

North York Moors National Park Authority

District/Borough: Scarborough Borough Council
(North)
Parish: Fylingdales

Application No. NYM/2020/0140/FL

Proposal: variation of condition 2 (material amendment) of planning approval
NYM/2019/0347/FL to allow replacement stonework to front wall of the
dwelling (resubmission following refusal of NYM/2019/0700/FL)

Location: Grove Cottage
Thorpe Bank
Fylingthorpe

Decision Date: 23 April 2020
Extended to:

Consultations

Parish - The Parish Council object to this planning application. As previously stated this property is in a conservation area and the Council feel strongly that each property's individuality should be respected. The application would change the street view.

Highways – No objections

Site Notice Expiry Date – 6 April 2020

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Reason(s) for Refusal

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| 1 | The proposed refacing of the existing front brick wall of the dwelling with stone would harm the ability to read the significance and development of this building, harming the significance of this designated heritage asset and causing significant harm to the character and appearance of this attractive and historic property and that of the surrounding conservation area contrary to Core Policy G and Development Policies 4 and 19. These policies aim to ensure that new development achieves a high standard of design, which reflects or complements that of the local vernacular and does not detract from the character, form and setting of the original dwelling. |
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**Background**

Grove Cottage is a semi-detached property located halfway up Sledgates within Fylingthorpe Conservation Area. Planning permission was granted earlier this year for the alterations and extensions, double garage and vehicular access following the demolition of an existing side extension and brick outbuildings. The permission also included the demolition of the existing boundary wall and rebuilding a brick boundary wall at a lower height with the access point moved.

This application seeks permission to vary that approval to reface the brickwork on the front elevation of the house with natural stone.

Main Issues

Core Policy G of the Local Development Plan seeks to ensure that the landscape, historic assets and cultural heritage of the National Park are conserved and enhanced, with particular protection being given to those elements which contribute to the character and setting of Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens or Scheduled Monuments and other sites of archaeological importance.

Development Policy 4 seeks to ensure that development within or immediately adjacent to a Conservation Area either preserves or enhances the character and appearance or setting of the area and that the scale, proportions, design and materials respect the existing architectural and historic context with particular reference to traditional buildings, street patterns, the relationship between buildings and spaces and views into and out of the area.

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Development Policy 19 is supportive of development to domestic properties within the domestic curtilage of dwellings which takes into account the special qualities of the National Park and architectural character of settlements.

The draft Fylingthorpe Conservation Area Appraisal provides a good account of the historic and architectural character of the Fylingthorpe Conservation Area. It states that the majority of buildings in the Conservation Area are not listed but appear to be 18th and 19th century in date and face the street front. Most are constructed of well-dressed honey coloured sandstone, much of it with herringbone tooling, although there are a few brick buildings. There are some painted facades and pebble dash but these are not characteristic. As such, the removal of the painted finish to the walls is supported however the use of brick is considered to be appropriate in this location and is a detail which contributes to the character of the Conservation Area.

Under s.72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, in exercising its planning functions the Authority shall pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Area.

Grove Cottage is an example of a traditional multi - phased building which is situated facing onto the highway, within the Fylingthorpe Conservation Area. Although a stone-built property, the principal façade has been refaced in brick (now painted). The building is of modest scale with typical vernacular architectural details. The Conservation Area is characterised by a number of high quality vernacular buildings, and in particular stone-built cottages and houses facing onto the highway, each set back from the pavement edge with a small front garden. The arrangement of these buildings and their character is an important part of the distinctiveness of the Conservation Area.

The mixture of stonework and brick provides evidence of the evolution of the site and the ability to read the development of this building. Such details/features can often be historic and the loss of this evidence can harm the historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

As expressed in para.193 of the NPPF any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (the Conservation Area) should require clear and convincing justification.

It is considered that insufficient justification has been put forward, other than the brick is in a poor state of repair, however no evidence has been provided of this. The surrounding brick buildings and boundary wall are constructed of a good quality, historic handmade brick and therefore while it is likely that the façade of the property was re-faced using the same materials it is difficult to assess the age, quality or condition of the brickwork because of its painted finish. However it is clear that the brick is historic and from their dimensions are likely to be late 18th to early 19^h century in date.

It is considered that the use of brick conveys the history of the building and contribute to its architectural character and that of the wider Conservation Area. It is suspected that the front façade was constructed in brick so as to contrast the secondary stone elevations, as at this time brick was considered to be a superior material. This is a vernacular building of great charm and the stone, brick and pantile are vernacular materials. As such the use of brick is totally appropriate for this area and the exposed bricks appear to be in good condition with no indication of any structural failure in the elevation. As such their loss would be harmful to

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the character of this building and the wider Conservation Area, and in accordance with para.194 of the NPPF I see no justification for their loss.

Replacing the historic building materials of historic buildings is incompatible with preserving significance of heritage assets. Historic England's principles of repair is "A conservative approach is fundamental to good conservation - so retaining as much of the significant historic fabric and keeping changes to a minimum are of key importance when carrying out repair work to historic buildings. The unnecessary replacement of historic fabric, no matter how carefully the work is carried out, can in most situations have an adverse effect on character and significance."

Whilst the harm would be less than substantial (para.196) any harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The building is in sound condition and is occupied and as such there does not appear to be any wider public benefit as a result of this application.

The removal of the paint to expose the brick would be an enhancement but should only be done using non-abrasive methods (Dof/Torc or poultice with test area). Sandblasting would cause catastrophic damage to the brick and should not be a technique used in this instance. Any bricks which are of poor condition could be replaced on a like for like basis.

Draft Local Plan

Strategic Policy I, The Historic Environment seeks to ensure that all development affecting the historic environment should make a positive contribution to the cultural heritage and the local distinctiveness of the National Park. Policy ENV11, Historic Settlements and Built Heritage seeks to ensure development to preserve and conserve the built environment, including Conservation Areas, with little change proposed from existing policies. However, these policies can only be given limited weight at this stage.

Conclusion

The ability to read the significance and development of Grove Cottage lies in the presence of brickwork alongside stonework and therefore the proposal to instate stonework across the front elevation of the dwelling would harm the significance of this designated heritage asset.

In view of the above considerations it is considered that the proposal would harm the character of this building and the character of the conservation area and refusal is recommended.

Explanation of how the Authority has Worked Positively with the Applicant/Agent

The Authority's Officers have appraised the scheme against the Development Plan and other material considerations and concluded that the scheme represents a form of development so far removed from the vision of the sustainable development supported in the Development Plan that no changes could be negotiated to render the scheme acceptable and thus no changes were requested.