

ENGLISH HERITAGE

EAST MIDLANDS OFFICE

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Our ref: L00255672

23 April 2014

Dear Mr Scott

CASTLETON HALL, CASTLE STREET, CASTLETON

Thank you for asking English Heritage to provide consolidated advice (via email, 9 April 2014) on the above planning and listed building applications for Castleton Hall, Derbyshire. Our advice takes account of all information associated with this application presented on your website. We were shown modifications to the scheme at the meeting held on 31 January 2014 and we assume that these are being treated as modifications to the application. Your authority has also asked us to consider the Derbyshire County Council report on the applicant's development appraisal (21 March 2014) and a paper produced by Milner Commercial explaining their approach to the applicant's Financial Development Appraisal and Viability Test (21 February 2014).

It is our understanding that it is the intention to create two separate freeholds - Castleton Hall and the north wing (Tithe Barn).

Our advice takes account of relevant guidance, including the Planning Practice Guide that has been published since our meeting in January. Having now consolidated our advice on this application, it is important to emphasise that this letter supersedes our previous comments dated 19 September 2013, 6 December 2013, 20 December 2013 and 9 January 2014.

Summary

Castleton Hall is a Grade II listed building of special interest in the national context, situated within the Castleton Conservation area. The current listed building and planning application proposes the conversion of the Hall into two dwellings, with separate curtilage to the rear and parking provision. Our advice is given in line with the Principal Act, the NPPF, the Planning Practice Guide, and the PPS5 Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide, which remains in force. Our published guidance document Conservation Principles (2008) further expands upon the value of historic places and how English Heritage assesses proposals for change in that



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context.

English Heritage supports the principle of securing a sustainable use for this building and we believe that a residential use is consistent with the long-term conservation of the listed building. We consider the proposal will result in a degree of harm to significance, which we believe is less than substantial, leading to consideration of the case against the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF (131, 132 and 134). We do not consider this is a case of enabling development and (in the context of previous planning conditions) we believe your authority will need to weigh up the public benefit of enhancing the significance of this listed building via full restoration against the degree of harm arising from the scheme that is proposed.

English Heritage Advice

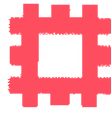
Significance

Castleton Hall is listed Grade II as a single dwelling dating from the early and later 18th century. It is built of coursed limestone with Welsh slate roofs. Of particular historic and architectural interest is the early-mid 18th century Baroque facade with striking classical detailing, giant pilasters and central doorway with large stone surrounds. Historical research including map regression shows a building on this site in 1614, though it is possible there may have been earlier development. On a plan of 1721 the north wing is noted as a tithe barn and within the adjacent pinfold. Internally and externally there are different architectural styles within the north wing, suggesting a different date/use. It is not known whether the house was occupied historically as two dwellings, although it is conceivable that at some point the north wing was in agricultural use to support the main dwelling, and then later domesticated and fully incorporated into the main house with visible 19th century alterations. 19th century tithe maps show some sub-division within the rear curtilage and it is acknowledged that the most recent use of the Hall as a youth hostel resulted in much alteration including new build within the grounds, which has in part had a detrimental impact on significance. In defining the heritage significance of the Hall, the evidential and historic value of the building relates to the evolution of the plan form, notably in its significant phase and development as a substantial property in single ownership when the grand and polite facade was created, with the supporting agricultural and domestic functions contained within its grounds. This is expressed architecturally - allowing the form of the main substantial block with architectural pretensions (presumably reflecting the social standing or aspirations of the owner) to be read in the context of the architecturally subservient north wing - which clearly housed service accommodation and related functions. The two are entwined in terms of function - the polite accommodation would not have functioned properly without the service elements. This relationship between polite range and service range is seen repeatedly in country houses of all scales - Castleton Hall shows the same arrangement in the context of a grandiose property in



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the middle of a small market town.

