
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 August 2025 by Kim Vo MPLAN

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/R5510/D/25/3366604

69 Copse Wood Way, Northwood, Hillingdon HA6 2TZ

- 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. & Mrs. Patel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hillingdon.
 - The application Ref is 12231/APP/2025/510.
 - The development proposed is described as a “retrospective application for fence”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter and Main Issue

3. The submitted plans show a straight and level fence from the side gate towards the rear boundary. However, the erected version on site features staggered height timber panels. Nonetheless, there is sufficient information available to make an informed assessment of the development from both the plans and what I saw on site. The main issue in regard to which is the effect of the fence on the character and appearance of the area, with specific regard to the Copse Wood Estate Area of Special Local Character (ASLC).

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The appeal site occupies a corner plot, with the entrance to the cul-de-sac of Oak Glade running along its side boundary. Positioned on elevated land, the site slopes down towards Number 75 Copse Wood Way. The surrounding area is residential and characterised by substantial detached dwellings, set within a mature wooded landscape that forms a scenic and cohesive backdrop. This verdant setting is enhanced by the openness of the streetscape, where low brick or stone walls and mature planting frame the publicly visible boundaries of each dwelling. Collectively, these features positively contribute to the natural and spacious quality of the ASLC.
5. The fence is prominently sited along the edge of the public pavement, being of a considerable height and spanning the full side boundary length. It also has light coloured timber panels and high level gravel boards. Whilst these materials are present in the area, it is the development’s scale and siting, combined with its

extensive length and bright finish, which appears obtrusive and incongruous to the street scene. Its imposing presence is further pronounced by the site's elevated position. This is a stark contrast from the previous side boundary of a long hedgerow with mature planting and a short section of timber fencing, which evidently supported a more open, landscaped setting.

6. New internal planting is visible above the fence and may eventually help to soften its appearance. However, even when fully matured, they would not sufficiently mitigate the structure's urbanising effect and the sense of solid enclosure imparted by it. It would also take some time to establish.
7. The fence therefore unacceptably harms the character and appearance of the area and detracts from the qualities of the ASLC as I have set them out. Consequently, it conflicts with Policies BE1 and HE1 of the Local Plan: Part 1 – Strategic Policies 2012; and Policies DMBH 5, DMHB 11, DMHB 12 and DMHD 1 of the Local Plan Part 2 – Development Management Policies 2020. Together, and amongst other things, these seek to ensure development proposals are of a high-quality design which integrates well with the area's character, and to conserve and enhance Areas of Special Local Character.

Other Matters

8. None of the cited examples strike me as being sufficiently comparable to the point I would find the appeal fence acceptable. They are either positioned well back from the junction head; feature planting towards the front corners; had mature overhanging trees/hedgerow above the fence lines; had no discernible difference in land levels; or comprised a shorter run of high timber fence panels.
9. There is no sufficiently conclusive evidence to demonstrate that privacy and security requirements cannot be met through alternative measures, such as the planting of a hedgerow (that existed previously), which might have a lesser impact than the appeal scheme. I remain to be convinced that the development is the only way to achieve the outcome the appellant desires.
10. I have seen an approved landscaping plan for a replacement dwelling at the appeal site. Council reference 12231/APP/2022/1910. It shows a two metre high fence along the full side boundary. I am unclear as to whether this scheme is extant. In any case, the harm identified with the appeal scheme does not solely lie on its siting or length, but also on its scale in totality and bright finish. The plan also shows the retention of a hedge on the same boundary either side of said fence. I am not therefore led to recommending allowing the appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan and material considerations do not indicate a decision other than in accordance therewith. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Kim Vo

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR