



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 May 2022

by L Douglas BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 JUNE 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/T5720/W/21/3289309

33 Lingfield Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 4PU

- 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 Kodiak Construction Ltd. against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Merton.
 - The application Ref 21/P0039, dated 8 December 2020, was refused by notice dated 28 July 2021.
 - The development proposed is described on the application form as: 'Demolition of existing five-bedroom dwelling and erection of three storey apartment building, with lower ground floor, to provide four three-bedroom apartments, including the removal of two trees and alterations to existing access'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appeal site is a large plot previously occupied by a 5 bedroom detached dwelling, which has been demolished. I have been referred to an extant planning permission¹ ('the Approved Scheme') which authorises 4 three-bedroom flats at the appeal site, with 4 off-street parking spaces and 8 bicycle parking spaces. The Approved Scheme is subject to a Unilateral Undertaking². That Unilateral Undertaking prevents future residents of 3 of the 4 permitted flats from applying for residential parking permits for the 'VC' Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ), leaving residents of 1 of those flats free to apply for an unlimited number of residential parking permits.
3. The appeal scheme seeks consent for the same form of development as the Approved Scheme, but the proposal would be subject to a different Unilateral Undertaking³ which would allow residents of all 4 proposed flats to apply for a maximum of 1 residential parking permit per flat.

Main Issue

4. Taking the above into account, the main issue is the effect of the proposed development on highway safety, with particular regard to on-street parking within the CPZ.

¹ The council's reference: 19/P2611

² Dated 15 September 2020

³ Dated 11 March 2022

Reasons

5. Lingfield Road, on which the appeal site is located, forms part of the VC CPZ. A Parking Survey⁴ undertaken by the appellant found residential permit holder parking stress within this CPZ was at 75%, taking parking spaces along the full extent of Lingfield Road, Homefield Road, The Green and High Street into account.
6. The council has raised concerns with the Parking Survey taking parking spaces on The Green into account, which are over 200 metres from the appeal site. If those parking spaces were not included in the Parking Survey's findings, the level of residential permit holder parking stress would have been 92%.
7. The council has stated the CPZ comprises 152 parking spaces, 114 of which are permit holder bays and 38 being shared use bays, and that 327 residential permits have been issued for the CPZ, excluding visitor permits. I also note a neighbour's suggestion that 22 business address permits may have been issued for High Street and 1 for each of Lingfield Road and Homefield Road. These figures suggest a high demand for on-street parking spaces generally, across the CPZ.
8. The council's draft Residential Parking Survey Methodology⁵ (RPSM) states surveys should cover a two-minute walk-time from the site, covering all roads within 200 metres, being based on how far a resident would reasonably leave a vehicle from their home. The RPSM suggests instances where a survey area can be amended: a) if the 200 metre boundary occurs halfway along a street, then the survey should be extended to the next junction, as people searching for a space would be unlikely to stop at an imaginary 200 metre line; and b) survey areas can be curtailed if there is no possibility of parking in locations that would fall within 200 metres of the site or people would not wish to park there, where there is satisfactory justification. The RPSM therefore outlines a logical approach.
9. The Parking Survey has included the entirety of the roads mentioned above, even though all of them have parking spaces which are located over 200 metres from the appeal site. Having walked all of those roads, I am satisfied that it would be reasonable to include the whole of Lingfield Road within the survey, as parking spaces on this road would be the likely preferred location for future residents to park their vehicles, and only a short section would lie beyond 200 metres from the appeal site.
10. Future residents seeking a parking space along Homefield Road would need to access it from Ridgway, which would be a contrived journey from the northern end of Lingfield Road if no spaces were found there, taking in a southern drive along the A219. The Green is also a one-way street inaccessible by vehicles directly from Lingfield Road. Vehicles leaving Lingfield Road would need to travel along a shorter extent of the A219 to the north to access The Green. No residential permit holder parking spaces were recorded on High Street. Parts of all these roads are within 200 metres walking distance from the appeal site, but no parking spaces on The Green would appear to be located within 200 metres of the appeal site.

