



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2024

by **David Cliff BA Hons MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th July 2024

Appeal Reference: APP/D3830/Y/23/3327677

Horsmanshoad Farm, Pickwell Lane, Bolney, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 5RH

- 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 Mr and Mrs Martin and Emma Smith against the decision of Mid Sussex District Council.
 - The application reference is DM/22/3820.
 - The works proposed are construction of single-storey extension to the rear elevation, along with related minor internal and fenestration alterations and other improvements to the external appearance of the building along with associated hard and soft landscaping works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. This appeal decision relates solely to an appeal against the refusal of listed building consent. Whilst the Council also refused planning permission for the proposals, no appeal has been lodged against that refusal.
3. As the appeal relates to a listed building I have had special regard to section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act').

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve a Grade II listed building, 'Horsmanshoad Farmhouse' (Ref: 1194159), and any of the features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.

Reasons

5. Horsmanshoad Farmhouse, listed in 1983, is a two-storey timber framed former farmhouse dating from the 17th century or possibly even earlier. The building has been substantially extended, including a two-storey 19th century extension to the eastern elevation, a part single, part two storey rear extension constructed in the late 1980s, along with separate conservatory and single storey rear kitchen/garage extensions in the early 2000s. There is evidence of now demolished farm outbuildings that historically lay in proximity to it. It is now in use a single dwelling. Despite the various additions, it remains a good example of a typical Wealden farmhouse.

6. Given the above, I find the special interest of the listed building, insofar as it relates to these appeals, to be primarily associated with the legibility of the Wealden farmhouse phase and the traditional materials and construction techniques associated with its timber framed core.
7. The proposed rear extension, whilst single storey, would be of a still considerable size and massing and would represent a further rearward projection, along with previous extensions, from the original historic core. The dual pitched roof design, whilst seeking to limit the overall height of the extension would be at odds with the existing roof forms. Although the appellant has sought to use matching materials, the further substantial addition to the building would further distract from and erode the legibility of the relatively modest scale and characteristically rectangular footprint of the original farmhouse. Whilst the original historic core of the building and associated historic fabric would not be directly affected, the proposal would undermine the historic and architectural integrity of the listed building.
8. Whilst the historic mapping shows several former farm buildings to have been in existence adjacent to the western and southern elevations of the listed buildings, these would be typically expected to have been associated with a traditional farmhouse. I therefore do not find that they provide a robust justification for the current proposal.
9. Despite there being no public views, the building is listed for its intrinsic architectural and historic interest and the visibility of the proposed works is not a determining factor in considering whether they would preserve its special interest.
10. Limited benefits to the integrity of the listed building would arise from some of the other elements of the proposals including the replacement of the uPVC drainage features with cast iron, the removal of a television aerial and the more sympathetic replacement of existing double-glazed windows. However, such benefits to the listed building would not outweigh the harm I have found to arise from the proposed rear extension.
11. Given the above, I find that the proposals would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. Consequently, I give this harm great weight.
12. Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework') advises that when considering the impact of a proposal on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 206 goes on to advise that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset through its alteration or destruction should require clear and convincing justification. Given that the proposals would preserve the original historic fabric of the building, I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.
13. Under such circumstances, paragraph 208 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, which include the securing of the optimal viable use of listed buildings. The proposal would enhance the living accommodation, including an enlarged kitchen, within the building. However, this is a private benefit and does not fall to be considered in the balance. Furthermore, the continued viable use of the

building as a residential dwelling is not dependent on the proposal as the building has an ongoing residential use that would not cease in its absence.

14. Given the above, I find that no public benefits have been identified that would outweigh the harm that would be caused. I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building Horsmanshoad Farmhouse. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and would be inconsistent with the relevant heritage aims of Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (March 2018) and the Framework.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cliff

INSPECTOR