



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 December 2011

by Olivia Spencer BA BSc DipArch RIBA

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

Decision date: 20 December 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/X1118/E/11/2157186

Chapel Cottage, Atherington, UMBERLEIGH, Devon EX37 9HY

- 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 Mrs Kate Boothby against the decision of North Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref 51845, dated 10 February 2011, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2011.
 - The works proposed are replacement double glazed windows.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The appeal building is one of a pair of late 17th or early 18th century cottages. The rendered thatched buildings are typical modest dwellings of the period and the area. The existing fine framed single glazed casement and sliding sash windows are not part of the original structure but are evidence of works to it in the 19th or 20th century in a manner characteristic of that period. As such I consider they contribute to the building's heritage significance and special architectural interest.
3. Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 5: Planning for the Historic Environment: *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* states that changing windows is advisable only where the original is beyond repair. Secondary glazing is usually more appropriate than double-glazing where the window itself is of significance. The windows in this case show signs of decay particularly on the cills but I have seen no evidence to suggest that they are beyond repair. Secondary glazing would allow retention of the historic windows and could be installed with minimal impact on the fabric or appearance of the listed building.
4. The proposed replacement windows, as shown on the application Joinery Details drawing no.10/012.05/D02, would have thicker and wider frames than the existing windows and have 24mm double glazing units fixed with timber beads. The size of the frames would reduce the area of glass in the windows giving them an uncharacteristically heavy appearance and an altered ratio of glass to timber. This would be particularly evident in the casement windows where at present, with the exception of window 6, the simple thin framed sashes meet in the middle giving the appearance of a slim vertical central division of the window as a whole. As proposed this central division would be made up of the thicker sash frames and a central mullion. This would

substantially increase the actual and, despite the thicker framing overall, the relative proportion of timber dividing the window. And whilst I note from correspondence with the Council that the appellant intends to use a spacer within the glazing units, I consider the stick-on glazing bars would add to the incongruous appearance of the proposed windows which would have a very different character and appearance to that of the traditionally framed windows now in place.

5. In view of the possibility of installing temporary, reversible secondary glazing, the improved thermal performance provided by the proposed scheme would not justify irrevocable harm to the heritage asset arising both from loss of the historic windows and the installation of inappropriate window replacements.
6. The appellant has proposed 12mm slimlite glazing units as an amendment to the scheme. I understand the appellant's disappointment that they were unable to provide further information and drawings to the Council in support of this amendment. However whilst I understand that these units can be accommodated in most timber windows constructed for single glazing and that they would be designed to reflect the form and appearance of the existing windows, I have seen no details of a proposal for smaller section replacement windows for the appeal building. Given that they would include double glazed units it may be the case for example that the detailing would differ from that of the existing single glazed windows. Further it would remain the case that the historic windows would be lost. On the basis of the information submitted and having regard to Policy HE.1 of PPS5, I cannot conclude that this would result in less harm to the significance of the heritage asset than other solutions that may deliver similar climate change mitigation.
7. The appellant has referred to other cases considered by the Council and at appeal where consent for double glazing has been given. However, the consultation response to proposal ref: 51774 in Ilfracombe notes that the windows in that case were of a modern or variable appearance. I am not aware of the full circumstances of the other cases, the condition and nature of the existing and proposed windows, or the nature and significance of the buildings of which they formed a part. It is not possible therefore to draw a direct comparison between any of these and the appeal before me which I have considered on its own merits.
8. For the reasons given I conclude that the proposed works would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building.

Olivia Spencer

INSPECTOR

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