



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 June 2023 by S Wilson LL.B. MSc MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1st August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/D/23/3321583

104 Strathbrook Road, London, SW16 3AZ

- 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 James Rooke against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 22/04535/FUL, dated 21 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 23 March 2023.
 - The development proposed is creating a vehicular crossover to the existing hard standing at 104 Strathbrook Road.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on highway safety with specific regard to the movement of pedestrians.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. Lambeth Local Plan (2021) (LP) Policy Q14 requires that minimum standards are met for the dimensions of parking spaces where they are created on front amenity areas. The Building Alterations & Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (2015) (SPD) sets out that parking bays in front amenity spaces must meet the Council's minimum standards (2.4m x 4.8m) and can be accessed without risk to highway or pedestrian safety. The London Plan (2021) table 6.2 (Car Parking Standards) sets out that parking spaces designated for use by disabled people should be 2.4m wide by 4.8m long.
5. Whilst the proposed development comprises the installation of a vehicle cross over, it would be to facilitate the use of the front amenity space for vehicular parking. There is an image in the appellant's grounds stating that the space making that up would be 4.8m long but it is not to scale so I cannot be completely certain that it would be the case. It seems that the one shown on the submitted and assessed plans is closer to 4m when allowing for the angle of the front of the house relative to the street. The result of a substandard sized space would be a vehicle overhanging the footway. I have the benefit of full mobility and vision and therefore I would be able to safely avoid such

obstructions. However, people with mobility or visual disabilities and parents with small children could collide with the obstruction or be required to enter the highway to avoid vehicles overhanging the footway. This would increase the likelihood of bringing pedestrians into direct conflict with moving vehicles and thus hazardous highway conditions.

6. This situation is not uncommon in the street scene. I observed a number of examples as part of my site visit. I am unaware of the status of such examples however and they would not be sufficient to suggest the appeal would be acceptable.
7. With this and the above in mind, the proposals would be harmful to the safe use of the highway with specific regard to the movement of pedestrians. It would thus be contrary to LP Policy Q14, Policies T1,T2 and T6 of the London Plan and the SPD 2015 concerning parking and crossover guidance specifically. Together, and amongst other things, these policies seek to ensure development does not have an adverse effect on the highway network. The proposal would also conflict with relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), insofar as they seek to protect the highway network and promote sustainable transport and safe, healthy streets.
8. In exceptional circumstances, Policy Q14 would allow a proposal where there is the need to provide blue badge parking for the household and where specific criteria are met. No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the appellant requires blue badge parking. Even if there would be a need for such, then Policy Q14 requires that this should be provided on street within 50 metres of the property before the use of a front amenity space can be considered. I witnessed an existing bay just a short distance along and approximately within the required 50m, as well as several other disabled bays in the wider area. Therefore, and even if a blue badge need were to be demonstrated, this could likely be met within 50m on street.

Other Matters

9. Appeal reference APP/NS660/D/20/3262762 differs from this in that its main issues considered character and appearance; whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Streatham Lodge Estate Conservation Area (SLECA) and its effect on the provision of parking in the area. In this appeal, the principle of the provision of parking in the area is not a point of contention. Neither is its effect on the character and appearance of the area. I am also, in terms of whether the appeal scheme would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the SLECA, in agreement with the Council that the former would be the case given the proposal's scale, nature and location. The findings of this example would not therefore have a significant bearing on my recommendation.
10. The level of public transport available can reduce parking stress. During my mid-morning site visit there were several spaces available on the street including directly outside the appellant's property. There is however no compelling evidence submitted to demonstrate parking stress and the issue would thus be afforded limited weight. Whilst, in some circumstances, travel by public transport may not be suitable for all, the opportunity to park on street is available and no compelling evidence of any special need has been advanced. In addition, public transport may be convenient for city and town travel, but less so for rural travel. No compelling evidence has been submitted that

demonstrates a need for rural travel and any exceptional difficulties presented as a result. Consequently, this point would attract limited weight.

11. One of the reasons for refusal states that the removal of a blue badge disabled space has not been justified. It was clear from my site visit that until recently there had been a blue badge disabled space directly outside the property. On the evidence before me I cannot be certain about the reason for removal or its validity. Whilst therefore sufficient weight cannot be attached to this matter in dismissing the appeal, this would not reduce the effect of the harm there would be in terms of highway safety.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. The appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan and there are no other material considerations worthy of sufficient weight to find contrary. I therefore recommend the appeal be dismissed.

S Wilson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and, on that basis, I dismiss the appeal.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR