

Proposed Extension at
Brock Mill House
Wingates Road
Wigan

For

Mr and Mrs Prescott

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This heritage assessment has been prepared by Peter Dickinson Architects in support of the proposed extension to Brock Mill House, Wingates Road, Wigan.
- 1.2. The proposal seeks to demolish the single-storey detached garage to the side elevation, and finish the demolition of the rear conservatory, replacing both with a sensitive stone and render single-storey extension of high-quality design.
- 1.3. This assessment will assess the impact of the proposed extension in response to the associated Heritage Statement by architectural historian Gary Miller. This statement will explore the following areas:
 - Characterisation of the Listed Building and its setting
 - Aspects of good design and an assessment of the proposed extension
 - Visual and material impact on the Listed Building and its setting.



Figure 1 – Aerial view of the site

2. CHARACTERISATION OF THE LISTED BUILDING AND ITS SETTING

- 2.1. The characterisation of the Listed Building and its setting has been assessed in detail within the associated heritage statement however, will be discussed briefly here to add context to this assessment.
- 2.2. The property is Grade II Listed and is located within the Wigan Lane Conservation Area.
- 2.3. The historical aspects with the most importance from the Heritage England statement are as follows:
 - Carved Oval dated 1821 on the first-floor window
 - Hipped slate roof
 - Windows with lintels and cambered soffits with 4-light casement
 - Coursed dressed stone exterior
- 2.4. These features along with the setting of the Listed Building is summarised in the associated heritage statement as:

"In conclusion, the significance of the building is contained within its high levels of evidential and aesthetic values. Externally this is mainly concentrated within the building frontage. There is further contribution made by historic value arising from the building having an association with former industrial activity in the Douglas Valley, and at the former Brock Mill, whilst communal values are lower. There is considered to be no value contained within the detached sectional concrete garage, and this imparts, at best, a neutral value upon the setting of the building."

3. ASPECTS OF GOOD DESIGN FOR WORKS TO LISTED BUILDING AND THE ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED EXTENSION

- 3.1. Extensions to Listed Buildings should not detract from the character of the main building, nor should they cause a material impact which harms a heritage asset.
- 3.2. Guidance on the extension of Listed Buildings is provided by Historic England and through various commentaries by conservation designers and consultants, including Richard MacCullagh MRTPI IHBC BA(Hons) MSc DipTP, principal of RMA Heritage based in Hampshire.
 - Show an understanding of the heritage significance of the Listed Building and its setting.
 - Seek to minimise any harm to the Listed Building's heritage value or special interest
 - Normally play a subordinate role and not dominate the Listed Building as a result of its scale, mass, form, siting or materials
 - Fulfil a function that is in the Listed Building's long-term interest
 - Sustain and add value to the Listed Building's significance by being of high-quality design, craftsmanship and materials.
- 3.3. In his article, Principles and Practice, MacCullagh makes the following commentaries on the subject of extensions to Listed Buildings:

"Whilst Listing introduces a much greater degree of control, it does not mean a historic building should be frozen in time but calls for well-informed and intelligent management of changes so the listed building can sustain its heritage value."

And, in reference to determining applications for the extensions to Listed Buildings, Planning Authorities;

*“shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses” **

*reference taken from Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990.

- 3.4. The guidance as outlined above indicates that Planning Authorities should encourage proposals that preserve the historic aspects of heritage assets but should not prevent well considered development proposals.
- 3.5. Richard MacCullagh advises that *“planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life is this and future generations”*. The scale of the heritage asset in question should always be considered. In instances where a building has been Listed due to its key architectural details or its unique materiality such aspects should be preserved, as stated by MacCullagh *“Given the great variety of historic building types and their individual characteristics, design advice shouldn’t be too prescriptive as what might work for one site may not necessarily work for another”*.
- 3.6. Considerations by both the designer and Planning Authority should be given to the specific significance of the heritage asset. The NPPF requires applicants to outline this significance and the importance of the asset and its setting.
- 3.7. The key significant heritage assets of Brock Mill House have been identified in this assessment and the associated heritage statement. Any proposal should seek to preserve these aspects of the Listed Building. The Architectural style of a proposal should carry less importance than how the proposal relates to the Listed Building itself.



