



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2024

by H Senior BA (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th February 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/D/23/3331595

94 Northleigh Road, Old Trafford, Trafford M16 0EQ

- 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 Victoria Barr against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 111249/HHA/23, dated 22 June 2023, was refused by notice dated 24 August 2023.
 - The development proposed is wooden garden fence.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I saw on my site visit that the fence has been constructed and have determined the appeal on that basis.
3. There has recently been a revised National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) published by Government. Those parts of the Framework most relevant to this appeal have not been amended. As a result, I consider that there is no requirement for me to seek further submissions on the revised Framework, and I am satisfied that no party's interests have been prejudiced by my taking this approach.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. 94 Northleigh Road is the end semi-detached property located at a bend in the road. The surrounding area has an urban character and nearby dwellings are of similar ages and styles giving a regular rhythm to the street scene. Boundary treatments along Northleigh Road vary but predominantly comprise low walls with or without mature hedging which contribute positively to the area's character.
6. The fence which is the subject of this appeal is constructed in slatted timber panels and increases in height from the front to the side and is located behind an existing low brick wall. It sits immediately at the back of the footpath and extends around a curve in the road along the side of the property. I understand that the fence replaced a hedge although there are no details of this before me.

7. The fence, because of its height, length and position at the back of the footpath close to the corner, is highly prominent within the street scene. In its current state the fence appears as a prominent and stark urban feature that fails to respect the characteristics of the wider area. The fence has a dominant, imposing effect, and is more enclosing than the low walls and landscaping which generally border the street.
8. I conclude therefore that the proposal harms the character and appearance of the area. It fails to comply with Policy L7 of the Trafford Core Strategy (2012) which, amongst other matters, seeks to ensure that development is compatible with the surrounding area and is appropriate in its context. It also conflicts with the guidance in the Guide for Designing House Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document (2012) which requires that boundary treatments are in keeping with the prevailing type of boundary, and the design aims of the Framework.

Other Matters

9. I recognise that being a corner plot, the side boundary needs to be made secure and accessible and, in that respect, the gated fence is of benefit to the appellant. However, I am unconvinced that a similar benefit could not be achieved by a different arrangement which would not harm the character and appearance of the area. I also accept that if the fence is painted or stained or if additional planting is introduced, its stark appearance could be reduced. However, I do not have any details of this before me and I have to determine the appeal on the plans submitted. This, therefore, attracts only limited weight in favour of the proposal and does not outweigh the harm I have identified.
10. I have taken the representation of support into account as a material consideration however it does not outweigh the identified harm to the character and appearance of the area.
11. My attention was drawn to other examples of fencing in the area which I saw on my site visit. However, the specific details of these cases are not before this appeal. In any event, I have determined this appeal on the site-specific circumstances of this case.

Conclusion

12. The proposed development conflicts with the development plan as a whole and there are no other considerations that outweigh this conflict. I therefore conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

H Senior

INSPECTOR