



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 September 2019

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 September 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/19/3232148

16 Beechcroft Avenue, Crewe CW2 6SQ

- 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 Julie Butterfield against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 19/1517N, dated 26 March 2019, was refused by notice dated 3 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a boundary fence to the front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The dwelling is located on a residential estate in a suburban area. The surrounding area is characterised by its open plan nature and by a general absence of built boundary structures in the areas to the front of the dwellings. This gives the area a pleasant open feel and contributes to its character and appearance in a positive manner.
4. The proposed development would disrupt this openness by introducing a fence between the front of the dwelling and the road. The presence of the structure in this location would not be consistent with the form of development in the surrounding area and would create an incongruous feature that would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
5. The appellant has referred to other fences present in the surrounding area. However, during my site visit I noted that fences to the front of dwellings are not prevalent and as such they do not form a definitive part of the character and appearance of the locality. I therefore give this consideration only limited weight and it does not outweigh the harm that would be caused as a result of the proposed development.
6. I also observed during my site visit that a hedge has been planted along the front boundary of the site and the appellant has drawn attention to the screening potential of this hedge as it matures. However, I cannot be certain that it would ultimately provide an adequate level of screening. Furthermore,

the hedge would not screen the development from all vantage points. For these reasons, I give the presence of the hedge only limited weight and it too does not outweigh the harm that would be caused.

7. I conclude that the proposed development would create an incongruous feature within the locality which would significantly harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to the design aims of Policy SE1 of the Cheshire East Core Strategy 2017 and Policy H6 of the Wistaston Neighbourhood Plan, which seek to protect the character and appearance of the area. The Council's decision notice also makes reference to Saved Policy RES.11 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan 2011, however the criteria of this policy do not refer to character and appearance in non-designated areas. I have not therefore assessed the proposal against this policy.

Other Matters

8. The appellant has stated that the proposed development is necessary to prevent damage to their property. This in itself does not however outweigh the significant harm to the character and appearance that I have found. The appellant has also drawn attention to the fact that there were no objections from neighbours to the planning application, but this factor also does not justify a harmful development.
9. The appellant has advised that the height of the proposed development could be reduced if this would help the appeal. However, the scope of the appeal process does not allow for the consideration of potential amendments to the proposed development. I have therefore considered the appeal on the basis of the plans submitted to, and determined by, the Council.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR