



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2023

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N2345/W/22/3309057

45 Watling Street Road, Preston, Lancashire PR2 8EA

- 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 Ian Burgess against the decision of Preston City Council.
 - The application Ref 06/2022/0911, dated 1 August 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is two storey side extension to form a self contained flat.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have had regard to Section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires that special regard be had to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether the proposed extension would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Fulwood Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The site is within the Fulwood Conservation Area through which Watling Street Road forms a spine road running east to west. No 45 Watling Street Road is a Victorian semi-detached building, with a later two-storey side extension, with land around it, located on the corner of Watling Street Road and Albert Road. It has a low boundary wall with pillars and a hedgerow along part of the boundary with Albert Road. Viewed from Watling Street Road, the property has retained much of its original features such as a ground floor bay window, stone cills and headers to the windows, ornate detailing around the front door, and a stone parapet at eaves level.
5. From what I have read, and seen during my site visit, the Conservation Area's significance lies in the historic suburban townscape which reflect its evolution as one of Preston's earlier suburbs from the Victorian period to the early 20th Century.
6. Relatively generous front and side garden space contribute to the setting for various Victorian houses in the locality. This results in a relatively spacious layout between various properties and the street, with low walling and foliage boundary treatments. The building on the opposite corner of Watling Street

Road and Albert Road, No 1 Albert Road, is also set back from the corner and further contributes to the distinctive sense of space in the vicinity of the appeal property. Together with the historic suburban residential architecture of various houses, these are distinctive characteristics of the Conservation Area. The draft Fulwood Conservation Area Appraisal indicates that these characteristics reflect the wealthy occupants that the suburb was intended for. These characteristics are noticeable at the appeal property, at its corner location fronting onto Watling Street Road.

7. That some buildings on other sites in the area are located closer to the footway than the historic host building at the appeal site does not negate the noticeable contribution of the above characteristics at the appeal site and in its vicinity, to the distinctive historic character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. The extension would widen the host building and erode the garden space between the building and the boundary with Albert Road. Also, the extra building width, in combination with the existing extension, would appear disproportionate to, and distract from the historic host building. As such, the proposed development would be visually discordant with, and erode the distinctiveness of, the locality's historic suburban townscape. At this prominent location in the street scene, these adverse impacts would be noticeable from various viewpoints on Watling Street Road and its junction with Albert Road.
9. That the proposed extension would be set back from and have a lower eaves and ridge height than the front elevation of the existing side extension, and its brickwork, roof and stone cills and headers would reflect those of the host building would not negate the harmful impacts identified. Furthermore, I do not anticipate that a landscape scheme could be conditioned that would be sympathetic to the characteristic openness of front side gardens and adequately soften the appearance of the proposed development.
10. Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework¹ advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Given the scale and substance of the proposal, I find the harm to the Conservation Area to be less than substantial in this instance, but nonetheless of considerable importance and weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 202 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against public benefits of the proposal.
11. Within the context of no identified shortfall in local supply of deliverable housing sites, the proposal would contribute to local housing supply in the form of a two-bedroom flat in an accessible suburban location, with associated socio-economic benefits during and after construction. However, the public benefits in these respects are limited by the scale of the development proposed. Consequently, the public benefits do not outweigh the great weight given to the conservation of the Conservation Area and the less than substantial harm to its significance which I have identified.
12. To conclude, the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the Fulwood Conservation Area. As such it would conflict with Policies 16 and

¹ Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government National Planning Policy Framework, 2021 (the Framework).

17 of the Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy² and Policies EN8 and EN9 of the Local Plan³. Together, these policies seek to ensure that development complements local character, and conserves and where appropriate enhances the historic environment.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J D Clark

INSPECTOR

² Central Lancashire Adopted Core Strategy Local Development Framework July 2012.

³ Preston Local Plan 2012-26 Site Allocations & Development Management Policies, Adopted 2 July 2015.