



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 April 2012

by **David Nicholson** RIBA IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 11 June 2012

Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/E/11/2162073

23 Silver Street, Ilminster, Somerset TA19 0DH

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Jane Morgan against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
 - The application Ref. 11/00850/LBC, dated 15 February 2011, was refused by notice dated 15 April 2011.
 - The works proposed are removal of existing double doors in west elevation of 23 Silver Street, Ilminster & replacement with fire door & side panel in existing opening.
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Decision

1. **The appeal is dismissed.**

Main Issues

2. The main issues are whether the proposed works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, and; the effects of the works on the character and appearance of the Ilminster Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. Ilminster Conservation Area includes many of the town's historic buildings and street patterns. No.23 Silver Street is close to the core of the conservation area. It was originally listed with Nos.19-21, in 1976, as part of a group of buildings in the same ownership and use, but from which it has recently been separated. Since then, on account of the survival of internal fixtures and fittings, Nos.19-21 have been recognised as one of the best-preserved draper's shops in the country and, following an English Heritage report, were upgraded to Grade II*.
4. No.23 was also re-assessed but retained at Grade II. The report notes that it should be designated for its sash windows and shop-front, its record of the growth of the adjoining business, and for group value with adjacent buildings and others in Silver Street. It notes that the rear of No.23 was rebuilt in the 1930s, lacks any intrinsic claims to attention and thus is not of special interest. Having viewed the site and studied the detailed English Heritage report and the Council's representations I can find nothing of significance to the listed building as a designated heritage asset in the rear extension. Nevertheless, the rear of No.23 is still attached to the front, and so part of the overall building, and should therefore be treated as part of the listed building for consent purposes. Moreover, while not of special interest, the stone and brick walls with tiled roofs provide at least a neutral backdrop to the front of the building.

5. The proposed fire door and side panel have been installed and I had the benefit of seeing them in place. The works are to an existing opening onto a private access to the side of the building within the further part of the rear extension. The previous double doors were made of timber within an existing opening in a limestone rubble wall in a part of the building which has no special architectural or historic interest. The replacement door and panel are half glazed within substantial uPVC frames.
6. In my assessment, the introduction of new, bright, white, modern plastic elements with thick, heavy, bulky framing is entirely at odds with the form and materials of the surrounding historic building. While the extension may not be of special interest it is still part of the building and very much part of its setting. By attracting attention away from the traditional stone and brickwork along the side access, the door and panel also detract from the historic character of the building as a whole and jar within its setting. To the extent that door is visible from public viewpoints within the conservation area, which will be particularly true when the door is open, I find that its character and appearance would also be harmed.
7. I have noted that the previous door was rotting but this could have been repaired or replaced to match without the requirement for consent. If necessary, glazing could probably have been included without harm to the historic character or setting. While replacement windows have been inserted into the adjacent buildings, I am informed that these are unlisted.
8. I therefore conclude that the works conflict with policy in paragraph 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the *Framework*) which attaches great importance to the conservation of designated heritage assets (which include listed buildings and conservation areas. As the new features, and their material in particular, do not follow the character of the building or the surrounding conservation area they are contrary to extant guidance in the *PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* which, at paragraphs 185-186, advises that *The insertion of new elements such as doors and windows, ... is quite likely to adversely affect the building's significance and New features added to a building are less likely to have an impact on the significance if they follow the character of the building.*
9. To the extent that they are material considerations, the works fail to comply with current adopted policies EH3 and EH1 of the South Somerset Local Plan, which do not permit development which would harm the character of a listed building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and; require development in a conservation area to preserve or enhance its character or appearance.
10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Nicholson

INSPECTOR