

Cerys Jones

From: Elgan Jones <elgan.jones@spab.org.uk>
Sent: 15 February 2022 11:44
To: planning_admin
Cc: Nick.Davies@gov.wales
Subject: Bettisfield Hall, Bettisfield, Whitchurch, SY13 2LB

Importance: High

FAO: Simon Greenland

Your reference: P/2022/0071

Our reference: 173372

Bettisfield Hall, Bettisfield, Whitchurch, SY13 2LB

Dear Simon,

Thank you for consulting the SPAB over the "retrospective" proposals to demolish a barn and erect three new timber-framed structures adjacent to the grade II*listed Hall. Whilst we have not had an opportunity to visit the site, we have reviewed the documentation submitted online and would like to provide the following observations.

Bettisfield Hall is a significant, grade II* listed building for its special architectural interest as a C17 gentry house notable as an early brick house and retaining much of its original character and construction. Upon reviewing the information included within this application, we are deeply concerned by the applicant's approach to demolish a historic building within the curtilage of the Grade II* listed building and construct three new structures within close proximity to the hall.

The historic plans included within the HIA notes that the barn was constructed between 1874 and 1912. Beyond this information, no further details, descriptions, historical or recent images are included within the Historic Impact Assessment or elsewhere within the submission. This aspect of the HIA relating to the demolished outbuilding is limited and its impact has not been honestly and fairly assessed within the summary table included. At present, we are unable to determine or provide further comments on this aspect of the application due to the lack of information.

We also have strong concerns regarding the construction of the three new timber-framed structures within close proximity of the hall. We again do not consider a thorough and representative assessment of the impact of the new barns on the setting and character of the site has been provided within the HIA. The report makes numerous references to the design being 'sympathetic' and the structures being located on the 'periphery of the setting'; however, these

statements do not appear to be supported by any evidence or further details. Upon reviewing the photographs of the site, we note that the existing and historic structures appear to all be brick in their construction and finish; however, the new structures are timber-framed with cladding. We also note that the historical and recent site plans show a clear boundary between the gardens/landscape and the agricultural range. The siting of the new structures' outbuilding 02' and 'outbuilding 03' has bridged this boundary and 'outbuilding 03' also appears to extend beyond the building line of the hall elevation; these could be particularly harmful to the character and setting of the Grade II* listed building. Additionally, the proposed plan layout of outbuilding 02 and 03 and their relationship to the adjacent structures do not appear to follow the style, orientation or site pattern. They do not form a courtyard, align along the boundary or with any structures but instead are laid out with gables on an east-west orientation.

The photographs included within this application also show a number of other changes and damage to the landscaping and setting of the site. These include the loss of the gardens and the construction of a substantial drive and hardstanding around the new buildings. These also appear to have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of the site and should form part of the assessment on the historic impact.

In summary, we are deeply concerned by the proposals contained within this application, the harm to the setting and character of Bettisfeild Hall, the assessment of the impact on the historic fabric and the neglect to include other harmful unconsented works within the application. Based on the information provided, we consider there to be a substantial risk of harm to the character and setting of the Grade II* listed building and therefore wish to register a **strong objection** to the proposals contained within this application.

We trust our comments are helpful to you.

Kind regards,

Elgan

Elgan Jones

Casework Officer

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

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