



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 July 2023

by A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/B5480/D/22/3311784

7 Forbes Close, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 1FD

- 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 Emma Ridley against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Havering.
 - The application Ref P1119.22, dated 5 July 2022, was refused by notice dated 5 September 2022.
 - The development proposed is construction of part ground/part first floor rear extension revised from design previously refused and erection of boundary fence/wall alongside St Leonards Way replacing existing wall nearer to highway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a two-storey dwelling located on the corner of Forbes Close and St Leonards Way within a residential area. There is an existing brick wall around the rear garden and an open grassed area between this and the footway on St Leonards Way, with planting along part of the boundary with the footway and a landscaped planter alongside part of the road. The corner houses opposite, at Forbes Way and Napier Close, have grass verges and landscaping alongside the footway. Whilst a nearby grassed area on St Leonards Way has been enclosed by a metal fence, this has a low height. Therefore, the immediate locality has a prevailing open, landscaped character.
4. The 2m high timber board fence and brick wall would enclose much of the open area between the appeal property and St Leonards Way. Although the boundary has been designed to blend in with the host property and surrounding area and would be sited behind existing and proposed planting, the height, length, and position of the fence and wall close to the footway would harm the spacious character of the locality.
5. The projection of the proposed boundary fence and wall forward of the existing host dwelling and garden wall and the adjacent group of houses on St Leonards Way, together with its proximity to the footway, would make it particularly prominent and incongruous in views from St Leonards Way and the Napier Close junction.

6. I have been referred to other examples of boundary walls close to footways in the wider locality, including on corner plots. These are in different parts of the estate which do not have the same open character as the area around the appeal site. As such, I do not find them comparable to the proposed development.
7. The Council does not raise any objections to the proposed rear extension. As this is of a size and design which is appropriate to the property, I agree with the Council that it would not harm the character and appearance of the area.
8. Overall, I conclude that the proposed boundary fence and wall would harm the character and appearance of the area. This would be contrary to Policy D3 of the London Plan 2021 and Policy 27 of the Havering Local Plan 2021 (the Local Plan). Together, these require development to respond to existing character, retain landscape features that contribute positively to the character of the area and provide boundary treatments that are sympathetic to the street scene. It would also conflict with the Council's Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document 2011 which recognises the importance of planting and boundary treatment to the street scene. Further, it would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which requires development to be sympathetic to local character. This is a planning harm to which I attach considerable weight.

Other Matters

9. The proposed wall and fence are intended to reduce anti-social behaviour, increase security for the occupants and avoid the area being used by members of the public, and I note that the Local Plan incorporates 'Secured by Design' principles. I give this some weight, but it does not outweigh the harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the proposal would conflict with the development plan as a whole and there are no material considerations, including the Framework, that would outweigh the conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

A Wright BSc (Hons) MRTPI

INSPECTOR