



## Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 7 June 2021

by **M Bale BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

**Decision date: 28 June 2021**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/L1765/W/21/3268048**

**17 North Road, Kings Worthy SO23 7NZ**

- 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 Mrs Emily Drabble against the decision of Winchester City Council.
  - The application Ref 20/02164/HOU, dated 27 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 December 2020.
  - The development proposed is described on the application form as to replace the current 0.9m (3ft) picket fence running south to southwest of the property garden, with a 1.83m (6ft) closed board fence approx. 20m in length.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural matter

2. The description of development on the application form includes an explanation of the construction of the fence and its detailed siting. It also gives some justification for the proposal. While I have not repeated the full description in my heading I have had regard to it in determining the appeal.

### Main Issue

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

### Reasons

4. There are varied patterns of development across Kings Worthy. The area around the appeal site is suburban in character. There are differences in the front boundary treatments, but dwellings are set back from the highway, generally with open frontages, creating an open and spacious appearance. No. 17 is a corner plot with frontage to North Road and Churchill Close. Given its position and extent of frontage, it contributes significantly to the overall character and appearance of the area.
5. There are a number of high fences to side boundaries that extend to the highway edge but do not enclose the dwellings. There are also some high front boundary fences. One at No.13 is in a relatively short gap between the host dwelling and its neighbour and does not enclose the dwelling. No.4 is another corner plot, but the dwelling differs in siting to the appeal site, being in a row of dwellings that have a more continuous alignment around the corner set well back from the carriageway edge beyond a wide verge. Like No.13 its front boundary fence is essentially a small length between the frontages of the neighbouring dwellings.

6. Although the proposed fence would not extend across the main front elevation, it would present a hard, stark boundary to the remaining roadside, continuing around the exposed corner boundary. It would be at odds with the prevailing forms and dilute the sense of spaciousness. The appellant has suggested that a shorter close boarded fence with trellis could be constructed instead of that applied for. That could allow plants to soften part of the structure but, even if I were to accept that amendment, the overall effect of enclosure with a high, mainly hard structure would be similar.
7. Either way, then, the proposal would harm the open, spacious character and appearance of the area. Such would result in conflict with those aims of Policy CP13 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 2013 and Policy DM16 of the Winchester District Local Plan Part 2 2017 which seek to ensure that development makes a positive contribution to the local environment, including providing boundary treatments that respond positively to the local context.
8. I appreciate that the entire garden area of No.17 is between the dwelling and the road frontage. Planting trees or hedges would take time, the absence of a high boundary leaves no private external areas, and provides challenges for creating safe play spaces for children. Nevertheless, whether or not fencing would be of lesser environmental impact than other possible alternatives, addressing these matters would provide largely private benefits to the occupiers. Despite some local support, they do not outweigh the harm to the public interest of protecting the character and appearance of the area, and conflict with the development plan that I have identified.
9. My attention has been drawn to a fence on the corner of The Pastures. While close to the appeal site in a straight line distance, that site is some distance by road such that it does not influence the character and appearance of the North Road area. Moreover, I saw that the wider environment around that site is generally more enclosed, so its presence does not indicate that a similar boundary should be permitted at North Road.
10. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*M Bale*

INSPECTOR