DAS Statement for Manor House, Baldock

Introduction

This large house has been listed as Grade II* and has recently been granted planning and listed building permission for conversion into 5no flats.

Work has commenced on the conversion but previous concern as to the design of the subdivision of the building has arisen again due to the layout of one flat. The extent of Flat 1 can now be more clearly understood and this with initial marketing has suggested the created flat will be not only awkward in its layout but unusable to an average family.

The proposal is to create a small further flat, Flat 6 that would allow not only a more sensible use for the grand building but would work to define the original building layout.

The further flat would cause little alteration of the existing consents, none to the elevations and only affect the garden to the building.

Design

The large size of the building would generally suggest its division into separate dwelling units as a simple division of area but due to the grandeur of Manor House both internally and externally the proposed division has instead been based on the units suggested by the original rooms. The larger rooms to the front of the building and what must have been a ball room to the rear have been retained as main lounges to the new flats. The scheme creates only two new opening through the original internal walls and these on the second less grand floor.

The long rear single storey projection to the main building is considered a later addition with expressed rather concealed box sash windows and lead roof junctions. The proposal is to reinstate an existing door through to the main building to increase the size of one flat and to create a new flat, Flat 6 in the nature of a cottage house to the rear.

It is believed the rear extension was likely a servant's quarters, stables or some other secondary provisions to the main house. It was constructed latter with clear junctions in the roof, a slightly different brick and a far lower floor level. The creation of a further flat in this area would more clearly define the structure rather than poorly merging it with a flat to the main building. Also the rear extension is of far poorer quality to the main building internally and would act to reduce the grandeur of a flat in the main house.

As permissions stand the largest flat Flat 1 can only suggest a layout with the bedrooms separated by a dramatic distance of some 25 mts. It is felt on walking this distance that a family would have parenting concerns at the distance from the main bedroom to the smaller rear bedrooms.

The additional flat would cause the division of the garden to the building but with a low fence and cultivation of the existing plating this division would not unduly damage the outlook as the patio to the large doors to the ballroom already act to divide the garden.

Conclusion

The proposal of a further flat still maintains a variety of one and two bedroom flats of various large sizes. The effect of the garden that is not grand is minimum and in many ways preserves the original plan intent of the large building.