



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 6 March 2024

by R J Redford MTCP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 19 March 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/W/23/3330473

25 Southern Road, West End, Hampshire SO30 3ES

- 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 J Martin against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is H/23/95400.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a front boundary fencing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Application for costs

2. An application for costs was made by Mr J Martin against Eastleigh Borough Council. This application is the subject of a separate decision.

Procedural Matters

3. The fence has already been erected and planning permission is sought to regularise this development. On visiting the site, I am satisfied the plans represent that which has been built.
4. I have also been appointed to determine another appeal on this site, APP/W1715/W/23/3330474. I have, however, dealt with it on its own merits in a separate decision, although appreciate there are similar issues.
5. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was updated in December 2023. However, the sections pertinent to this appeal have not changed to such an extent as to affect the matters raised by the main parties. It has not therefore been necessary to seek their views, although the revised version has been referenced in this decision.

Main Issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

7. The appeal site is located on Southern Road opposite the junction with Eastern Road within a suburban residential area. Although the properties in the area are a mix of designs, forms, and finishes, their relationship to the road is fairly uniform. The dwellings face the highway front on but are set back behind front gardens and driveways. Low level walls and fences backed by mature planting,

as front boundary treatments, are instructive to the area's overall appearance. This provides a verdant character to the road, whilst providing a pleasing level of intervisibility between the properties and the street scene, without compromising on privacy.

8. The proposed fence is of a height more akin to a side or rear boundary rather than the lower level commonly seen long the street frontages in this area. Although there is a hedge above the fence the ratio of hard boundary treatment to planting is entirely at odds to that prevalent along Southern Road. This gives the appeal site a significantly less verdant appearance and removes any intervisibility between the host dwelling's ground floor frontage and the road. As a result, the proposal has created an insular and enclosed character for the appeal site at odds to its surroundings. This effect is further exacerbated by its highly visible location when viewed from Eastern Road. It is not located on a corner or at the end of a road where a rear or side boundary may be expected. The appearance of the fence is therefore not in keeping with the overall street scene and has a harmful effect on its character.
9. It is noted that the materials used in the fence are common to the area, this however does not mitigate the harm caused by its height. It is also appreciated there are some examples of higher fencing along Western Road, Eastern Road, and Southern Road and these were viewed during the site visit. There is nothing before me to confirm they are lawfully erected, nor are they so abundant to inform the overall character of the street scene. They simply serve to confirm that each case should be considered carefully on its own merits.
10. The appellant's position that the character appraisal for the area and the Quality Places Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) do not require replication of the predominant frontage boundary is noted. However, on page 23 of the SPD it clearly states that 'should the boundary treatments of the majority of properties in an area consist of low fencing or walling and dense planting, a 1.8m high brick wall will not be acceptable.' It is acknowledged the proposal is not for a brick wall, but I find, in this instance, the impact of the proposed fencing would be similarly disruptive to the street scene.
11. That the proposal would not harm the living conditions of the occupants of the host dwelling or the adjacent properties, and would not have a detrimental impact on trees, highway safety and parking is noted. This however does not overcome the harm identified.
12. The fence would therefore harm the character and appearance of the street scene and fail to comply with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan and the guidance within the SPD insofar as they require new development to take proper account of a site's context including character and appearance.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above the appeal scheme would conflict with the development plan when read as a whole and there are no sufficiently weighted material considerations, including the Framework, which would indicate a decision otherwise. The appeal is, therefore, dismissed.

RJ Redford

INSPECTOR