
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 December 2019

by O S Woodward BA(Hons.) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/19/3240100

31 Bourne Hill, Palmers Green, London N13 4LJ

- 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 Berry against the decision of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 19/02026/HOU, dated 3 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 August 2019.
 - The development proposed is construction of hardstanding in connection with vehicular access.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of the proposed development provided by the appellant on the appeal form in favour of that of the original planning application form as it provides a more precise summary of development proposed.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development on highway safety and on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Highway safety and car parking

4. Bourne Hill is a fairly busy road with parked cars on the street, pedestrian crossings with islands in the middle of the road, and several side junctions. There are several existing off-street car parking spaces, all accessed directly from Bourne Hill. The evidence indicates that this is a 'classified road'.
5. The parking space proposed at No 31 would lead to movements to and from Bourne Hill, over a dropped kerb and a pavement. The space would be directly opposite the junction with Hillfield Park.
6. There are double yellow lines directly to the east, preventing parking and thereby providing adequate visibility both to and from westbound traffic. Visibility to the west would also be acceptable because eastbound traffic is on the opposite side of the road. However, the proposal would likely result in

reversing onto the highway because the space would be too small to allow for turning on site. The impact of this would be exacerbated because the space is directly opposite a right-hand turn lane to Hillfield Park. If there were simultaneous vehicle movements along Bourne Hill and/or into or out of Hillfield Park and/or into or out of the proposed space, this would likely impact on the free flow of traffic and on highway safety.

7. It is not clear that the space would be large enough to prevent overhanging of the footway. Although it would be some 4.4m deep at its deepest point, part of the area would be encroached by steps to the porch. The proposed space is on a narrower garden than the existing off-street spaces further westwards. However, any overhang would likely be minimal and there would remain sufficient space for pedestrians on the footway. Therefore, whilst this weighs marginally against the appeal scheme, its impact is minimal such that it does not alter my overall assessment.
8. The creation of the dropped kerb access would result in the loss of at least one on-street parking space, and potentially two. Although this would be partially replaced by the creation of the off-street space, this would only be for private use of the occupiers of No 31 and would not fully replace the unrestricted on-street space(s). The proposal would therefore increase on-street parking pressure. This too weighs against the appeal scheme but also does not alter my overall decision.
9. The proposal would therefore harm highway safety, failing to comply with the relevant parts of Policies 24 (The road network) and 30 (Maintaining and improving the quality of the built environment) of the Core Strategy (CS), and Policy DMD 46 (Vehicle crossovers and dropped kerbs) of the Development Management Document 2014 (DMD).

Character and appearance

10. The existing front garden is set noticeably above the footway level. It is predominantly hard landscaped, although there is a flower bed adjacent to the front bay window and along the boundary with the property to the west. It retains its front garden wall. This part of Bourne Hill is lined by residential dwellings with front gardens. A number of the front gardens have been turned into hardstanding off-street car parking, with associated loss of front garden walls. However, a significant number of properties do retain their front gardens and front garden walls. There is a grass verge along this part of Bourne Hill, which has only intermittently been paved over to form vehicle crossovers.
11. It is proposed to re-landscape the majority of the front garden and to drop the level to provide *at grade* access to the footway. The landscaping would slope from the house down towards the pavement to achieve this, although it is not made clear from the drawings what the degree of this slope would be. A flowerbed and associated retaining wall would be provided to the eastern boundary.
12. The re-landscaping of the garden would be acceptable because the existing garden is also hard landscaping, such that there would not be a significant change to its character and appearance as a result of the proposed development. I note that the landscaping would need to be sloped to provide level access and that details of this are not provided. If the proposal was otherwise acceptable, this could be controlled by condition. However, the

proposal would result in the loss of a front garden wall and grass verge which are both important and attractive features of this part of Bourne Hill.

13. The proposal would therefore harm the character and appearance of the area, failing to comply with the relevant parts of Policy CP30 (Maintaining and improving the quality of the built environment), CS, and Policies DMD37 (Achieving high quality and design-led development) and DMD46 (Vehicle crossovers and dropped kerbs), DMD.

Other Matters

14. The evidence indicates that there are no alternative opportunities for safe vehicular access to the property, because the rear access is pedestrian only.
15. The creation of an off-street parking space would make it easier in the future for the owner of No 31 to install an electric charging point. However, I note that this does not form part of the appeal proposal. I also note that the creation of an off-street space would make access to a parked vehicle easier, particularly in relation to young children. These are both factors which weigh in favour of the proposal by increasing the possibility of more sustainable transport choices and better safety, but they do not overcome the significant objections set out above.

Conclusion

16. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

O S Woodward

Inspector