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## Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 11 June 2019

**by Elaine Benson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 10 July 2019**

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### **Appeal A Ref: APP/L3245/W/19/3224410**

#### **The Coach House, Alkington Hall, Alkington, Whitchurch SY13 3NG**

- 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 and Mrs Wilson against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref 18/05487/FUL, dated 20 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2019.
  - The development proposed is described as *bespoke single storey lean-to to be constructed to the south (rear) of the existing dwelling*.
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### **Appeal B Ref: APP/L3245/Y/19/3224412**

#### **The Coach House, Alkington Hall, Alkington, Whitchurch SY13 3NG**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
  - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Wilson against the decision of Shropshire Council.
  - The application Ref 05488/LBC dated 20 November 2018, was refused by notice dated 23 January 2019.
  - The works proposed are described as *bespoke single storey lean-to to be constructed to the south (rear) of the existing dwelling*.
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### **Decision**

1. The appeals are dismissed.

### **Main Issues**

2. Whether the proposal would preserve the special architectural or historic interest of this Grade II listed building and its setting, and whether the works would harm the significance of the designated heritage asset.

### **Reasons**

3. The appeal property, the Coach House, is one of a number of curtilage listed barn conversions associated with the Grade II\* listed Alkington Hall. The Hall is a former house, then farmhouse which dates from 1592, with mid-to-late 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations and additions. The Coach House stands within a range of former farm buildings arranged around a courtyard to the south of Alkington Hall with a separate access. The farmstead comprises several, mostly brick built, mid-19<sup>th</sup> century buildings. The Coach House is a partly re-built but significantly older timber framed range probably dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
4. The Coach House has 2 distinct elements. The older part of the building contains timber embedded in its red brickwork. It has a steeply pitched roof

and a segmented brick archway at the rear over a recessed double door set. The elevation also contains honeycomb brickwork with gaps filled by bricks of a different colour. The more recent element of the building comprises brickwork and has a shallower roof pitch. I consider that the features described above are part of the significance of the listed buildings and the groups. There is a single-storey extension on the later, eastern end of the Coach House.

5. The proposed extension would be a simply designed mono-pitched glass box in a slender aluminium framing, with a brick elevation adjacent to the adjoining barn conversion, The Mill House. The extension would enclose the archway, retaining it as an internal doorway. The structure would not encroach into the embedded timber framework and would finish beneath the eaves line.
6. It is clear that the extension and its materials would be of high quality. However, the proposal would result in the loss of the simple, regular agricultural form of the barn. I am not convinced that there is any historical or architectural justification for achieving symmetry with the existing extension or otherwise balancing the rear elevation as the appellants suggest. Although the extension would be glazed, in my judgement the framing would still limit views of the existing doorway and its decorative brick surround and details and would reduce their prominence. The proposed works would therefore partly obscure and confuse the original appearance of the barn. Views of the historic features would be further restricted by furniture etc within the extension and the potential use of blinds or other methods of shading. The proposed extension would therefore unacceptably change the character of the barn range. When considered alongside the existing extension, this harm would be compounded.
7. In terms of the relationship of the Coach House with Alkington Hall, the proposed extension would not be visible on the main approach to the Hall and would not be on the elevation of the courtyard that faces it. The 2 buildings would be separated by the Hall's stable block and the other barns within the Coach House complex. The Coach House would not therefore be within the visual context of the grade II\* listed building. Notwithstanding this conclusion, the proposed extension would erode the agricultural form and context of the Coach House. This change to significance would harm the wider setting of the Hall in respect of its historic status as a farmhouse and complex of rural outbuildings. It would adversely affect how the buildings are experienced as a group, including the barn conversions grouped around the courtyard.
8. Using the language of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), the harm to the significance of the heritage assets and their settings would amount to less than substantial harm. The extension would provide additional living space for the appellants; however, this would be a private benefit. No public benefits have been identified and I conclude that the justification for the proposal does not outweigh the harm to significance.

#### *Other matters*

9. The appellants refer to an application for roof-located solar panels on the old stable buildings which received listed building consent. As they acknowledge, this was a development of a very different nature to the current appeal proposal. The appeal scheme raises different considerations and has been determined on its own merits in accordance with the relevant policies and guidance. Similarly, any future applications or appeals for extensions to barn conversions would be determined on their own merits.

*Conclusion*

10. I have given great weight to the conservation of the designated heritage assets. Insufficient clear and convincing justification has been provided for the harm, or the loss of significance, that would be caused by the proposed extension. I conclude that the appeal proposal would therefore conflict with Policies CS5, CS6 and CS17 of the Shropshire Core Strategy and MD2 and MD13 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development Plan. Among other things and of relevance to this appeal, these policies require new developments to be sustainable, to protect the historic environment and to be designed to a high quality, whilst respecting local context and character. The policies are consistent with the aims of the Framework.
11. Accordingly, for the reasons I have set out the appeals should be dismissed.

*Elaine Benson*

INSPECTOR