

Heritage Team Response

Date – 16/11/21

APP/21/01100 and APP/21/01101 (LBC)

Application description APP/21/01100 – Proposed rear fenestration alterations; lowering of existing basement floor level.

Application description APP/21/01101 – Listed building application for internal alterations; proposed rear fenestration alterations; lowering of existing basement floor level and installation of solar panels

The Site

The application site is a late C18, end of terrace, 3-storey property which is Grade II listed and located on Queen Street in the Emsworth Conservation Area. The building has previously been extended at the rear with a glazed, pitched roof extension. To the rear of this is a walled rear garden. The house is arranged over 4no. floors including the basement, which currently has a lowered head height.

Legislative and Policy Context

When assessing the proposal, the following legislation and policy context is taken in consideration.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, 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.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Conservation Area, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

The revised NPPF (July 2021) sets out in Chapter 16, the core principles relating to development affecting Heritage Assets that local planning authorities should consider in making planning decisions in the following paragraphs:

189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

194. 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.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

196. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

197. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

199. 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.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

Historic England Advice

In addition to the advice laid out in the NPPF, Historic England has published planning advice in the form of Good Practice Advice Notes (GPA's) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs). Most relevant to this application will be GPA2 – Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment.

GPA2 states at paragraph 4 - 'The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest'. It also advises that an assessment of significance is required as part of the application process including the understanding of the nature of the significance, the extent of that significance and level of significance. Paragraph 11 states 'to accord with the NPPF, the application will need to undertake an assessment of significance to inform the application process an extent necessary to understand the potential impact (positive or negative) of the proposal and the level of thoroughness proportionate to the relative importance of the asset whose fabric or setting affected'.

Local Planning Policies

Policy CS11 (Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough) states that planning permission will be granted for development that:

“Protects and where appropriate enhances the borough’s statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest”.

Policy CP16 (High Quality Design) (1a) of the Core Strategy states that “Planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax. All development should demonstrate that its design:

Identifies and responds positively to existing features of natural, historic or local character within or close to the proposed development site”.

Policy DM20 of the Allocations Plan states that planning permission will be granted for development proposals that conserves and enhances the historic assets of Havant. It also states that application which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets are expected to provide a Heritage Statement that:

1. Describe the significance of the asset and its setting, using appropriate expertise and where necessary original survey, at a level of detail proportionate to its significance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal.
2. Sets out the impact of the development on the heritage assets and mitigation that is proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage asset, including where possible positive opportunities to conserve and enjoy heritage assets.

Emerging Policy E13 from the Draft Local Plan 2036 provides similar advice to existing Policy CS11, but also adds that where harm cannot be avoided, mitigation may be proportionate to the impact and the significance of the heritage assets and fully incorporated into the development proposals.

The Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan has now been adopted and has relevant policies which are applicable to this application:

Policy H1 – Design and Heritage

Policy H2 – Heritage Appraisals

Proposal:

The proposal includes:

- Internal alterations
- Lowering of part of basement floor
- Alterations to rear fenestration

It is proposed that the existing basement floor within the first smaller section of the basement, is to be excavated and the floor level dropped to provide additional head height within this area, allowing the space to become functional. The area to the left-hand side of the stair will be converted into a new WC and store, whilst the main basement area will remain as existing. The area of the basement in which the floor is dropped, the basement will be tanked. The existing stair is to be extended. To the rear of the house there is a reduced height void below the ground floor. It is proposed that additional structural support be incorporated within this area to help support the existing ground floor above.

This element of the proposal has been amended since the pre-application enquiry which proposed to lower and tank the whole basement area. Concerns were raised with this and therefore the proposal has been reduced to only a small part of the basement. Overall it is considered that this will not result in harm to the significance of the heritage asset in this area of the building as the large majority of the basement and its original hearth opening will remain unaltered.

Assessment:

The application includes a Heritage Statement which is very limited in detail. Furthermore, the plans provided are poor in quality. However, technical specifications have been provided and given the small scale of the proposed development (i.e., one roof light window), it is considered that there is sufficient information to assess the proposal fully.

The proposed window would be set within the thatched roof and feature a mini eyebrow detail to match that of the dormer extension. The window would be constructed from timber and include a pivot opening style. Overall, it is considered that the window would not detract from the traditional appearance of the thatched roof and the additional detailing above would match well with the existing dormer. The significance of the designated heritage asset would not be harmed.

The proposed works to the ground floor, first floor and second floor as set out in the combined D&A and Heritage Statement submitted with the application, are not considered to result in harm to the architectural and historical significance of the designated heritage asset. This includes the replacement roof lights to the utility area, the type and manufacturer of which are specified.

The proposal also includes the installation of solar panels to be located within the roof valley. Subject to further details being submitted showing final design, these are not considered to result in harm to the heritage asset.

Overall the proposals are not considered to cause harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, or the Conservation Area and are in accordance with the relevant legislation and national and local planning policies.

Conclusion – No objection subject to the following condition:

1. Details of solar panels (detailed plan showing how these will be attached to the existing roof, materials and finish) to be provided and agreed prior to installation.

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