

4/00639/16/LBC - DEMOLITION OF REAR ENTRANCE PORCH AND EXISTING EXTENSION. SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS. EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS (INCLUDING SECONDARY GLAZING). OAK COTTAGE, LEIGHTON BUZZARD ROAD, WATER END, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HP1 3BH.
APPLICANT: Mr & Mrs Lowrie.

[Case Officer - Andrew Parrish]

Summary

The application is recommended for refusal. A very similar proposal was refused in January this year and the only change from that scheme relates to the introduction of secondary glazing in lieu of slim profile double glazing to two of the windows on the front elevation. Whilst this is welcomed, and many aspects of the scheme are acceptable, there are still issues with the scale and design of the rear extension and the replacement of many of the windows throughout the property with slim profile double glazed units. These proposals are not considered to preserve the character, fabric or appearance of this Grade II listed property within the Water End Conservation Area. As such the application does not accord with the NPPF, Policy CS27 or Local Plan Policy 119.

Site Description

The application site comprises a one and a half storey Grade II Listed cottage sited on the southern side of Leighton Buzzard Road some 100 m from a listed road bridge. The cottage is of traditional Chilterns design comprising small plain clay tiles over half timbered walls in painted brickwork with leaded glazed casement windows. The cottage forms part of a group of 4 terraced properties all of which are Grade II listed. The wider surrounding area is residential and all principle buildings in this part of Water End are Grade II listed. The site extends down to the River Gade and has a small vehicular access onto Leighton Buzzard Road near the bridge. There is pedestrian access from Leighton Buzzard Road. The site falls within the Rural Area, Chilterns AONB and Water End Conservation Area.

Proposal

Consent is sought for single storey rear extensions and alterations comprising:

1. A single storey side extension to the existing 2 storey rear wing comprising lean-to roof and new gabled porch to provide enlarged dining room
2. A single storey side / rear extension to the existing single storey rear wing (current kitchen) and rebuilding of existing outer (eastern) wall together with new hipped roof and bifolding doors to north-west elevation to provide new living room.
3. Conversion of existing sitting room in main house to a kitchen together with insertion of French doors to south (rear) elevation.
4. Conversion of WC to utility room.
5. Minor reconfiguration of stairs.

6. Replacement of modern partition walls to first floor.
7. Introduction of secondary glazing to two windows on frontage.
8. Replacement of all other windows with 'Slimlite' double glazing or standard double glazing.
9. Provision of standard double glazing to extensions.

Referral to Committee

The application is referred to the Development Control Committee due to the contrary views of Great Gaddesden Parish Council.

Planning History

- 4/00638/16/FH DEMOLITION OF REAR ENTRANCE PORCH AND EXISTING
A EXTENSION. SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSIONS. EXTERNAL
AND INTERNAL ALTERATIONS
Withdrawn
- 4/01161/15/FH DEMOLITION OF REAR ENTRANCE PORCH. REAR SINGLE
A STOREY EXTENSIONS AND EXTERNAL / INTERNAL
ALTERATIONS
Refused
19/01/2016
- 4/01162/15/LB DEMOLITION OF REAR ENTRANCE PORCH. REAR SINGLE
C STOREY EXTENSIONS AND EXTERNAL / INTERNAL
ALTERATIONS
Refused
19/01/2016
- 4/01146/15/FH REPLACEMENT GARAGE IN THE GROUNDS OF A LISTED
A BUILDING. PROPOSED DOMESTIC GREENHOUSE. PROPOSED
HARD STANDING AROUND REPLACEMENT GARAGE
Granted
08/06/2015
- 4/01147/15/LB REPLACEMENT GARAGE IN THE GROUNDS OF A LISTED
C BUILDING. PROPOSED DOMESTIC GREENHOUSE. PROPOSED
HARD STANDING AROUND REPLACEMENT GARAGE
Granted
08/06/2015
- 4/03448/14/LB REPLACEMENT GARAGE

C

Withdrawn
20/01/2015

4/03447/14/FH REPLACEMENT GARAGE

A

Withdrawn
20/01/2015

4/03426/14/FH REAR SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION AND EXTERNAL AND
INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

