
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 February 2017

by Mark Dakeyne BA (Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 3rd March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/D/16/3165083

1 Stirling Road, Hindley Green, Wigan WN2 4PH

- 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 Janet Farley against the decision of Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/16/82497/HHRET, dated 18 April 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 September 2016.
 - The development is described as '1) the removal of old boundary wall from front/side garden. Replacing it with higher 6 foot wall to corner point. Length around 100ft. Removing from that point 4 panels adjoining the neighbours replacing with 4 x 5 foot panels. 2) Erecting a 12ft x 14ft shed outbuilding inside the boundary wall. This protrudes the front elevation some 30 feet distance away from the house. 3) A hard surface flagged area required for a driveway. Includes a resin porous mix used to adjoin the flags laid and along two sides has shale borders.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The development has already been carried out. Notwithstanding the description of development set out above there are two timber sheds sited behind the wall. These are referred to in the appeal documentation, including the appellant's statement. I have determined the appeal on the basis that permission is sought for the erection of the front boundary wall and the two timber sheds.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the street scene.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is the first semi-detached bungalow on the southern side of a small cul-de-sac of similar properties. The modest dwellings in the avenue are fronted by a mix of low walls and railings generally below 1m in height. These unobtrusive enclosures are sympathetic to the small-scale nature of the street scene and provide a sense of openness to the cul-de-sac. Properties on the approach from the A577 along Kenilworth Drive to the junction with Stirling Road also have front boundary treatments of similar low-key character.
 5. The wall has been erected to screen the relatively large side garden of No 1 Stirling Road. The 1.8m high brick enclosure runs alongside the pavement for
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a considerable length at the entrance to the cul-de-sac, following the curve in the highway. Because of its height, length and siting up against the pavement, the wall appears as a discordant and over-dominant feature in the street scene in stark contrast to the modest front boundary treatments hereabouts. The wall is not broken up by any changes in materials or articulation so is unrelenting in its appearance. The structure detracts from the open feel of the cul-de-sac and the entrance to the estate. The wall is particularly prominent at the junction of Stirling Road with Kenilworth Drive.

6. The small garden sheds are largely screened by the wall with only the top of the roofs being seen above the wall. That said the sheds are sited forward of the appeal property and the bungalows either side. They would be in an incongruous position should the wall be removed.
7. I noted the other examples of higher walls and fences elsewhere on the wider estate as referred to by the appellant. Those close to the junction of Longhurst Road and Conway Road are along the side boundaries of corner plots where some higher screening would be expected. The wall at the appeal site is along the front boundary and therefore is not directly comparable. Moreover, from what I saw, the other examples of higher walls and fences form part of a more varied street scene with a greater mix of property types and boundary treatments.
8. The wall is well-built and will maintain its appearance. The red brick is similar to the facing material of 1A Kenilworth Drive. However, these attributes cannot compensate for the unacceptable height and siting of the wall. The enclosure provides privacy and security to the side garden but these benefits do not outweigh the harm caused to the street scene. Moreover, providing screening further back into the plot as illustrated elsewhere in the cul-de-sac would still allow a reasonable area of private garden and improved security without the same visual impact.
9. I conclude that the front boundary wall and sheds have an unacceptable impact on the street scene and conflict with Policy CP10 of the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy September 2013 as the development does not respect the character of the locality in terms of its siting and size and does not integrate effectively with its surroundings. The siting of the sheds does not follow the guidance in the Council's 'House Extensions Design Guide' as they would be forward of the established building line.
10. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mark Dakeyne

INSPECTOR