



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2020

by M Bale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 January 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/D/19/3233037

18 Cromwell Road, Bournemouth BH5 2JN

- 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 Ms Jane Miles against the decision of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2019-4413-E, dated 11 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 June 2019.
 - The development proposed is installation of a featheredge closeboard fence with matching featheredge closeboard gate (2m in height) around the southern property boundary of 18 Cromwell Road behind an existing border wall (0.7m in height).
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the installation of a featheredge closeboard fence with matching featheredge closeboard gate (2m in height) around the southern property boundary of 18 Cromwell Road behind an existing border wall (0.7m in height) at 18 Cromwell Road, Bournemouth BH5 2JN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 7-2019-4413-E, dated 11 April 2019, and the plans submitted with it.

Procedural and preliminary matters

2. The description of development on the application form contained further wording describing the previous hedge boundary at the site. However, as that is not an act of development, I have not included those words in the description of development in my heading or formal decision.
3. The development to which this appeal relates has already been carried out. Limited details of the proposal were provided with the application, so I have considered the appeal on the basis of what exists at the site.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The immediate area is characterised by a generally regimented arrangement of dwellings with a regular set back from the street providing a strong built form. Roadside boundary treatments to the fronts of dwellings, where they exist, are mostly low masonry walls or similar.
6. The fence has replaced a previously existing hedge that would have provided the occupiers similar privacy benefits. There is evidence that the need to

maintain the hedge clear of the footway had led to a deterioration in its appearance. That is not to say that the hedge management practices and resulting poor appearance justify its replacement with a solid structure that is more stark in appearance. However, there is no substantive evidence that, given its condition, the previously existing hedge made a particularly strong contribution to the character and appearance of the area. Given its height, species and overhanging nature it would have imposed on the street scene to some degree.

7. There are a number of fences of varying heights on the surrounding roads, which are particularly apparent at corner plots where rear gardens sit alongside the road. In a number of places, such as opposite the site on Cromwell Road and the corner sites of Wyncombe Road and Stourvale Road, these jut out forward of the road facing front elevation of the adjoining property, extending to the back edge of the footway. That arrangement, as can be seen at the site where the fence adjoins a neighbouring property that fronts Cromwell Road is not, therefore, uncharacteristic.
8. The fence at the appeal site projects forward of the front elevation of No.18 facing Wyncombe Road. That forward projection is somewhat unusual and, coupled with its position wrapping around the corner with Cromwell Road close to the back edge of the footway makes it particularly prominent in the street scene.
9. However, the main elevation containing the front door, facing Wyncombe Road, has been left open such that the fence does not enclose the whole house. Accordingly, it does not screen the front of the dwelling or create a fortress effect where the front of the property cannot be seen, such as would conflict with guidance in Residential extensions: A design guide for householders (2008) ('DG').
10. Policy CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan: Core Strategy 2012 seeks to deliver quality development. It has parallel aims to ensure a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and to ensure a high standard of amenity to meet the day to day requirements of future occupants. 18 Cromwell Road is somewhat unusual in that all of its external garden space lies between the dwelling and the bordering roads. Some form of relatively high enclosure is, therefore, required to deliver private garden space to its occupants.
11. I have found that the fence is not uncharacteristic of the area and so integrates appropriately into the surrounding built environment. Also, it would not conflict with the DG. It would not, therefore, harm the character and appearance of the area and, considering policy CS41 as a whole, I find no conflict with it.
12. For these reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

M Bale

INSPECTOR