



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 June 2024

by Mrs Chris Pipe BA(Hons), DipTP, MTP, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28th June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/X3405/D/24/3342191

Lakeside Hagley Drive, Rugeley, Staffordshire WS15 2AN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr James Hallam against the decision of Cannock Chase District Council.
 - The application Ref is CH/23/0402.
 - The development is proposed atrium space on front elevation, Conversion of outbuildings into utility and office space, Kitchen extension, Minor changes to garage and storage spaces, Landscaping changes in garden and solar panels on main house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. Much of the proposed development is the same as a previous approved scheme¹. The design of the linking atrium is the main difference between these submissions.
3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed atrium on the character and appearance of the area in general.

Reasons

4. The land near the property contains a lake, grade II listed bridge and Heritage Trail linking the town centre with Slitting Mill Road to the southwest.
5. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA Act) requires decision makers, when considering whether to grant planning permission, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The Council do not raise concern with regard to the effect of the proposed development on nearby heritage assets. I have no substantive evidence before me to disagree.
6. The appeal site is an unusual historic property which I understand was originally used as stabling for Hagley Hall before being converted to a number of workers cottages in the 1950's, before then being amalgamated into a single dwelling.

¹ Ref 23/0044

7. The appeal site is served by Hagley Drive. Gate piers define the gravelled access into the property and visually link the main property with the outbuildings. The outbuildings have an unusual form with a curved boundary shaping the garden.
8. The Heritage Statement accompanying the proposal confirms that the site is a non-designated heritage asset. However, its significance has been diminished by its conversion into cottages and modern interventions, such as windows and doorways. I do not disagree. The Heritage Statement confirms that the site is of low architectural merit. Whilst the heritage significance may have been diminished by unsympathetic alterations I observed during my site visit that the gate piers denote the functional entrance to the historic stables, and whilst simplistic in form they are prominent features of the appeal site.
9. Paragraph 209 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) (the Framework) confirms that the effect of a development on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
10. The proposal includes the removal of the capping stones of the existing brick entrance piers in order to incorporate the roof structure of the proposed atrium. A glazed front entrance door and atrium wall would be set back behind these retained brick piers.
11. The proposed pitched roof of the atrium would complement the roof of Lakeside. Notwithstanding this the proposed atrium would be a dominant and incongruous addition to the property which would detract from the linear form of Lakeside and the existing gate piers. Whilst the proposed atrium would clearly define a front entrance it would be at odds with the design and layout of the existing property.
12. I find that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area in general.
13. There is conflict with Policy CP3 of the Cannock Chase Local Plan (Part 1) 2014 which seeks amongst other things for developments to be well related, conserving the local historic environment and reinforcing local distinctness.
14. There is conflict with the Framework which seeks to ensure developments are of good design and sympathetic to their surroundings and that the historic environment is protected.

Conclusion

15. For the above reasons I conclude that this appeal should be dismissed.

C Pipe

INSPECTOR