

<b>Delegated Report</b>		<b>Analysis sheet</b>	<b>Expiry Date:</b>
	N/A / attached	<b>Consultation Expiry Date:</b>	<b>06/03/2020</b> <b>29/03/2020</b>
<b>Officer</b>		<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Gavin Sexton		2021/0188/P	
<b>Application Address</b>		<b>Drawing Numbers</b>	
10 Ferncroft Avenue London NW3 7PH		Refer to decision notice	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>	<p>Installation of sliding metal gates, railings, brick piers and replacement brick wall to front boundary; replacement of front entrance door and steps and side gate; erection of pergola to rear garden and various hard and soft landscaping works to front and rear gardens.</p>		
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	<b>Refuse planning permission</b>		
<b>Application Type:</b>	<b>Householder Application</b>		
<b>Consultations</b>	<p>Site notices were placed on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 for three weeks on Ferncroft Avenue.</p> <p>A notice was placed in the press on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021, continuing the statutory consultation until 14<sup>th</sup> March 2021.</p> <p>No responses were received.</p>		
<b>Summary of consultation responses:</b>	<p>No responses were received.</p>		

## Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Forum:

Thank you for forwarding this application to the Neighbourhood Forum for comment.

The Forum objects to the proposal to install automated metal sliding gates to front boundary. Metal gates are not a traditional feature of the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area. Together with the replacement of front gardens by car parks, they are causing very serious cumulative harm to the Conservation Area, as has been noted in both the 2003 and 2020 Conservation Area appraisals.

The Conservation Area character is based on garden suburbs, so that landscape infrastructure is of fundamental importance to the special architectural or historic interest and character and appearance of the area: in particular mature trees and hedges. Similarly, in the application of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as Amended, it is important to understand the central contribution of the amalgam of both front and rear gardens.

The existing car park has space for three cars only (not four) and we suspect that the application is an attempt to increase the area for off-street parking, in order to accommodate four cars, which is not compliant with Camden Local Plan policy T2.

Moreover, the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Statement notes the positive contribution of low brick walls and hedges to most properties in this part of the Conservation Area. The low brick wall and hedge at number 10 is shown below, long with adjacent front boundary treatments forming a positive contribution to Ferncroft Avenue.

We would also draw your attention to similar applications which have been refused:

- 2020/2471/P (24 Ferncroft Avenue), where the planning officer required the new gates to be constructed from timber, rather than metal, and sought to retain as much of the greenery as possible.
- 2020/1399/P (49 Redington Road), where the applicant was advised that metal fencing would be unacceptable for the Conservation Area and, as a result of this advice, an application for brickwork boundary was submitted and the existing privet hedge was retained and extended.

With regard to the proposals to install a timber decking area, shed and various hard and soft landscaping works to front and rear gardens, we would note that the application is not compliant with the following Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Plan policies:

### **BGI 1:**

Open/unbuilt areas within development sites should be designed to enhance their ecological, wildlife and residential amenity values. This includes:

- i. Retaining, providing and reinstating trees, hedgerows and other planting using species, especially those of high value to biodiversity, as set out in the 6.2 Planting Guidance to Enhance Biodiversity and Conservation Area Character.
- ii. Achieving an urban greening score in excess of the London Plan target.
- iii. Maximising the area of soft landscaping and using planting with high value to pollinators and insects, as set out in the 6.2 Planting Guidance to Enhance Biodiversity and Conservation Area Character.
- iv. Minimising hard surface areas to those necessary for the functioning of the site, such as footpaths to doors, and ensuring they are permeable to allow drainage of surface water.
- v. Retaining hedges and walls and taking opportunities to use hedges as boundary treatments, instead of or in addition to walls and fences.

Other relevant policies are:

## CAAC/Local groups\*

### comments:

\*Please Specify

- Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Character and Management Appraisal: Guidelines RF 1 and RF 8
- Camden Local Plan policy: CC2
- London Plan policy: G5.

**Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Advisory Committee:** No response.

## Site Description

The site is a two-storey single-family detached dwelling house located on the north east side of Ferncroft Avenue. The site is in Sub-Area two ('the Crofts') of the Redington/Froggnal Conservation Area (CA) and the property is noted in the Conservation Area Statement as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## Relevant History

2020/0113/p: Planning permission granted on 04/08/2020 for “Erection of single storey rear extension and enlargement of rear garden terrace; installation of one dormer window to the front and one dormer to the rear roof slope; replacement of pebbledash to front bay window with hanging tiles; re-paving of driveway.”

2021/0186/P: Approval granted for “Approval of condition 3 (Green roof) and 6 (external materials) pursuant to planning permission ref no: 2020/0113/P for; Erection of single storey rear extension and enlargement of terrace; installation of two dormers and other alterations dated 04/08/2020”

2021/0189/P: Planning permission was granted 29/03/2021 for “Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of permission ref:2020/0113/P dated; 04/08/20 (Erection of extensions, two dormers and other alterations) namely to amend glazing details to the south east and rear facing elevations, brick panels to rear elevation, brick slips to the front bay, lead cladding to rear elevation of existing ground floor and link to rear extension, new door and concrete steps to north west elevation, new gutter, rainwater and soil vent pipework, new vent tiles and brickwork, and boiler and fireplace flues to side and rear elevations.”

2021/0190/p: Application for “Installation of an air conditioning unit in acoustic enclosure and associated timber screen in the rear garden” is currently under assessment.

## Relevant policies

### NPPF 2021

### London Plan 2021

### Camden Local Plan 2017

- A1 Managing the impact of development
- D1 Design
- D2 Heritage
- A2 Open space
- A3 Biodiversity
- C5 Safety and security

### Redington Froggnal Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) May 2020

- SD1 (refurbishment of existing building stock)
- SD 5 (Dwellings: extensions and garden development)
- SD 6 (Retention of architectural details in existing buildings)

### Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Statement

### Supplementary Guidance

CPG Design (2021)

### 1. Proposals

- 1.1 The application seeks planning permission for :
- replacement of front entrance door & steps, and side gate
  - installation of pergola to rear garden
  - various hard and soft landscaping works to front and rear gardens
  - new brick wall and installation of automated sliding gates to front boundary.

#### ***Front door, steps and side gate***

- 1.2 The replacement of the front entrance door with a panelled front door and timber panelling, new glazed fan light and side lights, and new full width stone steps would be similar in appearance to the existing entrance and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the property. The replacement timber gate to the side passageway of the property would be set back from the front elevation and would not be overly visible. The replacement entrances would preserve the character and appearance of the host building and the conservation area and are acceptable.

#### ***Installation of pergola***

- 1.3 The pergola would be constructed of powder coated steel with a box section and would be attached at three points to the rear of the property. The materials are contemporary and designed to match other elements of the rear garden landscaping (see below). The pergola would be lightweight and open in appearance and would not be out of character as a rear garden structure. It would be installed above the rear patio area and would not lead to the loss of soft landscaping. The pergola would preserve the character and appearance of the rear garden area, the host property and the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area.

#### ***Landscaping***

- 1.4 In the rear garden, the original submission included a new shed, air conditioning unit and an area of timber decking at the rear of the garden. Following the objection from the Neighbourhood Forum the applicant has withdrawn these three elements from the application. The remaining rear garden landscaping proposals include :
- new steps at the end of the patio which formed part of the 2020 planning permission;
  - three panels and planters in corten steel which would provide contemporary landscape features;
  - stepping stone flags across the rear lawn.

- 1.5 In general these features would not add reduce the areas of soft landscaping by any significant amount, and would therefore maintain the garden's ability to support biodiversity as required by Local Plan policies A3 and D1, and Redington Froggnal policy BH1. These aspects of the landscaping proposals are therefore acceptable.

- 1.6 The 2020 planning permission include re-paving of the front hardstanding, with a condition added to secure details of replacement permeable materials. The general hard and soft landscaping plans for the front area are consistent with the details approved under planning reference 2021/0186/P. The exception relates to the boundary treatment.

#### ***Front boundary alterations***

- 1.7 The original submission proposed a 1.5m tall sliding gate in powder coated steel angle frame with infill panels of cedar battens, set between brick piers and a brick wall of height to match the gate. Four pleached trees would sit behind the wall. This arrangement was revised to a lower gate 1.2m tall, set between brick piers of 1.7m

- and 1.5m and a low wall with horizontal timber fencing atop, rising to the level of the lower piers.
- 1.8 Following officers advice this arrangement was further revised to sliding galvanised and powder coated steel gates, 1.5m tall between brick piers. A replacement low wall would extend across the remainder of the frontage with powder coated steel railings to match the gates atop.
- 1.9 The applicant has advised that they know local residents who have been mugged on their driveways in recent times, they are aware of cars which have been stolen on the street and their car has been broken into a couple of times on their driveway. For these reasons the applicant wishes to stop strangers from approaching the front door. A letterbox would be housed within the gate post. The applicant's preference is for an opaque boundary treatment but have proposed to compromise with open railings.
- 1.10 The site is in sub-area two of the Redington Frognal Conservation Area ('the crofts'). The CA Statement (page 13) identifies the "low brick walls and hedges to most properties" as elements of the streetscape which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Inappropriate front boundary treatments is identified on page 27 as a characteristic of development which harms the CA. It notes "alterations to the front boundaries between the pavement and properties can dramatically affect and harm the character of the CA..." and identifies the "introduction of high railings to inappropriate front boundaries" as often resulting in a detrimental impact."
- 1.11 More recently the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan reinforces the importance of retaining that character. Policy SD1 (refurbishment of existing building stock) sets out that
- "vi. Front garden boundary walls and hedges, which contribute to the character and appearance of the area, should be preserved or reinstated for new developments and refurbishments of existing building stock.*
- vii. Use of hedges as front, side and rear garden boundaries is encouraged, to enhance amenity, biodiversity and streetscapes."*
- 1.12 Policy SD5 (Dwellings: extensions and garden development) says "vii. Hedges (front, side and rear) and front boundary walls, which contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, should be retained".
- 1.13 Policy SD6 (retention of architectural details in existing buildings) states that "*Front boundary walls and original architectural details, such as chimneys, windows and porches, which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area, should be retained. Where such features have been removed previously, their reinstatement is encouraged."*
- 1.14 Together these policies place great importance on the contribution of boundary treatments to the distinctive character and appearance of the area.
- 1.15 The great majority of properties along Ferncroft Avenue have low brick walls topped with hedges, with open entranceways to the front garden or parking area. A very small minority have fences or railings and gates. The overriding character is a sense of open frontages with street/garden enclosure provided by hedges and greenery. The application site (currently hoarded) has a high hedge behind a low wall with a timber fence atop. The existing frontage is largely characteristic of the street, although the tall hedge makes the timber fence redundant and officers' preference would be for the removal of the fence so that the boundary is consistent with the predominant form of low walls and hedges.

1.16 The proposed gates, in both original, revised and further revised form would all be uncharacteristic features of the street. The final revision, 1.5m tall sliding metal railing gates with associated brick piers, would be discordant and incongruous additions to the street scene. They would appear overly defensive and would undermine the prevailing open character of the forecourts. The relative transparency provided by the use of railings instead of timber boards does not reduce the uncharacteristic and jarring sense of enclosure that the proposals add to the boundary. The detailing of the boundary railings bears no evident heed to local context and is out of character with the street. The continuation of the railings along the top of the wall would exacerbate the harmful visual impact of the development.

1.17 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area when considering applications relating to land or buildings within that Area.

1.18 The proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the character and appearance of the Redington Frognal Conservation Area. The proposed alterations to the boundary treatment, by reason of their size, design and materials, are therefore contrary to policies D1 (design), D2 (heritage) of the Local Plan and policies sd1, Sd5 and SD6 of the Redington Frognal Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **Trees**

1.19 In the event that an acceptable alteration to the boundary treatment is found which would require intervention in the ground to form footings or foundations, an arboriculturalist's report would be required demonstrating how the works would preserve the health of the adjacent street trees. Officers' strong preference would be for the details to accompany an application, rather than postpone it to approvals of details.

#### **Safety and security**

1.20 The applicant has expressed concern about their safety and security and expressed the need to protect their property with a substantial barrier on the street boundary. Local Plan policy C5 (safety and security) sets out the Council's aim to make Camden a safer place and expects development to take account of contributing to community safety and security and to promote safer street and public areas. Officers acknowledge that the applicant may have fears for their property and personal safety, however no alternatives mechanisms to providing a sense of safety through means which cause less harm to the local character have been demonstrated. Text supporting Local Plan policy D1 (design) notes that *"Gating as a solution to crime and antisocial behaviour problems will be resisted unless there are exceptional circumstances."*

1.21 It is considered that the proposals would give the property an unwelcome and hostile appearance, which would undermine the policy C5 emphasis on making the public realm feel safer. This concern is therefore added to the reason for refusal.

#### **Amenity**

1.22 Overall the proposals would not have an impact on daylight or sunlight to neighbouring properties and they would not result in harm to local residential amenity.

#### **Conclusions**

1.23 The personal safety matters identified by the applicant do not give rise to sufficient public benefit to outweigh the harm to the host building and the conservation area. The proposals are therefore refused.