
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 February 2021

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 8 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/W/20/3262585

29 St Dunstons Road, Feltham TW13 4JY

- 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 Haroon Siddique against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00975/29/P10, dated 18 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as the retention of the existing galvanised steel palisade fencing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The development has already been undertaken and I had the benefit of seeing it at my site visit

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is whether the development preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site contains a small collection of mainly brick buildings used as a car/vehicle repair and MOT facility. The site sits within the St Dunstons Conservation Area within 'The Village' Character Area, wherein it is recognised that there are a variety of uses and development is piecemeal and informal.
5. I can see that prior to the development being undertaken, the front boundary of the site was marked by a low brick wall and an open vehicle entrance. The development has resulted in a 2.4m high metal 'palisade' form of fencing being erected, along with a matching sliding gate.
6. In my judgement the palisade fencing has a significant visual effect on the area. A combination of its height, design and appearance means that it fails to harmonise with the prevailing character. Its appearance is harsh and uncompromising and being sited at the rear of the pavement, in the main, means that its unacceptable effects are heightened.

7. The appellant has referred to other fences within the area and seeks to draw support from their existence; I was able to see these at my visit to the area. The fence at Cromwell Lodge is not comparable in my view. Other fences and gates are present within the area and those referred to by the appellant detract from the character and appearance of the area. As such, they would not justify further harmful development.
8. The appellant has referred to the incidence of thefts from vehicles prior to the development and the reduction after the fence was erected. Although the appellant has not submitted any further details in order to quantify the level of crime and the stated reduction, this is capable of being a material consideration and I shall weigh it in the balance for this appeal. Although I can see that such a fence would be likely to reduce thefts from vehicles, there is nothing before me which indicates that any other solution has been considered. I am not convinced that the existing fence is the only solution to the security issue and so I am not persuaded that the harmful visual effects on the locality are justified.
9. I have considered all the other matters referred to in the representations and for the reasons set out above, I find that the development fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area. In relation to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) I consider that the level of harm to the conservation area is 'less than substantial harm'. The NPPF states that when considering the impact of development on the significance of such an asset (in this case the conservation area) great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of the level of harm. It adds that any harm should require clear and convincing justification. In relation to the benefits of the proposal, I consider these to be largely private benefits to the appellant, although I have given weight to the potential of the development to reduce crime. Having considered these matters, I conclude that the benefits of the proposal do not outweigh the clear harm that I have identified. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR