



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2023

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15th August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/D/23/3322568

6 Garlichill Road, Epsom KT18 5UB

- 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 Sivarajah Arulchandran against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00188/HHOLD, dated 7 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 2 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is the "retention of reconstructed damaged boundary wall to front and side of the property".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Garlichill Road has a spacious appearance with bungalows set back from the road with relatively open frontages. Whilst some of the front gardens have been utilised for parking the front boundary treatments are primarily low-level walls.
4. The new wall to No.6 is in situ, and together with the vehicular gate, which does not form part of this proposal, it fully encloses the frontage formed of hardstanding. Whilst the proposal is referred to as a reconstruction, the Council advise that the previous wall was approximately 0.4m in height. There are no details before me of the former wall but that would be reflective of neighbouring brick walls which appear to be in their original form. In contrast, the replacement wall is more than double that height and interspaced with taller pillar elements which, due to the slope to the ground level, vary between 1.6m and 1.9m in height. The wall is a prominent feature, and its visual intrusion is exacerbated by the use of light-coloured large blocks which have a stark appearance. The colour does relate to the rendering on the detached bungalow which appears to have been recently renovated. Nonetheless, the wall is part of the continuous alignment of front boundary treatments which forms part of the street scene.
5. I accept that a wall up to 1m could be permitted development and that would be higher than the previous and neighbouring walls, but parts of the erected

wall are significantly taller than that. Boundary treatments along Garlichill Road do vary and there are some which are in excess of 1m. From my observations, these are single pillars on either side of a gate or occur at corner plots where the higher side boundaries are screening rear gardens. The appellant has also referred to other examples in the wider locality including along Fir Tree Road and Reigate Road. However, these are busier 'B' roads with two-storey properties and verges/vegetation to the road. Therefore, the character of these areas is not directly comparable and generally, as a whole, high walls are not a predominant feature of the locality.

6. Overall, I find due to the height, form, and materials the wall is out of keeping and harmful to the visual amenity and character of the area. Thus, the development conflicts with Policy DES1 of the Reigate & Banstead Development Management Plan 2019 and Policy CS4 of the Core Strategy 2014 which together promote high-quality design that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of its surroundings.

Other Matters

7. The appellant advises that the boundary creates a safer and more manageable environment. There is no evidence before me of any specific safety issues that necessitate the need for the height and design proposed, nor that security measures and a well-defined boundary could not be achieved in other ways. Therefore, this is a matter to which I give limited weight, and it does not overcome the harm I have found.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons set out and having regard to all other matters raised the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR