



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 April 2023

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/D/22/3313985

309 Wickham Lane, Plumstead, Greenwich SE2 0NT

- 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 Sagar Thapa against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 22/2114/HD, dated 23 June 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'New paved parking area with retaining wall, new steps up and wheelie bin area'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I note that this is partly a retrospective application and that the development, apart from the dropped kerb, has already been carried out. I must determine the appeal on the basis of the submitted plans considered by the Council.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on pedestrian and road safety.

Reasons

4. The site comprises a semi-detached house in a primarily residential area. It fronts onto Wickham Lane and the house is at a higher level than the road. Wickham Lane is a relatively busy classified road which lies on two bus routes and there is on street parking on this part of the street.
5. According to the plans, the paved parking area measures 3.9m deep by 4.45m wide and is bounded on three sides by walls. The Council indicates that the minimum depth required for hardstanding areas for parking is 4.8m and this aligns with government guidance in the Manual for Streets (MfS) which sets out the recommended dimensions for off-street parking bays of at least 4.8m long by 2.4m wide. Although the Council states that the parking area is wide enough to accommodate two cars, its width falls short of the recommended dimensions for this and it may only be possible to park two smaller sized cars or one larger car.
6. The paved area is 0.9m too short to provide a parking space to meet accepted standards. This would result in vehicles over-hanging the footway causing an obstruction to pedestrians, including children and disabled people. It would

significantly reduce the width of the footway available, exacerbated by the location of a lamp post close to the proposed dropped kerb, and could result in pedestrians using the road instead of the path, causing a danger to them and a conflict with road users, including cars and cycles. This would harm pedestrian and road safety. Whilst the parking area may be deep enough to accommodate a city car or a full length hatched back car, it would not be possible to control the types of vehicles parking there.

7. The site is within an area with a low PTAL rating where policy T6 of the London Plan 2021 allows Boroughs to adopt minimum residential parking standards. This means that the provision of off-street parking spaces would be acceptable in principle, but, as outlined above, the proposed parking area is of an insufficient depth.
8. The appellant refers to other examples of vehicular crossovers in Wickham Lane and states that, as a result, the proposal would not set an unsafe precedent across the Borough. Although planning information has been provided for some sites, there is insufficient information to determine whether the sizes of parking spaces for those examples are comparable to the appeal proposal.
9. Overall, I conclude that the development would harm pedestrian and road safety. This would be contrary to Policies IM4 and IM(b) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies 2014 which require development to prioritise the needs of pedestrians, including those with disabilities, and cyclists and to promote walking and cycling safety. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires developments to provide safe and suitable access to the site and to not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety.
10. Policy T6 of the London Plan 2021 relates to car parking standards and is not directly relevant to the reason for dismissing this appeal.

Other Matters

11. The appellant refers to policies in the London Plan and the Framework which seek to intensify and make efficient use of land, and to optimise the potential of sites to accommodate development. The proposal relates to the existing use of the land as a dwelling and therefore these policies are not directly applicable.
12. The appellant indicates that the proposal would include the installation of an electric vehicle charging point, thereby improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This does not form part of the current proposals. In any event, the provision of an electric vehicle charging point would not outweigh the harm I have found in relation to pedestrian and road safety.
13. It is stated that the proposal would respond sympathetically to the site and its local context, in compliance with paragraph 130 of the Framework, and I agree that the development does not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the

Framework, that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

A Wright

INSPECTOR