



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 May 2023

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 June 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B1740/D/23/3314418
196 Ringwood Road, Totton, SO40 8EB

- 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 Parsons against the decision of New Forest District Council.
 - The application Ref 22/10857, dated 20 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 18 October 2022.
 - The development proposed is a 1.825m high fence across the front boundary, to include a 3.75m access that will incorporate a gate.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The fence has been erected and therefore this proposal is retrospective.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The detached properties to the north of Ringwood Road are set back, and the area has a relatively open and spacious appearance. The materials and form of the front boundaries vary, but generally, they comprise low-level walls/fences or are fully open allowing direct access for parking.
5. The appeal site is a short distance from Abbotswood Junior School and Forest Park Primary School. The wide verge in front of the property includes a combined pedestrian and cycle path and a pedestrian crossing is located to the east. The close-boarded fence, as erected, is sited along the back edge of the pavement with a gap providing driveway access. Behind the fence is a row of very tall conifer trees with the rest of the frontage used for parking.
6. I acknowledge that there are some other boundary fences and entrance pillars along Ringwood Road which extend above 1m in height. However, within the immediate vicinity, none are of the height of the appeal fence which is significantly taller than the boundary treatments it adjoins.
7. The substantial conifer trees currently dominate the site and screen the property. Nonetheless, these are not necessarily permanent, and the fence

creates a notable barrier, out of keeping with the prevailing form which if repeated along the road would substantially alter the character of the area.

8. Undoubtedly due to the proximity to the schools, and as explained by the appellant, the area outside the property will be particularly busy at certain times of the day. The appellant also explains that the replacement fence with an increased height followed the cutting back of the conifers, as requested by the highway authority to aid visibility, and that there have been incidents of anti-social behaviour in the area. Whilst I appreciate that the fence would provide an increased level of security and privacy to the front of the property, none of these considerations nor any other personal circumstances outweigh the adverse harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area.
9. Consequently, for the reasons given above, the scheme is unsympathetic and creates a visually intrusive feature in the street scene. It thereby fails to respect the character and appearance of the area, contrary to Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy for the New Forest outside of the New Forest National Park which promotes high quality design that contributes positively to local distinctiveness.

Other Matters

10. The introduction of the cycle path and the consultation process is a separate matter outside the scope of this appeal. The Council did not refuse the proposal on highway safety grounds and as I have found against the proposal on the main issue this is not a determinative matter.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR