



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2025

by R Gravett BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/W/25/3366222

160 Orrell Road, Orrell, Wigan WN5 8HQ

- 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 Raw Charging against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is A/24/98036/FULL.
 - The development proposed is installation of four electric vehicle charging stations including erection of associated equipment (feeder pillar and substation) and installation of associated underground cabling to point of connection.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including whether it would preserve the setting of the Grade II listed building, The Mount Public House.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises part of the car park to the front of The Mount Public House (160 and 162 Orrell Road) which is Grade II listed¹. In accordance with the statutory duty set out in Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I have therefore had special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Based on the official list entry, the significance of The Mount Public House is partly derived from its historic interest as a house, now a pub, and it was home to French Benedictine Nuns in the early C19th. It is also of architectural interest, consisting of a three-storey stone building with two bowed bays either side of a three-bay centre, and a central porch with Tuscan columns.
4. The setting of a listed building is the surroundings in which it is experienced, and this is not fixed and may change as the asset, and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset or may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. The Mount Public House is sited at the back of its car park, set well back from Orrell Road. The car park is behind a low stone wall and wide grass verge with a row of large, mature trees which are subject of a Tree Preservation Order. Together, these have a landscaped quality that make a positive contribution

¹ List Entry Number: 1228430

to the way in which the significance of the Mount Public House is appreciated, and the way it is experienced as an interesting, imposing building set back from the road. Notwithstanding the presence of parked cars, there is strong inter-visibility between the appeal site and the listed building, and the pub enjoys relatively wide, open views across the appeal site and towards the protected trees and the row of houses on the opposite side of Orrell Road.

5. It is proposed to install four EV charging stations with a substation, feeder pillar and underground cabling at one end of the row of car parking spaces closest to the grass verge. The EV charging stations have been carefully designed with the smallest possible size selected by the appellant, and I recognise they are not inherently incongruous in a residential area. There would be two different types, with slightly different dimensions, but the respective footprints of the EV charging stations would be modest and they would be sited so that their narrower end faces towards the road.
6. However, despite their design and orientation, the row of EV charging stations would be over 2m in height and would therefore be visible above the low stone wall appearing unduly dominant in close views from Orrell Road, and from the houses immediately opposite. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment assesses the lower crown height of the trees within the grass verge to be higher than the EV charging stations and accordingly, these would provide only limited screening or softening of the appearance of the proposal.
7. From the east, and particularly from the pavement on the opposite side of Orrell Road, the long side of the EV charging stations would be prominent despite being seen alongside the streetlighting columns, road signage and a bus stop within the pavement. Unlike a parked car, which is relatively transient, the EV charging stations would be conspicuous in oblique views towards The Mount Public House from the road, appearing as a row of large permanent structures along the frontage.
8. In longer views from the west along Orrell Road, the siting of the EV charging stations behind the grass verge means they would be obscured by the stone wall and hedging along the frontage of the adjacent property at 164a Orrell Road.
9. The entrance and exit are at either end of the low stone wall and from here the front elevation of The Mount Public House is viewed in full, with the open car park in its foreground. The proposed substation would be sited close to the existing exit, broadly aligning with the end of the wall. Its depth and height would mean it would appear a reasonably large structure, despite being finished in a green colour. In combination with the EV charging stations, its physical presence would erode the open quality of the appeal site, and it would permanently obscure views towards and from the listed building. This would alter and be harmful to the setting of The Mount Public House, and to the way in which its architectural interest is appreciated.
10. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting and that this should have a clear and convincing justification.
11. The harm that I have identified above would be at the lower end of less than substantial in this instance, but it is nevertheless of considerable importance and

weight. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

12. The extracts from 'ZapMap' included in the appellant's evidence shows that there are few EV charging stations in the local area. The wider provision in Wigan also appears relatively sporadic, but I have little information before me to show how this compares with other urban areas. Nevertheless, the proposal would provide an ultra-fast EV charging service for the local community, and customers and staff of the pub, which would be convenient and easily accessible, including from the strategic road network.
13. The provision of four EV charging stations would also contribute, albeit in a small way, towards the Government's long-term commitment to tackle climate change, and increasing the number of EV charging stations would remove some of the perceived, and real barriers, to the use of electric vehicles. In this regard, paragraph 161 of the Framework states that the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and should help to support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure and reduce reliance on forms of transport that generate air pollution.
14. Further, the appellant considers that the development would support the Council's 'Outline Climate Change Strategy Net Zero Carbon – Vision 2038 (2020)', which includes an action to significantly increase the number of electric vehicle charging points. The Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) (PfE) also supports significantly expanding the existing commercial network of electric vehicle charging points, both for public and private use. The use of electric cars clearly has wider public benefits including reducing air pollution and improving air quality and public health.
15. Finally, the appellant asserts that the proposed development would be beneficial in supporting the long-term commercial viability of the pub, but I have little evidence before me to substantiate this claim. Nonetheless, I acknowledge that the availability of EV charging stations could be attractive to customers and staff.
16. These public benefits would be modest given the small scale of the proposal, but I nevertheless afford them moderate weight. However, I conclude that they would not be sufficient to outweigh the great weight to be given to the less than substantial harm that I have identified. The proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, and it would fail to preserve the setting of the Grade II listed building, The Mount Public House. Consequently, it would conflict with PfE policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 and policies CP10 and CP11 of the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) (LP). Together, these require development to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings and respect the character and identity of the locality in terms of design, siting and size.

Other Matters

17. The appellant has drawn my attention to advertisement consents for the pub, as well as planning permission for a 25m telecommunications mast on land to the rear. Although it has been asserted that these have set a precedent for development within the setting of the listed building, the appellant recognises that they are prominent features which dominate the street scene including views along Orrell Road. This is consistent with my observations on site. Rather than providing justification for the appeal proposal, if anything, their presence points to the need

for proposals to be carefully controlled if the setting of the listed building is to be preserved. Moreover, it is not clear from the submissions to which signs the advertisement consents relate, particularly given the Council's evidence that the existing signage on the Orrell Road frontage appears to be unauthorised.

18. I also have very little evidence before me to substantiate the appellant's claim that the location of the proposed development is the only position on the site which would ensure the economic and operational viability of the project. Accordingly, these are not matters which lead me to reach a different conclusion in respect of the main issue above.

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 that the appeal is dismissed.

R Gravett

INSPECTOR