

A National Amenity Society

Mr Adrian Dowd
Planning Case Officer
Ribble Valley Borough Council
By email: planning@ribblevalley.gov.uk

29th March 2022

Higher Chipping House, Cutler Lane, Chipping, Preston, PR3 2SY. Application No. 3/2022/0186

Dear Mr Dowd,

Thank you for notifying The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) about the above case. Based on the information supplied with this application, we offer the following observations and advice to assist your authority in determining the application.

Summary

The CBA are broadly supportive of these proposals. However, this application fails to meet the requirements of paragraphs 194, 199 or 200 of the NPPF. We advise that the level of impact to extant fabric which is proposed requires justification and that less intrusive alternatives would be preferable, if they are practicable.

Significance

Higher Chipping House is a Grade II Listed building, which dates from the late 18th century. The house exhibits balanced classical proportions in terms of symmetry in its principal elevation and plan form. The Outbuilding, which this application also concerns is curtilage listed to the house. This appears (from a google search) to be more vernacular in design and construction, as well as perhaps less altered in the 20th century. As a result its historical and evidential values are potentially high. However this has not been assessed or understood within this application. For this reason the requirements of paragraph 194 of the NPPF are not currently met.

Comments

The CBA are broadly supportive of this application to convert an existing out building into auxiliary domestic accommodation and to undertake repair and maintenance work to the listed building. However, there is insufficient detail at present about the current condition of fabric which is proposed to be replaced. Paragraph 199 of the NPPF requires that 'great weight' is given to the conservation of the listed building. In this context it means that repair of existing fabric is preferable to its replacement, due to the historical and evidential values that historic building fabric contributes to the overall significance of the listed building. It is proposed to replace all of the windows on site. This requires 'clear and convincing justification' for the level of impact this will have on the legible evolution of the building and its historic character. A window schedule would be helpful in this instance in identifying the age, construction and condition of the windows

proposed to be replaced. There are less drastic alternatives to replacement such as the repair of historically significant windows, which include draft proofing measures to improve their thermal efficiency. This option should be considered for any windows that are not 20th century soft wood replacements.


It is clear that there is a conservation-led methodology to the choice of building materials proposed here, which the CBA fully support – the use of limecrete as a floor screed and breathable insulation and lime plaster for the out building. The historical significance of this building has not been assessed within this application. From the existing plans it appears this structure may have been built as stables? Or did it have an agricultural function? Retaining the legibility of the building's original function is desirable within any adaptive reuse scheme. Keeping the nibs of what appear to be dividing walls between stalls could help achieve this. It is not clear at present whether it is necessary to take down and rebuild the roadside wall of the outbuilding. It is clear that the wall is not currently straight, but the proposed rebuild would be. This needs explanation, justification and understanding. This will have an impact on its character, appearance and evidential value. Again, dismantling and rebuilding is a drastic measure and consolidation and repair of the wall would be a preferable way of correcting any defect. This element of these proposals requires further information to meet the requirements of paragraphs 199 and 200 of the NPPF.

Recommendation

The CBA request that your LPA's conservation team are satisfied that the level of intervention and loss of building fabric that is proposed by this application is justified. We recognise that the benefit of a site visit may help you determine whether these proposals do meet the requirements of paragraphs 199 and 200 of the NPPF. Without a detailed heritage assessment it is not possible for the CBA, or other National Amenity Societies to determine whether the level of impact is justified. The CBA advise that less intrusive means of repair and consolidation would be preferable for the windows in the principal house and the road side wall of the outbuilding, if such options are possible.

I trust these comments are useful to you; please keep the CBA informed of any developments with this case.

Kind Regards,



Catherine Bell. MA (cons), ACIfA
Listed Buildings Caseworker for England

Council for British Archaeology

The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) is the national amenity society concerned with protection of the archaeological interest in heritage assets. Local planning authorities have a duty to notify the CBA of applications for listed building consent involving partial or total demolition, under the procedures set out in, **Arrangements for handling heritage applications – notification To Historic England and National Amenity Societies and the Secretary of state (England) direction 2021.**