⁴ The appellant's appendix SOC5: ADL Traffic and Highways Engineering Ltd, reference 4758, dated 21 November 2020

⁵ The appellant's appendix SOC8: London Borough of Merton, Draft Parking Survey Methodology June 2007

11. Due to the road layouts, it would be relatively easy for future residents to access Homefield Road and complete a loop of the southern section of Lingfield Road, before searching the northern one-way section of Lingfield Road for a parking space. As a residential street with parking spaces within 200 metres of the appeal site, Homefield Road would be an attractive place to park for future residents. The 200-metre boundary referred to in the RPSM occurs over halfway along Homefield Road and it would be appropriate for the Parking Survey to cover the whole of this street.
12. The Green, however, would be a less attractive place to park, even for a secondary vehicle, due to only one side of the highway being served by a level hard-surfaced footpath overlooked by houses. The other half of The Green abuts public open space, where a raised grass bank with an unmade track adjoins the kerb. I saw that only 2 parking spaces on The Green would be visible from the northern exit of Lingfield Road, which leads me to doubt the Parking Survey's claim that future residents searching for a space from that junction would be able to see if there would be any available spaces on The Green.
13. Following the guidance set out in the RPSM, it would be reasonable to curtail the survey area to exclude The Green. This would be due to all parking spaces on that street being located over 200 metres from the appeal site, meaning there would be no possibility of parking within 200 metres of the appeal site on The Green. In addition, the 200-metre boundary referred to within the RPSM would occur much less than halfway along The Green. It would be likely that future residents would prioritise searching for a parking space on Lingfield Road and Homefield Road, where the Parking Survey found high parking stress.
14. The proposed development would be served by 4 off-street parking spaces, which would accord with the maximum parking standards referred to by Policy 6.1 of the London Plan (2021) (LP). The Unilateral Undertaking associated with the proposal would allow up to 4 additional vehicles to park within the CPZ, which the appellant has described as an unlikely situation where future residents of the 3-bedroom flats would have access to a single off-street parking space each. However, I consider it far more unlikely that future residents of the Approved Scheme would apply for 4 or more residential parking permits.
15. The appeal site is located in an area with a Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) of 2, where a PTAL of 0 would suggest the worst accessibility to frequent public transport services, and a PTAL of 6b would suggest the best accessibility to such services. The PTAL of the application site is therefore low; however, as explained by a neighbouring resident, the appeal site is reasonably close to Wimbledon station, with parts of Lingfield Road having a PTAL of 6a. I do not accept that only a few journeys could be conveniently made by public transport by future residents.
16. I therefore consider it unlikely that future residents of the 3-bedroom flat free to obtain residential parking permits as part of the Approved Scheme would seek 4 or more residential parking permits, as the appellant claims they would be entitled to apply for. It is likely they would seek a residential parking permit, but considering the size of the flat, the off-street vehicle and bicycle parking facilities available, the appeal site's proximity to public transport options and

the terms, conditions, and details applicable to residential parking permits⁶, it is unlikely that they would seek a similar number of residential parking permits as those likely to be sought by the future residents of the proposal.

17. The appeal scheme, where all 4 proposed flats would be free to apply for a single residential parking permit, would be likely to generate greater pressure on parking in the CPZ compared to the Approved Scheme. On-street parking pressure in the area is already high, as demonstrated by the Parking Survey's findings and 327 permits having been issued for 152 spaces within the CPZ. As the maximum off-street parking standards would be provided, the appeal proposal would encourage private car ownership beyond the levels that the development plan seeks to restrict from new residential development.
18. The proposal would be contrary to Policies T2, T6 and T6.1 of the LP, Policy CS 20 of the council's Core Planning Strategy (2011) and Policies DM T2 and DM T3 of the council's Sites and Policies Plan (2014). Amongst other things, these seek to reduce highway congestion, car dominance and ownership, improve highway safety, and encourage the provision of the minimum necessary parking, in accordance with maximum standards.
19. Policies CS 20 and DM T3 offer support for car-free developments in areas benefiting from good access to public transport, which are identified as having a PTAL of 4 or above. I have found that although the appeal site is located in an area with a PTAL of 2, it is reasonably close to good public transport links. Taken as a whole, these policies do not suggest residential parking permits should only be restricted for developments in locations with a PTAL of 4 or above.

Other Matters

20. The appellant has referred to problems which are claimed to be inevitable with the marketing of the 3 flats of the Approved Scheme where future residents would be unable to apply for a residential parking permit. No evidence has been submitted to support this claim and I do not consider any such problems would be inevitable or insurmountable, considering the location of the appeal site and the on-site vehicle and bicycle parking facilities which would be provided.

Conclusion

21. The proposal would generate additional pressure on parking in the area, which would be harmful to highway safety and in conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate my decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

L Douglas

INSPECTOR

⁶ The appellant's appendices SOC9 and SOC10.