
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2022

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 March 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/N3020/D/21/3289333
145 Ravenswood Road, Arnold NG5 7GB

- 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 Jade Houghton against the decision of Gedling Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2021/1112, dated 19 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 November 2021.
 - The development is described as replaced hedges along property boundary with concrete gravel boards, concrete posts and wooden fence panels. A gate was erected 8 years ago. Total measurements as follows; Gate = 4.26m x 1.164m. Fence = 18.7m x 2.4m (includes elevated ground height of 0.28m). Fence alongside path = 5.52m x 0.50m Side gate = 1.87m x 1.01m.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matter

2. The proposed fence is in place. It broadly reflects the details given on the application form and is as shown on the photographs provided.

Main issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a 2-storey semi-detached house that occupies a prominent corner plot at the junction of Ravenswood Road and Runswick Drive within a predominantly residential area. I saw that the boundary treatment of properties in the local area to which No 145 belongs includes low level stone walls and fences, hedges and other planting. Properties close to the site also include open frontages to the road.
5. The fence in question comprises a series of concrete posts, timber panels and gravel boards. It extends from just beyond a front corner of the main house towards the adjacent footway, and then along the highway frontage of the site to connect with a gate.
6. The considerable length of the fence coupled with its position close to the back edge of the footway means that the structure is a significant and prominent feature in views from both Ravenswood Road and Runswick Drive. From these

public vantage points, the fence appears as a rather stark, solid, formal barrier. It has an overly imposing presence in contrast with the generally more low-key and informal appearance of other boundary treatments to properties close to the site, which include fences albeit mostly at a low level. For these reasons, the fence appears out of place and obtrusive. It has a deleterious effect on the character and appearance of the local area.

7. Having walked around the local area, I did see a small number of properties with tall boundary fences including the dwelling at the opposite corner of the Ravenswood Road and Runswick Drive junction to the site. I am unaware of the background to this or the other examples that I saw, most of which exemplify the harm to which I have referred.
8. On the main issue, I therefore conclude that the fence significantly harms the character and appearance of the local area. Accordingly, it is contrary to Policy 10 of the Council's Aligned Core Strategies Part 1 Local Plan (ACS), which states that new development should, amongst other things, positively contribute to the public realm and create an attractive environment. It is also at odds with the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which state that developments should add to the overall quality of the area and be sympathetic to local character.
9. I have no doubt that the fence has improved the security and privacy for the appellant and her family and created a safer outdoor space than would otherwise be the case with the hedges and trees that were previously in place. These are important matters given the circumstances of the appellant's family and in dealing with serious problems such as litter, injuries and illness to pets and children and rat infestation that has resulted from the inconsiderate behaviour of others. ACS Policy 10 notes that all development should be assessed in terms of its treatment of features that reduce the opportunity for anti-social behaviour and promote a safer living environment. The Framework also notes that planning decisions should aim to achieve safe and healthy places. However, on balance, the matters raised by the appellant and the policy support given to them do not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above and taking into account the absence of any objections from others, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR