
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2017

by R J Marshall LLB DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/D/16/3165740

49, Glenferness Avenue, Bournemouth, BH3 7ER

- 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 M Watts against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2016-11111-H, dated 4 October 2106, was refused by notice dated 29 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is retrospective consent for replacement front boundary wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Background

2. The structure for which permission is sought has already been erected. The application is therefore for development undertaken without planning permission.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the development for which permission is sought on the character and appearance of the surrounding area which lies within the Meyrick and Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

4. The CA in which the appeal site is located is characterised by substantial detached houses dating principally from the mid-Victorian period up to the 1930s but with some later housing as well. The key attribute of the area is the spacious verdant setting of the houses amidst mature trees and shrubs.
5. The appeal site fronts onto Glenferness Avenue. This road displays many of the attributes of the wider CA. It is a wide road with wide tree-lined verges with in some cases low hedges between the trees. Adding to the verdant appearance of this road is the fact that the predominant front boundary treatment is comprised of low walls, mostly of brick or stone, with hedges and vegetation to the rear which extends above the top of the walls. There are a few exceptions to this general pattern of boundary treatment, mostly but not exclusively on corner plots at road junctions, where there are taller walls some of which have

rendered finish. However, these boundary treatments look out of keeping and are not good examples to follow.

6. Prior to the erection of the wall for which permission is sought the front boundary treatment at the appeal site comprised of a low brick wall backed by greenery. It was therefore of a type commonplace in this area. The structure now on site is considerably taller. It comprises a wall of just over 0.8 metres in height surmounted by a wooden fence giving a combined total height of just under 1.8 metres. The fence lies between a series of marginally taller pillars. A largely solid wooden gate of around the same height as the combined wall/fence has also been erected.
7. I appreciate that by having the fence set between piers as part of the structure it is not devoid of interest in the way that a simple flat panelled wall would be. However, even so, due to its height, the current boundary treatment appears to be overly harsh and intrusive in its setting. Added harm is caused by the white render finish of the wall which draws attention to the structure as a whole. The fact that the appellant's dwelling is partly rendered does not make this finish any more acceptable. And whilst I note that the earlier low wall on the appeal site may not have required permission to be demolished this does not support the erection of the current structure.
8. I note the appellant's concern that the Council is not being consistent in its approach to front boundary treatments in the wider CA. There are some structures in the CA of a similar height to that sought on the appeal site and with a render finish. However, without more evidence on their planning background, including whether or not they pre-date the designation of the CA, I attach little weight to this.
9. Turning to specific structures referred to, in 2011 the Council's planning board permitted a combined wall/fence on a site just to the north the appeal site of around the same height as the proposed before me. However, that has resulted in a structure out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area, albeit slightly less intrusive through not having rendered finish to the wall. It is a scale of development, therefore, that should in the future be avoided.
10. Elsewhere in the CA at Benellen Road a rendered wall has been recently permitted and constructed. However, its setting differs from the appeal site and the area between the piers has been infilled by hedging which softens its impact. This development, therefore, offers little support to the proposal before me.
11. It is concluded that the development for which permission is sought would detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area which lies within the Meyrick and Park and Talbot Woods Conservation Area (CA). As such it would conflict with Policies CS39 and CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan Core Strategy which seek to protect designated heritage assets and require new development to respect its surroundings, and with Policy 4.4 of the Bournemouth District Wide Local Plan (2002) which reiterates the statutory test that in CAs new development should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.
12. I understand the appellant's wish for a safe and secure front garden area. However, given that the predominant front boundary treatment in the area is

notably different from the scheme before me I am not convinced that this requires a wall/fence of the type proposed.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

R J Marshall

INSPECTOR