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Proposed Extension to dwelling at 14, Upper Rotcher, Slaithwaite, HD7 5UE
Ref 2018/483/10: Conservation, Heritage and Design Statement in support of the Application for Planning and Listed Building Consent.

The Existing Site

14 Upper Rotcher is located to the rear of the small row of terraced houses numbered 10-17 Upper Rotcher and is set back behind this terrace from Rotcher Lane. Immediately in front and to the west of the site is a detached two storey house No 15. The site is accessed by a lane off Rotcher Lane which drops down to and under the railway line which is to the south of the site. The site is very restricted with a small front garden area and yard to the side bounded by retaining walls supporting gardens to the surrounding properties. Upper Rotcher itself is located within the green belt and the application site is confined on all sides by buildings and the railway line.

These arrangements are illustrated on the site plan drawing numbered 2018/483/04A.

Existing Dwelling

The dwelling is a two storey listed grade 2 cottage with solid stone walls, stone slate roof and stone mullioned windows.
There is a stone 'lean to' shed attached to the west elevation in the yard. The building is in a poor state of repair with no rainwater goods resulting in some dampness in the walls and has been repointed with strap pointing presumed to be cement based mortar.

The listing details are as follows:

GV II
Late C18, early C19. Detached house. Hammer dressed stone. Quoins. Pitched stone slate roof. Coped gables. Moulded footstones. 2 storeys. South elevation has: ground floor; entrance with deep lintel and quoins. One 3-light stone mullioned window with recessed mullions. First floor; one 2-light stone mullioned window with recessed mullions. One 3-light stone mullioned window with recessed mullions. Included for group value. Listing NGR: SE0725213740

The building contains features such as the original window seats to the south elevation and ground floor open fireplace.

The accommodation consists of two main rooms at ground and first floor with the kitchen and bathroom housed in a rear extension with very low headroom in both cases. The kitchen has a ceiling height of 1780mm while the door into the bathroom is only 1550mm high.
A later staircase connects the ground and first floor main rooms and is non compliant also with unacceptable headroom and intrudes into the main principal space.
All the above can be seen on photographs 1 to 8 inclusive.

The Proposals

- Important parameters

A solution had to be found to make the building habitable to enable its continued use for the future as an important heritage asset and the following points 1 to 10 are considered integral to the development of the design to this end.

The following are considered significant:

1) The main facades facing south and east including retention of the window detailing.
2) The dominance of the main south and east elevations.
3) The main ground floor Principal Room.
4) The historic features such as the window seats.

The following essential repairs are to be undertaken:

5) Repoint the existing facades with a lime based mortar.
6) Re instate rainwater goods using timber gutters and cast iron or aluminium rain water pipes.
7) Generally repair internal floors and finishes.
8) Repair or replacement on a like for like basis of existing stone mullions where required.

The following improvements are considered essential:

9) Create a compliant bathroom with adequate headroom.
10) Remove the existing staircase and insert a new safe and compliant staircase.

- The Solution

After considering a number of options a solution was found which achieved all the above.

By removing the existing lean to shed and erecting an extension against the west elevation of the house within the existing yard it has enabled both a new staircase and bathroom to be provided to current standards thus releasing space within the existing building. As a result the existing ground floor Principal Room is reinstated and the kitchen, which remains in its current location, can be given a more than adequate headroom by removal of the existing bathroom floor at first floor. Rooflights of the conservation type are proposed which will provide a good level of natural lighting to the rear areas of the dwelling which currently suffer from inadequate levels of natural lighting.
By opening up the kitchen, creating larger openings through the dividing wall to the living area this creates a high quality living space which retains the historic features of the original building.

- Concept

The original concept was to design an extension which retained the dominance of the original building, in particular the main south and east elevations, and which clearly distinguished between the original historic asset and the new extension.

- Impact

To this end the roofline has been set down from the existing roofline and the front elevation of the extension set back from the existing main south elevation. The external materials are proposed as natural coursed stone to the ground storey and rear north elevation and oak cladding to the upper storey to the south and west elevations. The roof is proposed in blue slate on the front pitch while the rear pitch will be glazed which allows a high level of natural light into the stair and hall. Blue slate is evident on neighbouring buildings.
The extension itself, by nature of its location, will be discreet being hidden mainly by the main building due to the position of the adjacent house at No 15.
No alterations are intended to the main south and east elevations apart from essential repairs such as repointing, mullion repairs and rainwater goods. Rooflights are proposed with only a single rooflight visible from the south and these will be of a 'conservation' type.

In conclusion the proposed extension will be subservient to the original dwelling and due to its external treatment and setting out, will provide clarity between the original and new. It will not alter the character and appearance of the historic building neither will it cause any detrimental impact on the green belt due to its location within the group of buildings.

Pre Application Advice

A meeting was held at the Kirklees Metropolitan Planning Office on 14th February with the Conservation Officer Anna Blaxall when all the above was tabled. No objections were raised and the approach welcomed especially as these proposals would secure the survival of an important heritage asset.

Application Drawings and Documents
These accompany the application as follows:

Photographs 1-8 of the existing site and dwelling.

No 2018/483/01 Location Plan at 1:1250
No 2018/483/02A Existing Building Sheet 1 at 1: 50
No 2018/483/03A Existing Building Sheet 2 at 1: 50
No 2018/483/04A Existing Building Sheet 3 at 1: 50 and Site Plan at 1: 200
No 2018/483/05A Proposed Ground and First Floor Plans at 1: 50
No 2018/483/06A Proposed Sections BB and CC at 1: 50
No 2018/483/07A Proposed Elevations at 1: 50
No 2018/483/08A Proposed Section AA at 1: 50

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