A

Withdrawn
14/01/2015

4/03427/14/LB REAR SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION AND EXTERNAL AND
INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

C

Withdrawn
14/01/2015

4/01406/93/4 SINGLE STOREY SIDE EXTENSION AND DEMOLITION OF FUEL
STORE

Granted
10/12/1993

4/01407/93/4 DEMOLITION OF FUEL STORE AND ERECTION OF SINGLE
STOREY SIDE EXTENSION

Granted
10/12/1993

Policies

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Adopted Core Strategy

CS27 - Historic Assets

Saved Policies of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan

Policy 119

Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

Chilterns Buildings Design Guide (Feb 2013)

Summary of Representations

Great Gaddesden Parish Council

Supports the Planning Application for improvements to Oak Cottage, Water End.

The plans have been drawn up by an architect who specialises in Grade II listed buildings; the improvements and their design are sympathetic to the surroundings and of a high quality. The plans take into account the character, age and location of the house and are in keeping with the neighbouring houses in Water End and other Grade II listed buildings in the parish of Great Gaddesden.

Oak Cottage fronts the A4146, a busy route with a high volume of heavy traffic, in particular recycling waste vehicles. GGPC has been campaigning for many years to reduce the weight and volume of heavy vehicles on this road and is sympathetic to the requirement for householders to double glaze their windows to mitigate the high level of noise pollution.

Conservation Officer

Oak Cottage is a grade II listed semi-detached property (with Wayside); it lies on the south side of the Leighton Buzzard Road, at the end of a group of historic properties and is within the Water End Conservation Area.

The building (comprising Wayside and Oak Cottage) dates to the 16th century, extended to west in 17th century (this part being Oak Cottage), it is of timber frame construction with painted brick infill. The west end is a mid 20th century extension with a single storey element attached. There is a two-storey gabled wing to the rear (circa 18th century) and linked to this is a single storey former outbuilding, now in use as the kitchen. The property has architectural significance and also has social significance due to it formerly being the home of 1930's radio entertainer.

A previous application 4/03427/14/LBC was withdrawn due to conservation concerns with the several aspects of the scheme. A revised application was then submitted, various amendments to this were discussed and explored with the applicants, however the final plans submitted were similar to the first set of plans submitted, the scheme was subsequently refused. This latest application is similar to the previous application.

Various alterations to the listed building are proposed within this application, these are discussed in turn below:

Internal alterations:

Insertion of kitchen into existing living room - this is considered acceptable. The large late 20th century window to the rear elevation will be replaced by a pair of French doors with window either side – no objection. The introduction of glazing bars within the windows / doors would be more suitable for this traditional cottage and for the replacement doors adjacent.

No objection to the conversion of the WC to a utility room or relocation of the existing door opening, this part of the house is a modern extension.

The stairs up to the first floor are fairly modern so their minor reconfiguration is supported.

At first floor level the partition walls within the main range of the house are modern, no objection to their removal and insertion of new partitions.

An en-suite is to be inserted into the master bedroom, no details of any external vents have been submitted – a vent to the front elevation would not be supported. All pipework should be run internally, details should be submitted.

External alterations:

Following withdrawal of the previous application in 2015 (4/03427/14/LBC) the revised proposal for the replacement to the existing adjoining outbuilding took a more linear form and the gable to the end omitted. Following discussions between the planning officer, myself (SIC) and the applicant the design of the new rear extension was amended, breaking up the mass of the extension and reducing the amount of glazing within the end elevation. However the current plans under consideration are as previously proposed with a linear range of 6 windows within the end elevation – this does present a large amount of glazing on the approach to the property from the rear and is somewhat out of character with the existing property. Whilst the extension is clearly a modern addition to the property and should be read as such a reduction in the amount of glazing to this rear elevation and the reduction in bulk of this new rear extension would better preserve the character and appearance of Oak Cottage.

The demolition of the existing porch is supported, this is a relatively modern lightweight porch – it can be removed without harm to the fabric or special interest of Oak Cottage. The side extension to the rear wing has been scaled back from that originally proposed and the roof-lights omitted. The amount of side wall of the rear wing proposed for removal has been reduced, resulting in retention of a greater amount of the historic fabric and the remaining timber framing being visible at first floor. The porch was omitted from previous amendments but is now re-introduced to the scheme. The open porch adds to the clutter within this new extension, removing it would simplify the design of this proposed extension and benefit the listed building.

The replacement of windows forms part of the application:

The replacement of the majority of the existing (modern) windows is not objected to however the applicants propose slim profile double glazed units instead of single glazed windows. This did not form part of the 2014 previous Listed Building application (4/03427/14/LBC) which was withdrawn, instead secondary glazing was proposed. In my comments relating to the previous application I unfortunately confused the plans and did not realise the applicants intended to replace all the windows in the property in this way.

Dacorum Borough Council's policy in relation to replacing windows in Listed Buildings is (if the principle of replacing any window is acceptable) to require single glazing on the historic building; modern extensions can sometimes incorporate slim profile double glazed units if appropriate.

The existing windows are timber frame with leaded lights and single glazed, most are

modern (late 20th century) although the triple window at ground floor to the front elevation is late 19th / early 20th century. It is considered to be of architectural merit and worthy of retention. This window and an adjacent small ground floor window are shown on the plans to be retained with secondary glazing installed internally, this approach is welcomed.

The other modern windows could be replaced but only with suitable replacements, Historic England advice maintains that the introduction of float glass double glazing gives rise to untraditional reflections which does not suit the character or appearance of historic properties.

The applicants have previously submitted a sample of leaded 'Slimlite' glazing, however this sample only serves to demonstrate the issues that arise with double glazing in that the lines of the applied leadwork are reflected on the inner pane of glass giving a non-traditional appearance, also the internal appearance of the window with the back of the applied leadwork being visible is not considered an acceptable finish. With listed buildings attention needs to be paid to both internal and external appearance and in this instance the use of slim profile double glazed leaded light units is not considered acceptable.

The applicants reasoning for wanting double glazing is to try and reduce the noise from the busy and narrow Leighton Buzzard Road. Whilst this need is fully understood and appreciated it has been established through various research projects conducted by Historic England and other establishments that good quality secondary glazing can be considerably more effective at providing thermal and noise insulation than slim profile double glazing.

SPAB Technical Advice Note 16 relating to noise reduction through traditional windows suggests secondary glazing combined with draught proofing. A wide air gap is necessary to reduce high and low frequency noise with a minimum 150mm air gap between the external window and the internal secondary glazing recommended. A slim profile (14mm – 16mm) double glazed unit which incorporates an 8 – 10mm (SIC) air gap is unlikely to provide the level of noise reduction hoped for.

Windows in old buildings are typically small in relation to wall areas; as such the amount of heat saved by double glazing is rarely cost-effective.

The recent Historic England publication 'Traditional Windows. Their Care, Repair and Upgrading' contains a lot of useful information in relation to this:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/traditional-windows-care-repair-upgrading/>
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Changing the windows within Oak Cottage could lead to pressure from other properties locally to change their windows. A feature of the Conservation Area is the traditional leaded light windows to many of the historic properties fronting the road.

Whilst many aspects of the scheme are acceptable there are still issues with the scale and design of the rear extension and the replacement of many of the windows throughout the property with slim profile double glazed units. These proposals are not

considered to preserve the character, fabric or appearance of this Grade II listed property within the Water End Conservation Area. As such the application does not accord with the NPPF, Policy CS27 or Local Plan Policy 119 and is recommended for refusal.

Response to Site Notice / Newspaper Advertisement

None

Considerations

Background

This is a marginally revised application following recent refusal of a scheme (4/01162/15/LBC and 4/01162/15/FHA) on listed building and conservation grounds in January 2016. That proposal was subject to extensive pre-application and post-application negotiation following withdrawal of an earlier scheme (4/03427/14/LBC) in January 2015 and subsequent re-submission in March 2015 (4/01162/15/LBC and 4/01162/15/FHA).

