

16. FULL APPLICATION – LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR REPLACEMENT WINDOWS IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS – MANOR FARM, OLDFIELDS FARM LANE, GRINDON (NP/SM/0719/0780, TS)

APPLICANT: MR JAMES GOODFIELD

Summary

1. The proposed seeks to install double glazed windows to the north and south elevations of a grade II Listed Building. The type and design of the proposed window would harm the significance of the listed building. This harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits of improving the energy efficiency of the property. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

Site and surroundings

2. The site is a detached dwelling house that lies to the south of Grindon Village. It is a Grade II Listed Building. The listing description notes that the property is a farmhouse of 16th or 17th century origin with later remodelling and additions. It is constructed with coursed limestone rubble walls and clay tile roof.

Proposal

3. The application seeks listed building consent for the replacement of windows in the south (front) and north (rear) elevations of the house.
4. A former owner of the property replaced all the windows within the south (front) elevation of the house with inappropriate double glazed units that are harmful to the historic significance of the building. This is subject to an on-going enforcement case.
5. The application proposes to replace these unauthorised windows with new double glazed units that are based on the design of the former windows that were replaced without listed building consent.
6. The application also proposed to replace modern windows to the rear elevation. These windows were in place at the time of listing so they are not unauthorised.
7. The proposed windows have been designed to look like the windows that existed in the front elevation at the time of listing in 1985. The previous windows were single glazed whereas the proposed ones are double glazed. The proposed windows would have timber beading and applied glazing bars. They would also include a cap covering a hole that allows the air to be extracted between the panes of glass.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reason:

1. **The type and design of the proposed replacement windows would be harmful to the historic significance of the listed building. The public benefits of improving the energy efficiency of the property do not outweigh the harm that would be caused. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy DMC10 and the requirements of the NPPF.**

Key Issues

The Authority must, by virtue of S16 of the Listed Buildings Act 1990 pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

History

8. 2014 – An enforcement case was opened relating to unauthorised works at the site, including the unauthorised existing windows. This case remains ongoing.
9. 2019 – Pre application advice was sought from our Built Environment Team about replacement of the unauthorised windows. We advised that the type of windows proposed was unlikely to be supported.

Consultations

10. **Grindon Parish Council** – support the application for the following reason:

- *“The councillors refer to the research to find suitable windows; the need for the building to be practical and therefore, less reliant upon fossil fuels to keep the home warm; there have been considerable advancements in the technology that can provide listed properties with options to use double/triple glazing sensitively.”*

11. **National Amenity Societies** – No comments received.

12. **Authority’s Conservation Officer** – Objects to the application:

“The works proposed in this application will have a negative impact on the significance and character of the listed building. The proposal is therefore contrary to local and national planning policy (DMC7 of the Authority’s Development Management Policies (2019)), and section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. I therefore recommend refusal.”

The Conservation Officer’s reasoning is discussed in more detail further below.

Representations

13. No third party representations have been received.

Main policies

14. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, DS1, L3.

15. Relevant Development Management Plan policies: DMC3, DMC5, DMC7.

National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance

16. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority’s Core Strategy 2011 and the Adopted Development Management Policies 2019. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park’s statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.

17. Paragraph 189 advises that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including

any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

18. Paragraph 193 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
19. Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Development plan

20. Core Strategy polices GSP1, GSP2 and GSP3 together say that all development in the National Park must be consistent with the National Park's legal purposes and duty and that the Sandford Principle will be applied where there is conflict. Opportunities for enhancing the valued characteristics of the National Park will be identified and acted upon and development which would enhance the valued characteristics of the National Park will be permitted. Particular attention will be paid to impact on the character and setting of buildings, siting, landscaping and building materials, design in accordance with the Design Guide and the impact upon living conditions of local communities. Core Strategy policy GSP4 highlights that the National Park Authority will consider using planning conditions or obligations to secure the achievement of its spatial outcomes.
21. Core Strategy policy DS1 outlines the Authority's Development Strategy, and in principle permits the conversion of buildings to provide visitor accommodation.
22. Core Strategy policy L3 requires that development must conserve and where appropriate enhance or reveal significance of archaeological, artistic or historic asset and their setting, including statutory designation and other heritage assets of international, national, regional or local importance or special interest.
23. Development Management Policy DMC3 requires development to be of a high standard that respects, protects, and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place. It also provides further detailed criteria to assess design and landscaping, as well as requiring development to conserve the amenity of other properties.
24. Development Management Policy DMC5 provides detailed advice relating to proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, requiring new development to demonstrate how valued features will be conserved, as well as detailing the types and levels of information required to support such proposals. It also requires development to avoid harm to the significance, character, and appearance of heritage assets and details the exceptional circumstances in which development resulting in such harm may be supported.