Impact of the proposed works on significance

In considering all information, it remains the view of English Heritage that the proposed works would cause a degree of harm to significance. This degree of harm is judged as less than substantial and arises from both physical alteration and the consequences of separation. We recognise the physical alterations both internally and externally are minor and reversible. Particular concern was expressed over the physical subdivision of the curtilage - amendments have been submitted to remove any separation at the front of the property, and the harmful impact of proposed boundary treatment to the rear has been mitigated by changes tabled at the meeting in January 2014. However, the scheme remains depicted as separation with a smaller curtilage to the second property known as Tithe Barn. In our view, the potential harm to significance relates to the separation of a building which derives significance from its use as a single dwelling associated with its most important period of architectural development and the consequent implications for long term sustainability of the asset. This includes the potential longer term physical alterations, including incremental changes that could arise from separation and future separate ownership; and whether separation might affect viability in the longer term. It has been accepted previously that the optimum viable use for the Hall is as single dwelling house and thus the question remains whether there is a 'clear and convincing' justification to accept the harm caused by the separation, in light of the public benefits associated with the scheme - in this case full restoration of the building and its fine architectural details.

Relevant Policy

As these applications affect a listed building and a conservation area, the statutory requirements to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting and any features of special interest (s.16, 1990 Act) and to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area (s.72, 1990 Act) must be taken into account in the decision-making process.

Your authority should also aim to achieve the objective of sustainable development, which in this context means guiding the development towards a solution that achieves economic, social and environmental gains (paragraph 8, NPPF). The environmental and possible social gain worthy of seeking in this case, is the continued conservation of the listed building and this part of the conservation area so that the heritage value or significance can be enjoyed by present and future generations - an overarching planning objective (paragraphs 17 NPPF).

Our assessment is that the proposal will have a less than substantial harmful impact



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on the significance of the listed building and the conservation area as a whole. Great weight is to be given to the conservation of listed buildings (paragraph 132 NPPF) and as heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, any harm requires a clear and convincing justification (paragraphs 126 and 132 NPPF). It is sound within the planning system to weigh up less than substantial harm against clear and convincing justification including public benefit (paragraph 134). It remains our view that the justification for the proposed subdivision rests upon the balance struck between the less than substantial harm and the benefits of revealing and enhancing significance.

We have been consistently clear that we do not believe this is a case where Enabling Development arguments as detailed in our published guidance document are applicable and whilst both the applicant and objector refers to our published Enabling Development guidance in attempting to prove/disprove a conservation deficit, we do not believe this is a sound basis on which to determine these applications. By definition, Enabling Development is development which is contrary to policy and is not to benefit the owner or their financial circumstances but springs from the inherent needs of the heritage asset. An essential part of an Enabling Development argument is to demonstrate that a conservation deficit exists and that the scheme presented is the only viable option. This would follow full and open marketing at a price reflecting the building's condition to identify if there are alternative, less harmful uses - in this case, retained as a single dwelling.

We have read the Derbyshire County Council report commissioned by your authority on the applicant's development appraisal and the justification paper produced by Milner Commercial explaining their approach to the applicant's Financial Development Appraisal and Viability. Both documents discuss whether the development appraisals submitted should include all cost headings as stated within our published Enabling Development guidance -as the costs incurred would be for the purposes of a private owner rather than a developer. As we do not consider this to be an Enabling Development scenario, we do not believe it is appropriate for us to scrutinise each report in detail or to comment on which costs would be included in a development appraisal.

Position

We remain of the view the proposed subdivision of Castleton Hall will result in a degree of harm to significance, which is considered less than substantial. We accept the physical works are minor and improvements to mitigate the harm have been submitted. We do not believe the guidance for Enabling Development is strictly relevant here and we do not consider a conservation deficit has been proven. Whilst financial justifications may form part of this background information for this proposal, we consider any justification should focus on the benefits of full restoration of the grade II listed Hall within the conservation area. Accordingly, we believe you have



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sufficient information upon which to determine these applications.

Recommendation

We recommend these applications should be determined in line with the NPPF, including paragraphs 131, 132 and 134. Your authority will need to be convinced that the public benefit of the proposal outweighs any degree of harm to significance. If minded to grant consent, your authority may wish to consider the use of conditions/formal agreement to control the long term physical management of the site as a whole.

Yours sincerely

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