

Janice Chapman

From: Peter Mullans [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 October 2012 17:11
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: listed building application BE13712L (ADC)

Dear Dr Wightman,

re: Application for listed building consent BE13712L (ADC)

I was contacted by Mrs Chapman from Arun District Council, in reference to the above application, to say that you had recommended that listed building consent to fit double glazing be refused, and I expressed some disappointment about that, so she suggested I contact you directly to discuss.

I'm very much in sympathy with the aims of keeping listed buildings as original as possible, and all the improvements we have made to our house over the years have been done with this in mind. However, it does seem odd that double glazing is not allowed, even though it doesn't alter the appearance, and even if the windows can't be seen by the public, and do not in any way detract from the character of the house or its setting.

I would be very grateful if you would be kind enough to have another look at this application and perhaps reconsider your advice. I would ensure that the replacement windows were identical, in terms of the depths and widths of glazing bars, rebates, transoms, etc, and of course would submit samples (or dimensioned diagrams where samples are not practicable). So the only difference would be in the glazing, and there would be minimal change in the appearance of the glass, in terms of its reflective qualities, as the glass in the existing windows is modern flat plate glass.

There is also the fact that the windows in question are not visible to the public, as the house is side-on to the street and there are very tall hedges around the whole property.

I believe this situation, of people wanting to fit double-glazing to listed buildings, is becoming more common around the country, probably due to rising energy prices, which I know only too well. We only heat two rooms of our house during the winter, but our annual bill is still around £2,500.

There are some local authorities who have given listed building consent for double-glazing. For example in a project report (detailed at www.changeworks.org.uk) an account is given of fitting several different types of thin double-glazed units in important listed buildings of grades 1 and 2 in a conservation area which is also part of a World Heritage Site. In the Executive Summary it states:

"...The project has demonstrated that appropriate double glazing can be successfully incorporated into listed buildings, improving their thermal performance and lowering their CO2 emissions without detracting from their historic character or appearance. This report recommends that such systems should be permitted in listed buildings, both in Edinburgh and further afield, where there would not be a significant loss of

historic material..."

The report stresses the fact that very slim and efficient types of double-glazed units can now be obtained, and it goes on to recommend that double-glazing should be permitted in listed buildings, with appropriate safeguards. Its conclusions state:

"...In summary, it should be made clear that to all intents and purposes all systems installed had a very negligible impact, if at all, on the appearance of the buildings in question..."

"...Clearly, on close inspection the differences from single glazing may be discernable. However, when balanced against the need for significant CO2 reductions in all existing housing, these variations should not prevent change. Regarding building conservation as 'management of change' allows perspective to be maintained..."

"...Most of the variations in appearance mentioned above are only visible when an individual window is scrutinised close-up. Taking a holistic approach becomes important when considering how to improve the sustainability and energy efficiency of these culturally valuable buildings. This project has demonstrated that slim-profile double glazing can be successfully installed with no easily apparent visual impact..."

"...Energy-saving measures such as secondary glazing are currently permitted without the need for any permissions (where their installation does not alter any building fabric). ... these can have a far greater visual impact than sensitively-installed double glazing. Equality should therefore be awarded to appropriate modern double-glazing technologies..."

It is also interesting to see that in an appeal case (ref: 45/3/179, on www.communities.gov.uk) a Council argued in favour of double-glazed panels on a listed building when the owner wanted single-glazing. The Council made this point, among several others:

"...aesthetic considerations... should be balanced with the need to reduce CO2 emissions and to consider what is in the best overall interests of the building and the health of its occupants..."

The Secretary of State accepted this argument and found in favour of the council.

In conclusion, I do hope that you will be able to reconsider your advice to ADC in the light of the information presented here. In particular the assurance that the dimensions of the window elements will not be changed, so the appearance will remain identical to the existing windows, and that the position of the house is such that the windows are not visible to the public.

Best regards, Peter Mullans