

Heritage statement

Replacement casement windows

Highway Cottage, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, RG7 1BA

1. Introduction

1.1 The Heritage Statement has been completed to support the householder application for listed building consent relating to the replacement of windows at Highway Cottage, Basingstoke Road, Three Mile Cross, Berkshire RG7 1BA.

1.2 The property consists of a detached dwelling, the original part of which is believed to have been constructed in the middle of the eighteenth century. The building has been much altered and extended over the last 275 years or so, so that it now consists of three bedrooms and a WC on the first floor, together with a kitchen, study, bathroom, and sitting/dining room on the ground floor. The house has been Grade II listed since 29th April 1987. The precise entry in the listing is as follows:

“Small house. C.18, altered and extended C.20. Brick, old tile gabled roof. Two storeys, flanking chimneys. Road front: First floor string, boxed eaves. Two bays of three light wood casement windows and central door with flat board hood. C.20 extension at the rear. At one time a Public House known as ‘The George and Dragon’.”

Along with other houses in the immediate area, it is located within an Area of Special Character as designated by Wokingham Borough Council. If relevant to the context, a large modern BP petrol station with car wash, supermarket and carpark is located immediately adjacent to Highway Cottage’s western boundary.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The following section is considered most relevant to this proposal:

Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

2.2 The following paragraphs of this section are considered to be most important in relation to this application:

2.3 189. 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.

2.4 192. 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.

2.5 193. 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.

2.6 200. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

2. Site Proposals

2.11 The application proposes the replacement of existing windows in a like for like fashion. Those on the front elevation facing the Basingstoke Road are detailed in the Grade II listing. The other windows are not visible to the public.

2.12 Some of the windows due to their age and wear, despite best efforts in renovation, are suffering from deterioration in condition.

2.13 The proposed replacement windows are to be painted timber of traditional flush casement design in exact replica of the current listed detail. They will be bespoke made in solid hardwood to suit the character, age and construction of the house, including the handles and fixtures. All installed in full compliance with Building Regulations Document L (2021 edition incorporating 2023 amendments).

3. Heritage Impacts

3.1 The property is located within Three Mile Cross Area of Special Character and is Grade II listed.

3.2 It is considered that the replacement of the windows will result in no negative impact upon the appearance of the property or the local area – indeed, there will be no observable difference in appearance once the work is completed.

3.3 The proposed replacement windows are designed to conserve the character and appearance of the building and will be bespoke made by a leading and reputable specialist heritage window company, Sherborne Windows. They will also provide sound-proofing and improved heat retention in accordance with the desire to lessen environmental impact.

4. Conclusion

It is therefore considered that the proposal fully complies with the requirements of section 16 of the NPPF, and there is no material reason in heritage terms why consent should not be given.