
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 November 2022

by J D Clark BA (Hons) DpTRP MCD DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/D/22/3304552

8A Parsonage Road, Manchester M20 4PQ

- 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 A Russell against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref 132974/FH/2022, dated 8 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is rear and side extensions including reconstruction of existing extensions.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The proposed development is described on the decision notice as the erection of single storey side extension, part single part first floor rear extension and a two storey side extension to provide additional living accommodation following demolition of existing side extension. This revised description followed amendments to the proposed development and is a more accurate description than that on the application form.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Withington Conservation Area and the effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling.

Reasons

4. The appeal site comprises a detached dwelling with its access alongside 8 Parsonage Road and a front garden between the dwelling at 8A and No 8's rear garden. No 8A has been built in the original grounds of No 8. Other than its front garden, the space around No 8A is limited to two small courtyard areas. The existing dwelling therefore appears to be tightly located close to its boundaries with minimal space around it. It has previously been extended.
5. As the site is within The Withington Conservation Area, I have had regard to Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 which requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. The significance of the Conservation Area is its characteristic Victorian/Edwardian Villas and No 8A is referred to as being similar in scale and position to a coach house associated with the original villa

- at No 8. There are though new developments around the area including a dwelling to the rear of 6 Parsonage Road, No 6A.
6. The proposal includes removing previous extensions and replacing them and enlarging the dwelling at first floor level. Although the proposal would not increase the ground floor area, given the modest size of the existing dwelling and its proximity to its boundaries, enlarging it further detracts from any original concept of a coach house to a larger villa. No 8a has already been tightly squeezed into the rear garden of No 8 and enlarging it as proposed would create a dwelling that appears overly large and cramped in its plot and so visually incongruous in its context with No 8 and the character of the Conservation Area.
 7. I note that planning permission has been granted for single storey side and rear extensions and a two storey side extension¹. The approved scheme includes part of the proposal subject to this appeal but excludes the addition of a first floor rear extension. Notwithstanding the previously approved elements of this proposal, the cumulative effect of the extensions would fail to be subservient to the original dwelling. Whilst specific elements may not cause harm on their own and may meet certain criteria that could be used for determining whether a proposal is subservient or not, for example, setting in from the sides and not enlarging the footprint, the cumulative effect of the proposed extensions would cause harm as I have set out above.
 8. I consider that the proposal would amount to harm to the significance of the heritage asset. In finding harm, this is something to which I have given considerable importance and weight to. However, this harm is less than substantial in the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework², as it relates to a domestic extension to a property that can only be seen from limited vantage points including neighbouring properties and a car park to the rear of the site. Nonetheless, there are no public benefits to outweigh this harm.
 9. I conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the character of the Withington Conservation Area and would cause less than substantial harm to its significance as a designated heritage asset. It would conflict with Core Strategy³ Policy EN 3 and UDP⁴ Policy DC18 which seek to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the historic environment, and the guidance in the Framework with regard to heritage assets. It would also be inconsistent with the Core Development Principle in relation to protecting and enhancing the built environment as set out in Core Strategy Policy SP 1.
 10. The proposal would also conflict with Core Strategy Policy DM 1 and UDP Policy DC1. These indicate that, amongst other things, regard should be had to the impact of development on the surrounding area in terms of the design, scale and appearance of the proposed development; the character of the property and the surrounding area; and extensions to residential properties being subservient to the original dwelling.

¹ Planning Application Ref: 134580/FH/2022 – Approved 30 September 2022.

² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework, 2021 (the Framework).

³ Manchester City Council – Manchester's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document, Adopted 11 July 2012.

⁴ The Manchester Plan – The Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester, Adopted 1995 (Saved Policies).

Other Matters

11. The materials to be used in construction could be conditioned and so these are not a determining factor in my assessment.
12. I also note the comments made by the appellant about 6A Parsonage Road which is a larger property than 8A and is contemporary in its design. However, I have limited information about the background circumstances of No 6A and I do not consider that there are sufficient similarities between Nos 6A and 8A that justifies the proposal before me.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to the development plan and all other considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR