

69530 – Walshaw Hall, Bradshaw Road, Walshaw

Conversion of care home (Class C2) to 19 no. residential apartments (Class C3) with associated facilities and internal and external alterations.

Walshaw Hall is considered to be a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA).

Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The applicant has failed to comply with paragraph 194 of the NPPF in failing to fully describe the heritage significance of the NDHA. As such the local planning authority cannot comply with paragraph 195 of the NPPF to identify and assess the particular significance of the NDHA that might be affected by the proposals. The local planning authority should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

My site visit revealed the building still retains original historic fixtures, fittings, decorative architectural details in the Arts & Crafts style, wood panelling and very fine carved wooden fireplaces with high quality inlaid marquetry. The carved fireplaces are potentially older than the Hall and as such may be very significant. These factors, which are not exhaustive, indicate that full research and analysis into the potential significance of the Hall needs to be carried out in order for the full impact of the proposals to be assessed.

In saying that the subdivision of the dining hall and removal of the fireplaces, whether or not they are relocated elsewhere, at this time potentially represent a considerable harm and loss architectural and aesthetic value which currently cannot be supported in terms of heritage conservation.

A heritage statement of significance needs to be submitted in accordance with Historic England's guidance – Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: for the sustainable management of the historic environment – April 2008. This work should be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced heritage conservation professional.

The statement of significance should research and give analysis of any evidential value, architectural value, historical value, aesthetic value and communal value that may exist that would create its heritage significance. This approach and guidance are in alignment with the NPPF.

Mark Kilby PGDip (Building Conservation & Adaptation).

Conservation Officer