



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 January 2023

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16th February 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/D/22/3309265

65 Derwent Road, Southgate, Enfield N13 4QA

- 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 Ms Adelheid Voorbraeck against the decision of Enfield Council.
 - The application Ref 22/01789/HOU, dated 20 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 July 2022.
 - The development proposed is alterations to hardstanding and landscaping at front garden, involving replacement of paving stones with permeable block paving, with removal of front/side flowerbeds and widening of existing flower bed at side.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for alterations to hardstanding and landscaping at front garden, involving replacement of paving stones with permeable block paving, with removal of front/side flowerbeds and widening of existing flower bed at side at 65 Derwent Road, Southgate, Enfield N13 4QA in accordance with the terms of the application, 22/01789/HOU, dated 20 May 2022, and the plans submitted with it.

Preliminary Matter

2. The description in the banner heading above has been taken from the Council's Decision Notice because I consider it to be a more accurate description of the appeal proposal before me than provided on the planning application form.
3. The planning application was made retrospectively and I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the frontage of the host dwelling and the Lakes Estate Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. No.65 Derwent Road (No.65) is an attractive two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located on the north-west side of Derwent Road, within the Lakes Estate Conservation Area (LECA). The dwellings on Derwent Road are mostly closely-spaced Edwardian semi-detached pairs set slightly back from the road and there are few examples of front gardens, with most dwellings having some forecourt or driveway parking. The photographs submitted by the appellant, and the Original Ground Floor Plan, show that there was previously 'crazy

paving' to the front of No.65, with narrow, raised flowerbeds either side of a formal path to the front door. The 'crazy paving' has been replaced with a permeable herringbone designed block paving with a rain channel across the full width of the frontage. The width of the existing flowerbed along the boundary with No.67 Derwent Road has been increased slightly by around 600mm (and replanted) and decorative tiles have been laid on the steps to the front door.

6. The *LECA Character Appraisal* (2015) identifies that the significance of the LECA is primarily derived from the homogenous, collective value of its high-quality Edwardian housing, but also the pattern of front gardens, with decorative boundary walls and traditional planting. I recognise that front gardens contribute to the archetypal suburban townscape of the LECA and that the paving of front gardens to facilitate car-parking is a threat to its character and appearance. However, in this case, the herringbone block paving has replaced uncharacteristic 'crazy paving,' rather than replacing a traditional front garden with decorative boundary walls and tiled garden path. Further, the low brick wall with half round coping bricks on the boundary and the decorative tiles, replicate a formal approach to the front door, providing some traditional detailing. I do not therefore find that the proposed hardstanding and landscaping would cause particular harm to the appearance of the frontage of No.65, or wider streetscene.
7. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the LECA. I recognise that an ideal solution, from the perspective of the character and appearance of the LECA, would be for original front gardens to be reinstated. However, in this case, for the reasons given above, I find the effect on the character and appearance of the LECA to be, at worst, neutral. The statutory test of S72(1) is therefore met.
8. There is also no conflict with Policies CP30 and CP31 of the Enfield Plan Core Strategy, 2010-2025 (2010), Policies DMD37 and DMD44 of the Enfield Development Management Document (2014) or Policy HC1 of the London Plan (2021) which, together, seek to ensure that new development is of high quality design, respects locally distinctive or historic patterns of development and conserves and enhances the significance of heritage assets.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed

R. Jones

INSPECTOR