

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 17th February 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2024/0268 & SMD/2024/0269
Site Address: The Workshop, Harlech Drive, Knypersley
Proposal: Existing Grade II listed dwelling: Internal Alterations: 1 opening at ground floor and small lightweight partition to improve kitchen/utility usability. Lightweight partitions at first floor, introduction of 2 rooflights and replacement of 2 rooflights to improve natural daylight at first floor.
 Extension: erection of a 17m² GIA extension to provide additional living space and second bedroom. Unlisted Outhouse: demolition retaining bricks and roof tiles and reconstruction reusing materials to form a garden home office. Adjustment of fence line to move garden area from the adjacent cottage to this dwelling.

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	- Knypersley Hall – Grade II* (listing ref: 1074943) - Stables, coach houses including coachman's cottage and lodge north of Knypersley Hall – Grade II (listing ref: 1360971)
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

The proposal would involve alterations to a listed former stables and coachhouse (Grade II) within the setting of Kypersley Hall (Grade II*).

Knypersley Hall (Grade II*) is an early- to mid-18th century house, remodelled in 19th century. The building is constructed in roughcast brick with a slate hipped roof and symmetrical façade. The significance of the building derives from its retention of historic fabric and plan form, illustrative Neo-Classical detailing and retention of different phases of development, retention of internal décor and association with James Bateman who developed the gardens at Biddulph Grange.

To the northeast of the hall, is a linear range of ancillary outbuildings including a former stables, coach houses and attached lodge dating from the mid-19th century. The buildings are an eclectic mix of architectural styles, with an Italianate dovecote and Neo-Tudor detailing to the lodge. The building is constructed in a mixture of Flemish red brick and stone with plain tiled roofs. The significance relates to the association with the main hall, functional and ancillary character with polite architectural influence of an eclectic mix or revival styles which became increasingly popular in the 19th century.

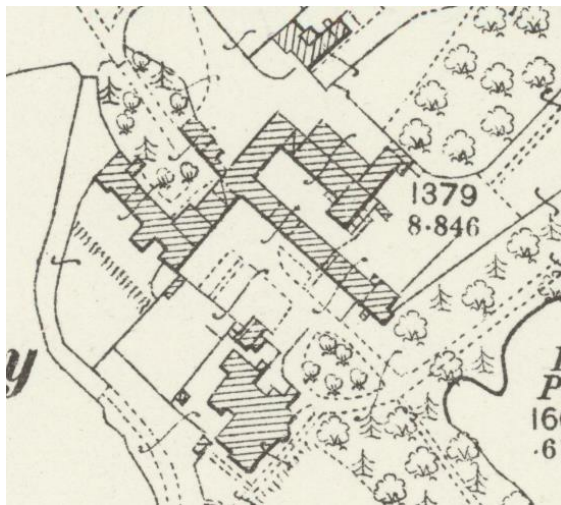


Fig.1 c.1899 OS map

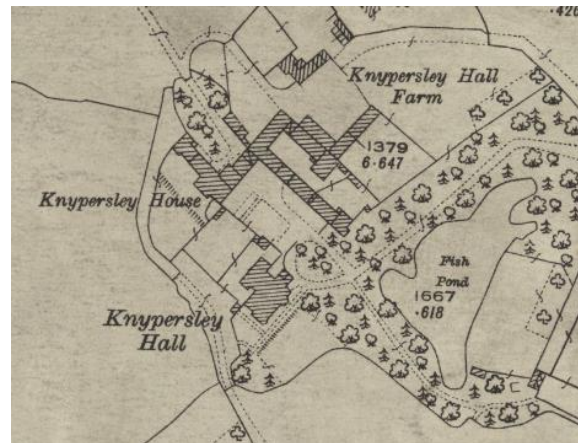


Fig.2 c.1925 OS map

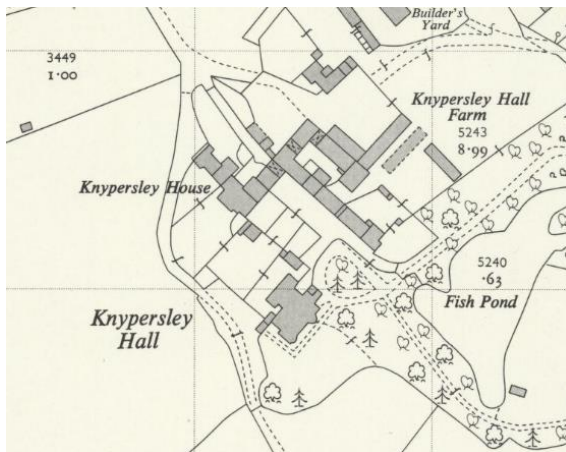


Fig.3 c.1960 National Grid map

Fig.1-3 map extracts – [online] National Library for Scotland

Assessment and Impact – Amended Plans

The proposal would involve alterations to install 2 new and replace 2 existing rooflights, demolish and replace an outbuilding and construct a 2-storey extension to the rear elevation. The building was converted to residential use in the 2000s (previous application refs: SMD/2000/0728 & SMD/2000/0797, SMD/2004/1523 & SMD/2004/1524).

These comments are in response to amended plans received for the proposed extension.

Rear extension

Whilst the building has polite architectural influence with its Neo-Tudor detailing, the building has retained its overall designed modest ancillary character, particularly in its scale and proportions. As illustrated in Fig.1-3, the building has also retained its historic footprint, along with the rest of this range of Grade II listed outbuildings.

The proposal would involve a 2-storey extension to the rear, which would be approx. 5.7m (H) x 5.2m (W) x 4m (D). This would be constructed in stone with a pitched roof and a glazed link.

The outbuilding range has been designed with the influence of eclectic architectural revival styles with this section of the Listed Building influenced by Neo-Tudor detailing, for example the mullioned and transomed windows, Tudor arches, large chimney stacks and cross/H-plan style which bookends aspects of the outbuilding range. Any extension to this part of the Listed Building will disrupt its historic legibility and diminish its historic layout and plan form. An extension, notably a 2-storey extension, would considerably interrupt the designed linear form of this particular section of the Listed Building.

In addition, the proposed 2-storey design would overbear and distract from the modest scale of the building. The glazed link would be a strikingly contemporary addition which would not respect the character of the principal building and likely draw attention away from the building's architectural interest.

It is noted that reference is made to the projecting wing to the southern part of the range, but this has been part of the historic development of the building prior to its listing.

Although the width of the extension has been slightly reduced from the previous submitted plans, this has done little to reduce or minimise the level of heritage harm arising from the proposal.

With reference to the Council's Design Guide (2018), conversions of traditional buildings should not normally require an extension. The building has already been converted to residential use in the 2000s and it has not been demonstrated that this proposal would realise the optimum viable use (i.e. the one that causes the least amount of heritage harm) as it is likely that the current use is the optimum viable use.

Alterations

The proposal would involve the replacement (and reorientation) of 2 rooflights installed to the rear and installation of 2 rooflights to the front elevation. The 2000s conversion involved some rooflights. Although these features can be quite domestic in character and create a cluttered appearance to the roofslope, their visual harm may be justified in terms of helping to realise or maintain the optimal viable use of the building.

From a conservation perspective, there would be no objections to the principle of adding 2 rooflights to the front elevation. However, it would be suggested that the proposed detailing is altered, such as reducing the size of the bathroom rooflight. In addition, there would be concerns with the proposed detailing of the rooflights (as shown on dwg no. A0-010 Rev P2). These type of rooflights are bulky framed with centre pivot mechanism which would be discouraged on a listed building. A slimmer profile, top opener would be encouraged to minimise the visual impact of these additions.

Replacement outbuilding

The proposal would involve the demolition and rebuilding of an outbuilding to the rear of the garden. The replacement would maintain the same height and depth, but would increase the length of the outbuilding. The annotations on the proposed plans mention that the existing materials would be reused in the rebuilding of the outbuilding. The alteration to the size of the outbuilding would be minor in scale and its positioning away from the principal listed building, mean these alterations would likely have a negligible impact on the setting of the listed building (subject to materiality and detailing of the replacement).

Whilst aspects of the proposed development – such as the replacement outbuilding – may have little or no impact on the heritage significance of the listed building, the proposed 2-storey extension and detailing of the rooflights would result in a harmful impact on the special interest and significance of the Listed Building. With respect of the extension, there does not appear to be clear and convincing justification for this level of heritage harm and, on balance, there does not appear to be any heritage-related public benefits which would balance or outweigh this level of harm.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting and special interest of the Listed Buildings (s.16 and 66).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within the setting), should require clear and convincing justification (par.213).

Where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (par.215).

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020) – DC2 The Historic Environment

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposal would result in harmful impact on the special interest and significance of the Listed Building. This would be contrary to s.16 and 66 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would be ‘less than substantial harm’ to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). There does not appear to be clear and convincing justification for this level of harm (par.213 of NPPF) and no heritage-related public benefits would arise from the proposal which would balance or outweigh this level of harm (par.215 of NPPF). As set out in par.212 of NPPF, great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset. We, therefore, maintain an objection to the proposal from a conservation perspective and recommend it is refused.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson