The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 July 2020 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Susan Ashworth BA (Hons) BPL MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/20/3254694
17 Fletsand Road, Wilmslow SK9 2AD

- 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 and Mrs Romero against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
- The application Ref 19/4028M, dated 23 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 24 April 2020.
- The development proposed is the erection of timber climbing frame (retrospective).

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. At the time of my site visit the climbing frame was already in place. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. This appeal concerns a timber climbing frame positioned in the front garden of a two-storey detached dwelling, located within a residential area. The front garden of the appeal site is of a generous size and lacks built development. This layout is reflective of surrounding plots in the locality, where dwellings tend to be substantial detached properties set back from the highway within large plots. As such, the area has a spacious character and appearance.

6. The climbing frame is sited forward of the front elevation of the main dwelling and close to the highway boundary. It is of a significant height and depth and is constructed largely of timber, with yellow slides. It has introduced built form of a substantial scale that is positioned forward of the front elevation of the host dwelling in an area typically devoid of development. As a result the climbing frame fails to respect the undeveloped nature of the front gardens

within this locality and thus it appears as an incongruous and overly dominant feature that erodes the spacious characteristics of the site and wider area.

7. Mature laurel hedging has been planted along the front boundary in large pots and I note from the evidence before me that it has grown substantially since the planning application was determined. It goes some way to screen the development. However, glimpses through to the climbing frame remain, particularly through the vehicular gateway. I acknowledge that the appellant is willing to accept a condition requiring the hedging to remain in perpetuity. Nevertheless, even if the boundary grew to completely screen the climbing frame, it would remain that the development introduces substantial built form to the front of the site which is uncharacteristic in the locality where front gardens are generally open and spacious.

8. It is acknowledged there may be factors which have prevented locating the climbing frame in the rear garden of the appeal site although I am not aware of the full details. However, notwithstanding this, this matter is not sufficient to outweigh the harm the climbing frame has on the character and appearance of the area as identified above.

9. For the reasons set out, this proposal harms the character and appearance of the area, contrary to policies SE1 and SD2 of the Cheshire East Local Plan, Local Plan Strategy 2010 – 2030 (July 2017) which seek to ensure developments contribute positively to an area's identity and protect and enhance the quality, distinctiveness and character of the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

Hannah Ellison
Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Susan Ashworth
INSPECTOR