25. Development Management Policy DMC7 addresses development affecting listed building, advising that applications for such development should be determined in accordance with policy DMC5 and address how their significance will be preserved. It goes on to detail specific aspects of development that will not be supported when dealing with applications affecting listed buildings. It advises that the only exceptions to this are where any resulting harm is less than substantial in terms of impact on the character and significance of the Listed Building and its setting; and where it is also off-set by the public benefit from making the changes, including enabling optimum viable use, and net enhancement to the Listed Building and its setting.
26. It also states that where change to a Listed Building is acceptable, an appropriate record of the building will be required to a methodology approved in writing by the Authority prior to any works commencing.

Assessment

Impacts of the proposed works on the significance, character and appearance of the building

27. The significance of the listed building has not been set out in the application and the application is therefore contrary to the NPPG and policy DMC5 in this respect.
28. However, in any case the Authority's Conservation Officer has assessed the proposal and has advised that the development would be harmful to the significance of the listed building.
29. The application proposed to replace the existing windows to the north and south elevations. The existing windows to the south elevation are not appropriate for the host listed building and harm its significance. The removal of the existing windows would be welcomed.
30. However, the existing windows in the south elevation are subject to an on-going enforcement case. As such, this application is not the only means available to remedy the breach. Significant weight should not be given to the fact that proposal would remedy the enforcement breach and it is essential that the proposed windows preserve the historic significance of the building. That the proposed windows would be better than the existing unauthorised ones is not in itself sufficient grounds to approve the current application.
31. As such, whilst the proposed removal of the existing windows is welcomed, the replacement windows must be of a design and appearance that makes the new ones acceptable in their own right.
32. The proposed windows have been designed to reflect the appearance of the former windows that were in situ at the time of listing in the 1980s. Those windows were not the original ones, but they were of some age and made a positive contribution to the significance of the building.
33. However, the previous windows were single glazed and the proposed ones are double glazed. If double glazing is to be used on a listed building, it is essential that the appearance of the frames and the glazing is appropriate for the important historic building.
34. The new windows in this application do not achieve this. The Authority's Conservation Officer has set out that:

“However, the introduction of double-glazed units will harm the character of the building, as this glazing type is not in keeping with a historic building. This harm will be exacerbated by the detailing to the (a) double glazing and (b) the window frames.

The proposed glazing type (a) has (i) a cap covering a hole that allows the air to be extracted between the two panes of glass. Unfortunately, this plug will be visible and cannot be hidden (at present) within the frames. Furthermore, there are small circular micro-spacers between the two panes of glass and these are visible at certain angles. These details will detract from the character of the building. No information has been provided on whether any kite (CE) marks will be visible on the glass.

Single double glazed units, to reduce the number of caps, are proposed to each window. The application proposes applied glazing bars to provide subdivision and beading, rather than putty, to fix the glazing in place. These non-traditional details will detract from the significance and character of the designated heritage asset.

35. The existing windows to the north elevation are also modern but these were in place at the time of listing so are authorised. Again, there is no objection to replacing these windows in principle but it is essential that the new windows are appropriate.
36. The same concerns apply equally to the proposed new windows in the north elevation as set out above for the south elevation, i.e. that the double glazing type and window detailing proposed is not appropriate for a historically important listed building.
37. The development would therefore cause harm to the historic significance and character of the listed building. Any harm to a listed building requires clear and convincing justification. It is considered that the harm in this instance would fall within the “less than substantial” threshold. This is not to say that the harm is acceptable, but the NPPF requires that less than substantial harm is weighed against any public benefits that would arise from the scheme.
38. The application places a strong emphasis on the energy efficiency benefits of installing double glazing at the property. This is fully acknowledged and there is no doubt that energy efficiency and carbon emission reduction is an important public benefit that can be weighed against the harm that would be caused.
39. However, every effort should be made to mitigate the harm. It is likely that the same public benefit of improving the energy efficiency of the property could be achieved in a manner that would not cause the same degree of harm to the listed building. No information has been provided to show that other means of improving thermal efficiency have been considered, If double glazing is indeed the best way to achieve this then it is highly likely that a better window design can be achieved that would still provide the same benefits but that would reduce the harm.
40. If the extent of the harm was reduced then it is possible that the public benefits could be said to outweigh it. However, because the design of the proposed windows is unacceptable and it is likely that there is a better solution, the harm cannot be said to be outweighed by the benefits.
41. The application would therefore cause less than significant harm to the listed building and this harm is not outweighed by public benefits. The application is contrary to policy DMC10 and the guidance contained within the NPPF.

Conclusion

42. The application would result in harm to the designated heritage asset. No public benefit exists that would outweigh that harm. The application should be refused.

Human Rights

43. Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil

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