



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2021

by Neil Pope BA (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/U1105/Y/20/3262597

Berry Cottage, Longmeadow Road, Lympstone, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 5LW.

- 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 David Holt against the decision of East Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref. 20/0411/LBC, dated 10/2/20, was refused by notice dated 7/5/20.
 - The works proposed are a timber frame single storey extension/porch to form downstairs w/c and utility room to the rear of the property.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and listed building consent is granted for a timber frame single storey extension/porch to form downstairs w/c and utility room to the rear of the property at Berry Cottage, Longmeadow Road, Lympstone, Exmouth, Devon, EX8 5LW. Consent is granted in accordance with the terms of the application Ref. 20/0411/LBC, dated 10/2/20, and subject to the conditions in the attached Schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. Berry Cottage is a Grade II listed building¹.
3. When considering the application the Council's officer expressed concerns, amongst other things, over the accuracy of the submitted plans. In particular, the failure to show the decorative fascia and apex pinnacle / finial on the proposed side elevations. Revised drawings have been submitted as part of the appeal. These show the fascia and apex pinnacle on the proposed side elevations, as well the repositioning of the proposed windows. As these revised plans do not fundamentally alter the proposal and no interested party would be affected by them, I have taken them into account in determining this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve the features of special architectural or historic interest which Berry Cottage possesses and if not, whether any harm would be outweighed by any public benefits.

Reasons

5. The heritage interest (significance) of Berry Cottage, which dates from the late 16th/early 17th century, is derived primarily from its special architectural and historic qualities. These include its plan form, rendered cob walls, thatch roof and roof timbers, chimney stacks, internal plank and muntin screen and the 19th century open rear porch with decorative bargeboards and apex pinnacle.

¹ The provisions of section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are engaged.

6. The proposed works would include the removal of the existing 19th century timber porch on the rear elevation of the building. Some of the tongue and groove boarding in this porch has decayed and the pitched roof has a covering of roof felt. These elements of the porch clearly need replacing. Whilst the Council has drawn attention to paragraph 191 of the National Planning Policy Framework, this property appears to be well maintained and there is no evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, this designated heritage asset.
7. The proposed extension would provide an enclosed porch and a downstairs toilet. The toilet would be of particular benefit to the appellant's wife who has arthritis. The extension would have timber walls, a lean-to roof clad in natural slates² and would incorporate the existing bargeboards and apex pinnacle.
8. The proposed removal of the existing rear porch would entail the loss of some of the 19th century fabric of the building. Whilst this would be unfortunate, as noted above, elements of the porch are now beyond repair and the roof covering does not contribute to the significance of the listed building. It is therefore unsurprising that the appellant wishes to replace the rear porch. The proposed re-use of the bargeboards and apex pinnacle is to be welcomed as it would retain some important 19th century fabric and pleasing features of the building. There would be a public benefit in replacing decayed fabric and maintaining this important building in a good condition.
9. The proposed extension would be larger than the existing porch but would amount to a very modest sized addition at the rear of Berry Cottage. It would not disrupt an appreciation of the plan form of the building and the majority of the rendered cob wall on the rear elevation of the host building would remain clearly discernible. The new lean-to new roof would not extend above eaves level and would be below the height of the first floor window. The timber clad walls would be similar to the weatherboarding on the rear of the cottage and the natural slate roof would reflect the local vernacular. Like many properties, listed buildings also evolve over time. The proposal would be a simple addition to Berry Cottage that would not detract from its heritage interest.
10. In addition to the 'standard' condition requiring works to commence within three years, in the interests of certainty a condition would be necessary specifying the approved plans. To safeguard the integrity of the building, conditions would be necessary requiring the decorative bargeboard and apex pinnacle to be re-used, the use of natural slates, timber walls and window frames, metal rainwater goods and making good any damage.
11. Whilst there would be some loss of historic fabric this has decayed over time and requires replacement. Other important fabric that is capable of re-use would be salvaged and incorporated within the new extension. On balance, the proposal would preserve the features of special architectural or historic interest which Berry Cottage possesses and the loss of some historic fabric would be outweighed by the public benefit from maintaining this important building. The proposal accords with the aims and objectives of policies EN8 and EN9 of the development plan. I therefore conclude that the appeal should succeed.

Neil Pope

Inspector

² The small section of pitched roof behind the apex pinnacle would also be clad in natural slates.

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1. The works hereby permitted shall commence within a period of three years from the date of this decision.
2. The works hereby permitted shall be undertaken in accordance with the following approved plans: 1:1,250 scale Ordnance Survey site location plan; 1:50 scale proposed ground floor plan (revised 08/20); 1:50 scale proposed rear elevation (revised 08/20) and; 1:50 scale proposed side elevations (revised 08/20).
3. The extension hereby permitted shall incorporate the decorative bargeboards and apex pinnacle from the existing rear porch, as well as the use of natural slates on the roof, painted timber clad walls, timber framed windows and painted metal rainwater goods.
4. Any damage caused to the building during the course of carrying out the works hereby approved shall be made good using materials to match those used in the existing external walls of the building.