
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 July 2019

by Jamie Reed DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/W/19/3227133

Thorp Arch Grange, Walton Road, Thorp Arch, Wetherby LS23 7BA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Berkeley DeVeer against Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref 18/06838/FU, is dated 30 October 2018.
 - The development proposed is erection of first floor office extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Background and Main Issue

2. A previous planning application¹ at the appeal site gave consent for a single storey extension with basement to be constructed to the side of the front elevation of the property. This scheme has now been constructed, with the omission of the basement level. The application which is the subject of this appeal relates specifically to this side extension, seeking to construct a further level of accommodation at first floor level, as an alternative to the basement.
3. The Council have confirmed that had they determined the planning application they would have refused it for reasons relating to the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the appeal property. Therefore, this is the main issue in the determination of this appeal.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is an impressive former school building of sandstone construction and slate roof. The building's somewhat grand appearance is emphasised by a larger central section, which is 3 stories in height and flanked either side by lower and longer 2 storey wings. Given its historical context and architectural form, it has been recognised as a non-designated heritage asset. The recently approved side extension has now been constructed, to form a modern, single storey office block, finished in sandstone and featuring a number of slim, vertical windows. When approaching the appeal property from the front, this lozenge shaped extension responds positively to the original form of the older part of the building, with the materials matching well. Whilst it is set forward from the original building, it is subservient in scale and does not compete with the original building due to its reduced single storey height.

¹ Council Reference- 16/04814/FU

5. The proposal would be situated on top of this recently constructed extension and would be of a predominantly glazed / curtain wall construction. It would be set in from the existing ground floor façade in order to accommodate an external balcony / walkway that would wrap around the proposal's perimeter.
6. The proposed extension would result in an alien and visually dominant form of development, the prominence of which would be emphasised further by its position set forward of the original building. When viewed as a whole, the recently constructed extension with the additional storey would no longer be subservient in scale and would feature large expanses of glazing which would be uncharacteristic to the existing form of development. As a result, I find that the proposed extension would be visually harmful to the character and appearance of the appeal property.
7. The appellant has suggested that as the previously approved scheme has established the principle of a modern extension to the original building then the proposal that is before me would also be acceptable. As explained above however, I disagree due to the proposal being at odds with the scale and form of both the original building and the recently constructed extension. Furthermore, taking a balanced judgement on the effects that the proposal would have on this non-designated heritage asset, there is nothing sufficiently compelling that would be capable of outweighing the harm I have identified above.
8. Consequently, the proposal would be contrary to Policy P10 of the Leeds Council Core Strategy (2014), and saved Policy BD6 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2006 alteration). When read together, these policies require proposals to be of a high quality design that is appropriate to their location and respect the scale, form and materials of the original building.
9. Furthermore, the proposal would also be contrary to Policy GP5 of the UDP, which requires proposals to pay due regard to any other relevant local guidance, which in this case would be the Thorp Arch Parish Village Design Statement (TAPVDS) (2004) and the Thorp Arch Neighbourhood Development Plan (TANDP) (2017). Policy BE2 of the TANDP requires proposals to not overwhelm neighbouring buildings and Policy BE4 requires proposals to Thorp Arch Grange to demonstrate how they will contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the building. Guidance within the TAPVDS requires any new building development to maintain the architectural style of their immediate environment.

Other Matter

10. Whilst I can empathise with the appellants frustrations in the delays they have encountered with the Council, this is a matter between the parties involved and would not alter the outcome of this appeal.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Jamie Reed
INSPECTOR