



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 January 2011

by David Nicholson RIBA IHBC

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

Decision date: 4 February 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/F0114/E/10/2135266

4 Lower Camden Place, Bath BA1 5JJ

- 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 Rupert Shaw against the decision of Bath & North East Somerset Council.
 - The application Ref 09/04887/LBA, dated 17 December 2009, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2010.
 - The works proposed are dampproofing of front vaults, infilling light well with glazed roof, relocating WC.
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Decision

- 1. I dismiss the appeal.**

Main Issue

2. From the evidence and all representations submitted, and my inspection of the site, I find that the main issue is whether the proposals would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Reasons

3. Nos.1-13 Lower Camden Place make up a row of similar early 19th century Grade II listed terraced houses within the Bath Conservation Area and World Heritage Site (WHS). The terrace is typical of most of the conservation area insofar as the façades are of ashlar stone with sash windows. Not unusually, the houses in the terrace are set back from the road, with lightwells in between, and vaults under the footway. I saw on my visit that the lightwells close to No.4 are generally uncovered.
4. In my assessment, the arrangement of the lightwell and vaults is part of the significance of the listed building. The proposed glazed roof would significantly alter and detract from these historic features and so harm the special interest of the listed building. As the house contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area, and to the WHS, these would also be harmed.
5. After initial consultations, the appellant acknowledged that a cementitious damp proofing would alter the fabric of the vaults and, through a contractor's report and quotation, has suggested a membrane solution that would be reversible other than its fixings. Essentially it would turn the interiors of the vaults into large waterproof containers. I saw that the vaults are damp and suffer from organic growth and salts, but this is inevitable given their location below the road. Moreover, this was probably always a feature of vaults which

may have been used for coal storage. While I accept that a membrane would be a less harmful solution than a render, I am not persuaded that the need for dry storage in the house would justify converting the vaults rather than simply putting items for storage elsewhere or into freestanding waterproof containers.

6. For all the above reasons, I find that the proposals would conflict with government policy in Planning Policy Statement 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* that there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets, the significance of which can be harmed through alteration (Policy HE9).
7. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should fail.

David Nicholson

INSPECTOR