



Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

6 February 2019

Christine Brown
Case Officer
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Sent by email: christine.brown@gov.scot

Dear Christine Brown

Listed Building Consent Appeal REF 170/2016 Enforcement Notice Appeal REF ENA 170/2021

Thank you for the opportunity for making a further submission on this appeal, which is made on behalf of the Cases Panel of Dumfries and Galloway Group, Architectural Heritage Society of Scotland. The Society's aim is to encourage the continued use of listed buildings through repair and upgrading which is respectful to their special interest and character.

It remains the opinion of the AHSS that the unauthorised changes to Meikle Dalbeattie Farmhouse do constitute a significant and damaging alteration to the character, historic value and importance of this Category C listed building and that the appeals should not be allowed.

HES guidance 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment - Windows' states as its first three key principles

1. *The windows of a historic building form an important element in defining its special interest and character.*
2. *The contribution windows make to the character of a historic building must be understood before considering alteration.*
3. *The size, shape, design and proportions of a window, the reflective sparkle and irregularities of old glass, the pattern of design, the materials and details of construction, the method of opening, the finish, and associated fixtures, typically contribute to the character of a historic window.*

It gives further advice later in the document:

'Generally, replacement windows should seek to match the original windows in design, form, fixing, method of opening and materials. In replacing sash windows, materials other than timber, e.g. uPVC, will rarely be acceptable.' (page 18).

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The replacement windows at Meikle Dalbeattie are contrary to the above guidance in every possible way. It remains the AHSS's contention that the windows still present in the sales particulars of 2015 are likely to have been, in the greater part at least, original to the building of the house and were all of types in use in the mid nineteenth century. If some were truly beyond economic repair, and this we shall never know since action was taken without consultation with planners, they should have been replaced with appropriate ones.

We should further like to comment on the appellant's submission as follows.

- 1.1 The fact that other windows in Dalbeattie may have been changed without consent is immaterial. All cases are judged individually.
- 1.2 The AHSS does not agree with the suggestion that it is impossible to upgrade a listed building to modern standards without damaging its character. The whole purpose of the advice offered by Historic Environment Scotland and by local planning and conservation officers is to manage effective and appropriate change with as little damage to the building's historic character as possible.
- 4.1 The appellant queries the 'special' value of the building as reflected in the listing. It is the AHSS's experience that this building correctly reflects the 'special' qualities to be expected in a Category C listing and the windows were a key feature of this. Their wholesale removal and replacement without consent is not acceptable.

In this case the AHSS requests that the appeals be refused.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Robertson
Chairman