

APPLICATION NUMBER		24/00063/LBALT	
SITE ADDRESS:		80 Cromford Hill, Cromford, Derbyshire, DE4 3QU	
DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT		Retention of unauthorised roof-lights.	
CASE OFFICER	Mr. Ecclestone	APPLICANT	Mr. Newberry
PARISH / TOWN	Cromford	AGENT	None.
WARD MEMBER(S)	Cllr. Whitehead	DETERMINATION TARGET	1 st April 2024
REASON FOR DETERMINATION BY COMMITTEE	Called in by Cllr Whitehead	REASON FOR SITE VISIT (IF APPLICABLE)	Not Applicable.

MATERIAL PLANNING ISSUES

The impact that the unauthorised roof-lights have on the special character and appearance of this Grade II Listed Building

RECOMMENDATION

Listed Building Consent be Refused.

1. THE SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 1.1 80 Cromford Hill, is a Grade II Listed, mid-terraced house, situated approximately halfway up Cromford Hill (B5036).



2. DETAILS OF THE APPLICATION

- 2.1 This is a retrospective application for the retention of two unauthorised roof-lights, that have been installed in the rear roof-slope.

3. PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

11/00766/LBALT	Replacement front door.	Approved
0798/0444	Retention of lean-to roof to rear of dwelling.	Approved
0394/0200	External alterations to Listed Building.	Approved
0491/0327	Alterations to Listed Building.	Approved
0789/0642	Alterations to Listed Building.	Approved

5. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

- 5.1 Parish Council: Not received.

6. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

- 6.1 None received.

7. OFFICER APPRAISAL

- 7.1 The main issues to assess are the impact that the unauthorised roof-lights have on the special character and appearance of this Grade II Listed Building.
- 7.2 80 Cromford Hill, is a Grade II Listed Building (Listed in 1990), situated within the Cromford Conservation Area and the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. Numbers 78 and 80 (which were built as a pair), are of enhanced significance to the Conservation Area and World Heritage Site, because they pre-date the major Arkwright housing developments in Cromford and on Cromford Hill. In this regard, they are most probably

early 18th Century in origin and represent a pair of cottages located on Cromford Hill that pre-date those Arkwright houses that were constructed alongside and within the vicinity. To the rear of the property is a historic two-storey, dual-pitched roof projection. To the east (at the side of number 84) is an accessway to a historic public footpath which turns in a north-easterly direction to the rear of the property.

- 7.3 The unauthorised roof-lights were installed without the benefit of advice or an application to the Local Planning Authority. This retrospective application is to retain two unauthorised roof-lights that have been inserted into the north-west facing roof-slope of the two-storey rear projection to the property. Two con-joined 'Velux' roof-lights have been inserted into the roof. The room in question is a small bathroom that already benefits from an existing window (which is also unauthorised – see paragraph 7.13).
- 7.4 Historic England's national advice / guidance, states that the insertion of new elements – such as roof-lights – 'are quite likely to adversely affect a building's significance'. The advice however, states that harm may be avoided if roof-lights are located on less prominent roof-slopes. However, whilst the proposed roof-slope in question is to the rear (north-west) of the property, there is public access to the rear of the properties, on rising ground, to this part of Cromford Hill, via a network of historic public rights of way. These public views of the roof-scape, therefore, give the rear (north and north-west facing) roof-slopes a particular prominence and significance within this part of the Conservation Area and World Heritage Site.
- 7.5 The village of Cromford is a Conservation Area (designated 1971) and is also a primary and important settlement of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (inscribed 2001). Whilst some of the historic properties of the village were Listed in the 1970s, a major re-survey of 1990-92 added a large number of historic workers cottages (and cottages pre-dating the Arkwright period) to the statutory 'List'. The village of Cromford has, via its World Heritage Site status, international significance and importance. The topography is a key element and attribute of its unique character, appearance and significance which allows, via the principal and secondary road network and the numerous public footpaths, views and vistas of the fronts, sides and rears of the historic workers housing to the main core of the village and to those on Cromford Hill. These access ways and topography offer important views and vistas of the historic housing and in particular, the roof-scape mosaic of the properties and of the village as a whole.
- 7.6 It is worthy of recognition that very few of the historic / Listed 'Arkwright' cottages, have had roof-lights installed within their roof-planes. Those that have, which are few in number, appear to have been inserted in the 1970s / 80s, prior to the Listing re-survey. As an architectural element of each of the cottages, the slated and tiled roofs remain more or less intact, displaying large areas of blank roofs which are deemed to be an important and significant part and fundamental contributor of their character. In this regard, the two large, con-joined, rooflights that have been inserted, introduce a modern element into the current blank roof-plane of the property. Furthermore, the presence of two large, con-joined, roof-lights, is overtly modern in character and appearance and the room in question (bathroom) already benefits from a window on the east facing gable-end of the rear projection (see footnote).
- 7.7 It is considered that the roof-lights, as installed, represent a significant intrusion within this particular and prominent roof-slope of the Listed Building, to the detriment of its current significance, form, character and blankness. As such, it is considered that the roof-lights are a harmful addition / introduction to the Listed Building and its special architectural character and appearance. Moreover, as the room in question already has a window, the requirement for further natural light and ventilation, is not deemed a sufficient justification for the detrimental / harmful external alteration and introduction that the presence of the new roof-lights have.

- 7.8 In the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG), Local Planning Authorities are directed to consider the ‘implications of cumulative change’ to heritage assets. This is a relevant consideration in this case. Whilst a small number of roof-lights do exist on the Listed Buildings (installed prior to Listing) in Cromford, the vast majority of roof-planes have survived blank and intact (although perhaps re-covered at some point). Approving a new roof-light(s) may, therefore, appear to be a relatively small and straight-forward proposal. However, the potential, cumulative, impact of a proliferation of roof-lights (of varying numbers, sizes and types), would have significant and harmful implications to the existing and future significance, character and appearance of the Listed Buildings which form an integral and important part of the Cromford Conservation Area and World Heritage Site.
- 7.9 It is considered that the harm identified, in terms of the Listed Building, would also have an adverse effect on the Conservation Area, neither preserving, nor enhancing, the building or Area and would be harmful to the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site. Whilst the proposal would not be deemed to cause substantial harm to the designated heritage asset, where that harm is less than substantial harm, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) directs that it should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. As the room in question (small bathroom) already benefits from a window, it is considered that the identified harm of the works, as carried out on the designated heritage asset, brings no public / heritage benefits (as defined in the NPPG) and in that regard, would not outweigh the harm caused.
- 7.10 The 1990 Act directs that in considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent, a Local Planning Authority shall 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”. It is considered, as outlined above, that the works as undertaken do not preserve the Listed Building or its setting. In this regard, there is a finding of harm. Whilst the identified harm to the Listed Building may not be deemed substantial harm, the NPPF (para. 208) directs that where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public / heritage benefits (as defined / included in the NPPG) of the proposal.
- 7.11 A recommendation of refusal is put forward on this basis.
- 7.12 The first-floor bathroom window at the rear is a 1 over 1, double-glazed, white, UPVC sash window. This appears to be of relatively recent insertion. Such a window type, material and detailing, is considered harmful and inappropriate to the Listed Building and its insertion / presence should therefore, be followed up by the Planning Enforcement Team.

8. RECOMMENDATION

8.1 Listed Building Consent be refused for the following reasons:

1. The roof-lights have a detrimental impact on the special character and appearance of this Grade II Listed Building, thereby conflicting with the National Planning Policy Framework.

NOTES TO APPLICANT

This Decision Notice relates to the following documents:

Application form and drawings, received by the Council on 5th February 2024.

The Council provides a positive and proactive pre-application advice service. Unfortunately, however, this was not taken up in this case. The application was therefore

considered as submitted and it was judged that there was no prospect of resolving the fundamental problems with it through negotiation. On this basis, the requirement to engage in a positive and proactive manner was considered to be best served by the Local Planning Authority issuing a Decision on the application at the earliest opportunity and thereby allowing the applicant to exercise their right to appeal.