



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 June 2026

by M Cryan BA(Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 17th July 2026

Appeal Ref: 6006661

25 Coniston Road, Hornsey, London N10 2BL

- 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 Ms Judith Isherwood against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application reference is HGY/2026/0165.
 - The development proposed is the formation of a vehicle crossover with driveway accessing from the front of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposed development was described on the planning application form as “dropped kerb to one side of property to include removal of boundary wall to enable parking for one car. Leasehold for ground floor flat includes both front and back gardens. With permission given to first and second floor flats to accommodate their bins”. A revised description was used during the appeal, which I have used in the banner heading above.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a two-storey Edwardian terraced property on the western side of Coniston Road, which has been internally divided into flats. The site is close to the town centre around Muswell Hill Broadway, and within the Muswell Hill Conservation Area (“the MHCA”). I have a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, the National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”) states that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance (paragraph 202). It goes on to advise that any harm or loss requires clear and convincing justification (paragraph 213) and that any harm that is less than substantial must be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal (paragraph 215).
5. The MHCA is a well-preserved example of a primarily Edwardian suburb of considerable consistency and quality, developed around a once-rural village set on high ground on one of the main routes into and out of London. The appeal property is in a sub-area of the MHCA characterised by terraced or linked semi-detached

housing with a relatively consistent architectural style, on a grid pattern of streets. The Council's 2008 MHCA Character Appraisal describes the sub-area as having "a notable consistency in character and appearance derived from its speculative development primarily over a period of less than thirty years between 1896 and 1913 after an initial start in the mid-1880s". From the evidence before me and what I saw on my site visit, the significance of the MHCA is derived principally from the quality of its built environment, the prevailing consistency of its character, and the way in which it serves to clearly illustrate the rapid growth of this part of London from the late 19th century through the earlier part of the 20th century.

6. The appeal property is double-fronted, with a central entrance and a bay on the right-hand side of the ground floor¹. There is a low brick wall to the street frontage, with a central gateless opening from which a porcelain-tiled path leads to the front door. The left-hand side of the front garden is paved, with bins for the three flats stored along the boundary to No 23; the right-hand side is gravel with a small central planted feature. The proposed development is the formation of a vehicle crossover, the removal of the left-hand front wall, and the creation of a gravel parking area with two rows of York stone flag runners. The porcelain tiled pathway would also be replaced with (unspecified) "appropriate material".
7. Among the threats to the MHCA identified within the Character Appraisal is the introduction of forecourt parking on a hard-standing within the front gardens of properties across the conservation area. This has led to the loss of front garden walls and a reduction in the amount of soft landscaping on the frontage in a number of isolated locations, most obviously in those streets closest to the town centre. The Character Appraisal notes the disruptive effect such changes have had on the visual continuity and enclosure of street frontages, and the consequent erosion of character and appearance which has occurred.
8. The appellant has stated that on Coniston Road "of the 15 double-fronted properties with sufficient space" – which I take to mean those on the central part of the western side of the street between No 19 and No 45 – "nine already have off-street parking [...of which...] six have full-width parking". Notwithstanding that they may have inadvertently *underemphasised* the proportion of properties in this group which have driveways², I accept that observation. The Character Appraisal also notes that, within Coniston Road, front boundary walls reinforce the continuity in the development along the east side of the street, implicitly acknowledging the loss of some of the walls on the western side highlighted by the appellant, though within the street as a whole this has affected a small minority of properties³.
9. Where boundary walls *have* been removed and parking forecourts created in what are, despite the generous size of many of the buildings, relatively shallow front gardens, it has led to parts of the street taking on a harsh appearance, dominated by car parking and hard surfaces. That is especially apparent where there are adjoining pairs or larger groups where off-street parking has been created, such as in the run of five consecutive properties from No 37 to No 45. There is no doubt in my mind that such developments have harmed the MHCA. The proposed parking area here would exacerbate the erosion of character highlighted in the Character

¹ All directions are given as viewed from the street.

² It is not a greatly significant point as far as my conclusion is concerned, but from what I saw during my visit, by my reckoning it is nine of 13 double-fronted properties which have some form of off-street parking: there are only 14 properties from No 19 to No 45 (inclusive), and within this group No 21 is single-fronted.

³ I did not attempt an accurate count of the total number of properties on the street, but noted during my visit that numbering runs from 1 to 55 on the odd side of the road, and from 2 to 90 on the even side.

Appraisal; it would be alongside another half-width opening at No 23, which would further emphasise the detrimental impact of the scheme.

10. I acknowledge that the existing front wall is not original, and that neither it nor the existing paved hardstanding are as sympathetic in terms of design or materials as they might be. However, their improvement or replacement is something which could be achieved without causing other harm to the conservation area, and this is not a therefore a factor which carries significant weight in favour of the appeal scheme.
11. For the reasons I have set out above, I conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the MHCA. It would therefore conflict with Policies SP11 and SP12 of the 2017 Haringey Local Plan, Policies DM1, DM9 and DM33 of the 2017 Haringey Development Management DPD, and with Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021. Together, and among other things, these policies seek to ensure that development enhances and enriches the borough's built environment, conserves or enhances heritage assets including conservation areas, and that a new crossover or vehicular access does not cause a visual intrusion to the street scene.
12. In the Framework's terms, the harm to the significance of the MHCA as a designated heritage asset would be less than substantial and, indeed, given the large size of the MHCA and the small scale of the scheme, towards the lower end of that categorisation. I acknowledge that there would be a private benefit to the appellant from having a personal off-street parking space, but no public benefits have been identified which would outweigh the harm I have identified. The proposal would therefore also conflict with the provisions of the Framework which seek to preserve and enhance the historic environment.

Other Matter

13. The appellant addressed the matter of the loss of an on-street parking space which had been raised in the Council's officer report, though it did not form part of the reason for refusal. The appellant suggested that, as they currently park on the road where the dropped kerb would be, "in effect a space would be gained...the on-street space and the space across the dropped kerb for any visitors I may have". It seems to me that that argument is not a strong one, as the appellant is not currently guaranteed that space; anyone else may park there when space is available. If a dropped kerb were present, there would be no space available for anyone else to use when the appellant was not at home. At other times use of the space in front of the crossover would effectively be in the appellant's gift (for want of a better way of putting it).
14. There would therefore be some loss of on-street parking capacity. Nevertheless, in view of the Council having found that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on parking conditions which in itself might have warranted refusal of the planning application, this is not a significant factor in my overall decision.

Conclusion

15. The proposed development would be harmful to the character and appearance of the MHCA. This harm, which must be afforded great weight, would not be outweighed by any public benefits of the scheme. The proposal would conflict with

the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan.

16. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

M Cryan

Inspector