



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 20 October 2020 by John Gunn DipTP Dip DBE MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 November 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/D/20/3257431
4 Wrekin Close, Northampton, NN4 8JL

- 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 Dr Julian Bailey against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2020/0622, dated 8 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 August 2020.
 - The development proposed is described as replace an existing hedge with a lower brick wall to allow for a rise in the ground level within the site and provide improved visual appearance, security and privacy.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted to replace an existing hedge with a lower brick wall to allow for a rise in the ground level within the site and provide improved visual appearance, security and privacy at 4 Wrekin Close, Northampton, NN4 8JL in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref N/2020/0622, dated 8 June 2020, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1). The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2). The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Location Plan
 - Garden Wall Planning Submission – Plan view
 - Garden Wall Planning Submission – Notes on plan view
 - Garden Wall Planning Submission – Proposed Elevation (amended elevation showing height details in cm rather than brick courses).
 - 3). No development shall commence above base course until a scheme of landscaping has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include indications of all existing trees and shrubs on the land, identify those to be retained and set out measures for their protection throughout the course of development.
 - 4). All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding

seasons following the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner. Any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

- 5). No development shall commence until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the brick wall hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the heading above has been taken from the planning application form. However, in Part E of the appeal form it is stated that the description of development has not changed but, nevertheless, a different wording has been entered. Neither of the main parties has provided written confirmation that a revised description of development has been agreed. Accordingly, I have used the one given on the original application.
3. The applicant on the original application form submitted to the local planning authority was Julian Bailey. However, the appeal has been submitted by Dr Julian Bailey. An e-mail has been received from the appellant giving his full name and confirming that he is a Doctor.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. Wrekin Close is characterised by detached houses, set back a short distance from the highway, with open front gardens or parking forecourts. Many of the dwellings have little or no front boundary treatment, although some have low hedgerows and shrubs. These characteristics continue into Hunsbury Hill Avenue, although examples of tall boundary walls, behind strips of landscaping or grass verges, are also evident, including at the entrance of Wrekin Close close to the junction with Hunsbury Hill Avenue.
6. The existing hedgerow at 4 Wrekin is not a typical feature of the road, however its height and irregular appearance contrasts with the otherwise solid form of the houses that lie nearby.
7. The proposed wall and pillars would be of a similar height, design and material as others in the locality. It would be set back from the pavement which would allow space for landscaping to be planted between the wall and the pavement. This would serve to soften the visual impact of the wall, similar to that found along the side boundary of No 10 Hunsbury Hill Avenue, a short distance from the appeal site, and visible within Wrekin Close. The landscaping of this area could be controlled by a suitably worded planning condition.
8. I note that in dismissing an earlier appeal¹ on the site that the Inspector whilst finding that the form of boundary treatment reflected other walls on the estate

¹ Ref: APP/V2825/D/18/3211156

that, considered that the position of the wall adjacent to the pavement edge with no landscaping in between was harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

9. The wall before me would, for the reasons set out above, differ from the scheme proposed previously. It would reflect nearby boundary treatments and accordingly, and subject to the delivery of an acceptable landscaping scheme, would preserve the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy S10 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1) and Policy E10 of the Northampton Local Plan 1993 -2006, which jointly seek developments with the highest standards of sustainable design that reflect the character of their surroundings.

Conditions

10. The Council has suggested several conditions it would wish to see imposed in the event that the appeal was allowed. I have considered these against the guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance.
11. To ensure that the development is undertaken as approved a condition referring to the approved plans is necessary. Both parties have agreed to a landscaping condition and for the reasons set out above I consider that such a condition is relevant and necessary.
12. The Council has requested a condition requiring details of bricks to be agreed prior to commencement of development. The submitted details include specific brick types for the main wall, fishtail pattern and lower and capping courses, which the appellant considers to be in keeping with the estate. However, I am unfamiliar with the bricks specified and therefore a condition is considered necessary to ensure that they are suitable for the appeal site. Both parties are agreeable to such a condition.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed subject to the conditions set out above.

J Gunn

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed with the recommended conditions.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR