



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 November 2022

by A.Graham BA(hons) MAued IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 December 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/M5450/W/22/3302232

Waitemata, Green Lane, Stanmore HA7 3AH

- 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 Pushpak Beriwal against the decision of London Borough of Harrow Council.
 - The application Ref P/3979/21, dated 23 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 21 April 2022.
 - The proposal is for installation of 1.7m high front boundary wall and metal sliding gates (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The description of development used by the Council in both of these applications differs from that on the original application forms. The Appellant has used this original description upon their appeal forms and as such I also use the same description above which I feel better describes the proposed development.

Main Issues

3. The main issue is the impact of the scheme upon the character and appearance of the area including the impact of the proposal upon the Stanmore Hill Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a detached house that stands within Green Lane which is an attractive road running towards Stanmore Hill. Green Lane is primarily characterised by early suburban properties and one of its key characteristics derives from the soft boundary treatments and garden landscapes that contrast somewhat from the more dense areas of Stanmore itself. Many of these properties are of some architectural and historic quality and as such are included within the Stanmore Hill Conservation Area.
5. The appeal property has its principal frontage directly abutting Green Lane and the boundary of the Conservation Area. As a result, I consider that the scheme would have the potential of affecting the special architectural and historic character of the Stanmore Hill Conservation Area.

6. The scheme before me seeks permission to retain an existing 1.7m high brick front boundary wall with piers. Metal railings exist between these piers and there is a black painted sliding gate that gives access onto the property's driveway and front parking area.
7. I saw on my site visit that the vast majority of boundary treatments along this part of Green Lane are softened by considerable landscaping or are of a vernacular type design. These primarily consist of low brick walls, perhaps with hedges or slim metal railings above, or timber picket fences or hedges. Such front boundary treatments therefore contribute in a positive manner to both the overall attractive character of Green Lane and the historic and aesthetic qualities that contribute to the significance of the Stanmore Hill Conservation Area, part of whose significance is defined by this attractive, heavily landscaped street.
8. In assessing whether to grant planning permission for this development I am required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give 'Special Attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Stanmore Hill Conservation Area. This is reflected in The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), which states that 'Great Weight' should be given to the heritage assets' conservation.
9. This guidance is also supported through the emphasis within the Framework upon the importance of good design and heritage management, which in turn is reflected within both Policies D3.D(1), D3.D(11) and HC1.C of The London Plan as well as Core Policies CS1(B) and (D) of the Harrow Core Strategy and Policies DM1 and DM7 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan.
10. Although the metal railings being painted a terracotta and dark colour attempt to echo some of the traditional materials found locally, I find the design and detail of these railings overly heavy and clumsy in their execution. This together with the visible welding and thick, overly simplistic design contribute to a harmful erosion of both the special character of Green Lane and the Conservation Area to which this site abuts.
11. The brick wall and piers themselves do perhaps echo more traditional boundary treatments locally but I consider that this is a stark feature within the streetscene due to it being too high between the piers themselves. This, together with the near absence of any landscaping along this boundary, make this feature also harmful within the streetscene.
12. In assessing the impact of this scheme I am obliged by The Framework to balance this harm against the public benefits outlined in the application. I have not however been made aware of any truly public benefits but I do consider that the need for security would constitute a private benefit for the occupants. I have however no evidence before me with regards the potential for crime here and even so I would consider that there would be more appropriate and visually sensitive means to secure the property to a satisfactory level without causing such visual harm to the area.
13. Similarly, I have been made aware of other schemes locally where boundaries have been modified. However, I have no information before me as to the reasons why these features came about and in any case I consider that the

vast majority still better reflect the character and appearance of the area than the scheme before me.

14. As such I can give these other examples and the private benefits associated with this scheme only very limited weight and this would not outweigh the harm or the conflict with the above mentioned policies. Therefore, in light of the harm to both character and appearance of the Stanmore Hill Conservation Area and the overall design of this part of Green Lane I find against this appeal as it would conflict with Policies D3.D(1), D3.D(11) and HC1.C of The London Plan as well as Core Policies CS1(B) and (D) of the Harrow Core Strategy and Policies DM1 and DM7 of the Harrow Development Management Policies Local Plan.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, taking into account all other matters raised, I dismiss the appeal.

A Graham

INSPECTOR