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Subject: BR/137/21/L

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Berghestede 1 Shripney Road Bognor Regis PO22 9LW

Listed building consent for replacement of existing non-original sash windows with retention of existing frames.

Berghestede is a C.17 house which has at some point been renovated. It is 2 storeys and attic with 2 dormers. The principal elevation is very attractive with squared flints with red brick dressings, quoins, stringcourse, panels between ground and 1st floor windows. There is also a modillion eaves cornice on the front and rear elevations. Modern casement windows as well as a doorway with flat hood over. The building is considered to be of architectural and historical significance.

The Proposal

The proposal is for replacement windows which incorporate a double-glazing system.

Windows are an important part of a building's history and can be invaluable to our understanding of historic properties. They can tell us not only of changing architectural taste but social hierarchy, building economics, technical advances and social history through taxation of windows and building materials. Above all, windows are a key part of the architectural composition of a building, and help to establish the character of a house or building. It is considered that the existing traditional windows which include slender glazing bars play an important role in the character and appearance of historic buildings such as this one.

Whilst I appreciate the desire for more thermally efficient windows, the proposal for double glazing needs consideration as it is not always appropriate for a listed building. Historic England also provide information on the methods by which this can be considered within a listed building.

Historic England have provided clear advice as to how this can be achieved in respect of historic buildings without recourse to double glazing. For instance, it should be established if the existing windows can be repaired and thermally improved without their total replacement, whilst considering the possibility of incorporating secondary glazing. There are further suggestions made in the guidance, but the Heritage Statement does not address these alternatives.

The joinery details appear to only relate to proposed doors as opposed to the windows. They also do not provide any great detail regarding the glazing system to be used, including the relevant dimensions: is it what appears to be 28mm, or the slimmer 12mm system? It is assumed that these would incorporate thermal spacers and applied glazing bars. Whilst a number of sections have been provided, they do not provide full elevational details which makes it difficult to understand what their appearance would be. Would they be the same or different? Unfortunately, it is not clear.

It is also difficult to understand from looking at the information provided how any glazing bars, if any, will be treated which is unfortunate and disappointing. There are two approaches that could be used as part of this proposal: to use glazing bars that are applied to one larger pane of glass or to use properly formed bars, which form part of the structure of the window.

In the first option, false glazing bars are applied to the surface of the window over a larger pane of glass in order to reduce costs and allow a standard double-glazed unit to be used. This approach is historically incorrect, aesthetically unconvincing and not appropriate for a listed building.

The second option requires that the glazing bars are integral to the windows. However, these generally would need to be thicker than the originals in order to take the extra weight of the double glazing (this would also likely be the case even with slimline double-glazed panes due to their size).

Windows such as those proposed (with standard glazing units) tend to lack the subtlety of detailing/profiles of the traditional ones, and will not only increase the perception of modern, standard windows, but also affect the design of the windows themselves. The use of standard double-glazed units will not only increase the perception of modern, standard windows, but also affect the design of the windows themselves. This would harm the character and appearance of the listed building. The same can also be said at times for the much slimmer glazing units.

This type of double glazed unit and window design is therefore not appropriate for a listed building and is considered to cause harm.

Conclusion

At present, it is considered that there are some concerns regarding the need for the windows to be replaced, as well as the lack of assessment of alternative options to improve their thermal efficiency. Further, the windows are a key element of this particular house and the use of the double glazing is of concern.

Therefore, at present, I am of the opinion that the proposal could be described as causing less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2019). As such, you will also need to consider the public benefits that the development may achieve as part of your assessment of the application, along with the contents of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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Please note: I work on Conservation for half of the working week (all day Monday and Friday and Tuesday Afternoons)

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