



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 October 2021

by S. Ashworth BA (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 19 October 2021.

Appeal Ref: APP/C4235/D/21/3277795

40, Queens Drive, Heaton Mersey, Stockport SK4 3JW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr A Shakos against the decision of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/077362, dated 10 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is side extension to existing property, including demolition of existing modern single storey side garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and on its significance as a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

3. 40, Queen's Drive is detached house with two storeys plus basement, dating from the late 19th century. It was built as part of a matching pair with No 38 and forms part of a group with No 36 which, although of a different form, appears to have been built at a similar time in similar materials. The property is entered on the Greater Manchester Historic Environment Record and is included on the Council's Local List as being of architectural and historic significance. Although not statutorily listed, the property is considered a non-designated heritage asset. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that 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 and the significance of the heritage asset.
4. The property has a vertical form with a central projecting gabled bay and subordinate recessed bays either side of it. It is constructed of red brick with a slate roof and has a ground floor polygonal bay and decorative eaves. A tall chimney contributes to the vertical proportions of the building. The front elevation of building is symmetrically designed. The rear, which is more subservient in terms of its design, fenestration is irregularly placed and detailing much more simple. The building has been extended in recent times by way of a modern flat roof garage to one side and a porch to the other.

5. The appellant's Heritage Assessment sets out the significance of the building as a heritage asset and notes, amongst other things, that the intact nature of the building yields moderate to high levels of evidential and high aesthetic value, in particular as a result of the intact front elevation with an additional contribution made by the internal plan form and detailing. In addition, there is some value from its historic significance and limited communal value. The assessment notes, and I agree, that the building makes a positive contribution to the street scene. To my mind that value is increased by the well-preserved appearance of Nos 38 and 40 as a pair and their group value with No 36.
6. The proposal seeks to demolish the modern garage and replace it with an extension to provide additional living accommodation on two levels. The extension would have a pitched roof and would incorporate vertically proportioned arched headed windows to the front to match the existing fenestration, and a dormer window to the rear. It would be constructed in materials to match those of the existing building.
7. The Council's Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) requires that an extension or alteration to a property should respect the form, shape and symmetry and proportions of the existing dwelling, amongst other things, and requires that dormer extensions should generally have a pitched roof and are in proportion to the roof so they are not dominant features.
8. The side extension would be lower in height than the main part of the building, but nevertheless it would be a substantial structure, its ridgeline extending to just below the eaves of the existing house and just below the ridgeline of the adjacent property. Moreover, it would fill the space between the house and boundary with the adjacent property and would be of substantial width compared with that of the dwelling and considerably wider than the subordinate recessed bays. As a result, the extension would significantly widen the property and would be seen as a disproportionate addition. Moreover, the extension would fail to respect and would thereby detract from the symmetry of the building- an essential part of its character and appearance and its aesthetic and historic value as a heritage asset.
9. At the rear, the extension would appear as a modern addition, incorporating a horizontally proportioned box dormer in 'Aluzinc' cladding, and bi-fold doors at a raised ground level including a window in the original part of the building. Whilst I acknowledge that the alterations would not be visible from the public realm, to my mind these modern elements would be overly assertive and would thereby dominate and detract from the simple character of the rear elevation.
10. I acknowledge that the garage, which itself fills the gap to the side of the property, does not reflect the character of the building. Nevertheless, it is of limited height and simple form and does not thereby significantly undermine or compete with the vertical proportions or detailing of the original building. In addition, as a result of its low height, the form of the side elevation of the dwelling, including the side bay, remains visible from the public realm. The proposed extension, in contrast, would result in the loss of the side bay, a feature that is replicated on No 38, and moreover, as set out above would

detract from the form and proportions of the original house. Accordingly, any heritage benefit from the removal of the garage is clearly outweighed by the harm to the significance of the building and Nos 38 and 40 as a pair.

11. I have taken into account the proposed regrading of the land levels in front of the garage to visually reduce the appearance of the extension. I note that land levels vary across the site and the raising of the land in the manner proposed would not to my mind unduly affect the proportions of the building. However, in itself, this would not significantly mitigate against the harm caused by the proposal. I acknowledge that the original plan form will largely remain legible, but this is a neutral matter in my considerations rather than a benefit of the scheme.
12. For the reasons set out, the proposal would cause a considerable harm the character and appearance of the building and thereby detract from its significance as a non-designated heritage asset.
13. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies SIE-1, SIE-3 of the Stockport Core Strategy DPD and Policy CHD 1.8 of the Stockport Unitary Development Plan Review which, amongst other things, requires that specific historic features are taken into account in a development, that extensions complement an existing dwelling in terms of design, scale and materials, and states that harm to the significance of a heritage asset will require convincing justification. In addition, the proposal would be contrary to the requirements of the SPD as set out above.
14. I acknowledge that the property has been renovated from a previously poor state and that the proposal would provide enhanced living accommodation within the property. This is of private benefit and attracts limited weight in support of the proposal. Accordingly, such a consideration does not indicate that planning permission should be granted contrary to development plan policies.
15. For these reasons, and taking into account all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

S. Ashworth

INSPECTOR