

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 December 2016

by P Eggleton BSc(Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 5 January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/16/3161103

Highview, 31 Barnet Road, Barnet, London EN5 3HB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr S Mahseredjian against the decision of the Barnet London Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 16/4888/RCU, dated 18 July 2016, was refused by notice dated 16 September 2016.
 - The development proposed is a new wall/railings and electronically operated sliding access gates and permeable driveway.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. This property is within a row of houses served by an access road that runs parallel to Barnet Road. They generally have front gardens that are relatively open. Many have no more than a dwarf wall and planting to their front boundaries. This ensures that the vegetation within the gardens contributes positively to the character of the area and complements the planting within the wide verge on the opposite side of the access road.
 4. The Council's concerns relate to the detail of the boundaries. The works have already been carried out. Across the frontage, there are high railings above dwarf walls and full height matching gates. The design is similar in relation to each side boundary. The walls and piers have been painted to match the house and the railings reflect, to some extent, the upgraded modern detailing of the property. However, although of high quality materials and a distinctive modern design, the works appear as being entirely alien and austere within this setting.
 5. Although a more contemporary design approach may be able to complement both the house and its setting, the scale and prominence of the existing works, particularly along the frontage, fail to achieve this and result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. The development conflicts with the design objectives of Policy CS5 of the Barnet Core Strategy 2012 and Policy DM01 of the Development Management Policies 2012. These policies generally
-

accord with the aspirations of the *National Planning Policy Framework* and should be afforded considerable weight. As the works represent poor design in this particular context, the *Framework* is clear that permission should be refused.

6. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Design Guidance 2013 encourages the use of materials that reflect those prevailing in the area. It advises that boundary treatments, such as high railings and gates, can be obtrusive and have a negative impact on the street scene. These matters are particularly relevant in this case. I find no support for the works from this guidance or from the advice within the Supplementary Planning Guidance note: Walls, Gates and Fences 1994.
7. Examples of other developments along Barnet Road have been provided. Generally, these do not relate to the immediate setting of this property which has its own distinctive character given the existence of the access road. The high railings enclosing the property at the head of the service road have a significantly different relationship to the public realm and they do not contribute positively to the character of the area. No details have been provided to demonstrate that the Council permitted any of the works referred to. In any event, this development must be considered on its own merits.
8. The matters put forward by the appellant in support of the works are not sufficient to outweigh my concerns. I therefore dismiss the appeal.

Peter Eggleton

INSPECTOR