
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 October 2017

by Philip Major BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16th October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/B2002/D/17/3181004

18 Field House Road, Humberston, Grimsby DN36 4TL.

- 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 Stephen Brown against the decision of North East Lincolnshire Council.
 - The application Ref: DM/0451/17/FUL, dated 8 May 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is the removal of shrubs and bushes; retaining the old boundary wall; block pillars on top of the boundary wall to 1.9m; all rendered; fencing to 1.9m height.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in the appeal is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. In this decision I will refer to the development as the fence, whilst acknowledging that it is a mixture of wall, pillars and timber fencing. The fence has been erected and I was therefore able to view the development as it was intended. The Council is correct to identify the extent of the fence as a significant element – it follows the roadside boundary of the residential property for a considerable distance. For this reason it is a prominent element in the street scene.
4. In this locality the majority of boundary treatments alongside the highway (which includes the footway) comprise low walls, fencing or vegetation. There are some higher fences and walls, but these tend to be screening side and/or rear gardens (as indeed is the case with the side fence at the Appellant's property). As a result the development in this case stands out as being at odds with the established pattern of boundaries hereabouts. It appears as an incongruous element in the street scene which is not characteristic of the locality. The length and overall height of the majority of the fence leads to a rather 'fortress like' visual element which contrasts starkly with the more restrained front boundaries elsewhere. I do not consider that treating the timber panelling with a different colour would make any material difference to its visual impact.

5. I recognise that the Appellant is concerned with the objectives of security, privacy and safety at the property. I am also aware that this plot is unusual in having such an extensive area which is potentially open to public scrutiny. However, it seems to me that an alternative method of enclosure would be able to achieve the desired objectives whilst also resulting in a more acceptable visual impact. The surrounding residential development is an illustration that such a situation can be achieved. It is clear to me from my site visit that lower solutions, or those involving a partially hard and partially vegetative boundary can be successfully integrated into this area.
6. Taking these matters in the round it is my judgement that the development as erected is of an obtrusive scale and design which has a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The development therefore runs counter to the requirements of North East Lincolnshire Local Plan Policy GEN1, which seeks to ensure that development is of an appropriate size and scale. This policy accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework for good design. There is also conflict with Policy 2 and Policy 20 of the emerging Local Plan, which similarly seek good design in development.
7. I am aware that people living nearby are content with the development as built, but these views do not carry sufficient weight to overcome the unacceptable harm and conflict with the development plan which I have identified above.
8. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Philip Major

INSPECTOR