

Appeal Decision Notice

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Decision by R F Loughridge, a Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers

- Listed building consent appeal reference: LBA-290-2018
- Site address: Broachrigg Farmhouse, Broachrigg Farm, Rosewell, Midlothian EH24 9DZ
- Appeal by Duncan Hew Hunter against the decision by Midlothian Council
- Application for listed building consent 12/00724/LBC dated 30 October 2012 granted subject to conditions by notice dated 24 December 2012
- The works proposed: Installation of replacement windows and doors, alteration to existing window openings, demolition of attached outbuildings, formation of decking, installation of rooflights, recladding of existing porch with timber and associated internal alterations
- The condition appealed against is condition 3 that the 16mm thick window panes indicated on drawings 1257(PA)01B and 1257(PA) 02A are not approved. The thickness of the double glazing on the replacement and new windows shall not exceed 12mm. Within one month of the date of this consent, details of the revised window design shall be submitted to the planning authority for written approval *[Reason: In the interests of protecting the character and appearance of the listed building. The applicant has not provided sufficient justification for the use of 16mm thick glazing. Significantly thinner double glazing is produced and can be easily obtained.]*
- Date of site visit by Reporter: 6 March 2013

Date of appeal decision: 8 April 2013

Decision

I dismiss the appeal and refuse to vary the terms of the listed building consent.

Reasoning

1. The determining issue in this appeal centres on the choice of glazing for the replacement windows, and the acceptability or otherwise of the appellant's proposal to install 16mm thick glazing for reasons of thermal efficiency.
2. Broachrigg Farmhouse is an early 19th century, two-storey, three-bay, rectangular-plan farmhouse with later additions and alterations. In 1999 it was listed category C. It is currently undergoing substantial renovation/restoration. Works commenced in advance of an application for listed building consent.



3. It is proposed to replace all the existing windows, other than the window on the east elevation of the extension, with double glazed timber sash and case windows. The window on the east elevation would be replaced by a glazed double door providing access to decking from the kitchen. In all cases, the glazing panes would be 16mm thick. In addition, the concrete lintol and mullions of the front dining room window (on the north elevation) would be replaced with timber.

4. There is no dispute that, as part of these works, the windows all require to be replaced in light of their decayed state. They are beyond repair. In such circumstances, national policy envisages that replacement windows should as nearly as possible match the originals in every respect. In most cases, six-over-six sash and case windows will be replaced by similar, but double-glazed versions. In addition, however, the proposal is to use thicker glass than existing. Increasing the thickness of the glass would require consequential increases in the dimensions of the surrounding timberwork.

5. The dining room window on the north elevation, however, appears to have been a later alteration, and the Council does not take issue with the proposed replacement of the concrete lintol and mullions. Similarly the Council does not take issue with the change in the window of the east elevation (also in a later extension) to form a glazed door giving access to the decking.

6. I consider the farmhouse to be a pleasing albeit plain building with much of its original quality surviving. I find that among the defining features of the building are the pattern and proportions of the fenestration. The existing sash and case windows in both the north and south elevations are characteristically small; and I agree with the Council that the changes in timber proportions consequential upon increasing the thickness of the glass as proposed would have a detrimental effect on the building erosive of its character and appearance. I do not accept the contention advanced on behalf of the appellant that the changes involved would be barely discernible.

7. In the submission on behalf of the appellant, there was little said about the reasons for the choice of the thicker glass beyond drawing attention to an increase in thermal efficiency. While it may be true that greater thermal efficiency might be achieved, that in itself does not warrant a departure from the normal policy approach that replacement windows should as far as possible be like for like.

8. My attention was also drawn to another building some distance away in which thicker glass had been found acceptable by the Council. I do not accept that what was decided in a different building in a different location is instructive in assessing the impact of the present proposal on the present building.

9. I am required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. In assessing this proposal I have taken into account Historic Scotland's guidance note on managing change in the historic environment which sets out principles that apply to altering the windows in buildings such as this. It advises that where there is no alternative to the

replacement of historic windows or elements of their glazing or joinery, the new elements should match the original. Specifically the note advises that this should include replication of the proportion, opening method, astragal dimensions and profiles. Where replacement by new more thermally efficient windows is under consideration, the new windows should match the detailed design of the historic ones. In the circumstances of this case, I consider that guidance to be sound, and I see no reason to depart from its terms. What is proposed falls short of what is required.

10. I have considered all the other matters raised in the submissions, but find nothing which leads me to a different conclusion. The condition attached to the listed building consent issued by the Council is soundly based and it should remain in place as an integral part of the listed building consent granted.

RF Loughridge
Reporter