
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 January 2024

by Alison Scott (BA Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 08 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Y5420/W/23/3322421

Christ Apostolic Church, High Road, Tottenham, Haringey, London N15 4NP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Christ Apostolic Church GB HQ against the decision of London Borough of Haringey.
 - The application Ref is HGY/2023/0003, dated 31 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 May 2023.
 - The development proposed is Perimeter security railings, gates and vehicle crossovers to the road facing areas.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework has been updated on 19 December 2023, and after the submission of the appeal. The historic environment policies have remained unchanged within the updated version of the Framework which is a material consideration.
3. The appeal site is located within the Seven Sisters and Page Green Conservation Area (CA). I am therefore mindful of my statutory duties in respect of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (the Act). In addition, the building has been locally listed by the Council and is therefore a non-designated heritage asset.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - Whether or not there would be a highway and pedestrian safety issue; and
 - Whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Seven Sisters/Page Green Conservation Area (CA) and the effect on the significance of the non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

Highway and pedestrian safety

5. The appellants are seeking a secure means of access to park vehicles off street as part of the proposal, with two vehicular crossovers and gates, one to provide access from Page Green Terrace and one to provide access from Pembroke Road. These are local roads set back and non-accessible to vehicles from the

main arterial road of High Road, with single and double yellow lines in existence, blue badge parking bays located outside the building and the area is within a controlled parking zone with its parking permit restrictions in place in order to control parking stress within the locality.

6. The local area is both commercial and residential although the immediate locality is residential in character. A footpath extends around the perimeter of the building and is a safe means for pedestrians to follow to and from High Road with its local amenities and good transport links. By installing two separate and wide vehicular crossings to two different street frontages where pedestrians freely flow past, there is no evidence presented to demonstrate this would not lead to conflict between the pedestrian and vehicles accessing and egressing the site. In addition, the area is one of restricted permit parking for local residents on specific days and at specified times. This scheme would impact upon this restriction by way of the crossover affecting on-street parking leading to further stress on local roads, and consequentially a pedestrian and highway safety issue.
7. Therefore, to conclude on this main issue, it has not been demonstrated that the new vehicular accesses would safeguard highway and pedestrian safety in accordance with the aims of policies DM32 and DM33 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017.

Effect on significance of conservation area and non-designated heritage asset

8. The appeal site is located within the CA significant for its residential expansion in the late 19th century of large terraces of Victorian and Edwardian houses flanking High Road with the set back of buildings providing full appreciation of their character, and the large swathe of open space at Page Green Common that enhances the sense of spaciousness and setting throughout the CA.
9. In accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 I have a statutory duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.
10. The appeal site is a striking castellated red brick building that sits back from High Road on a prominent corner with Page Green Terrace and Pembroke Road and was previously the Salvation Army buildings, according to the Council's Seven Sisters and Page Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP). Described in the CAAMP as 'characterful', its red brick finish to the front elevation and twin turrets with adjacent hall of a cohesive design characteristic, altogether presents as a visually distinctive set piece within this part of the CA.
11. At the time of my visit the appeal site was enclosed by hoardings that wrap around the front elevation and corner with Pembroke Road. The proposed vertical railings would surround the circumference of the building with pedestrian and vehicular gates included at a continuous height of approximately 1.8m high.
12. The locality is a blend of commercial and residential uses although the context of the appeal site is one of a residential setting. To install such an expanse of vertical metal railings at the height proposed around the full perimeter would introduce a new and alien feature into the street scene which would be at odds

with the local character to boundaries that is predominantly a combination of low brick walls and natural vegetation.

13. It would appear as a very stark and severe form of delineation to the host building, situated in close range to the building line. Its scale would obscure a substantial portion of the lower half of the building detracting from its special interest that is assigned by the Council as a non-designated heritage asset with its special interest required to be safeguarded. I appreciate the appellant has gone to lengths to amend an earlier scheme by using a more traditional form of boundary treatment and there is local support received to the scheme. Nevertheless, it would relate poorly to the local area and have a deleterious effect upon the special character of the building and the significance of the CA to which it is a component part. The extent of harm that would arise as a consequence of the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA.
14. Drawing the above together I find that the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and as such be contrary to Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Public benefits and heritage Balance

15. Paragraph 206 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that any harm to the significance of the CA should require clear and convincing justification. Also, with reference to the Framework and proposals affecting heritage assets, in finding harm to the significance of designated heritage assets, the magnitude of that harm should be assessed. Given that the impact of the proposal I find that the harm to be 'less than substantial' in this instance. This harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
16. The benefits of securing the site from anti-social behaviour has been brought to my attention by the appellant and the proposed enclosure designed to Secured by Design standards. However, there is no evidence of anti-social behaviour incidents before me to consider or that it would reduce crime levels or the perceived fear of crime. In any case, there are other means to secure the site that can be explored by the appellant rather than the scheme before me. They state that on-site parking is required to aid the less-abled parishioners. However, there are a number of dedicated disabled persons' parking bays located on the road outside the front of the church and there is nothing before me to indicate these are insufficient to serve the need. The appellant would install electric charging points within the site which can be considered as a public benefit although I would amount this to only a small overall gain. I recognise the role of a religious venue and its contribution to the community. However, I have no evidence before me to demonstrate how by not granting permission for this development would have a negative impact on such. Overall, the benefits before me do not amount to a clear and convincing justification to outweigh the harm I have identified.
17. Considerable importance and weight has to be attached to harm to designated heritage assets, and protecting non-designated heritage assets is also a material consideration. Therefore, to conclude on this main issue, the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA or the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. As such the proposal would

be contrary to the broad character and design aims and heritage protection objectives of policies DM1, DM9, SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017. However, I find no direct relevance with the proposal and policy DM3 as this refers to public realm.

Other Matters

18. There are a number of semi-mature street trees located close to the appeal site that could, from my inspection of their proximity to the site, be affected by the proposal. No tree survey has been submitted with the scheme, nor has the Council raised any concerns further to me drawing attention to them. Nevertheless, the location is within the CA and trees are an important component part of the CA and the streetscape as a whole. However, as I am dismissing the scheme on the main issues before me, there is no requirement for me to comment further on this matter.
19. The appellant raises inconsistencies following the Council's refusals of planning permissions at the site. However, this is a matter for the Council's attention and cannot be commented on from my own perspective.

Conclusion

20. To conclude, as there would be harm to the character and appearance of the CA and to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset as well as highway and pedestrian safety, the proposal would lead to conflict with the development plan taken as a whole. There are no material considerations that indicate the decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, for the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR