

E/08/0409/A

E/08/0409/A – The unauthorised removal of the main staircase and replacement of the main front entrance door of the Grade II listed building at North Leys, High Street, Much Hadham, Herts, SG10 6DE.

Parish: MUCH HADHAM CP

Ward: MUCH HADHAM

RECOMMENDATION

That the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Director of Internal Services, be authorised to take enforcement action under Section 38 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and any such further steps as may be required to secure the replacement of the main staircase and the main front door of the building in accordance with a detailed specification to be formulated by Officers, and agreed in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.

Period for compliance: 4 months

Reason why it is expedient to issue an enforcement notice:

The unauthorised removal of the main staircase and main front door from this heritage asset is detrimental to the character and appearance of this Grade II listed building. The works are therefore contrary to policy HE7 and policy HE9 of Planning Policy Statement 5.

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1.0 Background

- 1.1 The site is shown on the attached Ordnance Survey extract. It is located on the northern edge of Much Hadham High Street and within the Much Hadham Conservation Area. The property is also Grade II listed.
- 1.2 Following a concern raised by a local resident that there had been works carried out inside the listed building without the benefit of listed building consent, a site visit was made on the 29th June 2010 with the owner's agent to view those works.

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- 1.3 It was apparent at that visit that the main staircase within the entrance hall leading to the first floor had been removed, together with part of the first floor landing. It was also noted that the main entrance door to the front of the property had been replaced with one of a design that is not considered to be in keeping with the architectural and historic character of the building.
- 1.4 In respect of the staircase, the owner's agent showed Officers a letter from a company stating that the staircase had been removed because it was infested and considered to be in a dangerous condition. No contact had however been made with the local planning authority prior to the removal of the staircase.
- 1.5 Photographs of the site will be available at the meeting.

2.0 Planning History

- 2.1 The recent planning history is as follows: -

3/06/0813/FP	New vehicular access from garden to high street	Approved with conditions
3/06/0814/LB	New vehicular access from garden to high street	Approved with conditions
3/08/1801/FP	Erection of a new detached garage/store. New gable end to roof. Construction of a rear canopy. Construction of a retaining wall incorporating steps to rear of property.	Approved with conditions
3/08/1802/LB	New gable end. Replacement of roof tiles with Welsh slate. Construction of a rear canopy. New porch. Minor internal alterations. Removal of two windows & insertion of new window & replacement door in rear elevation. Replacement window in side elevation. Demolition of existing garage.	Approved with conditions

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3.0 Policy

3.1 The relevant national policy guidance in this matter is contained within Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment.

4.0 Considerations.

4.1 The above policy guidance indicates that proposals to extend or alter a listed building will be permitted in circumstances where:

- a) It would not result in the damage or loss of features of special architectural or historic interest
- b) The character and appearance or setting of the building would be preserved or enhanced.

4.2 In this case, however, it is considered that the removal of these identified key features has resulted in significant harm being caused to the historic and architectural character of the building. The main staircase was the focal point of the main hall and its loss is therefore detrimental to the historic character of the building.

4.3 The replacement of the former staircase is possible, and indeed considered essential in this case in order to help restore the historic character of the building. As such, a listed building enforcement notice would be required in order to ensure that the replacement is carried out in accordance with a specification and details to be agreed by Officers.

4.4 Similarly, the replacement front door is considered to be of a detailed design that does not reflect the fenestration detailing of the house or indeed the original door. As such, it is detrimental to the historic character of the listed building and officers consider that this should be replaced with a new door that replicates the original in terms of design and detailing. Again, this requirement would be specified on the listed building enforcement notice.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 It is therefore recommended that authorisation be given to issue and serve an enforcement notice requiring a replacement staircase and new front entrance door to be installed in accordance with a detailed schedule to be set out by Officers within the terms of the notice.