



3 SW

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

31 December 1982

Dear Mr. Lewis.

Thank you for your letter of 30 November enclosing this one from your constituent Mr. Dawes about his problems with his car. I am sorry that it has taken me so long to reply but I wished to look carefully into this case.

If Mr. Dawes wants to park his car in his garden, he has two problems to overcome. He has to cross the footway which requires the permission of the Highway Authority and he has to provide some kind of hard-standing, since this is required by his landlords, the North East Derbyshire District Council.

I understand that the whole job would normally cost £700. Since Mr. and Mrs. Dawes are disabled it might have been possible for them to have the work done at the Council's expense. The Council have, however, decided not to pay in this case. As a matter of policy they tend to make such arrangements for disabled people only when they use their cars for going regularly to work, whereas Mr. and Mrs. Dawes are retired. Moreover, the Social Services who advise the Council on these matters consider that as the present parking place is only 10 yards or so away, the proposed adaptations are not necessary to meet the needs of Mr. and Mrs. Dawes as disabled people, however reasonable they may be on other grounds.

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The alternative must be to get the cost of the works down as far as possible. Normally the District Council would make the access on behalf of the Highway Authority, and this would cost £80-90. However, if the Dawes care to apply to the Scarsdale Area Divisional Surveyor, at Cross Lane, Dronfield, Sheffield (telephone Dronfield 412885) they can obtain permission to undertake the works and a specification for them. They may then be able to get a better price from a contractor.

So far as the hard-standing is concerned, I gather the Council will be content if - as a minimum - stairs are laid for the wheels. This would cost about £100 if done under contract. However, if the Dawes are prepared to pay for the necessary slabs, the District Council will arrange for these to be laid by a team working under the Job Opportunities scheme. They should approach the Housing Department if they want to take advantage of this.

I hope Mr. and Mrs. Dawes will find this useful and that their problems will soon be solved.

Yours sincerely
Raymond Ellis

Raymond Ellis, Esq., M.P.