



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2024

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 December 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/24/3354074

76 Putney Park Lane, Wandsworth, London, SW15 5HQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr William Sabey against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2024/1174.
 - The development proposed is described as 'proposed dropped kerb with landscaping design and all associated works'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area, including on the Dover House Estate Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a two storey, end of terrace property, located within a triangular shaped plot. It is within the Dover House Estate Conservation Area (CA). The Dover House Estate Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) confirms that the special character of the CA is characterised from carefully planned clusters of picturesque cottage-style houses and their front gardens with privet hedges set around green spaces with many mature trees. The Estate was built by the London County Council in the 1920s and its layout and design ethos was influenced by the Garden City Movement. The appeal property and associated front and side gardens enclosed by privet hedges are consistent with the prevailing character of the CA and contribute positively to it.
4. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 (the Act) requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Similar advice is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (the Framework), Policy LP3 of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023 (WLP) and Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021 (LP).
5. The front boundary of the site is defined by hedging, with a small pedestrian entrance gate providing access to the dwelling. Whilst the area to the front of the dwelling is paved, this sits behind the hedging such that it does not

- significantly detract from the character and appearance of the dwelling or the wider area.
6. A parking space with an associated dropped kerb is proposed within the shallow front garden of the dwelling. The parking space would have a depth of 4.54m and a width of about 3.6m. Dual entrance gates of a similar design and appearance to the existing pedestrian gate are also proposed along the front boundary.
 7. The amount of hardsurfacing to the front of the house would be reduced overall. However, the hardsurfacing would be far more exposed in the street scene due to the removal of a section of hedging and the proposed wide double gates. Moreover, any car or other vehicle parked to the front of the dwelling would be close to its front elevation and accordingly, would dominate its setting. This would result in visual harm to the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and the surrounding area.
 8. The landscaped setting of the dwellings and privet hedging is a key characteristic of the CA and the wider Garden City Movement. The removal of a section of hedging together with the introduction of a formal parking space evident in the street scene would further erode the character and appearance of the CA. In this regard I note that the CAA identifies that the Dover House Estate was not designed with the car in mind and that the formation of hardstanding in the front gardens is considered to be visually harmful to the character of the CA. I concur with this view.
 9. The appellant has highlighted several examples of parking spaces within the CA that are in front/side gardens, including at the adjacent dwelling 74 Putney Park Lane. The Council confirm that permission was granted for the retention of the hardstanding and vehicle access at No 74 prior to 2000. This parking space has interrupted the boundary hedge to the front of the terrace and its use for the parking of vehicles detracts from the character and appearance of this part of the CA. The proposed parking space would be viewed in conjunction with the space to the front of No 74 and would exacerbate the harm that has already been caused to the CA. Consistency in decision making is important, but historic decisions which have resulted in harm to the CA should not set a precedent.
 10. The appellant has also highlighted other examples of parking spaces within front gardens in the CA. However, I have not been provided with information regarding the planning status of these hardstandings, or indeed whether they pre-dated the Article 4 direction which removed a number permitted development rights, including the formation of hardstandings in front gardens. I therefore place little weight on these examples.
 11. Accordingly, I find the proposal would have a negative effect on the significance of a designated heritage asset. Given the relatively small scale of the proposal, this harm would be less than substantial harm. Paragraph 208 of the Framework indicates that in such circumstances the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme. I acknowledge the personal benefits of the proposal to the appellant in terms of accessibility and convenience but this would not represent a public benefit. The appellant has also stated that the proposal would lead to improved safety and a reduction in on-street parking congestion. However, these matters would not amount to

public benefits of sufficient weight to outweigh the great weight that should be given to the asset's conservation.

12. In conclusion, the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the existing dwelling and surrounding area, including on the CA. In addition to the conflict with national policy and legislation identified above, the proposal would also be contrary to Policies LP1, LP3 and LP5 of the WLP, Policy HC1 of the LP and the CAA. Together these policies and guidance seek to protect the district's heritage assets and (amongst other things) to ensure that developments provide a high-quality design that contributes positively to local character.

Conclusion

13. For the above reasons, having regard to the development plan and all other relevant material considerations, the appeal is dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR