



Committee Report
Planning Committee North – 12 April 2024

Application no DC/23/4513/FUL

Location

23 Park Lane
Southwold
Suffolk
IP18 6HL

Expiry date 16 January 2024

Application type Full Application

Applicant Michelle Simmonds

Parish Southwold

Proposal Removal of existing wall to create one additional parking space; erection of new flint cobble wall and rear access

Case Officer Fabian Danielsson

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1. Summary

- 1.1. This application seeks planning permission for the removal of a flint and brick boundary wall and the construction of a new flint and brick wall and access gate in order to create an additional parking space at 23 Park Lane in Southwold. The application site is located within the Southwold Conservation Area and the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape.
- 1.2. Southwold Town Council object due to the following summarised reasons (included in full below):
- 1.3. The application does not appear to protect and enhance the area as required for a Conservation Area.
- 1.4. The application would adversely alter the street scene of this Lane by creating a partially open frontage which is not in keeping with the Lane.
- 1.5. The objections from the Town Council are contrary to the officer's 'minded to' recommendation of approval, therefore the Planning Referral Process was triggered. The application was presented to the Referral Panel on the 12th March 2024. The decision was for the application to be referred to the Planning Committee.

2. Site Description

- 2.1. The application property is a two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling located within the settlement boundary of Southwold. The property is Grade II listed together with 21 Park Lane which was constructed at the same time in the 17th century. The dwelling was encased in brick in the 19th century and then altered and converted in the mid-20th century with replacement doors and windows. It is a timber-framed structure clad in rendered brick with a roof of black-glazed pantiles with brick stacks to left of centre and right end. The dwelling itself faces onto Park Lane, with a small picket-fenced front garden. A longer, rectangular garden extends to the rear of the property. To the rear of this garden is a late 20th century brick-built garage with a single parking space in front of it, facing onto Lorne Road. Projecting at an angle from the rear eastern corner of this garage is a flint and brick wall, constructed at the same time as the garage, which joins with a historic flint wall running to the east along Lorne Road.
- 2.2. The property is located within Southwold Conservation Area as well as the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. Planning permission is sought for the removal of the wall section connecting the garage to the historic wall, and the construction of a replacement wall extending directly east from the corner of the garage to join the boundary wall towards the neighbouring property. An additional parking space would be created as a result of this.

4. Consultees

Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Southwold Town Council	4 December 2023	10 January 2024
<p>Summary of comments: The Town Council recommends that ESC refuse this application.</p> <p>There is a neighbour objection to be considered.</p> <p>The property is Grade II Listed and in a conservation area - no Listed Building Application form has been submitted.</p> <p>The application does not appear to protect and enhance the area as required for a Conservation Area.</p> <p>The application would adversely alter the street scene of this Lane by creating a partially open frontage which is not in keeping with the Lane.</p> <p>The Town Council recommend that ESC refuse the application.</p>		

Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Southwold And Reydon Society	N/A	16 January 2024
<p>Summary of comments: As the above application refers to a listed building in a conservation area, the Executive Committee is concerned that there is no Listed Building application. We also feel that the proposed changes would negatively alter the street scene, with an open frontage which is not in keeping with Park Lane. We also question why a further parking space is required.</p> <p>We therefore suggest this application is refused.</p>		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Highways Department	13 December 2023	5 January 2024
<p>Summary of comments: Notice is hereby given that the County Council as Highway Authority recommends that any permission which that Planning Authority may give should include the conditions recommended.</p>		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
East Suffolk Design And Heritage	4 December 2023	12 December 2023
<p>Summary of comments:</p> <p>The works affect the part of the site facing onto Lorne Road, there would be no works to the listed building, only in its setting. The wall to be removed is the angled brick and flint wall that abuts the eastern end of the garage and runs to the boundary wall with the street. This is a modern wall built at the same time as the garage in the 1990s and therefore has no historic significance. The flint cobble wall facing the street would be retained with a minor alteration comprising a new brick pier to ensure stability. The width of the existing opening would not be increased therefore there would be no impact on the sense of enclosure along the street. The design of the new section of wall that would run horizontally from the front face of the garage to separate the garden space from the parking area would be traditional in brick and flint, reflecting the character of the existing boundary.</p> <p>This proposal would preserve the special interest of the Grade II listed 23 Park Lane and would not impact its setting. It would preserve the character and appearance of the Southwold Conservation Area. There would be no harm to these designated heritage assets in conformance with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The relevant tests of the NPPF at paragraphs 201 and 202 are not applicable.</p>		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC Coasts And Heaths Project	4 December 2023	No response
<p>Summary of comments:</p>		

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
SCC County Archaeological Unit	4 December 2023	12 December 2023
<p>Summary of comments:</p> <p>We have no objection to the development and do not believe any archaeological mitigation is required.</p>		

5. Third Party Representations

Two letters of objection have been received, with a summary of their comments included below:

- Additional parking unnecessary
- Detrimental to the street scene
- Impact on Conservation Area

- Potential traffic issues
- Would need additional dropped kerb, which is undesirable
- Proposed pier not appropriate visually

6. Publicity

The application has been the subject of the following press advertisement:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	8 December 2023	3 January 2024	Beccles and Bungay Journal

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Conservation Area	8 December 2023	3 January 2024	Lowestoft Journal

7. Site notices

General Site Notice

Reason for site notice: Conservation Area
Affects Setting of Listed Building
Date posted: 11 December 2023
Expiry date: 4 January 2024

8. Planning policy

WLP8.29 - Design (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

WLP8.37 - Historic Environment (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas (East Suffolk Council - Waveney Local Plan, Adopted March 2019)

SWD6 - Design (Southwold Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' February 2022)

SWD7 – Parking (Southwold Neighbourhood Plan, 'Made' February 2022)

Historic Environment Supplementary Planning Document

9. Planning Considerations

Visual Amenity, Street Scene and Landscape

- 9.1. Policy WLP8.29 sets out that proposed development should respect the character, design and scale of the host dwelling, and character and appearance of the surrounding area. Key considerations include the overall scale and character of the development, the layout, site coverage, height and massing of existing buildings, the relationship between buildings and spaces and the surrounding street scene or townscape, and the use of materials and detailing appropriate to the local vernacular.

- 9.2. Other relevant policies for the proposed development include policy WLP8.37 - Historic Environment and WLP8.39 - Conservation Areas. Policy WLP8.37 states that proposals for development should seek to conserve or enhance heritage assets and their environment. As the property forms part of the Southwold Conservation Area, policy WLP8.39 also applies which states that any development within conservation areas will be assessed against the relevant Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, and that they should be of a particularly high standard of design and materials in order to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.
- 9.3. Policy SWD6 of the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan requires that all planning applications should demonstrate that they have followed the process for creating high quality design that is sympathetic to and in keeping with the best of the prevailing local character area and maximize the opportunities to improve the quality of the design.
- 9.4. The current proposal includes the removal of a modern flint and cobble wall. This wall was erected in the 1990's to join the corner of the newly constructed garage with the historic wall running along the rear of the property against Lorne Road. Although attractive, the wall is of no historical significance and its removal will therefore not result in any loss of historic fabric. The column where the wall to be removed joins the historic wall appears to have already been modified as part of the construction works for that wall, and therefore no further damage to the historic wall is expected.
- 9.5. Comments have been received suggesting that the character of the street and therefore the conservation area will be harmed by the removal of the wall and the resulting creation of an additional parking space. It is true that Lorne Road is primarily characterised by either building frontages facing directly onto the road or pavement, or a mix of low and high brick walls, generally with greenery behind. Vehicular openings from the road are few, although there are examples, and other garages are present at both the western and eastern ends. However, the wall to be removed is at an angle which means that although the opening at the rear end, towards the garage and the house, will be widened, the opening will not be widened towards the street which means that the sense of enclosure along the street would be minimally affected. Likewise, the proposed brick pier to ensure the stability of the remaining historic wall is likely to have a minor effect on the street scene.
- 9.6. A new wall is proposed to run directly east from the corner of the garage to the neighbouring boundary fence. This will serve to enclose the garden behind the new parking space and will include an access gate. The wall is proposed to be constructed in brick and flint cobbles reclaimed from the removed wall, in a traditional style that would not detract from the historic environment. The proposed new wall will be of a similar height to that of the removed wall.
- 9.7. As the width of the opening at street level will not change, the historic wall will be retained and the replacement wall will be of a traditional style to match the retained wall and the surrounding area, the impact is considered to be neutral with regards to the visual effect to the street scene and Conservation Area. The changes proposed are minor and will have very localised effects. Therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable from a visual design and historic environment perspective.

Residential Amenity

- 9.8. Policy WLP8.29 also states that proposed development should not result in an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 9.9. In this case, the proposal is not considered to cause any harmful effects in relation to overlooking, loss of privacy, noise or light pollution, nor is considered an overbearing development. Comments have been received regarding the impact of the proposed additional parking on traffic and considering whether a further dropped kerb will be necessary which would affect the parking of other residents along the street. In terms of traffic, the development is of a minor scale and the amount of parking will be appropriate to a residential setting. One additional parking space is not considered to have a noticeable impact on the amount of traffic to and from the property as there would be no noticeable intensification of the use of the property. In addition, the width of the opening at street level is not proposed to change and no further dropped kerb will therefore be necessary.

Highways and Parking

- 9.10. Suffolk County Council as the Highways Authority were also consulted on the application and did not raise any concerns over highway safety or the impact upon other highways users. While the proposal does not provide any turning space on-site, this is the same for the current space. Given the nature of Lorne Road, vehicle speeds are likely to be low and therefore the impact of an additional vehicle reversing into, or off the highway is considered to be minimal, especially compared to the potential impact of an additional vehicle parked nearby, on the street.
- 9.11. Policy SWD7 of the Southwold Neighbourhood Plan states, in part, that “Development proposals which include new on-site residential parking provision will be supported provided the scheme:
- does not result in a car-dominated street scape; and
 - preserves and enhance biodiversity; and
 - does not create an open frontage in areas where enclosed front boundaries prevail; and
 - preserves a good quality of garden amenity space for existing and future occupants of the site; and
 - uses permeable surfacing, where practicable. Where this cannot be achieved, proposals should demonstrate how surface water will be drained on-site in a sustainable fashion.”
- 9.12. While the proposed development would increase visibility of vehicles within the Lorne Road street scene, the increased parking area available would not be significantly increased compared to the existing, given the angle of parking area. There would be a limited reduction in ‘planted’ garden space retaining a good quality outdoor amenity space for residents. Albeit there are some examples, the street is not characterised by enclosed front gardens – where properties front Lorne Road, they are generally situated up to the Highway and elsewhere within Lorne Road, the street frontage includes rear boundary treatments. The proposed surface of the parking area would match the existing.
- 9.13. Comments have also questioned the necessity of this additional space and pointed to the publicly available parking at the end of the road. While this can be sympathised with, whether something is necessary or not is not a material planning consideration and can therefore not be given any weight when determining the planning application.

- 9.14. It is noted that during discussions with neighbouring residents, concerns were raised that the house would be used as a holiday let or so called 'party house'. While the use of the property as a holiday let housing single households would be permitted within the current use class of the property, the letting of it to larger groups would require a change of use application and would require further application to the local planning authority.
- 9.15. For the reasons set out above the proposal is acceptable and planning permission can be granted.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. The proposals accord with the relevant national and local policies and guidance listed above and are therefore acceptable.
- 10.2. As the Parish Council have objected, the application was presented to the Planning Referral Panel, which decided that the case should be presented to Planning Committee for determination.

11. Recommendation

- 11.1. Delegate to the Head of Planning and Coastal Management.

12. Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within a period of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In accordance with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in all respects strictly in accordance with the following approved plans and documents for which permission is hereby granted:

- Drawing nos. Drwg.No. 162102 A received on 21 November 2023.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what has been considered and approved.

3. The materials and finishes shall be as indicated within the submitted application and thereafter retained as such, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure the satisfactory appearance of the development in the interests of visual amenity

4. The use shall not commence until the area(s) within the site shown on Drawing No. 162/02A for the purposes of manoeuvring and parking of vehicles has been provided and thereafter that area(s) shall be retained and used for no other purposes.

Reason: To ensure that sufficient space for the on-site parking of vehicles is provided and maintained to ensure the provision of adequate on-site space for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles where on-street parking and manoeuvring would be detrimental to highway safety to users of the highway.

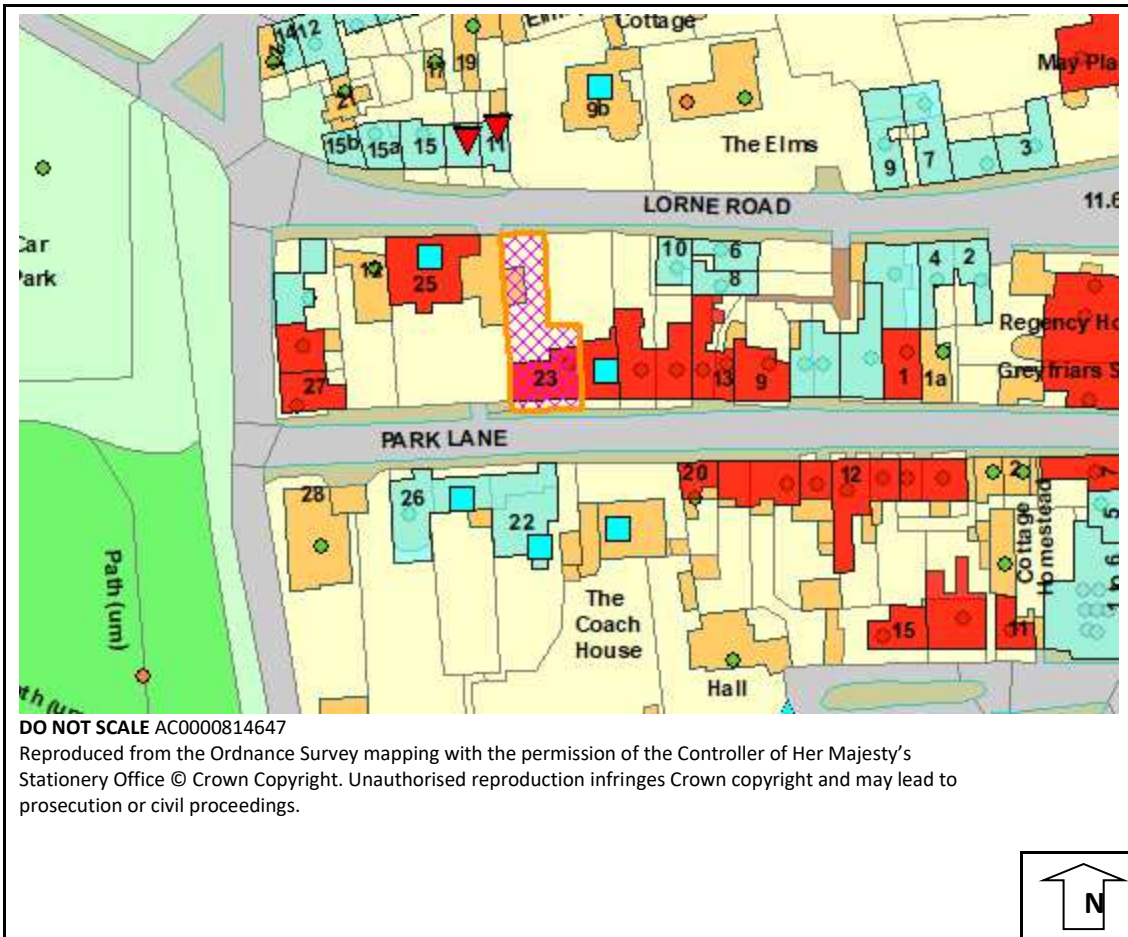
Informatives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and local plan to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

Background information

See application reference DC/23/4513/FUL on [Public Access](#)

Map



Key



Notified, no comments received



Objection



Representation



Support