
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2023

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th March 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/W/22/3306420

4 Winifred Road, Bearsted, Kent ME15 8NR

- 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 Andrew Fleming against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application ref. 22/502613/FULL, dated 23 May 2022, was refused by notice dated 29 July 2022.
 - The proposed development is the construction of a garden gate & fence.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. At my site visit, I saw that the development has been completed and I note that the application has been submitted retrospectively.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a semi-detached chalet bungalow on Winifred Road with off-street parking to the front. It is located within a row of other properties of similar scale and architectural style. The immediate vicinity is predominantly residential in nature.
5. In general, front boundary treatments along Winifred Road are low level in nature, comprising brick walls, railings, mature hedgerows and trees. There are close boarded fences in the vicinity, however these are to properties at junctions in the neighbourhood and broadly serve to enclose side garden areas as well as frontages; they are the exception within the street scene rather than the rule.
6. The new boundary fence and gates are of a solid appearance and span the entire width of the plot at the front. Abutting the public footpath, there is no space for planting to the fore to soften or screen the development. In my view, they introduce harsh and urbanising features to the street scene, and appear incongruous within the context of the vicinity.

7. I sympathise with the appellant's personal circumstances and note that the scheme would improve security and privacy. However, these matters do not counterbalance the harm that I have identified above.
8. I consider that the proposal results in harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It is contrary to Policies DM1 and DM9 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan October 2017 and the Council's Residential Extensions Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (2009), which collectively seek to ensure new development is of acceptable scale and appearance.

Conclusion

9. Based on the above and all issues advanced, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR