



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 October 2022

by John D Allan BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/W5780/D/22/3306203

9 Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead, Redbridge, London, E11 2RQ

- 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 Amanjit Jhund against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Redbridge.
 - The application Ref 1266/22, dated 18 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2022.
 - The development proposed is the construction of a driveway/front hardstanding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the construction of a driveway/front hardstanding at 9 Spratt Hall Road, Wanstead, Redbridge, London, E11 2RQ in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 1266/22, dated 18 April 2022.

Procedural Matter

2. The application was retrospective and at the time of my visit I saw that the development had taken place, including with the installation of a dropped kerb at the roadside to provide a pavement crossing.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the Wanstead Village Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within the Wanstead Village Conservation Area (CA) which includes a busy and vibrant town centre and an eclectic mix of surrounding building styles, ages and uses, all set around a core group of three separate and distinctive areas of large green open spaces. Its special interest is derived from the cohesion of its variety that harmoniously pulls together to create a distinctive village character.
5. The appeal property is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling and is a typical example of the terraced and semi-detached homes built around the turn of the last century which tightly line the south-west side of Spratt Hall Road behind reasonably shallow frontages. No 9 is opposite the late-20th Century Wanstead Library and Churchill Room. The remaining stretch of the north-east side of the road is lined by one side of Christ Church Green. Nos 1-41

- (consecutive) Spratt Hall Road fall within an area covered by an Article 4 Direction which has removed permitted development rights for hard standings and the removal of boundary walls. The works that have taken place have included removal of a section of front wall and change to the surface to create an off-street parking area.
6. The Council has identified that front boundary walls and gardens are important to understand how roads were designed in this area and used, as they mark the original boundary. In this instance part of the original front wall, which is constructed from concrete blocks, remains. Together with an obvious demarcation between the brick-paved surface within the curtilage of No 9 and the back edge of the pavement, the retained section of wall clearly marks the original boundary of the property. The importance of the distinction between the road and gardens is understood, but this has not been undermined by any significant degree from the changes at No 9.
 7. In addition, I saw during my visit a very clear change in character to the frontages of the properties as one progresses along Spratt Hall Road. Of the fourteen dwellings (Nos 1-14) that face the public library on the opposite side of the road up to the corner of Christ Church Green, seven (50%), not including the appeal property, have mostly open frontages and dropped kerbs leading to on-site parking spaces. Beyond No 14, in contrast, the significant majority of properties have retained their front boundary enclosures and planted gardens. The change is stark and further embellished by an equally noticeable change in character to the opposing side of the road at roughly similar points. Nos 1-14 face a fairly contemporary building in community use that sits close to the back edge of the pavement. Beyond No 14 the dwellings face the open and historic Christ Church Green. Therefore, given the context of the immediate environment surrounding the appeal property, I do not find the driveway and front hardstanding to be out of keeping or visually harmful within the immediate street scene.
 8. In the absence of any visual harm, I am satisfied that the development has, as a minimum, preserved the character and appearance of the CA. Its significance as a heritage asset has therefore been unaffected. As a consequence, I find no conflict with Policies LP26 or LP33 of the Redbridge Local Plan 2015 – 2030, adopted in 2018, as far as they require the design of development to be high quality, respectful and complementary to an area's character, and to conserve and enhance the character and significance of the historic environment. The proposal also complies with the similar heritage conservation aims of The London Plan 2021 Policy HC1.

Conditions

9. The Council has suggested a condition that would require the external materials used to match those used in the existing building. As the development is not an extension to the building this makes no sense. Neither has any concern been raised with the surface materials that have been used, which are sympathetic to their setting. As the development is retrospective, no further conditions are necessary.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given, in the absence of any other conflict with the development plan, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

John D Allan

INSPECTOR