



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 April 2019

by J Evans BA(Hons) AssocRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/19/3224357

14 Truesdales, Ickenham, Uxbridge UB10 8FJ

- 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 J Jang against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref 73684/APP/2019/41, dated 5 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2019.
 - The development proposed is the removal of soft landscaping in front of house, replaced with brindle block paving and a planting bed for 1 additional car park space within original boundaries.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description on the planning application form refers to the appeal development as 'retrospective'. Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) makes allowance for the submission of a planning application for development which has been carried out before the date of the application. Section 55 of the Act describes development as the carrying out of building operations or the making of material changes of use rather than the retention of works or the continuation of a use. I have, therefore, omitted the word 'retrospective' from the description of the development and consider the appeal on the basis that it is for the removal of soft landscaping in front of house, replaced with brindle block paving and a planting bed for 1 additional car park space within original boundaries. I have assessed the appeal on the basis of the plans and documents as submitted.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located part way along Truesdales, forming part of a modern residential development which fronts tightly onto a shared surface for pedestrians and vehicles. A number of properties along Truesdales have landscaped gardens which visually provide a natural break to the predominance of hard surfaced materials along the street.
5. I consider that the soft landscaping areas are a valuable component of the character and appearance of Truesdales, they provide a positive contribution

that helps to break up the predominance of hard surfaced materials along the street. The value that the soft landscaping contributes is particularly noticeable when viewing locations along Truesdales where such landscaping does not exist. In these circumstances the overdominance of hard surfaced finishes and the associated vehicle parking have a negative effect on the character and appearance of the street scene.

6. Whilst I acknowledge the appellant proposes a component of soft landscaping to the front of their property, this would not be sufficient to mitigate the harm that would arise through the appeal proposal. The increase in hard surfacing to the street, and the ability for a vehicle to park to the front of property directly adjacent to shared surface would result in an overly dominant hard landscaped and cluttered appearance, this would not result in an attractive high quality environment.
7. I have taken account of the comments from the appellant that parking on the existing driveway in front of the garage is impractical as there is not the ability for vehicles to pass each other. However, such an arrangement is not unusual in a domestic context, and even if benefits would arise in this regard, they would not be so substantive to override the conclusions I have reached above with regard to the harm that would result from the proposals.
8. Whilst I also acknowledge that there are other examples in the area of works similar to the proposal, I do not have the full facts of these cases before me, and nonetheless there are differences informing the relevant judgements that are based on the specific circumstances of an individual case.
9. I am additionally aware of a recent appeal decision concerning 12 Truesdales¹, whereby the Inspector dismissed a proposal for a parking area and removal of soft landscaping to the front of that property on the basis of that it would detract from the character and appearance of the area and would contribute to a gradual erosion of the appearance of the housing development. Whilst I have reached my conclusions on the facts of the case before me, nonetheless the decision at 12 Truesdales is consistent with the conclusions I have reached.
10. I therefore conclude for the reasons outlined above that the appeal proposal would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would conflict with Policies BE1, BE19 and BE38 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two – Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies 2012, which seek amongst other things, development which improves and maintains the quality of the built environment, harmonises with the existing street scene and original buildings, and expects development proposals to retain and utilise landscape features of merit.
11. The proposal would also conflict with the guidance contained within Section 11 of the Hillingdon Design and Accessibility Statement Supplementary Planning Document: Residential Extensions 2008, on front gardens and parking which, amongst other matters, seeks to avoid replacing front gardens with hardstanding and losing the feeling of enclosure and definition between pavement and private space.

¹ APP/R5510/W/18/3216469

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Evans

INSPECTOR