The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 November 2021 by M Long

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/21/3277930
29 The Chine, Grange Park, London N21 2EA

- 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 George Christou against the decision of The London Borough of Enfield.
- The application Ref 21/00729/HOU, dated 28 February 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2021.
- The development proposed is described as "the construction of a permeable resin bounded gravel hard standing in connection with vehicular access involving an electric vehicle charging point (in line with the requirements of DMD 45(3)) together with the replacement of the front boundary wall."

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a permeable resin bounded gravel hard standing in connection with vehicular access involving an electric vehicle charging point together with the replacement of the front boundary wall at 29 The Chine, Grange Park, London N21 2EA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 21/00729/HOU, dated 28 February 2021, subject to the following conditions:

   1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

   2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: GC-2020-DRG-03, GC-2020-DRG-04, GC-2020-DRG-05 and GC-2020-DRG-06 (Site Location Plan).

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matters

3. On 20 July 2021 the Government published a revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). I have had regard to this as a material consideration however, planning decisions must still be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The issues most relevant to this appeal remain unaffected by the revisions to the Framework. I am therefore satisfied that there is no requirement to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and that no party would be disadvantaged by such a course of action.

4. In the formal decision, I recommend that the description of development is amended to remove reference to Policy DMD 45(3), as this is not an act of development in itself.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Grange Park Conservation Area, and the effect of the proposed development on highway safety.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

6. The appeal site is situated within the Grange Park Conservation Area where Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention is paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. The Conservation Area predominantly derives its significance from its suburban character and historic architecture, which includes Arts and Crafts influenced features. The appeal dwelling is located on the western side of The Chine, it has an existing paved front forecourt area and low boundary wall which the appellant has described as being in a poor condition. The surrounding area is mainly comprised of detached and semi-detached houses with low front boundary treatments. A significant number of these properties have hard standing for vehicles located at their front.

7. The proposed development would replace the existing paved front forecourt with a permeable resin bounded gravel hard standing for a vehicle. The proposal would include a low front boundary wall constructed from reclaimed red bricks and an electric vehicle charging point. The proposal would also incorporate some soft landscaping.

8. Due to the high prevalence of hard standings in place of front gardens at the surrounding properties, the proposed development would be in keeping with the character of the area. Therefore, any car that would be parked in front of the appeal property would be viewed in the wider context of The Chine's streetscene, where a significant number of vehicles are similarly positioned in front of a dwelling. The proposed materials and low height of the boundary treatment would share a similar appearance to existing development in the surrounding vicinity and would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

9. The Council have referred to sections within the Grange Park Conservation Area Appraisal that identify the loss of front gardens, and their replacement with hard standing for vehicles, as a key problem in the area. However, the appeal site already has a paved surface and low boundary wall, and the addition of a single car parked in front of the appeal property would be a small addition to the wider streetscene that would preserve its character and appearance.

10. Given the above, the proposed development would preserve the character and appearance of the Grange Park Conservation Area. As such, it would accord with the Development Management Document (adopted November 2014) specifically Policy DMD37, which seeks to prevent development that is inappropriate to its context or which fails to have appropriate regard to its surroundings, and Policy DMD44 which seeks to ensure the design of

development affecting heritage assets should conserve the asset in a manner appropriate to its significance. There would be no conflict with Policy 31 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025 (adopted November 2010) which seeks to ensure that development has regard to the special character of heritage assets. The proposal would also accord with Policy HC1 of The London Plan (adopted March 2021), which seeks to ensure that development affecting heritage assets conserves their significance.

Highway Safety

11. There are a substantial number of properties along The Chine with vehicle accesses to the highway, some of which relate to hard standings where vehicles are essentially parked parallel to the highway. Upon my visit to the site, I noted that some cars had been parked at an angle, rather than completely parallel to the highway, however they remained within the site boundaries. There are also a number of crossovers within the surrounding area that are situated within close proximity to areas of on-street parking. There is a designated on-street parking bay area and single yellow line on the highway in front of the appeal site. During my visit, I observed a limited number of pedestrians and a low volume of traffic travelling at the low speeds that are expected within a suburban, residential area.

12. The proposed hard standing would accommodate a vehicle parking space that would require manoeuvring that is akin to parallel parking. The parked position of the vehicle would result in the bonnet and boot of the vehicle facing in a north to south orientation, rather than in a position perpendicular to the highway. Overall, the actual measurements of the proposed parking space would be larger than a standard parking space size (2.4m x 4.8m).

13. During my visit to The Chine, I observed a vehicle being reversed onto a hard standing and finish in an almost parallel position to the highway with minimal manoeuvring. The size of the hard standing was similar to the proposed scheme, which indicates that there would be no need for excessive manoeuvring at the appeal site. Moreover, while not identical to the scheme approved at No 18, the submitted evidence suggests that the appeal scheme is comparable in design and that a vehicle could park in a similar parallel orientation to the highway. Given that there is already frequent use of similarly-sized hard standings in the surrounding area, and that pedestrian and traffic volume is low, the proposed scheme would not result in harm to the safety of highway users.

14. Concerns have been raised in relation to additional damage to the footway and increased danger to pedestrians resulting from excessive manoeuvring on areas outside the reinforced dropped kerb. However, as excessive manoeuvring is unlikely, any associated damage or increased danger to pedestrians is also unlikely. Any concerns about the practicalities of constructing the crossover are not related to the planning issues that are of primary concern to this appeal.

15. The proposed crossover would be within close proximity to a designated on-street parking bay which, when occupied, would have an impact upon visibility. However, this would not be to the extent that there would be a significant hinderance to vehicles entering or exiting the appeal site. There are a number of crossovers along The Chine that are within close proximity to on-street parking spaces and, as such, they are an established and anticipated feature within the area.

16. The Council have referred to the Revised Technical Standards for Footway Crossovers. However, this document is principally related to dropped kerbs and the Council's responsibilities in their capacity as a Highway Authority. It is not directly relevant to the planning issues related to this appeal.

17. For the reasons above, the proposal would not result in harm to the safety of highway users. As such it would accord with the Development Management Document, specifically Policy DMD46 which seeks to ensure vehicle crossovers and dropped kerbs allow for off-street parking that has no adverse impact on road safety and that the size of the off-street parking is sufficient to ensure that vehicles do not overhang the public footway. There would be no conflict with Policy DMD45 which seeks to ensure parking layouts provide adequate sight lines and meet all manoeuvring requirements. The Council have mentioned conflict with Policy 25 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy 2010-2025, however this policy primarily focuses on improving the provision of routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Reference has also been made to Policies T6 and T6.1 of The London Plan, however these policies relate to parking provision in respect of new development and not the highway safety matters related to the provision of an access and parking at an existing residential dwelling.

Conditions

18. In addition to the standard time period for commencement of the development, I recommend a condition requiring the development to accord with the approved plans as this provides certainty. There is sufficient detail regarding the use of materials included within the approved plans, therefore a separate condition to control the use of materials is not considered necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

19. The proposed development would accord with the development plan, when considered as a whole. Based on the above, and having regard to all matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

M Long

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

20. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR