



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 August 2025

by Stuart Willis BA Hons MSc PGCE MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 SEPTEMBER 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R3515/W/24/3356162

Land Adjacent 43-47 Dale Hall Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant outline planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs J Goddard against the decision of Ipswich Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is IP/24/00537/OUT.
 - The development proposed is 1no. custom/self-build residential dwelling and annexe accommodation for a carer.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Outline planning permission is sought with all matters reserved except access. I have had regard to the other details on the submitted plans but have treated them as illustrative other than for access.
3. I have taken the description of development and address from the decision notice, as it has been confirmed a change was agreed from that given on the application form. These were also used on the appeal form.
4. As part of the appellant's appeal submissions an amended site layout plan, block plan along with an Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statements were provided. These did not fundamentally alter the appeal scheme, and parties have had the opportunity to comment on them. Therefore, parties would not be prejudiced by my taking them into account in my reasoning.
5. A Section 111 agreement was also provided relating to the Suffolk Coast European Sites Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy Contribution and indication that payment had been made. The Council have subsequently confirmed that they no longer wish to contest the reason for refusal relating to effects on European Sites.
6. As the proposal is in a conservation area and relates to development in the setting of listed buildings, I have had special regard to sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act).

Main Issues

7. The main issue is whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Park Conservation Area and whether it would preserve the setting, as it relates to the special interest of the nearby listed buildings known as

'Woodside' (Ref: 1264602), 'Highfield Lodge' (Ref: 1247683) and Drumbeg (Ref: 1237477).

Reasons

Park Conservation Area (CA)

8. The appeal site is the roadside part of a larger field with properties either side of it along Dale Hall Lane (the Lane). There are some small-scale buildings located to the rear of the field, although the appeal site itself is currently undeveloped.
9. The appeal site lies at the edge, but within the CA. The CA includes varied built form of different ages and includes recent developments near the site, including opposite. Nonetheless, there are areas of open space within the CA, including near the appeal site and the park itself, and frequent mature vegetation within plots and along the roadside. The significance of the CA is derived, in part from the large Victorian and Edwardian villas and inter-war detached houses as well as the relationship of the built form with areas of open space and verdancy.
10. No 43-47 Dale Hall Lane is the only prominent built form along this section of the lower part of this side of the Lane. It has large areas of open space behind and to the side of it. These factors give an open and spacious feel to the area which the appeal site and remainder of the field form an important part of. This contrasts with the more built up and continuous development along Constitution Hill and the other side of Dale Hall Lane which is distinctly different. As you pass the site along the Lane, the break in development and separation that the site currently provides is obvious and important.
11. The absence of built form at the appeal site and much of the land behind acts as the last break in the otherwise continuous development along this part of Dale Hall Lane and Constitution Hill. It forms part of the wider open space that runs along Valley Road. The mature vegetation along the upper and roadside boundary of the site further re-enforces the separate character of the appeal site and remaining adjacent open pocket of land from the development opposite and adjacent.
12. There are views across the appeal site over the open fields adjacent. This includes from the Lane as well as an impressive views into the CA from Valley Road where the undeveloped semi-rural nature of this pocket of open land can be appreciated. In what is a largely urban area, this pocket of open land provides a rare semi-rural feel and feature. Moreover, while the site is adjacent to, rather than within the Parks Character Area Ipswich Urban Characterisation Study area, similar views are highlighted.
13. As a result, the appeal site contributes positively to the verdant and spacious character and appearance of the CA.
14. Outline permission is sought, and details of the built form is not to be agreed. Furthermore, there is a mix of property size, types and designs nearby. Subject to details at reserved matters stage, I see no reason why an appropriate design could not be achieved in terms of the appearance of the built form.
15. Nevertheless, the indicative information shows development across much of the site given the need for a dwelling and carer accommodation. Regardless of the design of the building/s, the introduction of a dwelling, annexe, parking area and vehicles and other domestic paraphernalia, would significantly change the

character and appearance of the site. Furthermore, the proposed larger and formal access would replace the existing farm gate style small opening.

16. Although between properties and not dissimilar grain, the scheme would erode the openness that the existing important gap creates, leading to a continuous run of development and urbanising this area of the field and side of the Lane. This would be obvious in views in, out and across parts of the CA.
17. Consequently, the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Due to the nature of concerns and importance of the site in the CA, the proposal would cause a moderate level of less than substantial harm.

Woodside

18. Woodside is a Grade II* listed building. It is a mansion property designed by renowned local architects. It is a large, imposing and impressive Victorian building with projecting wings and bays and a 4-storey tower. There are sash windows and Corinthian portico and other elaborate detailing both internally and externally.
19. The special interest of Woodside derives, so far as relevant to this appeal, from its architectural detailing and grand appearance and status as a good example of a one-of-a-kind mansion from this period.
20. There are extensive grounds associated with Woodside which runs from the property at the top down towards Valley Road. The scale of the associated paddock, kitchen garden and outbuildings within the walled garden along with their design and materials demonstrate the importance of the mansion they serve. Such mansions were purpose built on the fringes of towns to mimic the rural setting of country houses. The grandeur and high status of Woodside comes partly from these curtilage buildings and the context of the open land around the garden. Consequently, the garden and outbuildings contribute to and are part of the special interest of Woodside historically.
21. There is no clear evidence before me to indicate that the appeal site and wider field were historically linked to Woodside. Nonetheless, the open undeveloped land around the grounds, including the appeal site, and the absence of built form links back to the importance and stature of the origins of Woodside. The appeal site contributes positively to the setting and special interest of Woodside.
22. Woodside and its ground are already experienced with built form to some boundaries and nearby land. It is not experienced or appreciated in isolation and there is some variation to the built form nearby which has taken place in its setting. Notwithstanding this, much of the development around Woodside has been along Constitution Hill or other streets than this side of the Lane. The section and side of the Lane where the appeal site is located has remained open. While there would be limited views of Woodside itself with the appeal scheme, the introduction of built form and domestication of the site would further erode the undeveloped context and rural setting of Woodside.
23. Historic England have not objected but did raise concerns. They referred to the sense of open countryside that is maintained by the undeveloped field between Woodside and the Lane. Even with some separation retained as a buffer between the site and the walled garden and property itself, the domestic character and appearance of the proposal would be obvious. There would be a reduction in the

remaining undeveloped setting of Woodside from the scheme. This would be prominent in views from parts of the Lane and Valley Road.

24. As such, the proposal would fail to preserve the setting of Woodside as it relates to its special interest. Given the scale and prominence of the proposal and the already cumulative effect of it with other development in the setting of Woodside, the harm would be a moderate level of less than substantial.

Highfield Lodge and Drumbeg

25. Highfield Lodge is a Grade II listed building. It is an impressive brick house of 2 link parallel gabled ranges. There are sash windows and canted bays. It has decorative corbelling through the eaves and Gothick inspired interior detailing. Drumbeg is a rendered timber framed Grade II listed building with gabled projections. It has an Elizabethan vernacular style with external features of note including casement windows, canted bay and jettied attic bressummer.
26. The significance and special interest of these, in part, comes from their architectural appearance and detailing. Both Highfield Lodge and Drumbeg are positioned amongst other dwellings and experienced as part of the mostly continuously developed streetscene with properties of varying designs, ages and scale around them often setback from behind street trees and boundary treatments. Their urban setting makes a neutral contribution to their significance and special interest.
27. Although near the undeveloped appeal site, there are limited, if any, views of the site or the surrounding open land with Highfield Lodge or Drumbeg. They are appreciated and understood as part of the streets and urban area they form part of. As such, the introduction of development at the appeal site as proposed would not detract from or harm this.
28. Thus, the proposal would preserve the setting of Highfield Lodge and Drumbeg as it relates to their special interest.

Conclusion on main issue

29. Therefore, the proposal would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the CA or the setting, as it relates to the special interest of Woodside. The scheme would be contrary to the requirements of the Act, as well as the design and heritage protection aims of Policies DM12 and DM13 of the Local Plan¹ and the National Planning Policy Framework (Framework).
30. Given effects on trees and landscape features could be considered as part of any reserved matters stage, there is no conflict with Policy DM9 of the Local Plan where it requires information and protection of such features.

Heritage and Planning Balance

31. The level of harm to the CA and Woodside has been set out above, both being less than substantial. There would be public benefits to the economy from the build and occupation of the property. The site is in a location accessible to services and facilities. Although there are limited details at this stage, there would be benefits

¹ Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document Review

associated with energy efficiency and biodiversity. Due to the scale of the scheme and the details currently before me, these benefits would be small.

32. There would also be a limited, but worthwhile, contribution towards housing supply in an area where there is currently less than a 5-year supply of housing land. This would align with the Frameworks aim to significantly boost the supply of housing. While described as custom/self-build, no suitable condition or mechanism to control the property as this has been provided. Therefore, it could not be secured as such. A lack of harm from matters such as flood risk, highway safety and living conditions of nearby occupiers would be neutral factors.
33. The proposal would cause harm to the character and appearance of the area, the CA and the special interest of Woodside. The proposal includes carer accommodation although detailed evidence of the exact nature or reason for this have not been provided. It has also not been demonstrated that the appeal scheme and/or site is the only way of achieving the required accommodation.
34. I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, but the harm from the proposal outweighs its benefits in terms of eliminating discrimination against persons with the protected characteristics, advancing equality of opportunity for those persons and fostering good relations between them and others. It is therefore proportionate and necessary to dismiss the appeal.
35. These factors do not represent clear and convincing justification for the harm to the assets involved. Great weight is given to the assets' conservation. The benefits clearly do not outweigh the considerable importance and weight in the planning balance from the harm to the designated heritage assets.
36. The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance, in this instance designated heritage assets, provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed. Therefore, paragraph 11d)ii of the Framework does not apply.
37. There is no need for me to undertake an appropriate assessment for effects on the Stour and Orwell Estuaries Heaths Special Protection Area because the scheme is unacceptable for other reasons and would not take place. Provision of suitable mitigation would be a neutral factor.

Conclusion

38. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it.
39. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

Stuart Willis

INSPECTOR