



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 August 2025

by **C Mayes CMLI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M0655/W/25/3365402 **43 London Road, Warrington WA4 6SG**

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Metodi Metodiev of Santorini Est 2023 Ltd against the decision of Warrington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 2025/00180/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as “retrospective erection of canopy, decking & fence with fence gate to the rear yard of cafe for additional covers”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. Reference to “retrospective” in the description of the application is not a form of development. However, the application form confirms that the development has been completed, and I was able to see this during my site visit. I have therefore determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area; and,
 - whether the development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Stockton Heath: London Road/Grappenhall Road Conservation Areas.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two-storey mid-terrace building constructed from red brick with pitched slate roofs fronting onto London Road. The terrace comprises buildings of similar and consistent construction, materials and character. The appeal property is in use as a café and other properties in the terrace are predominantly in commercial use.
5. To the rear of the property is a two-storey, semi-detached outrigger, that continues the architectural form and materials of the principal building, and a small service yard. This arrangement is consistent with several other properties within the same

terrace row, and adjacent terraces in the area, creating a strong pattern and rhythm of built form and open spaces.

6. Several properties along the terrace row have enlarged the rear outrigger, maintaining the two-storey, pitched roof form. In many cases, the enlarged outriggers occupy a significant portion, or the entirety, of the rear service yard. Other service yards have been enclosed by flat roofed single-storey extensions or with boundary walls. However, these extensions and alterations are predominantly built from brick and are complementary to the host building, terrace row and wider area. Where open space has been reduced or lost to development, the proportions and form of these extensions has remained sympathetic to the strong pattern, proportions and rhythm of development.
7. The appeal development encloses the rear yard of the appeal property with timber fencing and a solid timber gate, both of which are lower in height than adjacent boundary walls. A shallow-pitched felt-covered roof spans the enclosure. The gate has been painted blue, however, the fence remains unpainted and, at the time of my visit, was partially obscured by a white plastic mesh sheet. The appeal development is lower height and smaller mass. In this regard it may be seen as subservient to the adjacent enlarged extensions and outriggers. However, it is also, therefore, out of keeping with and disrupts the established pattern and rhythm of development along the rear of the terrace row.
8. Therefore, the appeal development is not complementary to the character and appearance of the host property and wider area in terms of the nature or quality of the materials used. Neither is the shallow-pitch of the roof sympathetic to the proportions and architectural language of the host building or other buildings in the area.
9. Furthermore, while the colour of the gate and proposed colour of the fence may match the colours used to the front of the property, the two elevations are not seen in the same context. Hence, the appeal development introduces to the street scene of the service road a palette of colours which, rather than adding vibrancy to the area, contrast harshly with the muted colours of the predominant red brick walls and grey slate or tiled roofs in the surrounding area.
10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal development has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host building and is an incongruous addition to the area. Hence, the proposal conflicts with Policy DC6 of the Warrington Local Plan, December 2023 (the LP) which requires development, among other things, to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and use a palette of high-quality materials which are appropriate to the local context.

Conservation Areas

11. The appeal site is within the London Road portion of the Stockton Heath: London Road/Grappenhall Road Conservation Areas (the CA). As such, I have a statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) also requires great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets. These include conservation areas.

12. The CA is not supported by a conservation area appraisal, although the designation plan does include some supplementary notes and explanations. As such, I have considered the heritage significance of the CA based on what I saw at my site visit, the information on the designation plan and in the evidence before me.
13. Much of the heritage significance of the CA would appear to be derived from the architecture and development of London Road as a suburb of Warrington and a commercial high street during the 19th and 20th centuries. The architectural language of buildings fronting London Road is a mixture of shops, pubs and housing in a variety of styles.
14. The domestic and service arrangements to the rear of the properties are integral to the area's historic character. Thereby, the rear elevations and associated spatial and access arrangements form part of the significance of the CA.
15. The service road to the rear of the property provides access to the rear and service yards of properties along London Road, other commercial properties and the gardens and yards of some dwellings fronting onto Gaskell Street and Grice Street. While the service road is not a thoroughfare, I saw at my site visit that the road is well-used by pedestrians accessing commercial and residential properties allowing the significance of the rear of the appeal property and development within the CA to be appreciated.
16. In these regards, the appeal development fails to preserve or enhance the historic character or appearance of the CA, as it introduces incongruous materials and disrupts the pattern of spatial and access arrangements to the rear of the property and along the terrace row. The proposal, in the terminology of the Framework, would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA.
17. Paragraph 215 of the Framework states that less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (in this case the CA) should be weighed against the public benefits of the appeal development. I acknowledge the proposal would support the existing business, may create some additional employment and contribute to the vibrancy and economic health of the high street. There is no substantive evidence that the business, or any other business in the surrounding area, would become uncompetitive or cease to trade if the appeal were dismissed. The limited public benefits would not be of sufficient weight to justify the harm to the CA identified above.
18. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal development would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CA. This would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and the Framework and would conflict with Policy DC2 of the LP, which seeks to ensure that development proposals take into account the elements that contribute to heritage significance including architectural and historic interest, and character and appearance.

Conclusion

19. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. For the reasons given above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

C Mayes

INSPECTOR