Figure 2 – Example of elevational materials

- 3.8. The proposed design, as provided by Peter Dickinson Architects and shown on drawing no. 4032-21-01B, demonstrates a sensitive extension, simple in form and scale which retains the key heritage aspects of the Listed Building.
- 3.9. The image adjacent (figure 3) demonstrates a replacement extension to a dwelling within a Conservation Area. The extension is well proportioned and designed and mirrors the existing building.
- 3.10. The works to Chanters Farm House, Atherton, Wigan has set a precedent for a single-storey rear extension to a Listed Building. The site is largely obscured by trees and as such the style of the extension is unknown. Chanters Farm House is also of coursed stone of a similar colour and style to Brock Mill House.



Figure 3 – Precedent at Chanters Farm House

4. VISUAL AND MATERIAL IMPACT ON THE LISTED BUILDING

- 4.1. The intention of the proposed extension by Peter Dickinson Architects is to have as little impact on the materiality and visual appearance of the Listed Building as possible. As such the proposal does not impact any of the outlined key historical characteristics in paragraph 2.3.
- 4.2. As is stated in the associated heritage statement both Brock Mill Cottage and Brock Mill House have been extended over time, this reduces the historic significance of the rear and side elevations that whilst still original in terms of the 1947 Planning Act have no characteristics of note.
- 4.3. The proposal will replace the now-demolished conservatory and garage both of which added no positive impact to the setting of the

Listed Building with a high-quality design, sensitive to its surroundings in the Conservation Area.

- 4.4. The front elevation retains much of its original historic character, the difference being that in the conversion from three dwellings to two, the door placement was changed resulted in less symmetry between Brock Mill Cottage and Brock Mill House. The side and rear extension is set back from the front elevation to maintain its visual prominence.

- 4.5. Within the heritage statement, the architectural historian references

"The largely intact nature of the front elevation, located within a substantial garden plot also lends to some notable historic value."

As the proposal is set back from the front elevation and is no greater in scale visually than the existing garage there is little to no impact on the character of the Listed Building.

- 4.6. Replacing the low-quality 1970s peddle-dash garage to the side of Brock Mill House with a sensitive, stone and render side and rear extension, would greatly enhance the setting of the Listed Building.



Figure 4 – Dwelling house and existing garage



Figure 5 – Front Elevation from drawing 4032-21-01A

- 4.7. In terms of impact to the Listed Building the previous two-storey extension to the rear has had the most impact:

“The most significant addition in terms of ‘aesthetic value’ considerations is the two-storey rear extension, built in painted render over brickwork. The element is a fairly stark contrast to the dressed stone of the main building envelope, although there is a similar extension to the adjoined Brock Mill Cottage.”

The proposed extension projects from the rear in-line with the previous two-storey extension. Since the proposal is single-storey the extension will have much less impact on the Listed Building.

- 4.8. The proposed aluminium windows are of a modern contrast to the existing iron and timber windows, clearly differentiating the extension from the main dwelling house.

4.9. Irregular coursed smooth ashlar stone in combination with white render is proposed for the extension to be sympathetic to the main dwelling without matching.

4.10. The interior of the Listed Building is not mentioned in the Historic England Listing but would remain largely unaffected by the proposal so has not been assessed in the associated heritage statement.

4.11. Within the associated heritage statement, the architectural historian concludes that the proposed scheme is wholly supportable.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. The proposed extension has been developed with the key characteristics of the Listed Building in mind. The modest contemporary design proposed by Peter Dickinson Architects retains the visual prominence of the original building whilst respecting its materiality and key architectural details.

5.2. It is anticipated that the assessment of the characteristics of the Listed Building outlined above demonstrate that suitability of the proposed extension.

5.3. Peter Dickinson Architects have an established portfolio of rural and conservation projects. The design for the extension at Brock Mill House makes use of this experience which in the Architect’s view provides a contemporary extension that does not detract from the heritage aspects of the Grade II Listed Building.

REFERENCES

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Historic England

- Richard MacCullagh's Article *Extending Listed Buildings, Principles and Practice*
- Listed Building and Conservation Area Act 1990

Peter Dickinson Architect 24th May 2021