

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 November 2021

by Simon Warder MA BSc(Hons) DipUD(Dist) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 November 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/21/3270380

10 Willow Wood Road, Meopham, Gravesend DA13 0QT

- 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 Sam Bannister against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20201187, dated 12 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 20 January 2021.
 - The development proposed is front and side boundary walls and entrance gate.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) has been updated since the parties' appeal submissions were made. They were given the opportunity to comment on any consequences of the revised version for the appeals, but neither indicated that there were substantial implications. I agree and have referred to paragraph numbers from the revised version.
3. The enclosure was partly built at the time of the site visit.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene and its setting.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a detached dwelling which sits within a cul de sac of similar properties. Most properties have fairly generous front gardens enclosed by planting and low brick walls. This gives the street scene an open, verdant character that contributes positively to local distinctiveness and complements its rural setting. The occasional slightly higher boundary walls detract from this character.
 6. At up to 1.89m high, the proposed boundary enclosure would be significantly taller than other walls in the cul de sac. The combination of walls, piers and metal railings would give the enclosure a formal, urban appearance which would be at odds with the street scene and its setting, notwithstanding the choice of materials and detailing. The height and form of the enclosure would offer limited opportunity for planting to contribute to the street scene.
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Notwithstanding the curvature of the road, the front and side faces of the enclosure would be highly prominent along a considerable length of the cul de sac, particularly on the approach from Willow Walk.

7. The enclosure would, therefore, be a dominant and incongruous feature which would be harmful to the character and appearance of the street scene and its rural setting. I recognise that the site does not fall within a designated landscape area. Nevertheless, the proposal would conflict with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014. Together these policies seek to conserve or enhance landscape character and require development to be locally distinctive and integrate well with its surroundings. Nor would the proposal accord with Framework paragraph 130 to the extent that it has similar aims.

Other matters

8. The appellant has referred to Framework policies for sustainable development. However, there is no substantive evidence to show that the appeal proposal would contribute to any of the roles of sustainability.
9. I have had regard to the other concerns expressed locally, but they have not led me to a different overall conclusion.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Simon Warder

INSPECTOR