The principal concerns have related to the size and width of the rebuilt rear projection, the gablet feature to the roof, the amount of glazing, particularly to the rear elevation and the use of slim profile double glazing and the fenestration pattern. The following summarises the steps that were taken in negotiation to try and achieve a scheme that could be approved:

- Initial plans - concerns raised that the extensions appear to overwhelm the listed building and would be unsympathetic in terms of the amount of glazing, and the bulky roof form. (Email dated 15/05/15)
- Revision PL-02 K submitted - gablet feature omitted. Welcome, however, the width and bulk were not amended and the proposal was considered a retrograde step with the introduction of a crown roof. Nor was the amount of glazing reduced. (Email dated 12/06/15)
- Meeting on site - 31/06/15 - advised that further options should be drawn up to reduce width / bulk and the amount of glazing to the rear. In addition it was advised that the introduction of the gabled porch projection was considered to result in an over-articulated and busy appearance to the rear. A much simpler, lean-to canopy, as per the neighbouring property would be considered more appropriate to the cottage, helping to keep it more settled. (Email dated 01/07/15)
- Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 submitted - Option 4 with double pile roof facing river considered preferable as it was the only one that broke up the bulk and mass of the roof when viewed from the rear. Advised that improvements would still need to be introduced to set the left hand "gable" back slightly to provide a clear break and reason for the double "gable". Aesthetically preferable to provide an asymmetric form. Sketch forwarded to agent. (Emails dated 20/07/15 and 23/07/15)
- Two further Options 1 and 2 submitted - These included all discussed amendments. Agreed with agent that Option 1 (PL-02 O) was preferable and that with a full set of

revised plans the application could be recommended for approval. (Email dated 29/07/15)

- Revision PL-02 P submitted - This included the addition of 2 side light windows to the French doors. On balance, the increase in glazing was considered detrimental and did not retain the settled characteristic of the existing building. Advised that the amount of glazing remained disproportionate overall and still dominant to the amount of brickwork on the rear elevation. Also advised that glazing bars should be added to fit with the "cottage style" pattern proposed in the main listed building. The introduction of slim profile double glazing to existing windows was also considered unacceptable in listed building terms. Advised that general policy relating to windows on listed buildings states that historic windows should be retained or repaired and replacement is only to be considered as a last resort or if the window is beyond repair. (Tel conversation with Cons Officer and email dated 20/08/15)
- Revision PL-02 R submitted - Window in rebated section omitted, window glazing throughout reconfigured with front roadside windows in 'Slimlite' double glazed leaded lights, but retaining the triple window with secondary glazing. Removal of glazing bars from remaining windows throughout. However, still considered over-glazed on rear extension and omission of glazing bars detrimental to the character of the cottage. Advised that all existing windows to front should be retained as single glazed with secondary glazing if necessary, and the remaining windows amended with glazing bars as before. Amount and disposition of glazing to the rear of the extension should be amended. (Email dated 10/09/15 from Cons Officer)
- Sample of 'Slimlite' glazing submitted - Advised that the use of slim profile glazing is not acceptable and secondary glazing should be considered. The sample demonstrates the issues that arise with double glazing in that the lines of the applied leadwork are reflected on the inner pane of glass giving a non-traditional appearance; also the internal appearance of the window with the back of the applied leadwork being visible is not considered an acceptable finish. The introduction of float glass double glazing will also give rise to untraditional reflections. If the more modern windows do require replacement this should be on a like for like basis. Glazing bars should be introduced for the new doors to the rear elevation (kitchen and snug). Re-emphasised concern over the amount and over-crowded nature of the glazing on the rear of the extension. Suggested window layouts forwarded. (Email dated 11/11/15)
- Revision PL-02 S submitted (against which the applications 4/01162/15/LBC and 4/01162/15/FHA were ultimately considered and refused) - The plans went full circle back to those originally submitted and further retrograde in respect of the omission of "cottage style" glazing bars throughout, and the introduction of slim profile double glazed leaded lights to the frontage against Conservation advice.

The current application proposes minor amendments from the previous refused scheme in respect of the two ground floor windows on the front elevation. These are now to have high quality secondary glazing fitted to the inside rather than the previously proposed replacement with slimlite double glazing. However, all other alterations / extensions are as previously proposed and refused, including the introduction of double glazing to all windows and doors within the cottage and extensions.

Policy and Principle

Applications for listed building consent can only consider the effect of the proposals on the architectural and historic interest of the listed building, and should ignore all other impacts.

Oak Cottage is a listed building and therefore important to have special regard to the impact of the development on the setting of the listed building.

Saved Policy 119 of the DBLP states that:

"Consent to alter or extend listed buildings will only be granted where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the proposal will be carried out in a manner appropriate to the scale, proportion and external and internal appearance or historic character of the building to which it relates."

Policy CS27 states that:

"The integrity, setting and distinctiveness of designated and undesignated heritage assets will be protected, conserved and if appropriate enhanced."

Effects on listed building

As noted above, the proposals have been the subject of extensive negotiation with both the Conservation Officer and Planning Officer following the withdrawn application in 2015 (4/03427/14/LBC) and the subsequent refused applications in January 2016 (4/01162/15/LBC and 4/01162/15/FHA). The Conservation Officer has noted that, despite a series of incremental amendments on the previous applications which culminated in a scheme in July 2015 (revision PL-02 O) that could be supported, the plans have returned virtually to the original plans submitted with further retrograde steps through for example the omission of glazing bars from the windows / doors.

The plans raise the following issues:

Internal alterations generally supported but omission of glazing bars from French doors / windows is not supported as it would be uncharacteristic of a traditional Chilterns cottage, presenting large undivided casement windows / doors that would be harmful to the architectural character of the cottage.

Rear extension would appear unduly large and bulky, and would tend to overwhelm the existing cottage to the detriment of its character. The scheme under revision PL-02 O had been negotiated to a satisfactory conclusion in this respect with the bulk of the extension broken up.

The amount of glazing within the rear elevation of the extension is excessive and would appear out of character with the existing cottage. It would also tend to accentuate the bulk of the extension. Again, the scheme under revision PL-02 O had been negotiated to a satisfactory conclusion in this respect with a reduced size and number of windows to the rear elevation.

The gabled porch projection, which had been omitted on previous amendments, in

favour of a much simpler lean-to canopy, results in an over-articulated appearance, adding to the clutter of an over-fenestrated extension to the detriment of the character and setting of the listed building.

With the exception of two front windows, the replacement of all windows throughout the property with slim profile double glazed leaded light units or standard double glazing is unacceptable to the architectural and historic interest of the listed building and would set an undesirable precedent.

Whilst the introduction of secondary glazing in lieu of slim profile double glazing to two of the windows on the front elevation is welcomed, and many aspects of the scheme are acceptable, there remain issues with the scale and design of the rear extension / extent of glazing, the introduction of a gabled porch projection to the side extension and the replacement of other windows / doors throughout the property with slim profile / standard double glazing. These changes, for the reasons explained in the Conservation Officer's comments above, are not considered to preserve the character, fabric or appearance of this Grade II listed property within the Water End Conservation Area. Furthermore, if allowed, there is a grave danger that the proposal would set an undesirable precedent to accept slim profile double glazing in the other listed properties in Water End, if not elsewhere within the Borough, to the further detriment of the heritage value of its listed buildings.

These proposals are not considered to preserve the character, fabric or appearance of this Grade II listed property within the Water End Conservation Area. As such the application does not accord with the NPPF, Policy CS27 or Local Plan Policy 119.

RECOMMENDATION - That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:

- 1 The proposed development, by reason of the size, width and form of the rear extension, and the excessive amount of glazing within its rear elevation, would appear unduly large, bulky and out of keeping, and would overwhelm the existing cottage to the detriment of its character, appearance and setting. Furthermore, the introduction of the gabled porch projection together with the unsympathetic style and form of windows within the development, including the replacement of the majority of windows throughout the property with Slimlite / double glazed units, would accentuate the harm to the character and setting of the listed building by respectively adding clutter and harming the architectural and historic interest of the listed building. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CS27 of the Dacorum Borough Core Strategy September 2013 and saved Policy 119 of the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011.**

Article 35 Statement:

Listed Building Consent has been refused for this proposal for the clear reasons set out in this decision notice. The Council acted pro-actively through positive engagement with the applicant at the pre-application stage and during the course of the previous application in an attempt to narrow down reasons for refusal and find a more acceptable way forward. However, this

positive advice has not been followed and objections remain outstanding. Since the Council attempted to find solutions, the requirements of the Framework (paragraphs 186 and 187) have been met and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Order 2015.