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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2012

**by Mrs A L Fairclough MA, BSc(Hons), LLB(Hons), PGDipLP, MRTPI, IHBC**  
an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

**Decision date: 28 August 2012**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/E/12/2170378**

**Vicarage House, Vicarage Fold, Wiswell, Clitheroe BB7 9DF**

- 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 Mr Ken Dobson against the decision of Ribble Valley Borough Council.
  - The application Ref 3/2011/0624, dated 2 August 2011, was refused by notice dated 21 December 2011.
  - The works proposed are described as 'fit secondary glazing'.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Preliminary Matters

2. In March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published, cancelling, amongst other things, *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5). However, the *PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* (HEPPG) remains valid.

## Main Issues

3. Vicarage House is a Grade I listed building that lies within the Wiswell Conservation Area. On this basis the main issues are whether the works would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and, linked to that, whether they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area. On top of that, there is a need to consider whether the proposals would offer sufficient benefit to outweigh any harm that might be caused.

## Reasons

4. Vicarage House is a 2-storey stone built house, with a stone slate roof. It dates back to around the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century. The architectural palette includes stone mullion windows with hollow chamfers and outer chamfers and hood moulds. They are 2, 3, 4 and 5 light windows, which are arranged asymmetrically on the main elevations, many of them have slender, single glazed metal frames. The uninterrupted visibility of the form of the fine mullion windows allows the special architectural and historic interest of the building to be appreciated internally. Externally the existing views into the building, from within the curtilage, allows the depth of the thick stone walls to

be seen. These features contribute to the architectural and historic significance of the listed building.

5. The house is located in the heart of Wiswell. It is a large building with a substantial plot and is one of only two listed buildings within the Wiswell Conservation Area. Therefore, I agree with the Council in that it can be described as forming a focal building in the Wiswell Conservation Area. The appeal dwelling is set at a higher level than the road and is screened from view along Pendleton Road by a high stone wall with a mature hedge atop. However, the upper floor windows on the front elevation are visible from the junction of Pendleton Road and Moor Lane and the listed building can also be glimpsed between the boundary trees and via the entrance gate on Vicarage Fold. Thus the building contributes positively to the architectural and historic significance of the Wiswell Conservation Area.
6. The proposed works include the installation of secondary glazing to all the windows. No drawings have been submitted to illustrate the precise design of the secondary glazing and I have no full technical specification. However it seems that it would take the form of aluminium frames at each window which would be fixed to the building by the drilling of holes into the internal stonework. The edging trims to each secondary glazing frame would be shaped to fit snugly between the wall and frame and the fixed frames would then be sealed into place using a silicone sealant. Horizontal sliders would be incorporated in 2, 3 or 4 panels. These would be fitted into the frames using brass rollers to ensure a smooth opening action for ease of ventilation. In addition, twin brush rollers would be fitted to ensure efficient sealing to eliminate draughts and for security. Locks and handles would then be fitted to enhance security.
7. Each window would require the drilling of several holes to ensure that the secondary glazing frames would be fixed to the inside of the stone reveals. This would remove small parts of historic stonework. The frames would be sealed using a silicone sealant, which bonds to the stone and could cause further damage. Consequently, I am not persuaded that the proposal would not cause damage the listed building. Furthermore, I do not consider that the works would be traditionally repairable without blemish. Moreover, the introduction of horizontal sliders would create a prominent frame when viewed internally, which would have a flat, uniform appearance and would obscure the finesse of the detailing found in the individually glazed lights. The works would appear crude when viewed in conjunction with the fine timber panelling within the house. To my mind the proposed secondary glazing to the mullion window closest to the staircase would also appear discordant as the internal reveal is shallow and chamfered.
8. Moreover, the glazing and the vertical parts of the individual sliding frames could also be visible externally in the form of double reflection and vertical features mid glass. Thus the introduction of an off the peg solution to a building with a variety of window opening sizes would appear contextually incongruous. To my mind the proposed works would not be of an appropriate design for the fenestration type exhibited in Vicarage House. It would not sustain or enhance the significance of Vicarage House as a focal building within Wiswell Conservation Area and to the extent that the works would be seen, they would also fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

9. While I acknowledge that the harm it would cause to the significance of the listed building is less than substantial. Paragraph 134 of the Framework states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
10. The proposal would provide some benefit to the appellants, notably improved energy efficiency and security. I note the appellant states that it would also allow the existing windows to be retained. I also acknowledge that the appellant has implemented significant improvements to improve energy efficiency in his home and that he wishes to reduce heat loss and condensation during the winter months. Paragraph 95 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings. However, paragraph 87 of HEPPG also states that where a proposal causes minor harm there will still be a loss of value to society caused by that harm and some works may seem individually of little importance but can cumulatively be destructive of a heritage asset's significance.
11. Although, the energy benefits of this scheme would be considered both a private and public benefit, I consider that this would not outweigh the harm I have identified by the installation of secondary glazing to all the windows at Vicarage House. This would harm the character of the listed building and, linked to that; it would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
12. I note that the appellant states that the companies involved with installing secondary glazing have years of experience of fitting secondary glazing to stone mullion windows in Grade I listed buildings. However, paragraph 86 of HEPPG states that not all designated assets are of equal significance or sensitivity to change. I am required to determine this appeal on its own merits in the light of current policy.
13. The proposed works would accord with the Framework in respect of energy improvements. However, it is my view that these do not provide sufficient public benefit to outweigh the harm that I have identified. On that overall basis, this aspect of the proposed scheme would conflict with the Framework. It also conflicts with HEPPG.

## **Conclusions**

14. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

*Mrs A Fairclough*

INSPECTOR