

Heritage Statement
and
Design and Access Statement
Alteration to fireplace at
South Well, Carraway Lane, Marnhull, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1NJ

Introduction

This statement is written to comply with paragraphs 128 and 129 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF) which requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by alterations, including any contribution made by their setting, stating that ‘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’.

Such an approach is also identified as best practice in Historic England’s ‘Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 – Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment’ (March 2015), which notes that ‘the information required in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision’.

The proposal

This application is for retrospective listed building consent to replace a poor modern ‘Adam style’ reproduction fireplace with a more appropriate wooden fire surround in the rear ground floor living room.

The need for listed building consent

Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that “no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised.”

As such, for the replacement fireplace to require listed building consent it must constitute an alteration in a manner which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

There is no question that the replacement of one fire surround with another constitutes an alteration to the listed building. However it is not an alteration which affects the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building.

The replacement of one modern fireplace with a similar modern fireplace is an alteration to the listed building but, fundamentally, it is not an alteration which, in terms of the Act ‘would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest’. As such consent is not required.

The alteration to the fire surround should be considered more akin to replacing modern kitchen units or replacing modern fitted furniture in a listed building which is never deemed to be an alteration which requires listed building consent.

However, the local planning authority has already refused a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Works to a Listed Building and takes the view that listed building consent is required. Hence this application.

Justification

The previous fire surround was a very poor modern 'Adam style' fireplace with stuck on plastic mouldings, the type purchased from B&Q or Jewsons. It related poorly to the period of the listed building, made no contribution to its special architectural or historic interest and was arguably of negative heritage significance (ie it caused harm to the character of the listed building).

The replacement fire surround is a simpler more appropriate design which avoids the use of inappropriate period motifs. Its relatively simple design responds better to the vernacular origins of the listed building. It is only loosely fitted to the listed building and is totally reversible.

Access

Access arrangements are not affected by the proposed alteration.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out in this Heritage Statement the proposed alteration is totally compatible with the preservation of the listed building.

As such the proposals comply with policies aimed at conserving and enhancing the historic environment contained in the NPPF, the adopted Local Plan and, most importantly, the statutory duty set by Sections 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Peter Bell BA MA (bldg. cons.) PDD (bldg. cons.) IHBC

Heritage Consultant