

FAO Sharon Holman, Wrexham County Council.

By email: sharon.holman@wrexham.gov.uk

6th August 2019

Your ref. P/2019/0535

Our ref. 152985

Dear Sharon,

Conversion of existing range at Knolton Hall.

Thank you for notifying the SPAB of the application to convert the existing range of buildings structures within the curtilage of the Grade II* listed Knolton Hall.

The SPAB generally only comment on listed building consent applications that listed buildings with fabric dating from 1720 or earlier. We understand that the building dates identified for conversion date from nineteenth century and that the **Victorian Society** should be consulted on this application. We also understand that this building range falls under the curtilage protection of the listed hall.

Our primary interest in this application is ensuring that the proposals and conversion of the range do not affect the setting and context of the listed structure, Knolton Hall, which we understand dates from the sixteenth century. For clarity, we have not reviewed nor provide comment on the whether the proposals which affect the individual buildings are appropriate.

Whilst we have not had an opportunity to visit the site, we have reviewed the drawings and documentation submitted online and provide the following observations. The proposed conversion of buildings generally retains the massing and character of the agricultural range, a sense of separate and the hierarchy of the Hall.

We do note that there is limited information or specification included as part of this application which identifies the materials and methods for repair, alteration and conversion. This poses a risk that inappropriate materials which are not technical compatibility may be used and lead to accelerated deterioration of the fabric and the character of the buildings. We would seek clarity on the materials and methods used for converting these structures.

Furthermore, to protect the character and wider setting it is important that the external detailing and materiality is appropriate and would strongly recommend that any approvals are conditioned with further details and samples sought of the following building elements:

- Roof covering (including ridge tiles)
- 1:5 scale details showing the verge and eaves details. It is important that the replacement roof covering is not undertaking using modern construction details or finishes.
- Window details
- External Door details
- Lime mortar pointing samples.

Further advice on responsible approaches to upgrading the fabric of older properties can be found on the following websites and we strongly recommend that the applicant and agent make use of these resources if they have not done so already:

- SPAB: <https://www.spab.org.uk/advice/energy-efficiency/>
- Sustainable Traditional Buildings Alliance (STBA): <http://stbauk.org/>
- Responsible Retrofit Knowledge Centre: <http://responsible-retrofit.org/>

One aspect of the proposals which does raise some concerns is the proposed cart port located between the Hall and the range. The application does not include long views or an assessment of the car port in its context which demonstrates or justifies any impact to the setting to the Hall. We accept that there is an existing carport structure in a similar location however this is smaller in footprint and has a significantly lower roofline which is broadly level with the brick boundary wall. There is a clear historic separation between the Hall and the adjacent range. Our concern is that this structure will dissolve this sense of separation and will be visible from wider views to the Hall itself. We kindly request that the agent provides further details so that this element of the design can be assessed in greater detail. Until such time, there is a risk that the new carport will cause harm to the character and setting of the grade II* listed house.

We trust that our comments are helpful to you. Please let us know the outcome of this application in due course.

Yours sincerely,



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