Entry Number:1314531

13. Based on the evidence, the rear door, apart from having black door furniture, does not reflect the previous door, and with its overly decorative surround is neither architecturally, nor historically, appropriate to this property. Consequently, I am not convinced that the new doors are a suitable replacement. Whilst the appellant refers to the works being fully reversible and that they are in keeping with the Georgian character of the building, the evidence of those previous features is not before me.
14. Given the above, I find that the works fail to preserve the listed building and its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. This harms the significance of the heritage asset which I must give considerable importance and weight.

Effect on conservation area

15. The CA covers the historic core of a village that largely developed in the 18th century when estate cottages, connected to the New Esholt Hall of 1706 were built. In the early 19th century, the textile industry developed which brought wealth to the area. Further change resulted from the development of the turnpike road to the north of the village and the opening of the railway. During the early 20th century, the village expanded following the construction of more housing.
16. The special interest and significance of the CA derive from its historic and architectural interest as a well-preserved 18th/early 19th century village where the historic street pattern has been retained. The appeal site reflects the traditional materials used throughout the village and includes prominent stone chimney stacks, which are visible on the roofscape of houses throughout the CA.
17. Whilst the appeal site occupies only a small part of the CA, its separate and detached position, set against the background of the surrounding fields, means that it is visually prominent. Replacing the historic doors and surrounds with new doors leads to some harm to the CA through the erosion of historic and architectural detail. As a result, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.

Public Benefits and Balance

18. 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 goes on to advise 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 the listed building to be less than substantial, and at the lower end of the scale, however, this is, nevertheless, of considerable importance and weight. The harm to the CA is also less than substantial, and whilst limited in scale, it affects a prominent house within the CA.
19. Where a proposal would lead 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 proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

20. The Planning Practice Guidance² sets out what may be regarded as public benefits, such as works to a listed private dwelling which secures its future as a designated heritage asset. Whilst the replacement doors have provided some limited economic benefits, the property already has an optimum viable use as a dwelling. Therefore, this would be a limited public benefit.
21. Although the appellant refers to the new hardwood doors using traditional joinery finishes and breathable paint, and that the original masonry or surrounding features have not been damaged, this is to be expected from conservation led works to a listed building. I also appreciate the need to provide greater security, weather resistance and prevent heat loss. However, in the absence of any significant public benefits, the proposed works would not outweigh the harm that I have identified. Therefore, I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the Grade II listed building, and the character or appearance of the CA would be neither conserved nor enhanced.
22. Consequently, I consider that the proposal would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 21 of the Framework. Furthermore, it would conflict with Policy EN3 of the Bradford Local Plan Core Strategy, 2017, which seeks to preserve, protect and enhance designated assets and their settings.

Conclusion

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

M J Francis

INSPECTOR

² Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723, 23 July 2019