
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 December 2019

by Alison Partington BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th December 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/19/3238888

40 Cheyne Avenue, South Woodford, London E18 2DR

- 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 Ayo Fifo against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 2158/19, dated 16 May 2019, was refused by notice dated 11 July 2019.
 - The development proposed is described as the “erection of front boundary fence including bricks, metal, columns up to 1650mm high and a sliding gate of 1650mm high”.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. At the time of my site visit metal railings and a sliding gate were being installed at the property. These had a different design and height to those shown on the plans submitted as part of the appeal. For the avoidance of doubt, my determination of the appeal is on the basis of the plans before me and not what was being installed at the site.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in the appeal are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - The character and appearance of the area; and
 - Highway and pedestrian safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a semi-detached dwelling in a suburban residential area comprising similar properties. A characteristic feature of the area is that properties have modest front gardens set behind low boundary walls. Whilst some of the walls have been removed and others have been augmented by low railings or vegetation, the open character created by them remains an important feature of the area.
5. The proposed boundary treatment would consist of a low wall with metal railings and posts above it, and a solid sliding gate. Whilst the brickwork would

incorporate detailing, the overall height of the structure would be out of keeping with that found in the surrounding area. In addition, the solid nature of the proposed gate, which would extend approximately half the width of the plot, would be an uncharacteristic and unsympathetic addition to the street scene, given the open character of the area.

6. As a result, I consider that the proposed development would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, it would be contrary to Policy LP 26 of the *Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (adopted March 2018)* (RLP) which requires that developments have a high quality of design that respects the local character of the area.

Highway and pedestrian safety

7. The front garden of the property has been hard paved and would provide 2 off road parking spaces. Whilst it is suggested by the appellant that cars would be able to turn within the site and so enter and exit in forward gear, no evidence has been produced to support this claim. From what I observed, I am not satisfied that this would be possible for both spaces when the other is occupied.
8. Cheyne Avenue is a lightly trafficked residential road with good visibility along its length. I observed that many houses along the road have also created parking spaces within the front garden area and the majority of these did not have sufficient space to enable vehicles to turn within the site. As such, vehicles must have to either reverse into or out of these spaces. There is no evidence that such movements cause any issues with regard to highway or pedestrian safety at present.
9. The height of the proposed boundary treatment and the solid character of the gate would restrict visibility to a slightly greater extent than the former wall that existed at the property. Nevertheless, given that people tend to come out of private driveways at low speeds, I consider that the proposed development would not unacceptably harm highway or pedestrian safety. The Council have referred to Policy LP23 of the RLP on the decision notice. However, this policy is concerned with the provision of cycle and car parking rather than highway safety. However, the appellant has highlighted that the RLP does promote a safe environment for people. I consider that the proposal would not conflict with this aim, nor with the *National Planning Policy Framework* which requires a safe and suitable access to be provided to sites for all users.

Conclusion

10. Although I have found that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway and pedestrian safety, it would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area. For this reason, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

Alison Partington

INSPECTOR