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London Borough of Hillingdon
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18 July 2014

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed erection of steel gates, railings and posts and erection of brick entrance piers with stone capping at 36 Linksway, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 2XB; (Revised Scheme to Application 2014/1574)

We are instructed to submit the planning application on behalf of our client, Octagon Developments Ltd, for the erection of entrance gates and railings at 36 Linksway.

The application comprises the following:

- The application form and ownership certificate duly completed;
- Location Plan;
- Entrance Gate and Railings Plan (Drawing No. 9100 Rev A);
- There is no fee required due to an application of the same description being submitted within the previous 12 months (Ref: 44603/APP/2014/1574)

The Site

36 Linksway is a large detached property located on the south western side of the road. Linksway is a residential area comprising large detached properties with varying styles and designs.

Proposal

The proposal is a resubmission taking into consideration the reasons for refusal for Application 44603/APP/2014/1574. The proposal includes the erection of steel gates, railings and posts and the erection of brick entrance piers with stone capping. The steel railings have a height of 1500mm, the reductions from the previous proposal are 530mm.

Rather than submit an appeal this proposal for entrance gates and railings reduces the height of proposed railings and deals with other matters to allow you now to permit the development.

Planning Considerations

Policies BE5, BE13, BE15, and BE19 of the Unitary Development Plan need to be taken into consideration. These Policies refer to Linksway being an Area of Special Local Character and the Properties having Open Frontages. Appendix 1 illustrates the character of Linksway with

large properties set in generous plots with a mixture of frontage boundary treatments either in place or approved.

Openness and Character

Analysing the Street Scene of Linksway and the wider area many of the modern properties including 29 and 29a have entrance gates and railings with hedging to soften the impact of the railings. Numbers 29 and 29a are next to each other and along with the other nearby examples in appendix 1, all contribute to the character of the area and have gates and railings of a similar style to the proposed development. This also highlights that a large majority of Linksway is not characterised by open frontages.

Furthermore, the application 44603/APP/2013/369 which was approved at appeal has an approved landscape drawing illustrating a 2m high laurel hedge to be planted at the front of the site. This would have altered the openness of the site in any event and is an evergreen feature.

In addition the examples of hedging planted behind railings demonstrates that the hedge eventually takes over and softens the railings by growing through them, reducing their dominance on the street scene and if needs be softening any original impact. The various examples from the local area demonstrate this.

Layout

The reason for refusal in the previous application stated that the proposed development had a prominent position along the 'front' boundary line of the site. This was not correct as the 2 sets Entrance Gates were set back from the front of the road by nearly 3m deep by 4m wide therefore reducing any possible prominence of the gates on the street scene. This feature is supported by number 23 which is almost directly opposite number 36 and has entrance gates that are set back from the main road and a wall with a high hedge. With the gates being set back it prevents the overbearing impact on the street scene as suggested and the hedge softens the visual appearance of the railings. This in turn becomes part of the character of the area.

Design

The refusal of planning permission for the previous application referred to the Residential Extensions Guidance SPD December 2008 and in particular to Paragraph 10.2. This refers to front gates over 1m being refused planning permission. The guidance does not take into consideration the context of the area where Linksway has large properties with generous and wide front gardens. It deals with more standard streets and cannot therefore be relied upon in this context.

In addition, the approval of gates and railings at number 42, which is two dwellings down from number 36 had piers and railings at a height of 2m approved which is contrary to the Residential Design Guidance you have stated. The reduction in height of the proposed gates and piers with the proposed hedging and existing trees will soften the visual impact on neighbouring properties.

Conclusion

The Statement has defined the character and appearance of entrance gates and railings along Linksway and the suitability of the proposed development at number 36. It has demonstrated that the proposed gates are to be set back from the main road and the reduced height of railings with the hedge behind would prevent a detrimental impact of the openness of neighbouring properties.

On this basis, we invite the Council to welcome the development and accordingly grant planning permission.

We look forward to receiving confirmation of the registration of the application shortly.

Yours faithfully

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