



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 September 2023

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 04.10.2023

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/D/23/3325470

8 St Johns Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 6HJ

- 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 Ivan Mollison against the decision of Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref 23/0515M, dated 10 February 2023, was refused by notice dated 19 April 2023.
 - The development proposed is installation of slatted fence and gate 1.42m high to front of property with hedge/living wall facing highway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for installation of slatted fence and gate 1.42m high to front of property with hedge/living wall facing highway at 8 St Johns Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 6HJ in accordance with the terms of the application, 23/0515M, dated 10 February 2023, and the plans submitted with it.

Preliminary Matter

2. The planning application was made retrospectively and I saw on my site visit that the fence, gate and hedge facing the road have now all been installed. Accordingly, I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site, No.8 St Johns Road (No.8), is a detached bungalow located on the north-west side of St Johns Road. The topography of the appeal site slopes away from the road, such that No.8 is situated at a lower level.
5. St Johns Road is a mix of bungalows and two-storey houses which are set back from the road behind driveways and front gardens. I observed on my site visit that there is a variety of boundary treatments along the road, including low walls, hedges and timber fencing, or a combination of these. I did not find open frontages to be a particular, or defining, characteristic of the area.
6. Along the front boundary of No.8, a horizontal aluminium slatted fence of around 1.42m has been installed with an electric gate, which slides behind the fence, providing access to an existing driveway. Along the side boundaries, the

fence varies in height to reflect the topography, although it is a maximum of around 2m. Because of its height and the topography of the appeal site, I observed that No.8 has a reasonable level of enclosure, but I did not find the fence and gate, or this level of enclosure, to be out of keeping with surrounding area, particularly given the variety of boundary treatments present.

7. The fence has been set back from the pavement by around 0.175m to allow container planting to be accommodated. It is unlikely, given the depth and width of this planting, that it will grow to screen the fence to any significant degree. It does however provide a green foil to the dark grey aluminium, in a similar way to the existing boundary planting I observed within the front gardens of the adjoining bungalows. Further, although the fence and gate are visible in both directions when travelling along St Johns Road, this planting, combined with the simple panelled design and dark grey finish, means the fence assimilates well into the streetscene, rather than appearing highly prominent. The use of horizontal slats with a reasonable gap between them (of 15mm) also allows some intervisibility between the road and the appeal site and the use of a contemporary material reflects the fenestration details of the host bungalow.
8. I therefore find on the main issue that the development does not appear out of keeping, nor does it cause harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Consequently, it accords with policies SD2 and SE1 of the Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030 (2017), policies GEN1 and HOU11 of the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (2022) and Policy H2 of the made Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan. Together, and amongst other things, these require development, including residential extensions and alterations, to be of high quality design that contributes to and reflects an area's character and identity. It further accords with the principles of good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Conditions

9. The Council have suggested conditions in respect of the implementation of the planning permission, approved drawings and use of materials. These conditions are not however necessary in this case because the development as described has already been installed.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR