



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 February 2024

by **A Tucker BA (Hons) IHBC**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 April 2024

Appeal A Ref: APP/L3245/W/23/3316545

Brockton Hall Farm, Brockton, Shifnal, TF11 9LZ

- 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 Oliver Garfoot against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 21/06006/FUL.
 - The development proposed is extension and remodelling of an existing Georgian farmhouse and associated landscaping.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/L3245/Y/23/3316546

Brockton Hall Farm, Brockton, Shifnal, TF11 9LZ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Oliver Garfoot against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application Ref is 22/03935/LBC.
 - The works proposed are extension and internal remodel of a traditional Georgian farmhouse red brick dwelling and associated landscaping at Brockton Hall Farm, Brockton, Shifnal, Shropshire. The design looks to demolish an unattractive and poorly constructed existing single-storey extension and construct a replacement extension. The proposed extension will be subservient and sympathetic to the existing dwelling with a flat roof design and brick facing facade.
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Decision – Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Decision – Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

3. The appeals relate to the same scheme under different legislation. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning.

Main Issue

4. The main issue for both appeals is the effect of the proposal upon the significance of the grade II listed building known as Brockton Hall Farm¹.

Reasons

5. Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCA) requires the decision maker to have special regard to

¹ List Entry Number: 1480563

the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

6. The appeal building is a substantial farmhouse that dates from the early 19th century. It has a broadly L-shaped plan, with a principal well-composed formal range facing south and a secondary wing at the east side that extends to the north. The front range has a polite appearance as a result of its symmetrical fenestration that is enhanced by a projecting central bay which is topped by a simple pediment. In contrast, the rear range has a more modest and functional appearance. Although it has seen some harmful interventions, including the recent loss of the secondary stair², it retains a legible historic floorplan.
7. A small single storey outbuilding stands at the rear to the side of the existing porch. Although much altered and extended, it retains fabric that is reported to date from the mid-19th century. This indicates that the building was previously narrower and carried a service function as evidenced by its retained bread oven at its western end. Whilst it is of very limited architectural value, its presence and remaining historic fabric further illustrates the way the building functioned in the past and how it evolved; it therefore has a degree of evidential significance.
8. The functional north range and corresponding later entrance porch at the rear faces towards the associated working buildings. Brick walls separate the external spaces from front to rear³, and internally the floor plan illustrates a clear divide between the front and rear of the house; with the polite living rooms and bedrooms at the front and working rooms and secondary bedrooms at the rear. Thus, a hierarchy of spaces and external areas are illustrated, which is demonstrative of how the house would have been used with working spaces at the rear and formal rooms at the front.
9. The building's surviving historic fabric, its traditional form, its association with the working buildings to the north and the way it functioned, and the clear social hierarchy and separation of front and rear spaces are characteristics that contribute to its special interest.
10. The proposal would see the outbuilding removed and replaced by a substantial ground floor extension. A modest level of harm would arise from the loss of the outbuilding as it would lessen our understanding of how the building functioned in the past, and would result in the loss of historic fabric.
11. The extension would be of a substantial size. Based on a purely numeric comparison, it is suggested that it would represent an appropriately sized addition. However, its design, scale and detailing would be wholly inappropriate for several reasons. The large central hallway and opening up of walls to connect the hallway and extension to surrounding rooms would provide a more modern living environment; however, in doing so the current hierarchy between the front and back of the house would be wholly undermined, harming the plan form of the building and incurring the loss of historic fabric.
12. The proposal formalises the loss of the external brick wall that separated the farmyard from the front garden. This would be an adverse spatial change. It

² Although this is shown on the existing floor plans, the list description confirms that it was removed in 2021 and before the date that the building was listed.

³ Although at the time of my visit the external wall to the west had been demolished, it is still shown on the existing plans.

would be further emphasised by the extent of south facing glazing within the extension. This would face towards the front garden in a prominent manner from a rearward area that was not previously associated with the south front. Additionally, the glazing proportions of the extension's south elevation would appear ill considered when viewed with the near square proportions of existing south-facing glazing.

13. To the rear the extension would have an expansive and over-scaled solid elevation. The broad flat roofed form would be entirely at odds with the forms of the host building, with its pitched roofs and traditional gable widths. It would have an assertive appearance that would detract from the modest and functional character of the rear of the building.
14. The reasons for proposing a formal cornice are unclear. The host building has a much simpler range of details. The appearance of the cornice, particularly at the rear alongside the working aspects of the building and facing over an historic farmyard space, would be entirely out of place and would represent a further blurring of the distinction between the front and rear of the house.
15. Taken together, the impacts arising from the proposal would cause a considerable level of harm. In terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework) the harms would be less than substantial but would nevertheless be of considerable importance and weight. Paragraph 208 of the Framework establishes that any harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
16. It is suggested that the proposal would achieve a more suitable layout for modern family living. The existing layout, particularly at ground floor is complex, and the rooms do not relate well to each other. However, there is nothing before me to suggest that changes to the degree proposed are necessary to ensure that the building can continue to function as a dwelling, and I therefore find that this benefit would be of a private nature.
17. It would be necessary for the extension to conform to modern standards in terms of insulation. However, there is nothing before me to suggest that the thermal performance of the building would be considered holistically or that the works would incorporate other improvements to the building that would go beyond those that are required by other legislation. Therefore, I give this matter little weight.
18. Economic benefits would arise during the construction process. However, these should only attract modest weight owing to the small scale of the proposal.
19. The public benefits would carry modest weight and are not sufficient to outweigh the harm identified.
20. In summary the proposal would fail to meet the requirements of the LBCA as it would harm the special interest of the listed building. It would be contrary to Policies CS6 and CS17 of the Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy 2011, and Policies MD2 and MD13 of the Shropshire Council Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan 2015. Together these policies seek to ensure that proposals protect the historic environment.

Other Matters

21. The second reason for refusal for both applications related to insufficient information to justify the replacement of windows. Additional information has been submitted with the appeal, which demonstrates that the condition of the windows has been considered in more detail and some are capable of repair. The Council is content that such matters could be covered by a condition if the appeals were allowed. I see no reason to take a contrary view. As I am dismissing the appeal for the reasons given, this matter does not need to be considered further.

Conclusion

22. For the reasons given above, the appeals should be dismissed.

A Tucker

INSPECTOR