The Planning Inspectorate

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2020

**by Anne Jordan BA (Hons) MRTPI**

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

**Decision date: 3 July 2020**

**Appeal Ref: APP/F2415/W/19/3235031**
**Stockerston Hall, Church Lane, Stockerston, LE15 9JD**

- 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 Henry Nicholson against the decision of Harborough District Council.
- The application Ref 17/02121/FUL, dated 14 December 2017, was refused by notice dated 17 June 2019.
- The development proposed is proposed 3 bay car-port.

## Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a 3 bay car-port at Stockerston Hall, Church Lane, Stockerston, LE15 9JD in accordance with application Ref 17/02121/FUL, dated 14 December 2017 and the plans submitted with it and subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

   2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: PL201021787_2_A.

## Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the setting of Damson Cottage and Stockerston Hall, both Grade II Listed Buildings, the effect of the proposal on the setting of Church of St Peter, a Grade I Listed Building and whether the development would preserve the special interest of these heritage assets.

## Reasons

3. S16(2) and S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Policies GD8 and HC1 of the Harborough Local Plan amongst other things, seek to protect, conserve and enhance the setting of heritage assets and these reflect the statutory duty defined in the Act.

4. Stockerston Hall is a Grade II listed country house with a number of associated outbuildings. Whilst part of the building has 17th Century origins, the main Hall was substantially rebuilt in the mid 19th Century and has been more recently

refurbished. The outbuildings known as the Coach House and Damson Cottage are listed as curtilage buildings and are arranged to form a courtyard along with the main Hall. To the rear of Damson Cottage, which comprises a long low range running east to west, sits a range of modern stables and a large open fronted agricultural store, and this forms a secondary outer yard. To the east of the group lies the Church of St Peter, a Grade I listed building.

5. The appeal relates to the erection of an open sided car-port adjacent to Damson Cottage. The structure would be constructed with oak posts and an asphalt pitched roof with timber sides. It would be located on the outer courtyard side of the building.

Impact on the Significance of Damson Cottage & Stockerston Hall

6. Damson Cottage is a long low brick built range with a tiled roof. The majority of the fenestration for the building faces away from the outer yard and the eastern section, against which the car-port is proposed, comprises a stretch of blank walling. Towards the west window and door opening indicate the residential use of the building. The significance of the asset lies in its part of a group of outbuildings associated with the adjoining Hall, and in its status as a relatively well preserved example of a vernacular building of its type.

7. The proposed car-port would be located adjacent to the stretch of blank walling on the eastern edge of the yard. The open sides of the structure would allow clear views of the building behind and although the roof of the carport would interrupt views of the long roofline, the height of the proposed carport would not break the ridge of the building behind. Furthermore the eaves of both structures would be broadly aligned. As such, it would not detract significantly from views of the asset behind.

8. I take account of the wider setting of this asset and the functional form of the adjoining flat-roofed garage and agricultural store and the design of the adjacent stables which is constructed in similar materials. The yard is also used for some open storage and casual parking. In this context the form of the structure would not appear particularly prominent and the materials used not out of place. Furthermore, although the adjacent garage sits at a lower level I am satisfied that the area to the front of the Cottage would not require excavation to facilitate the development and so the proposal would not alter existing land levels.

9. As the significance of Damson Cottage lies largely in its appearance and association and neither would be harmed by the proposal I am therefore of the view that the structure would not harm the significance of Damson Cottage.

10. Stockerston Hall lies to the east of the outer yard and the proposed car-port would lie within its wider setting. The significance of Stockerston Hall is in part derived from the appearance of both the building itself and the arrangement of outbuildings, structures and landscaping that sit immediately around it. However, as I am satisfied that the proposal would be comfortably assimilated into the setting of Damson Cottage and would not appear prominent, it follows that the proposal would also not harm this aspect of the significance of Stockerston Hall.

Impact on the Significance of the Church of St Peter

11. The Church of St Peter lies to the south of the appeal site. It is medieval in origin and has been altered over time, most recently at the end of the 19th Century. It sits on elevated ground above the village and close to the Hall within a well planted churchyard. The church tower is notable in long ranging views into the site. The significance of the asset lies in its age and in its architectural and historic interest.

12. Views of the church tower are available across the outer courtyard and these views would also include the proposed car-port. However, in the same way that the structure would not appear prominent and would be comfortably assimilated into the fabric of the yard, the proposal would not be obtrusive in wider shared views of the church tower. I am therefore satisfied that the proposal would have a neutral effect on the significance of this heritage asset.

13. I therefore find no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to preserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The Council have referred to Policies GD8 and HC1 of the Harborough Local Plan. Together, amongst other things, these seek to protect, conserve and enhance the setting of heritage assets and so have similar aims to the Framework and I find no conflict with these.

**Conclusion**

14. The proposal would not harm the significance of St Peters Church, Stockerston Hall or Damson Cottage. Accordingly, having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

15. I have considered the proposed conditions in light of the advice in Planning Practice Guidance and consider conditions in relation to the period of implementation and approved plans to be reasonable and necessary.

*Anne Jordan*

INSPECTOR