Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2025

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/W/24/3337032
74 Stamford Road, Bowdon WA14 2JG

- 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 Hine against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The application Ref is 106546/FUL/21.
- The development proposed is the erection of a two storey dwellinghouse with additional accommodation at basement level.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Since the planning application was determined, the Council has adopted the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan 2024 (PFE). As a result, Policy L7 of the Trafford Core Strategy 2012 (CS) has been partially replaced by Policy JP-P1 of the PFE and Policy R1 partially by Policy JP-P2. I have therefore referred to those policies where relevant to my consideration of the appeal.

3. In accordance with the statutory duty set out in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Bowdon Conservation Area (CA).

4. In accordance with the statutory duty set out in Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, I have given special regard to the desirability of preserving 75 and 77 Stamford Road or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Main Issues

5. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on (i) the character and appearance of the CA and (ii) the setting of the Grade II listed 75 and 77 Stamford Road.

Reasons

Conservation area

6. The special interest of the CA is noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal 2016 (CAA) to include the architecture of the residences present, and the materials used in their construction. The appeal site is located within Character Zone C: the early Victorian expansion of the CAA. This is noted to be a primarily residential area with

a range of plot and house sizes and materials, with the scale and massing of buildings being larger in this character zone. A considerable variety of architectural styles are noted along Stamford Road in the CAA. The architectural interest of the buildings and the role that Stamford Road played in the historic expansion of the settlement of Bowdon define the significance of the CA in the area in which the appeal site is located.

7. The former coach house was identified as a positive building in the CAA but it has now been demolished. The association of the appeal site and 72 Stamford Road has in essence been lost through the demolition of the coach house. In the absence of the coach house, they no longer have any perceptible connection, and certainly not in a way that means that their relationship is a contributor to the significance of the CA. In that context, I am not persuaded that the only way in which a new dwelling can be accommodated on the appeal site in an acceptable manner in terms of its impact on the CA is through the replication of the former coach house, or at least something close to it.

8. There is much variation in the street scene close to the appeal site with respect to the design of the buildings. The appeal proposal would for the most part be a well-designed dwelling, be of an acceptable scale and would incorporate materials and detailing which are appropriate within the CA. It would not appear cramped in the plot, and indeed would have a similar footprint and a lesser width than the dwelling which was permitted in 2016. The side elevation and new wall adjacent to No 72 along with the proposed aluminium doors to the rear would not be prominent and would not result in harm to the CA. However, there are aspects of the proposal which would have a harmful visual impact upon the character and appearance of the CA.

9. The plans show that timber cladding would extend across part of the ground floor front elevation. The proposed side elevation shows that this cladding would be flush with the front elevation, but the inclusion of brick detailing above and around the door would create an awkward visual interface here. More generally, the timber would appear as an incongruous feature on the front elevation. It is also unclear as to how this detail would work. The proposed ground floor plan shows a door and window, but the elevation drawing does not. In addition, the proposed first floor and roof plans imply that the canopy would extend to the mid-point of the first-floor window. This would interfere with detailing above the ground floor window but again is not shown on the elevation drawing.

10. The Proposed Stamford Road Street Elevation drawing suggests that the timber element would be prominent in the street scene. It is not entirely certain how it would appear for the reasons outlined above, but it would be a visually jarring feature on what is otherwise a well-designed dwelling. Furthermore, I am not convinced by the information I have before me and my own observations that the use of timber cladding as an external facing material in this way is characteristic of the CA. It is also not clear from the plans provided as to how visible the section of the proposed new boundary wall closest to Stamford Road, and its intended dog-leg, would be in the street scene. If visible, it too would appear as an uncharacteristic feature, because of its angle.

11. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the CA and to its significance. Consequently, the proposed development would fail to accord with Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the PFE and

Policy R1 of the CS where collectively they seek to promote good design and to require new development to preserve or enhance the CA.

Listed buildings

12. The listing description for Nos 75 and 77 Stamford Road notes that they were constructed c.1830 and outlines their architectural features. Their significance therefore lies both in their historical and architectural interest. They are flanked on either side by dwellings of a notably larger scale and are separated from the appeal site by the width of Stamford Road.

13. Although the appeal site and the adjacent openness of Hollywood opposite provide a degree of spaciousness, both sites are behind walls with hedging above or gates. In the context of the scale of development that exists immediately adjacent to the two listed buildings and those boundary treatments, the spaciousness of the land opposite does not contribute to the setting of the listed buildings. The proposal would not be of a substantial scale relative to the listed buildings or what is located around them, either.

14. For these reasons, the proposal would not cause harm to the setting of the listed buildings or to their significance. It would accord with Policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the PFE and Policy R1 of the CS where collectively they require new development to preserve the settings of listed buildings.

Planning Balance & Conclusion

15. I have found that the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the CA and to its significance. The proposal would therefore fail to accord with the development plan, taken as a whole.

16. Given the nature of the proposed development and that the harm would be localised, I consider that less than substantial harm to the CA would arise. Nonetheless, in light of the statutory duties that relate to this designated heritage asset, the harm that would be caused carries considerable importance and weight in the planning balance of this appeal.

17. Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

18. In that respect, the Framework seeks to significantly boost the supply of homes with a focus on previously developed land. Whilst the provision of a new dwelling on such land in a location which is close to services, facilities and public transport would be a public benefit of the proposal, it does not outweigh the harm to the designated area. And, in any event, the same benefits could be achieved through a dwelling of a design that would not result in harm to the CA.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR