

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2016

by Jameson Bridgwater PGDipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 30 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/V3120/D/16/3159770

Hillview, Bessels Lea, Blewbury, Didcot, Oxon OX11 9NW

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs B Rowe against the decision of Vale of White Horse District Council.
 - The application Ref P16/V1695/HH, dated 29 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 August 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as a close boarded 2m high boundary fence to east side.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a close boarded 2m high boundary fence to east side at Hillview, Bessels Lea, Blewbury, Didcot, Oxon OX11 9NW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P16/V1695/HH, dated 29 June 2016, subject to the following condition:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 16/0308/BFP1, 16/0308/BFP2 and 16/0308/BFPBP1.

Preliminary matter

2. The 2m high close boarded fence was already in place at the time of my site visit.

Main issue

3. The main issue in the appeal is:
 - the effect of the 2m high close boarded fence on the character and appearance of the area with particular regard to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is at the eastern side of Hillview, Bessels Lea, with the 2m high close boarded fence fronting Bessels Way. The fence is finished in timber.
 5. The Council have reasoned that the 2m high close boarded fence would detract from the character of the area, due to the proposals location, height and materials and that it would have an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, whilst I accept that the erection of a fence has resulted in a limited change to the character of Bessels Way, based on the evidence before me and my
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observations during my site visit; the location, height and materials are similar in scale, design and character to other boundary treatments in the area. In particular the timber boundary fencing to the north of the appeal property on Bessels Way (B4016), along with existing fencing at the property located at the junction of Bessels Lea and Bridus Mead. Consequently, taking account of the domestic scale, design and materials (timber) of the proposed 2m high fence it would not be incongruous or stark when considered in the context of the prevailing character of the area.

6. Furthermore, given that the plot has been sub-divided to create a new dwelling; it is necessary to ensure that adequate privacy would be provided for the future occupiers of the property. Moreover, in this site specific circumstance it is unlikely that the provision of a lower fence or wall would provide the required level of privacy, due to the proximity of the rear garden to Bessels Way.
7. I consequently find that the proposed 2m high close boarded fence would not result in material harm to the character and appearance of the AONB or the local area, due to the proposal being of a domestic design and height that is similar to other fences in the locality. The proposal is therefore consistent with Policies DC1 and NE6 of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011. These policies seek amongst other things to ensure that development respects local character and would not spoil the appreciation of the landscape quality of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Conditions and Conclusion

8. The fence is already in place therefore it is not necessary to apply the standard implementation condition; however, it is necessary for the avoidance of doubt, to define the plans with which the scheme should accord.
9. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Jameson Bridgwater

INSPECTOR