
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 May 2014

by Jennifer Tempest BA(Hons) MA PGDip PGCert Cert HE MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 4 August 2014

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/E/14/2215122

139 Summer Street, Stroud, GL5 1PH

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs M Franklin against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref 13/1616/LBC, dated 30 July 2013, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2013.
 - The works proposed are loft conversion with internal alterations and installation of roof lights.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The Council is not opposed to the internal alterations proposed which include the repositioning of the staircase which is acknowledged as helping to restore something of the original plan form. The building is described as having been extensively altered internally in the 1960s/1970s with little of merit surviving internally.
3. Accordingly the main issues are a) whether the proposed rooflights would preserve the listed building known as 139 Summer Street (listed as Slade Cottage, 139 Summer Street) or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses and b) whether they would preserve the setting of the adjacent listed buildings which together have been identified as forming a group.

Reasons

4. 139 Summer Street is listed Grade II. It forms part of a small group with the attached building to the east, 141 Summer Street and Slade House. 141 Summer Street is listed Grade II as the former stables to Slade House, whilst Slade House, listed Grade II*, is a detached three storey property set slightly apart from and to the north east of No 139 and the former stables.
5. The appeal property has a modern concrete tiled pitched roof. Attached to its south western end but in separate ownership is a building with a monopitched roof now described as a garage but which the appellants' evidence suggests includes the elements of a former cottage. The appeal property is set on sloping ground below the level of the Summer Street and the entrance and

principal elevation of the cottage faces north and out across the Slad Brook valley.

6. The scheme would involve the insertion of five roof lights. Two rooflights are proposed within the rear roof slope facing towards the road and three in the front roof slope which faces out over the valley. The rear elevation of the cottage has two small ground floor windows and one upper floor window, in an informal pattern. The north elevation has three mullioned windows in the first floor and one in the ground floor. There is a centrally placed door and two smaller and more recent windows which do not align with the windows above. The proposed windows in the front elevation would be positioned above the existing first floor windows.
7. The existing cottage has no roof lights nor, as far as the evidence shows and from what I saw during my site visit, are there any rooflights in the former stables. I noted that Slade House has a small roof light immediately above the parapet on its south facing roof. Part of the essential character of these Cotswold buildings is derived from their use of local materials and, in the case of this group, the largely unbroken character of their roof cladding. In respect of the appeal property, some of this special character has been eroded by the modern roof materials.
8. The appellants' evidence sets out some of the changes which have occurred to the building and adjacent buildings over time. However, despite the alterations to the appeal building most of which appear to have taken place prior to its listing in 1974, it remains a building of some significance and makes a positive contribution to the group of listed buildings of which it forms part.
9. The insertion of rooflights, which despite the proposed use of 'conservation' rooflights are not a traditional feature of Cotswold roofs, would result in harm to the appearance of the building and to its special interest. The proposed three rooflights in the north elevation, each aligned with the window below, would introduce an increased formality into the appearance of the cottage and draw additional attention to the roof, adding to rather than mitigating the incongruous appearance of the modern roofing tiles.
10. Use of the roof as additional living space would not in itself be harmful to the special architectural or historic interest of the building and the existence of the two light window in the gable is indicative of past use of the roof space. I share the Council's concern however that the number of roof lights goes beyond what is necessary to provide natural light to the proposed accommodation. I have noted the comments made with regard to natural light and minimising carbon footprint, but there are various ways in which this can be addressed to secure efficient use of electricity.
11. The introduction of the five rooflights would harm the setting of the former stables. Although setting is not confined to any particular viewpoints or public views, the grouping of the three listed properties can be appreciated from various points along the raised pavement on the south side of Summer Street. The two proposed rooflights in the southern roof slope would draw additional attention to the modern appearance of the cottage roof in these views. In addition, I noted that the group can also be seen in more distant views from the opposite, north side of the valley. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed works would have a limited but nonetheless adverse effect on the

setting of the listed buildings and in particular the setting of the former stables to which it is attached.

12. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a statutory duty on decision makers in considering whether to grant listed building consent to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
13. The proposed rooflights would fail to preserve the special architectural interest of the appeal property. They would also fail to preserve the setting of the former stables to Slade House. Whilst the harm to the heritage assets would be less than substantial harm as set out in the Framework, any harm to heritage assets requires clear and convincing justification. Although the works would maximise use of the building, any public benefits would be very limited and do not outweigh the harm to heritage assets.
14. For the reasons given above and having taken all matters raised into account, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Jennifer Tempest

INSPECTOR

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