
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 December 2020

by T J Burnham BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23rd December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/20/3255664
42 Benton Road, Ilford IG1 4AU

- 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 N Sivagnanam against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 0808/20, dated 9 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 16 April 2020.
 - The development proposed is the retention of front and side boundary wall and proposed metal railing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. At the time of my site visit the development had commenced, although the railings proposed between the brick pillars had not been installed. What was in place appeared to accord with the plans before me and I have determined the appeal on this basis.
3. The description of the proposal has been altered from the application form to the decision notice. However, the original description adequately describes the proposals and I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and highway safety.

Reasons

5. The appeal property sits fronting Benton Road with its side elevation against Mundon Gardens. The boundary treatment to the front gardens of residential property, where it exists on this section of Benton Road generally consists of simple low brick walls or timber fences.

Character and appearance

6. I note that the SPD¹ advises that the design of boundary treatments should reflect the character of the area, and where there is a predominant character and/or height, proposals should reflect this.

¹ Housing Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Adopted September 2019

7. The front and side boundary walls contain a number of brick pillars in excess of 2m in height. They form prominent features within views along the street and as a result of their height and design they form uncomfortable features which are significantly at odds with the prevailing front boundary treatment of other residential property in the area.
8. I conclude therefore that the development detracts from the character and appearance of the area. The proposal subsequently fails to accord with SPD guidance and Policy LP26 of the Redbridge Local Plan (2018) (RLP) which amongst other things promotes high quality design that respects the local character of the area.

Highway safety

9. While only a snap-shot in time, I was able to observe on my site visit that Benton Road was reasonably busy with vehicles on a mid-week early afternoon. By reason of their height, design and positioning, the walls and particularly the pillars which partially align one behind the other provide a significant impairment to the visibility of westbound traffic on Benton Road for any driver exiting Mundon Gardens.
10. This lack of visibility and the limited depth from the Benton Road carriageway to the wall will have caused drivers to have to creep forwards onto Benton Road to gain visibility of oncoming traffic. Such occurrences, given the busy nature of Benton Road will have increased the risk of collisions between vehicles at this location.
11. I conclude therefore that the development has a detrimental effect on highway safety. The proposal therefore fails to accord with Policy LP26 of the RLP which amongst other things states that development that does not take available opportunities to improve the way an area functions will be refused planning permission.

Other Matters

12. I note the presence of the tall brick pillars with railings across from the site. However, while the enclosure, which appears of some age, does incorporate a degree of decorative flair, its height appears to be borne partly out of a functional requirement to enclose the apparent electrical apparatus within the site.
13. I was also able to observe other domestic boundary treatment nearby at the time of my site visit, which had been brought to my attention. However, this appeared significantly lesser in scale than that comprising the scheme before me. These examples do not therefore justify the appeal, and neither does the indicated previous presence of tall evergreen hedging on the boundaries which has since been removed.

Conclusion

14. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

T J Burnham

INSPECTOR