



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 December 2022

by C Rose BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th January 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/W/22/3304140

38 Chandos Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 6PF

- 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 Ms Heidi Jackson against the decision of Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 22/00833/F, dated 11 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is demolition of 8no. existing garages and construction of 2no. two storey residential dwellings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Councils reason for refusal focuses on the effect of Unit 1 and does not raise any concerns in relation to Unit 2. In light of this I am focusing the consideration of the appeal on the effect of Unit 1 only, noting that Unit 2 cannot reasonably be severed from Unit 1 as part of this appeal due to the shared parking and access arrangements.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of proposed Unit 1 on the character and appearance of the area, including whether it would preserve or enhance the significance of Cotham and Redland Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The CA is characterised by its leafy suburb of individually developed urban streets dominated by a high-quality Victorian townscape with a spacious and verdant character. The CA contains a high quality of built fabric. No's 36 and 38 Chandos Road adjoining the appeal site, in combination with other buildings on Chandos Road and Alexandra Park, are identified as Grouped Buildings of Merit in the Cotham and Redland Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals September 2011 (CAMP).
5. No's 36 and 38 are a pair of large semi-detached properties in use as flats. The site also adjoins a coach house forming No 12 Alexandra Park. The site is located within the CA comprising a garage court of eight garages. Whilst three garage doors and their roofs are visible fronting Alexandra Park, the remainder of the site including the 5 no. remaining garages is screened from the public domain behind No 12. Due to the single-storey nature of the three garages fronting Alexandra Park, and their slight set back from the back of the existing

pavement, they are not prominent in the street scene. Furthermore, I note that the buildings on the appeal site are not identified in the CAMP as buildings that detract from the character or appearance of the CA.

6. Unit 1 would be set forward of the side elevation of No 38 and be located beyond the current position of the existing garage doors fronting Alexandra Park. As such it would be positioned closer to the back edge of the existing pavement. In this location it would be taller than the existing garages, with a similar height as No 12 but positioned forward of the front building line of that neighbouring property and abutting the boundary with No 38. The resultant angular design of Unit 1 in this location, when taken together with its increased scale and massing, gable roof form facing the road and its hipped roof rear profile, would make it a conspicuous feature.
7. Due to its height, bulk, and position forward of the garages and the side elevation of No 38, Unit 1 would be highly visible from Alexandra Park and Roslyn Road reducing the gap and openness between No.12 and No.38 and resulting in an overly prominent building. Whilst there is some planting to the side of No.38, parts of the proposed side elevation would be visible on approach from Chandos Road where it would present a large and dominating blank side elevation. The proposed positioning would not be characteristic of the immediate area or other mews development within the CA that generally appear to follow established building lines and are orientated with their longer elevations facing the street similar to No.12.
8. Although the design and materials attempt to replicate architectural features forming part of the character and appearance of the CA, its two-storey form, prominent position, and orientation would detract from the character and appearance of the area and would appear incongruous in relation to No 38. It would also screen views of No 38 on approach from Alexandra Park and Roslyn Road due to its position and height. As a result, the proposal would detract from and partially screen the detailing of No 38 reducing its contribution to the CA as a large semi-detached spacious building of merit. This is harmful regardless of the level of traffic, the site being on a bend in the road, and the site no longer forming part of the curtilage to No 38.
9. The proposal does involve the removal of vacant garages which do not currently make a positive contribution to the character and significance of the CA and in fact detract from it. However, the potential benefit of removing the existing garages does not justify nor outweigh the harm that would arise from the proposal whereby the presence of Unit 1 would introduce an unacceptable transition between No 38 and the properties adjoining Roslyn Road which would not respect the existing built form or building lines.
10. The appellant's Design and Access and Heritage Statements refer to a number of other developments in the area. Whilst I have limited information in relation to the planning history of these other sites, from the information before me, the appeal proposal is considerably different in terms of its position and orientation in relation to neighbouring properties. As a result, the presence of other development does not lead me to a different conclusion in relation to the impact of the appeal proposal on the CA which I have necessarily considered on its own merits.
11. When taking account of all of the above, I find that the harmful impact of Unit 1 as proposed on the character and appearance of the area, would fail to

preserve or enhance the significance of the CA. Given that the harmful effect would be localised, the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated asset. In such circumstances, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires that less than substantial harm be weighed against any public benefits.

12. With regard to the above, the site is in a location close to a range of services and facilities, would add two additional dwellings to the supply of housing, provide some limited economic benefits and redevelop the garage court site to a high standard of energy efficiency, enable long term repair and structural solution for the existing site and boundary walls and offers the potential for reduced traffic movements and associated noise when compared with the use of garage blocks. Taking such matters into account, individually or together, the public benefits are not sufficient to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA that I have identified, and the great weight afforded to the asset's conservation.
13. It follows that I conclude that Unit 1 would fail to preserve or enhance the character, appearance and significance of the CA. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policies BCS21 and BCS22 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy 2011, Policies DM26, DM27, DM30 and DM31 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan 2014. Amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure that development delivers a high quality of design, safeguards heritage assets and preserves or enhances their special character and appearance. It would also be contrary to the Framework insofar as it seeks to secure well-designed places and the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

Conclusion

14. It is not a matter of dispute between the parties that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites and I have no reason to take a different view. However, when the proposal is considered relative to paragraph 11 of the Framework it falls under footnote 7. In that respect, I have found that the proposal would harm the significance of the CA and that the harm would not be outweighed by public benefits, which provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed under paragraph d) i) of the Framework based on application of its policies in Chapter 16 relating to designated heritage assets. It follows that in such circumstances it is not necessary to go on to assess the proposal against the subsequent paragraph 11 d) ii).
15. For the reasons given above I conclude that the proposal conflicts with the development plan taken as a whole and there are no other considerations, including the provisions of the Framework, which outweigh this finding. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

C Rose

INSPECTOR