



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 July 2019 by Andreea Spataru BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

Decision by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/N5090/D/19/3229167

10 Croft Close, Mill Hill, London NW7 4QL

- 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 Majid Azad against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.
 - The application Ref 19/1553/RCU, dated 15 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 7 May 2019.
 - The development proposed installation of new metal gate with associated railings.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. The application to the Council was a resubmission of an earlier, refused, retrospective application for the installation of new metal gate with associated railings¹. I understand that the appeal development is an amended version of the previous scheme, which is currently in place, and for which an enforcement notice has been served. I have treated the appeal on its own merits.

Main Issue

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

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site accommodates a two storey, detached dwelling, located in a cul-de-sac, within a predominantly residential area characterised by a mix of detached and semi-detached properties. The dwellings located within this cul-de-sac are set-back from the street, have private driveways and low boundary treatments to the front. The low brickwork/stonework and hedges located to the front of properties are a feature that make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the street scene. Visible within this cul-de-sac are

¹ Application ref: 18/3397/RCU

also the side wooden fences of the properties located on corner plots, at the junction of Marsh Lane with Croft Close. There are some high metal railings and gates on Marsh Lane, and some of them are visible from Croft Close.

6. The proposal seeks to make several amendments to the metal gates and railings to the front of property. The amendments include the removal of the ornate scrolling to the top of the gates and railings, and the introduction of a low brick wall at the base of the railings. The brick wall would accommodate a soil border which would allow the introduction of climbing plants. Examples of such plants elsewhere in the area have been provided within the appeal statement.
7. The proposed gates and railings would have a prominent position within the street scene, as they would be located to the front of the property. Their height and overall design would be in contrast with the low boundary treatments of all the neighbouring properties in Croft Close. Thus, they would appear as an incongruous addition which would harmfully affect the character and appearance of the street scene.
8. I note that features of the street scene have been included into this scheme, such as the low brick boundary wall at the base of the railings and the vegetation, which would soften to some degree the hard appearance of the metal gates and railings. However, these additions are not sufficient to make the proposal blend into the street scene.
9. The appellant has drawn my attention to several properties located on Marsh Lane which have metal railings and gates to the front. I did note during my site visit that materials, heights, and overall appearance of the front boundary treatments vary along Marsh Lane. Whilst the high metal gates and railings of one of the properties on Marsh Lane are visible from Croft Close, the low form of the boundary treatments in the cul-de-sac provides a far stronger context to the appeal site.
10. I acknowledge the appellant's desire to increase security for the occupiers of their property. However, I am unconvinced that the development is necessary to provide a safe and secure environment.
11. I acknowledge that the development would not affect the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties and I note that no objections have been made by third parties. However, these do not lend positive weight to the development.
12. Accordingly, I conclude that through a combination of its design, large size, and prominent position, the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, the development would be contrary to Policy DM01 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2012) and Policy CS5 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (2012), which require, amongst other things, for development to respect local context. I find little conflict with Policy CS1 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (2012) as this sets out the strategy to concentrate and consolidate housing and economic growth, and thus is not directly relevant to the appeal proposal.

Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Andreea Spataru

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR