
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 January 2017

by L Gibbons BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 23 February 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/W/16/3160257

Waterside, 57 Coach Road, Hamble, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 4LA

- 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 Mrs Lesley Biddiscombe against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref F/16/78091, dated 15 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 6 July 2016.
 - The development proposed is a retrospective application for the retention of 2m high double gates and wall along front and side boundaries and partial variation of condition 1 of planning permission F/13/72898.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for a retrospective application for the retention of 2m high double gates and wall along front and side boundaries and partial variation of condition 1 of planning permission F/13/72898 at Waterside, 57 Coach Road, Hamble, Southampton, Hampshire SO31 4LA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref F/16/78091, dated 15 February 2016, and the drawings numbered Lan 01; A012-004-100 Rev A and Photo 1, and the following conditions:
 - 1) Within 2 months of the date of this decision details for additional planting along the site boundary of Waterside with Coach Road shall be submitted to and approved in by the Local Planning authority for approval. The details shall include the number, size and species of the plants and include the timescales for planting and of any future maintenance. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the details so hereby approved and within the agreed timescales.
 - 2) For a period of no less than 5 years from the date of this decision, any trees or plants on the north eastern and north western boundaries that are removed, die, become seriously damaged or any gaps that appear between plants, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with plants of the same species and number.

Procedural Matters

2. For the sake of clarity I have used the description of development as set out in the Council's decision notice as this more accurately reflects the nature of the development.
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3. At the time of my visit the gates and wall had been constructed. For the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeal based on the development as carried out.
4. The Council refer to Policy DM1 of the submission Eastleigh Borough Local Plan (LP) 2014. I note that the Council intend to replace this document with a new local plan and will not make any further progress on the 2014 version. I therefore give this policy very little weight.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

6. The appeal site is located in a mainly residential area with countryside and the Southampton Water to the south. There is a mix of designs of houses and includes two storey blocks of flats and semi-detached houses. The boundary treatment in the area varies with mainly low front walls, although tall fences and boundaries are found in the area, particularly on corner plots. Waterside has a very contemporary design which is in complete contrast to adjacent properties. It is an uncharacteristic but very attractive feature in the street scene which adds to the variety and interest of the area.
7. The development is a wall and gates which have been built in place of the permitted scheme. The wall is visible when approaching the house along Coach Road from the north. However, it is seen in the context of the very strong and dominant design of the house. In addition, there is a grass verge on the north east boundary which has been built up a little and the wall is set back from the pavement. This reduces the visibility of the wall in this location and it does not dominate the surroundings.
8. There is no verge on the north-west boundary. However, the bend in the road and some open space opposite the appeal site provides a sense of spaciousness in this location, and therefore the wall does not appear imposing. Furthermore, the wall and gate have been constructed with very similar materials to the house and this helps to blend it in to the appearance of the house. I consider they have a scale and mass that are appropriate to the context of the site. There is some planting on along the boundary which has yet to mature but will in time soften the appearance of the wall. Additional planting would help to increase this effect.
9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the development does not cause harm to the character and appearance of the area. It is not in conflict with saved Policy 59.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review (BLPR) and Policy DM1 of the submission LP. These amongst other things seek new development which does not have an unacceptable impact on the character and appearance and takes full and proper account of the context of the site. It is not contrary to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework in respect of the need for high quality design.

Other matters

10. Local residents have raised concerns about the retrospective nature of the application and that it may result in other such development. However, there is nothing to suggest that there is a likelihood of this being repeated by the occupiers of adjoining properties. Nor have any other examples been put forward to which this might apply, and a generalised concern of this nature does not justify withholding permission in this case.

Conclusion and conditions

11. The Council have suggested two conditions in relation to submission of details for landscaping and replacement planting, and I agree that these are necessary in the interests of the character and appearance of the area. I have amended the wording where necessary for the sake of clarity. The development has been completed and my formal decision refers to the approved drawings. No further conditions are necessary.
12. For the above reasons and having regard to all other matters raised I conclude the appeal should be allowed.

L Gibbons

INSPECTOR