



# The Planning Inspectorate

An Executive Agency in the Department of the Environment and the Welsh Office

Room 1404  
Tollgate House  
Houlton Street  
Bristol BS2 9DJ

3960

Direct Line 0272-878927  
Switchboard 0272-878000  
Fax No 0272-878769  
GTN 1374-

ROOM

ALLOWED

MR W P Wheldon  
25A College Crescent  
LONDON  
NW3 5LH

Your Ref:

-

Our Ref:

T/APP/X5210/A/94/435414/P7

Date:

20 MAY 1994

Not received

Dear Sir

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, SECTION 78 AND SCHEDULE 6  
APPLICATION NO: PL 9301131

1. I have been appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment to determine your appeal against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden to refuse planning permission in respect of an application described as being for off-street parking for one car at 25A College Crescent, LONDON NW3. I have considered the written representations made by you and by the Council and I inspected the site on 21 March.

2. No 25A comprises the lower part of a large four-storey end-terrace house standing at the corner of College Crescent and Belsize Park within the Belsize Conservation Area. The off-street parking area referred to in the application is to the side of the property, adjoining the front door of 25A, and involves vehicular access to Belsize Park.

3. From my inspection of the site and the surrounding area and from my consideration of the representations, I am of the opinion that the main issues in this appeal are concerned with the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and on parking conditions on the highway.

4. The current development plan for the area is comprised of the Greater London Development Plan of 1976 and the Camden Borough Plan adopted in 1987. These give general support to the requirement contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas. A Unitary Development Plan for the Borough has also been placed on deposit and merits consideration in this appeal. Detailed policies in this Plan make provision for retaining garden walls where they are part of the established character of an area and for resisting forecourt parking where front gardens



are an important feature. It is indicated in further guidance on forecourt parking adopted by the Council that this will be refused in conservation areas.

5. I saw from my inspection that the character of Belsize Park is primarily established by the white rendered elevations of the four-storey detached and semi-detached houses on both sides of the road. Each property has a series of wide steps leading up to the front door and a small front garden in front of a semi-basement enclosed by a low, similarly white rendered wall to the street. There is one block of modern flats on the opposite side (Belsize Park House) with 5 semi-basement garages and an open forecourt but, with one exception (No 67), there is no off-street parking to the original houses.

6. I consider that the setting to the houses which these walls and enclosed gardens provide should be retained. In my opinion, however, the appeal property does not form part of this character but relates more directly as part of the short frontage of buildings in College Crescent. This is emphasized in my view by the brick elevations of these buildings, including the flank boundary wall to Belsize Park, and more particularly by the recently-completed dwelling built between No 25 and the first house in that road.

7. Permission for this dwelling was granted on appeal in 1988 on a site which then contained lock-up garages. There was already, therefore, existing vehicular access at this point and it was envisaged that the new house would have forecourt parking - although it would appear to me that the very steep slope of this forecourt may make this impractical. The Inspector at that time also noted that there was already car parking space at No 25 and she expressed the view that the retention of this arrangement would be preferable to increased parking at the kerb. I saw on my visit that there is still a hard-standing at the present appeal site and no physical barrier to providing vehicular access to it. The space is clear of the pedestrian access to both 25 and 25A and it is possible for a vehicle to be parked beyond the building line of the property.

8. In my opinion, this site is not an important visual feature in the area and no established garden wall would be lost. I consider, therefore, that notwithstanding the Council's guidelines for forecourt parking in conservation areas, the proposal would not be contrary to the relevant policies in the emerging UDP and I have come to the conclusion that whether or not it already exists, vehicular access to the site in this case, to provide off-street parking for one car, would not detract from the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which would be preserved.

9. With regard to present parking conditions on the highway, I recognise that the necessity to keep the vehicular access clear of on-street parking represents one less space available to meet the wider needs of the area. There would, however, be

no loss of overall provision and, in my view, any effect on the wider needs would be very limited and does not represent a justification for refusing permission. There are specific reasons why I have concluded that an access at this point would not harm the Conservation Area and a permission in this case would not represent a justification for the use of other front gardens in Belsize Park leading to a material loss of on-street provision.

10. I have taken account of all the other matters which have been drawn to my attention in connection with this appeal but none outweigh the considerations which have led me to my decision. The Council has not requested any conditions if permission is granted and I propose to impose only the standard time-limit for implementation.

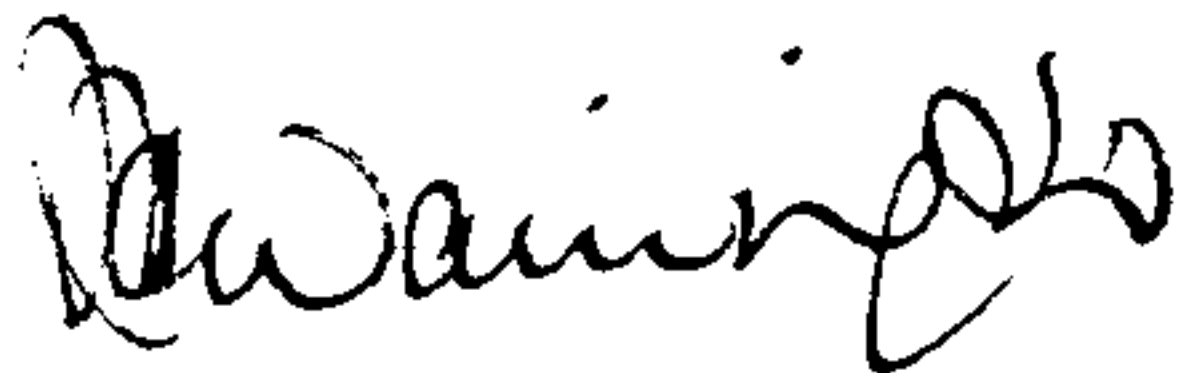
11. For the above reasons and in exercise of powers transferred to me, I hereby allow this appeal and grant planning permission for vehicular access to provide off-street parking for one car at 25A College Crescent, LONDON NW3 in accordance with the terms of the application (No PL 9301131) dated 1 September 1993 and the plans submitted therewith, subject to the condition that:

1. the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this letter.

12. This letter does not convey any approval or consent which may be required under any enactment, bye-law, order or regulation other than Section 57 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

13. Your attention is drawn to the provisions of Section 74 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires consent to be obtained prior to the demolition of buildings in a conservation area.

Yours faithfully



J H WAINWRIGHT FRICS DipTP FRTPI  
Inspector