
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 March 2022

by S D Castle BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/W/21/3281981
36 Blandford Drive, Coventry CV2 2JB

- 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 Carl Dean against the decision of Coventry City Council.
 - The application Ref FUL/2020/2927, dated 27 January 2021, was refused by notice dated 26 March 2021.
 - The development proposed is change of use of open space to private garden and erection of a boundary fence (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description I have used above is taken from the appeal form and the Council's decision notice.
3. The development has already occurred. I am, therefore, considering the development retrospectively.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is an end terrace property that presents its flank elevation to the western side of Blandford Drive, with that elevation set-back from the pavement behind an area of landscaping. No 36 forms part of a wider planned estate in which open landscaped spaces, often adjacent to flank elevations, are prevalent. The regularity of dwelling design and layout in the surrounding area, in combination with the significant areas of both public and private open green space, gives a cohesive, spacious and verdant character to the area. The appeal site contributes positively to this character through the dwelling's congruent design, orientation and consistent set-back from the highway behind an area of landscaping.
6. The fence appears out of keeping with the identified character of the estate because it has resulted in a hard edge to the street scene, with very limited landscaping between it and the pavement. The fence has a harmfully dominant profile, resulting in an appreciably more built-up and defensive appearance to the street frontage. It has encroached into one of the characteristic open green

spaces at a prominent street facing location, harming the area's prevailing verdant and spacious character.

7. I have taken account of the other examples of fencing in the area, including those to which the appellant has drawn to my attention. These other examples of fencing do not, however, form the predominant character of the surrounding area and, therefore, do not necessarily serve as examples to be followed in this case. The fencing at no 132 has a significantly different context to the appeal site given it has a run of garages to the rear that project forward in the street scene. I have no substantive information regarding the circumstances under which other fences in the surrounding area were constructed. In any case, I have determined this appeal on the basis of the particular circumstances of the appeal site and the character of this part of Blandford Drive, and on the merits of the scheme before me. The street scene on the western side of Blandford Drive, of which the appeal site forms a part of, remains largely verdant and open. The fencing to the side of no 38 is further set-back from the pavement than the fencing at no 36.
8. The development, therefore, fails to respect the original design concept of the estate and is harmful to the identified cohesive, spacious and verdant character and appearance of the area. As such, it is contrary to Policies DE1 and GE1 of the Coventry City Council Local Plan (adopted 2017). These policies, taken together, amongst other things, require that development enhances its surroundings, respects the importance of green infrastructure in complementing the built environment, and positively contributes towards the local identity and character of an area. Moreover, the development is inconsistent with paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework as it does not add to the overall quality of the area and is not sympathetic to the local character.

Other Matters

9. I understand the appellant's need to replace an unsafe wall and increase the safety of their property, particularly as it is an area young children use. I am not, however, persuaded that this consideration justifies this specific development or outweighs the harm that I have identified with regards to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons above, the appeal is dismissed.

S D Castle

INSPECTOR