



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 August 2019

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 2nd September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/F1040/D/19/3231935

The Water Tower, Swarkestone Road, Weston-on-Trent, Derby, DE72 2BU

- 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 Mr David Ford against the decision of South Derbyshire District Council.
 - The application Ref 9/2019/0116, dated 31 January, was refused by notice dated 11 April 2019.
 - The development proposed is a three storey extension to side of house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Reasons

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed extension on the character and appearance of the building and the area.
3. The appeal building is located a short distance from the village of Weston-on-Trent. The surrounding area is characterised mostly by agricultural land. It is approached from a long drive opposite three other dwellings and which also leads to another dwelling.
4. The Council says that the building was previously used for wartime water storage and has heritage interest as a wartime structure. The appellant disputes its heritage interest because the water tank and top part of the building were removed in the early 1960's. He says that the building was part of a large prisoner of war camp and that other buildings have been converted or replaced without reference to their historic context.
5. The building is a tall and narrow four storey structure of brick with a shallow hipped roof with almost all windows in one elevation and blank elevations on the roadside elevation and a side elevation. As such it has an unusual and unique character and appearance. Its form and blank elevations have a simple and striking, utilitarian character.
6. The building is not listed and I have not been provided with any evidence that it is locally listed. Given the limited evidence I am unable to ascertain whether or not it has significance as a heritage asset. Therefore I have not taken into account the Council's development plan policies for heritage assets but have assessed the proposal on the basis of the other development plan policies referred to. Those are policies BNE1 and H27 which seek to encourage well-designed developments that respect the character and appearance of the

property and the area. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has similar objectives.

7. The building is presently almost completely covered by dense ivy planting on all elevations other than around window and door openings. Although the building is sited close to the road, roadside vegetation and the ivy on the building make it almost impossible to discern that a building is there. As such, it presently contributes to the leafy character of the roadside area but the presence of the building is not clearly perceived from there.
8. The proposed extension would be sited to one side of the building. It would have three storeys with a hipped roof at a steeper pitch than that of the existing roof. This would give it an overly prominent and rather discordant appearance. Although its ridge height would be lower than that of the main roof, the length of the extension would be only slightly less than that of the existing side elevation and its width would be only slightly less than that of the front elevation. Its size and scale would therefore be considerable in relation to the existing building and it would not have a sufficiently sub-ordinate appearance. This would significantly harm the character and appearance of the building.
9. Although it is the appellant's intention to cover the extension in ivy to help it blend in, future owners/occupiers could choose to remove it and planting should not be used to screen an otherwise unacceptable extension. Without planting, the extension would be clearly seen from the road through gaps in the roadside planting and during winter months. The size and scale of the proposal would thus appear overly dominant given its proximity to the road and this would cause some harm to the character and appearance of the area.
10. I am not persuaded that the other permissions referred to by the appellant are directly comparable with this, given the unique character and appearance of this building. I do accept that the building is narrow and has little natural lighting. However, I am not satisfied that there is no other means of providing additional accommodation and natural lighting in a more sensitive way that respects the building's character.
11. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of both the building and the area, contrary to the development plan and the Framework. There are no material considerations that justify determining the appeal otherwise and the appeal should be dismissed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector