

Appeal Decision Notice

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Decision by Michael J P Cunliffe, a Reporter appointed by the Scottish Ministers

- Listed building consent appeal reference: LBA-300-2004
- Site address: 31 Church Street, Portknockie AB56 4LN
- Appeal by Mr T Murphy against the decision by Moray Council
- Application for listed building consent 15/00246/LBC dated 2 February 2015 refused by notice dated 6 April 2015
- The works proposed: Replacement of four windows and two doors
- Application drawing: Drawing No 01: Replacement of windows and doors
- Date of site visit by Reporter: 23 July 2015

Date of appeal decision: 6 August 2015

Decision

I allow the appeal and grant listed building consent subject to the following condition:

1. The replacement front door and door frame shall be of timber construction.

Reason: to preserve the character and appearance of the street frontage of the house and its contribution to the conservation area.

Attention is also drawn to the advisory note at the end of this notice.

Reasoning

1. The determining issues in this appeal are the effects of the proposed alterations on the character and appearance of the listed building and the Portknockie Conservation Area, and on energy efficiency and domestic comfort. I am required by section 14(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and by section 64(1) of the Act to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

2. The appeal property is a semi-detached single storey house with dormer windows facing onto Church Street in the Portknockie Conservation Area, which retains the character of a traditional fishing village. The property is Category C(S) listed, and the list description of the house and its neighbour describes them as later 19th century houses, with number 31 rendered and lined as ashlar with contrasted painted dressings and modern glazing. None of the windows appears to be original. The windows on the street frontage

are of white uPVC, and are not proposed for replacement. The windows on the rear elevation are wooden-framed, and the application proposes to replace them with uPVC. The doors covered by the application, one on the front elevation and one at the side, appear to be of painted timber construction but are probably not original.

3. In general, where original features of a listed building survive, it is desirable to replace them on a like-for-like basis in the same material so as to preserve the character of the building. In the case of the appeal property, however, the original windows have been lost through earlier alterations. In particular, those on the front elevation which would have been the most significant in determining the appearance of the building and its contribution to the character of the surrounding area have already been lost. While this is regrettable, it would not be changed by the proposed alterations. The integrity of the building has already been compromised. In my view, the replacement of non-original wooden-framed windows on the rear elevation with uPVC similar to those already present at the front would not significantly affect the architectural or historic qualities of the building when considered as a whole.

4. The one alteration proposed to the front elevation is to replace the existing wooden door with a white uPVC door. This would in my view have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the building and of the surrounding conservation area. While street-facing windows on other nearby properties are of a wide variety of styles and materials, including uPVC, white plastic doors scarcely feature. I found only one example on a neighbouring street. Their spread through the conservation area would significantly alter its character. I am therefore imposing a condition on listed building consent requiring that the replacement front door and frame must be of timber construction. The side door is not readily visible from the street, and I do not consider that its replacement in uPVC would raise the same issue.

5. In reaching my decision, I take account of the improved thermal performance of double-glazed uPVC window units and the contribution these can make to reduced carbon emissions and improved domestic comfort. However, this has to be balanced against the need to preserve the character and appearance of Portknockie and of the listed buildings which contribute to these qualities. While the spread of uPVC onto street frontages and onto buildings that retain their original doors and windows should be resisted, there is in my view scope for some latitude in the particular circumstances of this appeal.

Michael J P Cunliffe

Reporter

Advisory note

The length of the consent: This listed building consent will last only for three years from the date of this decision notice, unless the works have been started within that period. (See section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended)).