Proposed Replacement dwelling at Dye House, Rushton Spencer

Design, Access, Planning and Heritage Statement

Planning History and Background to the Application

Planning permission was received last year (6.03.17 -Application Ref SMD/2016/0709) for the extension of the existing house.

The applicants have subsequently decided that the size, quality and layout of spaces resulting from the renovation and extension of the property would neither satisfy their needs nor justify the costs involved in carrying out the work. Apart from the very evident poor quality of the existing structure, one major constraining factor is the very low ceiling heights in the existing building - not much more than door head height (see photos in Heritage Assessment)

As a result of pre-application discussions with the LPA the following agreements have been reached:

1. Demolition of the existing building is acceptable. This follows the preparation and submission of a heritage assessment of the existing building which concludes that the building has little value and is not worthy of retention from a heritage point of view
2. A replacement dwelling of an equivalent size to that which currently has approval is acceptable in principle
3. The site may be rationalised by means of the demolition of the two bays of the adjacent industrial building (which is under the control of the applicants) and bringing this land into the domestic curtilage, in exchange for a portion of the current site behind the industrial unit which will revert to industrial in terms of use class

The Site

The site rises up from the lane at the western boundary to the eastern field boundary and the building has been planned accordingly: the ground floor level of the main building has been set above the adjacent road level which is in a flood zone (Zone 3), having a high probability of flooding. Parking has been taken off the lane where it rises up to the adjacent industrial building and this has facilitated level access from the parking area into the building. The lounge has been set slightly higher again to suit the rising outside ground level

The Design Process

In order to balance the building footprint with garden and parking areas it is felt important to retain a three-storey house on the site. Orientation and siting of the house have been

governed by consideration of sunlight and views (predominantly to the south), and the relationship to garden areas, parking and principal access.

The current scheme has evolved following detailed discussions with the LPA regarding the size and massing of the building. Our original designs were based upon a full three storey building having an equivalent floor area to the previous scheme. The LPA considered the proposed building to be too high and suggested that we reduce it to essentially two storeys with the second floor accommodation within the roof space. They also advised that 'equivalent size' should be measured in terms of volume rather than floor area. The submitted scheme reflects these recommendations. The volume has been reduced by both shrinking the overall footprint area and by reducing the height. The proposed height is the minimum required to achieve a minimum 2400 ceiling height with a minimum floor construction depth (with downstand beams encroaching into the ceiling height) and to allow for minimum headroom within the loft space. The restricted headroom within the loft space has been mitigated , to some degree, by the introduction of dormer lights.

Comparative volumes are as follows:

Previously approved scheme: 857m³ (excluding outbuilding)

Application scheme: 845m³

If we take account of the further reduction in volume on site due to the demolition of the two bays of the industrial building (275 m³) then the resultant development will have a considerably reduced impact on the openness of the Greenbelt and will therefore satisfy clause 45d) of the NPPF.

External Materials

The external materials proposed are generally those found traditionally in the locality: stone walling (much of it reclaimed from the former building) with dressed stone detailing (quoins, heads and cills etc) and Staffordshire blue slates to the roofs.

Climate Change

The orientation of the house follows best practice with the larger areas of glazing facing south and smaller windows to the north. In terms of conservation of fuel and power for the dwelling the property will be designed to meet or better current Building Regulation Standards

Parking

Three parking spaces are provided on the area previously occupied by the end bays of the industrial building which is an improvement upon the provision shown on the previous application

Access

Level access is afforded from the parking area to the principal entrance and throughout the principal habitable rooms at ground floor level