



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 August 2025

by **John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/D/25/3369067

19 Cecil Park, Pinner, Harrow, HA5 5HJ

- 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 Marc Marazzi against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Harrow.
 - The application Ref is PL/0922/25.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing concrete driveway and installation of permeable block paved hardstanding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The application was made retrospectively. At the time of my visit, I saw that the development was complete and that the property's frontage was open faced and laid to hardstand with permeable block paving and maintained hedgerows to the side boundaries.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development upon the character and appearance of the Tookes Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling along a suburban residential street and within the Tookes Green Conservation Area (CA). The Council's *Tookes Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2009* (CAAMS) identifies the area's special interest as stemming from its medieval origins but including also the later Metroland developments of suburban housing alongside the Metropolitan railway during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with a high quality of architecture throughout and an overwhelming residential character. The greenery from public and private spaces, including front gardens and grass verges, is identified as important to the area's soft urban character.
5. The pre-existing plan, Drg No 019/EX/100, which accompanied the planning application, shows approximately one half of the original garden at No 19 as a non-permeable concrete hardstand, and the remaining part as a permeable gravel surface. A photograph of the pre-existing layout included on the same drawing clearly shows a tree of some maturity within the frontage to the side of the

concreted area. The appellant's own submissions confirm the works undertaken involved removal of a tree. I share the Council's view that the pre-existing layout would have been in-keeping with the Metroland character of the CA and a positive contributor to the pleasant vistas looking east and west along the straightly aligned Cecil Park, which are informed through a combination of its street trees, front garden greenery, and regularity of form and detailing of properties either side, as highlighted within the CAAMS.

6. The CAAMS goes on to identify pressures, issues and opportunities for enhancement within the CA. Amongst these, the hardsurfacing of front gardens, which are acknowledged as intermittent throughout the CA, is identified as having an inappropriately urbanising effect and that a balance should be retained between hardsurfacing and greenery so that the character and appearance of the CA can be preserved.
7. The loss of the tree and construction of a fully hardsurfaced frontage to No 19, without any degree of enclosure along the boundary to the back edge of the pavement, appears as precisely the type of change the CAAMS identifies as harmful and which it seeks to prevent. I recognise that the hedges to the sides of the space offer some relief, but the absence of any foliage or soft landscaping in front of the dwelling, or boundary demarcation between the public and private realm, provides a harsh setting for the property that is uncharacteristic of its origins or the soft landscaping which predominates within front gardens generally along Cecil Park and within the wider CA. The dominance of the car, when vehicles would be parked, would further detract from the setting of the dwelling and wider street scene. I find the development at the appeal property has neither preserved nor enhanced the character or appearance of the CA.
8. The appellant has pointed to several examples of hardsurfaced frontages in the area. I saw these for myself, including those immediately next door and in close proximity to the appeal property. However, far from informing and contributing to the area's special character, the visual harm they cause is openly recognised within the CAAMS and was evident for me to see for myself. In addition, I observed that incidences along Cecil Park where a property's frontage was entirely open were few and by far the minority. In many cases where hardstands had been created, some degree of enclosure and planting had been retained and contributed to a better and more balanced approach to the accommodation of a parked vehicle.
9. I recognise that in removing the tree, the appellant's actions were not malicious. However, I cannot agree with the assertion that the Council's land charges search response was wrong. Section 1.02 of the document dated 18 June 2024, and which has been presented to me as part of the appellant's submissions, states that the property is designated within a conservation area in the adopted Harrow Local Plan.
10. I note the appellant's offer to replant a tree and to incorporate planting and landscaping within the frontage. However, nothing of this nature is before me. Also given the limited space available, together with the appellant's stated desire to accommodate between 1-3 vehicles, I am unable to determine with certainty how the harm that I have identified could be mitigated.
11. Having regard to paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework – December 2024 (the Framework), the harm arising from the works to the

significance of the CA is less than substantial. However, this does not equate to a less than substantial objection and any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification in line with paragraph 213 of the Framework. Furthermore, in line with the Framework's paragraph 215, such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

12. Given the statutory duty set out in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, I attach significant weight to the harm that I have identified to the historic environment.
13. I understand that there may be parking pressures within the area at times. However, the personal benefits arising from the provision of additional off-street spaces at No 19 do not amount to any public benefits that weigh in favour of the proposal. I note the previous front boundary wall may have been in danger of collapse, but its removal and the provision of hardstand beyond would not have been the only way to address this problem.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given, I find the development to be harmful to the character and appearance of the Tookes Green Conservation Area. As such, there is conflict with Policies HC1 part C and D3 of The London Plan (2021), Policies CS1 parts B and D of the Harrow Core Strategy (2012), and Policies DM1 and DM7 of the Council's Development Management Policies (2013). Between them, and amongst other things, these seek to ensure that new development responds to local distinctiveness, enhances, and utilises the heritage assets and architectural features that contribute towards the local character, achieves a high standard of design and layout, and seeks to secure the preservation, conservation, or enhancement of heritage assets. For the same reasons there is conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework's objectives for achieving well-designed places and conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
15. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR