Heritage Assessment: Wood Vale, Sutherland Road, Longsdon

Introduction

Town and Country Planning legislation requires the submission of a statement demonstrating how the special historic or architectural interest of a building or area has been considered within a planning application proposal.

This Statement demonstrates how design principles and concepts have been applied to the design of the proposal and how it has taken account of national and local historic environment planning policies, and in particular how the design preserves or enhances the historic and architectural importance of the application building; how the proposal has been designed to harmonise with the existing architectural style of the building and area; the application building's setting; and particular physical features of the building and area that contribute to its special interest or character.

Caldon Conservation Area

The Caldon Conservation Area was first designated in June 1996 and extended in January 2011.

There are no Listed Buildings as such in the vicinity of the application building. However, the canal bridge near the North East corner of the application site is Listed. The proposed domestic extensions are considered to be not of a scale and in a location that will have a direct impact on the Listed bridge, but may have an impact on its setting.

The Caldon Conservation Area is focussed on the Caldon Canal along its route from Stockton Brook to the West (at the City boundary), and then when its splits into two branches at Endon, to the former Leek basin to the North East and Froghall Basin to the South East. The Conservation Area encompasses the canal, its locks and towpaths and its basins.

The Caldon Canal was constructed in 1776 between Etruria and Froghall to carry limestone from the quarries at Cauldon Low to Stoke on Trent and beyond. However, following the decline of commercial traffic in the early 20th Century the canal fell into disrepair. Following a campaign, a partnership involving volunteers, local authorities and British Waterways was formed to restore the Caldon Canal leading it to be officially reopened to navigation in September 1974. It is now used for leisure purposes.

The application sits in a location between the two branches after its split at Endon. The branch to the former Leek basin runs alongside the Northern boundary of the application site. The Southern branch is 200m to the South of the application site.

The Historic Context of the Application Property

The application building is a two storey detached dwelling. The application property was constructed in the mid to late 19th Century. Machine-made bricks have been used in its construction. Its roof is of clay tiles manufactured from one of the local potteries. Its grounds accommodates a small number of outbuildings which this application proposes to remove.

The planning policy context

Conservation areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are defined as areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

The development plan for the area is the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

Plan Policies

The Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan Submission Version February 2018 contains the planning and conservation policies that are relevant to this proposal.

Policy SS1 Development principles requires new development to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the area and maintains is local distinctiveness.

Policy 1A encourages Sustainable Development in the area.

Policy SO8 in the Design and Conservation section promotes local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection and enhancement of historic assets.

Policy DC2 The Historic Environment requires heritage assets and their setting to be enhanced and gives protection to designated and non-designated heritage assets.

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The planning application has three elements to it. Firstly, the application proposes additions to the existing dwelling (two storey and single storey side extension), secondly it proposes an alternative vehicular access to the property and thirdly it proposes a replacement garage for the property.

The proposed side extension is a modest two and single-storey building that provides a fourth bedroom at first floor and, at ground floor, a new family room. The proposed garage is a double garage with a tiled roof. It is proposed to remove two existing outbuildings and the existing garage and car port.

The elevations of the extensions and garage are in brick and all roofs are proposed to be in a matching plain tile.

The proposed replacement access will be to the south of the application building, and so further away from the canal. It would be out of view of the Conservation Area and Listed bridge, as would be the new driveway. The proposed house extensions and the proposed garage would be visible from the Conservation Area, but no closer and at something of an angle. Given the modest nature of the proposals and their positioning on the application site, it is considered that the proposals will not harm the interests of the Conservation assets.

It is considered that the nature of the well-designed extensions and new access do not detract from the character of the Caldon Conservation Area. In terms of Policy SO8, the proposal is in keeping with the character of the application building and the character, scale and design of buildings nearby. The proposal preserves the historic character of the Caldon Conservation Area.

Conclusion

This Assessment has identified the elements of the character of the Caldon Conservation Area and examined the value of the application building and site within this context. The proposals have been assessed against the Council's Local Plan policies. The conclusion of this study is that the proposed extensions and garage and alternative vehicular access will not harm the historic character of the Conservation Area and will comply with the Council's planning policies.