
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2025

by **SE Hughes BA (Hons) PGDip MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/D/25/3370005

6 West Hill Road, London SW18 1LN

- 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 Mr Tariq Hussain against the decision of the London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref is 2025/1521.
 - The development proposed is “application for retention of two gates to front boundary (Retrospective)”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. During my site visit I was able to see that the development is already in place. I have determined the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The Council has not raised any objections to the development in terms of its effect on the living conditions of neighbouring residents, highway safety or fire safety. Based on the evidence before me, and my observations at the site visit, I have no reason to take a different view. I therefore consider the main issue to be the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. West Hill Road is a residential area characterised by detached and semi-detached houses with driveway accesses. The front boundaries are mostly enclosed (individually or in combination) by low boundary walls, fences and hedges. On my site visit I observed that the majority of driveways were open (sometimes featuring a retractable bollard). Where gates are installed, they are wooden barred gates or metal railed gates, providing a permeable interface between the street and the private dwellings.
5. Looking at the pre-existing front boundary elevations, the property was previously served by two sets of decorative metal gates supported by brick piers. The appeal proposal has widened the access, removing the brick piers and has replaced the visually permeable decorative metal gates with solid metal gates.
6. Whilst the gates are lower in height than the pre-existing gates, their greater width and solid form is incongruous and overly dominant. Furthermore, in combination with the property’s existing hedge and fencing, they block views of the host

property's front drive and garden, negatively impacting opportunities for natural surveillance from the garden and ground floor of the host property to the street and vice versa.

7. I acknowledge that the material type and colour match other black metal gates in the surrounding area. However, in contrast with the appeal development, the other gates nearby are not solid. To my mind it is this departure from the prevailing style, which causes the development to be visually jarring.
8. The appellant has drawn my attention to numerous examples of other gates located in the wider area, including the neighbouring gates serving 6A West Hill Road. With regards to the neighbour's gates, whilst the gates are a similar height, they are not solid, so are less dominant. In the case of the gates at 42 and 92 West Hill Road they are not intervisible with the appeal site and all the other gate examples are in other streets. Accordingly, their context is materially different and therefore does not justify the development at the appeal site.
9. I acknowledge the evidence put forward relating to ease of access and vehicular manoeuvrability, enhanced security and the safety and welfare of the children residing at the property. However, there are other security measures that could be utilised, such as non-solid gates, that would be less incongruous within the street scene.
10. Overall, I therefore conclude that the development has harmed the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Consequently, it conflicts with policies LP1 and LP2 of the Wandsworth Local Plan 2023-2038 which require development to be of high-quality and to relate positively to the prevailing local character. In addition, it is also contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure that development is sympathetic to local character.

Other Matters

11. I am aware that the appeal site is adjacent to West Hill Conservation Area (WHCA). Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. The special character of the WHCA as a whole is derived from its many differing architectural styles and housing types. Given the appeal site's location beyond the boundary of WHCA and the extent and nature of the development, I find that the character and appearance of the WHCA as a whole, would be preserved. I note that the Council raised no objection in this regard either. Nevertheless, this lack of harm to the WHCA weighs neutrally and does not alter my overall conclusion with regards to the development's impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above I conclude that the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

SE Hughes

INSPECTOR