



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 June 2025 by S Wilson LL.B. MSc MRTPI

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/D/25/3367027

20 Acton Lane, Ealing, Chiswick W4 5ED

- 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 Varinder Dubb against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref is 244535HH.
 - The development proposed is creating a front driveway to allow off-street parking and EV-charging.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. On my site visit I observed that the appeal site had wooden construction fencing to the front boundary preventing access. However, I was able to see all I needed to from public land. In addition, there is no dispute between the parties about what was there before or the subject of the plans. Therefore, I make my recommendation based on the plans before me and on the observations made on my visit.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - Whether the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Acton Green Conservation Area (CA).
 - The effect of the proposal on highway safety.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Character and Appearance

5. The CA Appraisal (CAA) sets out that the central part of the CA is strongly determined by the presence of Acton Green Common (the Common) and the properties clustered around it. The Common and the mature trees and railway embankment behind it are the dominant features of the area. The various boundary treatments to the properties along Acton Lane contribute to defining the spatial relationship between the streets and the Common.

6. The CAA sets out that threats to the special character of the CA include inappropriate development or alterations of the original fabric or properties layout, and the loss of garden walls, which has resulted in a significant loss in definition of the streetscape and a loss of the original spatial hierarchy between public and private spaces within the CA.
7. Number 20 Acton Lane (No 20) is a mid-terrace residential dwelling located within the CA and adjacent to the Common. As mentioned above, I could not see the front garden or boundary treatment; however, I have evidence before me that states a boundary wall exists and a front garden, of which there is no dispute. The streetscape of Acton Lane is clearly defined by enclosed front gardens with a continuous front boundary treatment breached only for pedestrian access. This consistent streetscape sets the spatial relationship of Acton Lane with the street and the Common and contributes positively to the character and appearance of the CA. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.
8. Details before me indicate the formation of a driveway/parking space to the front, the formation of a vehicle crossover, and the reconfiguration of the boundary wall amongst other things. The creation of a driveway access would remove a section of the brick boundary wall, which would adversely disrupt the continuity of the front boundary treatment and the sense of enclosure of the front garden, contrary to the prevailing character of this section of Acton Lane. The result would be a diminishment of the positive contribution the boundary and the enclosed front garden makes to the character and appearance of the CA. Consequently, the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
9. Given the scale and location of the proposed development, I consider it would lead to a slight erosion of significance and result in minor harm. The harm to the significance of the CA would be less than substantial in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (the Framework). Nevertheless, it is a matter of great importance and weight.
10. I am required to balance this harm against the public benefits of the proposal. Whilst I acknowledge the proposed use of high-quality materials, I am not convinced that the proposed hard and soft landscaping would be a significant improvement over the existing front garden, particularly given the significance of the boundary and the front gardens to the character and appearance of the area. Furthermore, I do not have any substantive evidence to demonstrate any improvement of biodiversity at the appeal site and am unconvinced of any public benefit. The provision of improved access to the appeal site would, primarily, be a personal benefit which I afford little weight.
11. The use of an electric vehicle (EV) may align with the promotion of low carbon transport; however, so would the use of public transport in a well-connected location. As such I afford the installation of an EV charger on site limited weight. The removal of obstacles such as EV charging cables from the public realm would be a minor public benefit; however, I have not been provided any evidence to demonstrate that a problem exists at this location. There may also be alternative solutions to this that have not been fully explored.

12. Accordingly the proposal would conflict with Policies D4 and HC1 of the London Plan (2021), Policies 7.4, 7B and 7C of the Ealing Development Management DPD (2013), Policies 1.1 and 1.2 of the Ealing Development (Core) Strategy (2012), the aims and intentions of the Acton Green Estate Conservation Area Management Plan and the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), insofar as they seek high quality development that respects local distinctiveness and conserves or enhances the character or appearance of heritage assets.

Highway Safety

13. No 20 is within the Bedford Park Controlled Parking Zone which has a Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) of 5. The London Plan Policy T6(B) requires that car-free development should be the starting point for all development proposals in places that are well-connected by public transport, therefore, the proposal would conflict with Policy T6 of the London Plan.
14. Whilst the proposed plans set out that the depth of the front area would be 4.22m from the start of the driveway to the front of the house, the plans show that some of this space would be occupied by soft landscaping. The proposed hard standing driveway depth of the parking space would be 3.58m which would not meet parking depth standard as set out in the guidance within the Dropped Kerb Application Pack for Residents (July 2021) which is the Supplementary Planning Document concerning parking and crossover guidance.
15. The result of a substandard sized space would be a vehicle overhanging the footway. 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.
16. The proposed boundary wall treatment within 1.5m of either side of the proposed access opening to the front of No 20 would exceed 0.6m. The height of the boundary treatment at this location would impair the ability to clearly see pedestrians when exiting the proposed parking space increasing the risk of conflict between footway pedestrians and vehicles using the proposed access.
17. With this and the above in mind, the proposals would be harmful to the safe use of the highway for all users. It would thus conflict with London Plan (2021) Policy T6 and Policy 1.1 (f) of the Ealing Development (Core) Strategy (2012) insofar as they seek to ensure development does not have an adverse effect on the highway network. The proposal would conflict with the Dropped Kerb Application Pack for Residents (July 2021) insofar as it seeks good design that does not have an adverse impact on pedestrian and highway safety. The proposal would also conflict with relevant paragraphs within the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), insofar as they seek to protect the highway network and promote sustainable transport and safe, healthy streets.

Conclusion and Recommendation

18. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

S Wilson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

19. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR