



Northumberland County Council

Conservation-Ecology-Archaeology

MEMORANDUM

To: Colin Godfrey, Planning Officer

From: Val Robson, Building Conservation Officer

Date: 8/1/2021

Reference: 20NP0073LBC

Proposal: LBC Retrospective - Alterations to roof, alterations and replacement of windows, repointing of stonework, installation of external flue and retaining wall and associated works.

Address: Holystone Grange, Holystone, Morpeth, NE65 7AN

Significance

Holystone Grange is a grade II listed building which dates from the early 19th century and is of ashlar stone with Welsh and Lakeland slate roofs. It is set within extensive landscaped grounds which include a number of important listed structures. These include the Garden house which is grade II listed and which was reconstructed here in 1933 from materials of 1889-93 by Norman Shaw, bought following the demolition of Haggerston Castle. It is of ashlar stone with a flat roof with a central shallow glass dome. The listing includes a reference to the fact that the "interior of dome has C19 Baroque plaster frieze".

Legislative Framework and Policy

In providing comments on applications Building Conservation has regard to Section 16 (2) and Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which advise that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall 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.

In addition, the NPPF is a material Planning consideration in the assessment of the

application.

Section 12 of the 2018 NPPF is about achieving well-designed places.

Paragraph 124 of section 12 advises that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 of section 12 advises that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

In addition, Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the 2018 NPPF is a material Planning consideration in the assessment of the application.

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF advises 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.

Paragraph 194 advises that 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.

Paragraph 195 advises that where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 196 advises 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.

Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets 2015 should also be taken into consideration in the assessment of this proposal.

Assessment of Development Proposals

Alterations to roof, alterations and replacement of windows, repointing of stonework, installation of external flue and retaining wall and associated works.

Repointing of stonework

The application states that the walling was previously pointed in a sand/cement mix and that it has now been pointed with lime mortar.

These works are considered to be acceptable

Roof

The application states that the roof previously had an asphalt covering with a timber framed and slated cover which had been erected at some point in the past over the dome. The existing roof structure had suffered prolonged water ingress through the asphalt roof covering, possibly due to the additional loading imposed by the additional structure which had been erected over the dome. The applicant has stated that works were carried out to remove the timber framed slate roofed structure to allow the original dome to be exposed (as original construction in 1933). The flat roofs have been replaced with GRP coloured grey with mock lead rolls and lead verges.

The details submitted regarding the structure of the roof dome are considered to be acceptable.

With reference to the internal “ C19 Baroque plaster frieze” which is mentioned on the listing description I note that the applicant states that it was of plastic and plasterboard. This is peculiar given that the use of plastic was not widely available at that time and given the very specific assessment of Historic England. It is a shame that although there are detailed photographs of the external dome before restoration that none were taken of the interior. If you wish me to pursue this matter with Historic England to see if they have any photographs which were taken at the time of listing or any further written details please let me know.

Windows

The application states that the existing windows had softwood timber frames with metal glazed internal panels and that the new windows are painted hardwood windows.

The applicant states that the existing window in the west elevation of the ancillary kitchen area was irreparable and has been replaced with a painted hardwood double glazed casement window. The applicant also states that the existing irreparable window in the North elevation of the ancillary kitchen area has been altered to form a Gothic style window to match the adjacent West Elevation of the main residence.

Whilst these windows are not ideal – the casement window having applied glazing bars and the lancet window being too grandiose for the size and function of this kitchen offshot- it is considered that the quality of the works undertaken balances any harm done to the significance of the building.

The large windows to the south and east elevation, which were a grey/green colour and of a metal appearance (possibly copper ?) have been 'scraped' to reveal a shiny gold/bronze appearance. This is not mentioned in the Heritage Statement.

The additional details which have now been submitted are acceptable

Internal Works

The application states that the existing internal plasterboard and skim coat ceilings were damaged by water ingress through the asphalt roof covering and have been replaced with new plasterboard and skim coat.

A new oil fired heating boiler has been installed in the ancillary kitchen area with a flue out through the west elevation.

These works are considered to be acceptable

Erection of Retaining Wall

The applicant has stated that the bankside to the west elevation of the garden room had slipped and was lying against the external face of the wall to a height of up to 1.2m (from floor level) resulting in dampness. External re-landscaping works were carried out and a stone faced retaining wall erected to remove the earth from against the building.

These works are considered to be acceptable

Conclusion

Building Conservation advise that the only outstanding matter appears to be the issue of the baroque plaster frieze. Given the additional information provided by the applicant

the planning authority may wish to make a decision based on this information or may wish to explore this matter with Historic England.

Val Robson
Building Conservation Officer