
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 14 December 2020

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 18 December 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/20/3258696

33 Bishops Avenue, Northwood HA6 3DD

- 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 Amit Devani against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/1040/RSP, dated 29 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 29 July 2020.
 - The development is described as the erection of boundary brick wall with metal railings and metal sliding gates (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Brick walls and piers had been erected at the property, without the benefit of planning permission. The proposal which is the subject of this appeal seeks to reduce the height of the brick piers and erect railings and metal gates.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to this detached house, which has been extended in various ways. The property sits within its generous plot and the frontage provides parking for a number of cars. The surrounding residential area contains a variety of detached houses of differing designs but of similar proportions, in general.
5. The frontages of houses on Bishops Avenue mainly contain areas for parking cars and landscaping. It is notable that the front boundaries of the houses are often open and those that do have some form of feature, are generally marked by a low wall. The character is of open frontages where boundary features, where they exist, are low and this often includes the side boundaries between the plots, at the front, where these are often marked by planting only, or similarly low features. I consider that this makes a strong positive contribution to the character and appearance of Bishops Avenue.

6. The proposal would result in a number of brick piers of varying heights between 1.33m and about 1.7m. Metal railings would infill the gaps between the piers and 2 sliding metal gates would be positioned at the vehicular entrances. The proposed enclosure of the entire frontage, including the sides, with walls and railings of this height, would be significantly at odds with the strong prevailing character of the area that I have described. The combination of the height and extent of the walls, railings and gates would appear harsh and out of place in contrast with the general character of the area.
7. I have observed the boundary treatment at No 37 Bishops Avenue, referred to by the appellant. The front boundary does contain a combination of brick walls and railings. In comparison with the very great majority of the houses that I observed, this existing feature at No 37 only confirms my view that harm to the area can result from such development. In addition, the appeal scheme would have a much greater impact due to the inclusion of gates and the enclosure of the side boundaries at the front.
8. The appellant indicates that the proposal is required due to the incidence of car-related crime in the area. I have been provided with no further details in relation to this matter and I consider that it does not outweigh the harmful effects that the proposed development would have on the character and appearance of the area.
9. For the reasons set out above, the proposal would have an unacceptable and harmful effect on the area, contrary to Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Council's Core Strategy and Policy DM1 of the Development Management Policies. As a consequence, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR