

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 February 2023

by John Whalley

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21st February 2023

Appeal ref: APP/F4410/D/22/3310815

49 Ravenswood Drive, Auckley, Doncaster DN9 3PA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal of planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Paul Morris against the decision of Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application, ref. 22/01326/FUL, dated 27 May 2022, was refused by a notice dated 14 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is the erection of a 1.77m - 1.60m high boundary wall and 1.68m high gates (Retrospective) with alterations to lower sections of wall to 0.90m to improve visibility, (being resubmission of 21/03467/FUL, refused on 03/02/2022).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed and planning permission is refused.

Main issue

2. The main issue in this appeal is the acceptability or otherwise of the appeal footway edge boundary to No. 49, as proposed to be altered, on the appearance of the street scene.

Reasons

3. No. 49 Ravenswood Drive is an extended single storey dwelling on a corner plot at the road junction with Common Lane. The appeal red brick wall follows the curved line boundary to the back of the footway of the 2 roads, enclosing the front and side gardens to the house. The wall has been built to a height of about 1.7m above the adjoining footway. Steel framed boarded vehicular gates have been fitted at each end of the wall to a similar height.
4. Following refusal by the Council of an earlier planning application ref. no. 21/03467/FUL on 3 February 2022, the current appeal application 22/01326/FUL, dated 27 May 2022, proposes the lowering of the wall each side of the gates to a height of 0.9m above the footway to provide safer visibility at the accesses.
5. The Appellant, Mr Morris, said his family had lived in Auckley for many years. Moving to No. 49 Ravenswood Drive upon retirement and now having visiting grandchildren, the high boundary wall was considered necessary to provide security for the children when playing in the front and side gardens; there being no rear garden available on this corner plot. If the wall was reduced to

1m as suggested by the Council, privacy and security would no longer be possible.

6. The Council said the new fronting wall was incongruous and detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene. That was contrary to policies 41 and 44 of the Doncaster Local Plan, (September 2021), and section 2.6.1 of the Doncaster Transitional Developer Guidance (April 2022). They said the new wall fails to accord with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework, (July 2021), that new development should be of high quality design and add to the overall quality of an area.
7. I consider that planning permission should not be granted to retain the appeal wall as it is or in the current proposed altered form. Although Mr Morris does not accept the Council's view that the modified wall would still be overbearing and detrimental to the street scene, I agree with their conclusion. Mr Morris' corner plot is more exposed to views than most of the neighbouring houses. That exacerbates the appeal wall's predominance, its excessive height almost hiding the single storey house at No. 49, producing an impression of some sort of closed-in secure premises, rather than the wall being a domestic residential boundary. That, in my view, is ill suited to this otherwise pleasant housing estate. The high obscured gates unfortunately add to that impression.
8. I can understand Mr Morris' wish to provide a safe and private outdoor area for his grandchildren's recreation. There is no rear garden to No. 49 and the front and side gardens are narrow. I also note there are a variety of boundary treatments to nearby houses, both in terms of materials used and heights achieved. But none produce the same rather grim degree of enclosure. I have also considered the representations regarding the endeavour to match the design of the house at No. 49, but find the new wall, as intended to be modified, will not add to the overall quality of the neighbouring residential area as exhorted by guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, (para. 126).

Conclusion

9. For the reasons outlined above, and taking into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Whalley

INSPECTOR