



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 February 2026

by A James BSc (Hons) MA MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/25/3375995

55 Parkhurst Road, Bexley DA5 1BA

- 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 D Stannett against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application reference is 25/01569/FUL.
 - The development proposed is reduction of existing boundary fence and gate from 2 metres to 1.5 metres.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. In the interests of conciseness, I have taken the description of the proposal from the decision notice.
3. While there is an associated enforcement notice appeal at this site, the enforcement notice appeal is not before me.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached, two storey dwelling, which is sited within a predominately residential area. Dwellings in the locality are typically two storeys high (some with accommodation within the roof) and are of various designs. There is a consistent front building line along this part of the road. Dwellings are generally set back from the highway, with areas of landscaping and parking to the front. The front boundaries are typically defined by low to medium height brick walls, with brick piers. Some of the walls have metal railings above. Properties tend not to have gates, but where these are present, they are usually constructed of metal and have a vertical bar design.
6. The existing fence and gate were dismissed at appeal¹ in December 2024 due to their impact on the character and appearance of the area. This appeal seeks consent to reduce the height of the unlawful fencing and gate from 2 metres to 1.5 metres. The fencing is sited on top of a low wall and consists of horizontal slats.

¹ Appeal ref: APP/D5120/D/24/3347359

The gaps between the slats are limited in size, which provides a relatively solid boundary treatment. The appellant advises that the slats are constructed of metal in order to respond to the other metal railings present in the locality. However, the application form and plans refer to 'horizontal timber panels.' I have determined the appeal based on the plans before me.

7. I appreciate that the appeal scheme would provide a greater level of visibility of the appeal property than the previously dismissed scheme. However, I find that the design of the proposal appears incongruous in the street scene and harmfully discords with the more traditionally designed boundary treatment in the locality.
8. I observed on my site visit that some of the metal gates and railings in the locality are a similar height to that proposed in the appeal scheme. Nevertheless, the metal railings and gates by reason of their vertical emphasis and gaps between bars provide a permeable boundary treatment, which enables the sense of spaciousness along the street to be retained.
9. The appeal property has been substantially renovated and has a modern appearance. I do not find that the proposal discords with the design of the host property. However, regardless of the material, I find that the appeal scheme by reason of its horizontal emphasis and lack of permeability would harmfully discord with the character and appearance of the area and would erode the spacious character of the street scene.
10. The appellant has drawn my attention to a high, close boarded fence that runs to the front of a local sports facility. Full details of the circumstances of this existing fence are not before me. However, this fence is some distance away from the appeal property. It also does not relate to a dwelling. Accordingly, the circumstances are materially different. Nonetheless, I do not find that the presence of an existing close boarded fence in the locality, justifies the harm that I have identified above.
11. The appellant has also drawn my attention to a boundary wall that serves No. 42 Parkhurst Road. This dwelling is located around the corner from the appeal property, where the street scene has a different and less uniform character. The boundary wall at No. 42 is constructed of brick and is therefore materially different in its appearance. It also provides screening to the rear garden of this property, whereas the front boundary treatment is substantially lower and more open. Accordingly, I find that the boundary treatment at No. 42 is not comparable to the appeal scheme and I give it limited weight in my decision.
12. Although, I find no harm to the host property, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal scheme is harmful to the character and appearance of the area. The appeal scheme conflicts with Policy D1 of The London Plan adopted in March 2021 and Policies SP5 and DP11 of the Bexley Local Plan, adopted April 2023. These policies among other things require that all development is of high-quality design and contributes positively to the local environment and street scene. While Policy SP5 advises that design 'need not be constrained by what already exists', this policy is clear that design should be of a high-quality and respect the existing character and context and I have found clear conflict in this regard.

Other Matters

13. The appellant argues that the contemporary boundary treatment could be retained along the site frontage at one metre in height, without the need for planning permission. Nevertheless, the appeal scheme seeks consent for a higher boundary treatment, which would not be permitted development and would have a materially different visual impact, given its height. Accordingly, I give this argument limited weight in my decision.
14. I acknowledge that the local highway authority raises no objections to the proposal; however, this does not alter my findings set out above.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no other material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework that would outweigh this conflict. Therefore, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

A James

INSPECTOR