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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 October 2019

**by James Taylor BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 21 October 2019**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/Q3115/D/19/3228355**

**24 Ravensmead, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX39 4JG**

- 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 Neil Humphreys against the decision of South Oxfordshire District Council.
  - The application Ref P18/S3201/HH, dated 21 September 2018, was refused by notice dated 9 April 2019.
  - The development proposed is the erection of 1.8 metre timber close board fences and gates to the front and rear of the dwelling.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matter

2. I have based the description of development on the Council's decision notice as this more succinctly and accurately describes the proposed development than the description provided on the application form. However, I have omitted the Council's reference to the proposal being retrospective as is not an act of development. Furthermore, I note that the application form states that the works have not been completed.

### Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed fencing to the south of 24 Ravensmead on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

### Reasons

4. The appeal site is located within a residential area of properties dating from the twentieth century. The appeal property is a 2-storey, mid-terrace dwelling. To the north of the terraced row, the houses have enclosed, and private gardens positioned between the dwellings and their vehicular parking and garaging. To the south the properties have largely open gardens set back behind an access path and open land that is laid to grass. The housing estate has a number of comparative terraces displaying similarly private gardens, garaging and parking to the rear, contrasted by open provisions to the front.
5. The appellant sets out that the host building has been subject to renovation works that have reversed the internal layout of the property therefore, making

- the south elevation the rear of the house. Consequently, they seek to make provisions to enclose land to the south to provide a private garden.
6. From my site visit I noted that fencing has been erected to both sides of the dwelling. To the south, the land up to the access path has been enclosed. Within the housing estate, indeed immediately adjacent to the appeal site there are a number of boundary features that enclose land around the dwellings. This includes hedging, and a variety of fencing.
  7. The Greenwood Meadow street scene is characterised by the open frontages of 1-21 Greenwood Meadows (odd only) and 23-27 Ravensmead. The appeal site appears prominently within this attractive sweep of open space that positively contributes to the character and appearance of the dwellings and the area. This character and appearance is further supported by the continuation of open space to the front of 14-22 Ravensmead and around Glynswood House. Whilst I acknowledge some hedge planting and low fencing, to circa 1 metre in height, these features do not negatively impact on the openness and provide some subtle variety and interest.
  8. Within the wider area I was unable to see any examples where fencing extended beyond the access path, and I have not been pointed to any in the evidence. The proposal to erect 1.8 metre high timber fencing within this open and spacious context would appear incongruous and substantially erode the open and spacious character of the surrounding area. It would be an obvious, prominent and hard feature penetrating into the openness. It would be of a greater scale, and project further into the open area than any fencing in the street scene, or within a similar context elsewhere in the wider housing estate.
  9. Furthermore, enclosing the property with such fencing to both sides would have a detrimental impact on the legibility of the host building. There would be no clear access and egress point for visitors to the property. This does not reflect good design.
  10. In light of the internal alterations that the appellant has made I understand the desire for them to provide private amenity space to the south side of the dwelling. However, it is a consideration to which I afford little weight and does not in any way outweigh the deleterious impact I have set out previously.
  11. In conclusion, the proposed fencing to the south of 24 Ravensmead would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. It would be contrary to policies D1 and G2 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 Strike through version on adoption of South Oxfordshire Core Strategy December 2012, and policies CS1 and CSQ3 of the adopted December 2012 South Oxfordshire Core Strategy, the aims of which include achieving good design and sustainable development. Furthermore, the proposal would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework objectives in relation to design.
  12. Therefore, for the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*James Taylor*

INSPECTOR