The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 April 2019

by Siobhan Watson BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 May 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/J1860/W/18/3205888
The Old Diary, Horton Manor, Hanley Swan, Worcester, WR8 0DN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mrs Gillian Earle against the decision of Malvern Hills District Council.
- The application Ref 18/00416/HP, dated 20 March 2018, was refused by notice dated 25 May 2018.
- The development proposed is the provision of a first floor bedroom and en-suite extension.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposal relates to a listed building, I have had special regard to section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

3. The appellant has disputed whether or not the building is listed. I agree with the Council that the Old Diary is listed by virtue of it being within the curtilage of Horton Manor Farmhouse which is Grade II listed. Under section 1(5) of the Act, the listing applies to any free-standing structure erected before 1 July 1948 within the curtilage of the listed building. This applies irrespective of whether or not it has been explicitly identified in the list description or whether group value is indicated. Irrespective of any subsequent changes in ownership, the appeal building was constructed for ancillary purposes directly related to the function of the building as a dairy and is historically linked. This is the basis upon which I have determined this appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issue is whether the extension would preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed building.

Reasons

5. Horton Manor Farmhouse dates from the 17th Century. Its special interest is primarily associated with its historical legibility as a traditional rural dwelling closely surrounded by the former farm buildings associated with it, of which the application building is one. The steel barn that is between the Farmhouse and The Old Diary does not sever the relationship, neither does the Certificate of

Lawfulness for the use of land at the Old Diary for residential purposes. As well as the strong historic functional relationship between the buildings, there is also a visual relationship as the two buildings are close together and inter-visible.

6. The Old Diary retains much of its rural character by virtue of its red brick construction, its linear form and simple, utilitarian proportions. Additionally, there is historic and architectural interest in the upper floor window openings in the gable elevations. These reflect a former loft use and sometimes diaries of this age stored cheese in the loft.

7. The first floor extension would result in the demolition of the gable wall and would disrupt the historic window opening pattern and brickwork. The proposed lowered ridge would look overly domestic and incompatible with the existing linear roof form. The proposed large window, which would be almost the full height of the extension, would be of an irregular shape which would not be reflective of the building's former use as a barn. For these reasons, the extension would be not be sympathetic to the special interest of the Old Dairy. I note the appellant's comments in respect of amending the window design but this would not overcome the other matters.

8. I accept that the Old Dairy has already been substantially altered in order to convert it to a dwelling. Such alterations include the installation of glazing on the ground floor. However, the proposed alterations would exacerbate the existing loss of fabric and the barn would become even more domestic in appearance. This would result in unacceptable harm to the historic significance of the building. This diminution of its historic character would, in turn, deplete the historic farmstead.

9. Paragraph 193 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. It goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets. As the Old Diary is detached from the Farmhouse, and as the extension would affect just one end of the building, the harm to the significance of the Farmhouse would be less than substantial but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight.

10. Under such circumstances, paragraph 196 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. I appreciate that the family circumstances of the appellant indicate the requirement for additional living accommodation. However, the personal circumstances of the appellant do not constitute a public benefit that would outweigh the harm.

11. Given the above, I conclude that the proposals would fail to preserve the special historic interest of the listed building. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and Paragraph 192 of the Framework. The proposals would also conflict with Policies of SWDP 6, SWDP 21 and SWDP 24 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (2016). Together, these policies seek to ensure that development should conserve and enhance heritage assets, including the contribution made by their settings and it should be of a high quality design.

12. It would also conflict with Policy RE1 of the Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019 which indicates that proposals should conserve local distinctiveness; the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings; and that design should respect the connections between people and places.

13. Furthermore, it would be at odds with Section 4.6 of the South Worcestershire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2018) which also seeks to protect heritage. In addition, it would not be in accordance with the Hanley Castle Parish Building Design Guide 2017 which advises that alteration or extension of historic farmsteads and agricultural buildings should be sensitive to their distinctive character and form.

Conclusion

14. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Siobhan Watson

INSPECTOR