

MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer		
Service	Green Infrastructure	App No:	242347
Address:	1 Diamond Villas, Ward's Cross, Hurst, Wokingham, RG10 0DG		
Proposal:	Householder application for the proposed two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, and loft conversion including rear roof change from hipped to dormer.		
Heritage Asset:	Village Centre Hurst: Area of Special Character – identified by the Council and is classed as a non-designated heritage asset, one which holds a degree of historic and architectural merit in the traditional buildings within it (several of which are listed buildings) and the character of the area. Nos.1-3 Diamond Villas – non-designated heritage asset.		
Site Visit Made:	Yes		

Summary Of Recommendations

Objection

Comments On Proposal

Diamond Villas is a short terrace of three dwellings dating from the late 19th century terrace built of a uniform red/orange coloured brick with a slate roof located in the heart of Hurst. The terrace exhibits many aspects typical for residential developments of that era and is also particularly noted for its decorative horizontal bands of buff brick banding across the width of its front elevation and buff brick diamond motifs set between the dwelling at first-floor height. Whilst changes have been made to the front aspect of the terrace (i.e. replacement of the windows and front doors, introduction of different styled open porches to two properties, the break to the mid-level banding due to the removal of a window sill to No.1) the terrace still possesses a level of historic, and architectural interest in its overall form for it to firstly be identified as a non-designated heritage asset and one that is important in the positive contribute it makes to the Village Centre Hurst Area of Special Character in which it is located. This terrace being one of a number of late 19th century terraces within the central area of the village built on the same side of Broadwater Lane. Importantly, particularly in reference to this application, no.1 Diamond Villas represents a clear termination of the line of built form along the north of Broadwater Lane prior to the verdant setting of the Old Posting House, of which the open space immediately adjacent to the building forms part.

Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but doesn't require to be sent via secure methods.

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.

The current application follows from the refusal of a new dwellinghouse immediate adjacent to no.1, under application 211871 in 2021. Part of the reason for the refusal of this scheme was how the additional dwelling, as attached to the side of Diamond Villas, would seek to disrupt the historic form and rhythm of the terrace, which in turn is identified as an important element of the character of Hurst village. It would have also sought to close down the open space and erode the verdant character which presents to the highway and setting of the Old Posting House. Whilst the current application has sought to reduce the size, form and massing of the side element, the fundamental issue of introducing additional built form to the side of the terrace remains.

As noted, Diamond Villas is a relatively well-preserved Victorian terrace which positively contributes to the character and appearance of the area. Part of its architectural and historic interest, and thus significance, is that it is a complete terrace of three, unaltered in terms of built form as experienced from the highway (save for the very small kick-out of the rear extension to no.3). Nearly almost all of the 19th century development along the northern part of Broadwater Lane/Wokingham Road have the same character, in that there is a very strong, almost uniform, building line along the road, of which part of the area's character is drawn. To introduce a divergent form of built character, with an asymmetrical building line would seek to diminish the architectural and aesthetic quality of the terrace and in so doing result in a harmful impact on the Hurst Village Centre Area of Special Character.

Notwithstanding the concern over the principle of a side addition, an objection is raised to the architectural treatment of this element. The proposed design fails to authentically reflect the host, specifically in the size and proportion of the fenestration – which should match that of the host – and the introduction of the mono-pitched outshot to the front. The elevation should be flush, and reflect the details of the host – the monochromatic string coursing, flat stone arches etc.

Whilst the primary objection is raised over the side addition, the rear elements also raise concern. Given the precedent of the other two dwellings of the terrace, the large box dormer and out-of-proportioned single storey addition cannot be reasonably repudiated, however the single storey element's facing material should be of brick to match the host and not the proposed cream render.

Overall, from a heritage stance, it is recommended that the proposed scheme be refused on the grounds of the harm it would cause to appearance of the historic period terrace that in its present form is considered to hold merit and positively contributes to the distinctiveness of the Area of Special Character. This relative simplicity forms part of the NDHA's significance, and so to extend it by this amount and arrangement, would severely dilute the plan form and overall architectural integrity of the building and thus erode the significance of not only the host building(s) but Area of Special Character as a whole.

Given the identified harm, the proposed development would conflict with Policy CP3 of the Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy and Policy TB24 of the Managing Development Delivery local plan.

As such, an objection is raised against the application due to the arising harm to the identified heritage assets and refusal is recommended.

Conditions			
N/A			
Date:	29/09/2024	Signed:	Roderick McDonald Built Heritage Officer