Expiry Date - 05/12/2023

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1170/23 **Recommendation – REFUSE**

Site: **49 Robson Road Worthing West Sussex BN12 4EE**

Proposal: **Install motorised sliding gate (maximum height 2057mm) to the side of the property on Trent Road (North elevation) and boundary fence (overall height 1800mm) to west elevation.**

Date of site visit: 17/10/23

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The site is located on a corner plot to the west of Robson Road and to the south of Trent Road within a residential area of Worthing. The site is within the Robson Road Conservation Area which extends north from the bend in the road and includes the junction of Robson Road and Trent Road. The Conservation Area appraisal identifies the '*moderne'* buildings within it (including the application property) as positive contributors to its established character and appearance. The building is identified as a 'Local Interest Building' due to its contribution to the character of the area in which it is located and is listed within the Worthing Local Interest Study (August 2003) as follows: '*One of the many Art Deco houses built in this part of the town that survives with the original windows. As with the houses in Shaftesbury Avenue, there is an intriguing third floor, which gives the appearance of having been intended as a summer room or possibly to give the feel of a penthouse'.*

The property comprises of a semi-detached, three storey house with flat roofs and parapet design, a two storey bay to the front and white smooth render elevations. The property is set back from the road behind a traditional basket-weave wall that is characteristic of the area and a front garden. A timber fence has been installed behind the wall enclosing the north-east corner and north boundary of the site although there is no record of consent having been granted for this fence. There is vehicular access to the north boundary with a driveway and hardstanding leading to a detached flat roof garage. A timber fence and hedge within the site separate the driveway from the main garden area to the north of the house. There is a large tree to the north-east corner of the site

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for installation of a motorised sliding gate to the north, a pedestrian gate, and a boundary fence to the west side.

The proposed sliding gate would be installed to the existing access to the north of the site on to Trent Road. The proposed gate would measure 4m wide with a curved top of 2.057m high to the centre and 1.75m high to the sides. The fence would be the 'Limnos' design from Contemporain, a solid design with diagonal plank effect pattern in blue powder coated aluminium. As the proposed gate is much higher and wider than the existing brick piers new piers would be required to either side of the gate to support it. The information submitted does not confirm whether the proposal is to retain the existing low brick piers and construct new piers behind this or to widen the access and remove the existing piers and part of the wall as both options seem to be shown on the submitted plans.

Details of a pedestrian gate 'Jabal' from the same manufacturer have been provided measuring 0.9m wide and 1.75m high finished in the same powder coated aluminium in blue. No indication has been provided as to where the pedestrian gate would be positioned on the site, or whether there would be any removal of the boundary wall to accommodate this.

A new fence is proposed to the west boundary (adjacent to the driveway for the garage). The proposed fence would again be from the same manufacturer consisting of the 'Jabal Lamelles' fence in powder coated aluminium in blue. The fence would measure 1.5m high mounted on top of the existing boundary wall to a total height of 1.8m high. It is however noted that the dimensions provided on the submitted plans show the wall at only 0.3m high which is lower than the existing wall and therefore it is assumed that part of the wall would be demolished. Again insufficient detail has been provided to confirm this.

No details relating to the materials or finish or the proposed piers have been provided or how the existing walls would be altered as a result of the proposal.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/0806/17 - Single storey rear infill extension - Approved

AWDM/0042/14 - Section 211 Notice under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to remove and replace one Bay tree and remove one Holly tree within Robson Road Conservation Area - Permitted

Consultations:

WSCC Highways - This application is for the installation of a sliding gate and boundary fence. The site is located on Robson Road, an unclassified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph.

From inspection of the plans, the applicant proposes to install a sliding gate for the existing vehicular access on Trent Road, whilst a new boundary fence is to be installed on the western boundary. The proposals are not anticipated to give rise to a detrimental highway safety impact.

In summary, the LHA does not consider that this proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in 'severe' cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network, therefore is not contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 111), and that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal.

Representations:

One representation received:

We are the neighbour of the applicant, as far as we are aware the boundary is on our side, so we would like to know more details on how this would affect our property or wall so to speak, will our wall remain? If not will the fence be fixed to ours or would posts be put on their side, how would this look to us our view? As it is our boundary if problems occurred in the future, who would be responsible and would this be documented?

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM23, DM24
National Planning Policy Framework (HCLG 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPG 'Extending or Altering Your Home' (WBC)
Robson Road Conservation Area Appraisal

Planning Assessment

There is no objection in principle to extensions and alterations to residential dwellings within the built-up area. The key considerations are the effects on the visual and residential amenities of the locality and the character and special features of the conservation area.

Visual Amenity and Conservation Area

The Conservation Area Appraisal refers to the area as follows: *'The houses in the conservation area are fine examples of modern movement inspired architecture. … The road is fairly wide and paved on both sides and the houses have moderately large front gardens and integral garages, giving the street a spacious and uncluttered appearance. Trees in the front gardens contrast with the crisp lines of the buildings and add variety to the streetscene.*

Prevalent building materials, textures and colours, are noted as: *The (approx.) 0.5m high red-brown brick, basket weave garden walls survive throughout the area. Occasional stretches of shiplap fencing placed behind the walls are detrimental to the area's special character.*

Enhancement opportunities are listed as: *Retain the basket-weave brick front garden walls. Remove any additional wooden fencing (e.g. at Nos. 62, 49 and 66)'.*

The appraisal clearly sets out those features of the conservation area that are important to preserve and this includes the basket-weave walls that are a predominant characteristic of the area. The proposed gates and fence would result in the loss of part of this wall and its replacement with much higher piers to support the gates and loss of the top section of wall to accommodate the fence. Very limited detail has been provided with the application, and it is unclear exactly which parts of the wall are to be removed or where the new piers would be installed to support the gates.

The only other gates visible in the street scene in the immediate area are low height, traditional timber gates or open metal gates; the majority of properties have open driveways. The existing fence and hedge contained within the site separate and screen the garden from the parking/garage area and there does not appear to be any need to enclose the driveway and garage with high boundary treatments as it would not offer any additional privacy to the main garden.

The proposed vehicular gate would increase the width of the existing opening to a scale that is not consistent with other vehicular accesses in the area and would introduce a high modern gate in blue that would appear alien and intrusive in the street scene, and at odds with the uncluttered, spacious feel that contributes to the conservation area. The colour, design, materials, height, width and prominent siting of the gate would be entirely out of keeping with the area and would directly conflict with the advice in the Conservation Area Appraisal to retain the traditional basket weave walls that are characteristic of the area. Even if the wall were to be retained as existing and the new piers installed behind the wall to accommodate the gate, this would still appear very uncomfortable in the street scene and would significantly detract from the character of the area.

The fence of the height, materials and design proposed would be prominent in the street scene and would significantly detract from the character of the area. The solid boundary that would result from the proposal in addition to its uncharacteristic materials and blue colour would be extremely prominent in the street scene and significantly out of keeping with the character of the area.

No specific details have been provided in relation to the position of the pedestrian gate, however it is likely that this would result in the removal of some of the boundary wall, directly conflicting with the recommendations of the conservation area appraisal and causing significant harm to the character of the conservation area. New high piers would be required to support a high gate adding to the uncharacteristic appearance of this feature. The colour, design, materials and height of the pedestrian gate would be entirely out of keeping with the area.

Insufficient details have been provided as to the position of the pedestrian gate and in relation to what is intended for the existing walls and the proposed gates and fence.

The proposal as submitted would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and would appear as dominant and intrusive features in the street scene and seriously detract from the visual amenities of the locality.

Residential Amenity

The installation of a gate and fence at this site would not detrimentally affect the residential amenities of adjacent occupiers.

Recommendation

REFUSE for the reason:-

The height, width, design, colour, materials and prominent siting of the proposed gates and fencing would result in a dominant and visually intrusive form of development that fails to respect the predominant characteristics of the area, or preserve or enhance the Robson Road Conservation Area, introducing a high, solid form of boundary treatment and heightened sense of enclosure that would be unsympathetically out of keeping with the front boundary treatments that are characteristic of the area, resulting in significant harm to the Robson Road Conservation Area. The proposal fails to achieve a high quality design or to make a positive contribution to the sense of place, local character and distinctiveness of the area, resulting in a discordant addition to the street scene that severely detracts from the visual amenities of the locality. The proposal is therefore contrary to policies DM5, DM23 and DM24 of the Worthing Local Plan, the Robson Road Avenue Conservation Area Appraisal and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, allowing the Applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal. The Local Planning Authority is willing to provide pre-application advice in respect of any future application for a revised development.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Amanda Haslett Date: 05/12/23

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 05.12.2023