



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 February 2021

by Jonathan Edwards BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/20/3258165

31 Peppard Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 8JP

- 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 Alec White against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 200441, dated 18 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 1 June 2020.
 - The development proposed is removal of existing hedging and planting to perimeter boundaries fronting road and erection of new fencing and brick piers.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for removal of existing hedging and planting to perimeter boundaries fronting road and erection of new fencing and brick piers at 31 Peppard Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 8JP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 200441, dated 18 March 2020 and the submitted plans.

Preliminary Matter

2. The fence with brick piers has been erected and so I have determined the appeal on the basis that development has commenced

Main Issues

3. The main issues are (i) the effect on the character and appearance of the area and (ii) the effect on trees and hedges.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The fence and piers are adjacent to the pavement and can be seen from Peppard Road and Newlands Avenue. There are various types, styles and sizes of boundary treatments nearby, albeit that low walls and hedges tend to lie to the front of properties to the south of the site. For example, the development is seen with a prominent length of fence and wall on the opposite side of the road as well as similar close boarded fencing at 33 Peppard Road (No 33). I am advised that the boundary treatment at No 33 may be unauthorised although no information on any enforcement action has been provided. In any event, it currently forms part of the street scene. The development is not incongruous given the mix of nearby boundary treatments.
5. The fence is low enough to allow clear views of the house behind and so it does not appear excessive in height. Also, the brick piers and access gaps break up

the length of fencing to help ensure it is not unduly dominant. The materials used are similar to others in the area. As such, the development is sympathetic to its environment.

6. For these reasons, the scheme does not harm the character and appearance of the area. In this regard, it complies with policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 (LP). Amongst other things, this policy seeks to ensure development responds positively to its context and reinforces local distinctiveness.

Trees and hedges

7. While referred to in the description, no plan has been submitted that illustrates the extent of planting that has been removed. Before and after photographs show that the fence largely replaces a low wall and suggest that the main loss of greenery has been caused by a new drive which does not form part of the appeal scheme. Also, as it is constructed on a similar line to the previous wall, I am unconvinced that the fence has caused harm to the roadside pine tree.
8. For these reasons, I conclude the development does not have an adverse effect on trees and hedges. As such, and in this respect, it accords with LP policies CC3, CC7 and EN14. These all seek to ensure development protects trees and hedges of importance and are designed to maximise resilience to climate change. LP policy H11 is irrelevant to this appeal as it relates specifically to new residential development.

Other Matter

9. Concern has been raised that the scheme would set an undesirable precedent. Any future application will need to be considered on its own merit. In any event, I have found the fence and piers are in keeping with the area and so are not undesirable.

Conditions and conclusion

10. The development has been completed and so there is no need for the conditions suggested by the Council. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Jonathan Edwards

INSPECTOR