



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 May 2024

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/24/3340889

Hillside, Springfield Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 1AE

- 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 Hancock against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 24/0025/FFU, dated 9 January 2024, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2024.
 - The development proposed is for the replacement boundary hedge with wall (maximum height of 2.4 metres) with brick pillars and panels infill.
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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 property is situated along an unmade road of detached properties, which has a sylvan appearance and forms part of the Wooded Hills Housing Character Area. The Council's Western Urban Area - Character Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (WUAC) describes it as hilly areas with large irregular plots, winding roads/lanes with heavy vegetation and a scattering of Victorian/Edwardian houses. Boundary treatments: hedges, trees and dense vegetation, are identified as contributing to the character.
4. The hedge to the front of Hillside has been removed and the proposed boundary wall has been partially constructed. The plot is located on an incline, and following the slope the overall height of the proposed boundary treatment would range between 1.9 to 2.7m. The wood panels provide some relief to the brickwork, however, together with the solid sliding gate the proposal would create a notable barrier with an urbanising appearance. In combination with its height and siting, the boundary treatment would have a prominent and imposing impact on the street scene, out of keeping with the prevailing form.
5. While vegetation prevails, a variety of other boundary treatments have been introduced along Springfield Road. The hard landscape features are generally mixed with hedging, non-solid gates or are set back behind a verge. Individual pillars may be of a similar height to the boundary proposed but do not create a continuous enclosure, and the more extensive additions are mainly located towards the southern end of the road where the density of development

changes. As such, I do not find that these examples are of the same design and form as that proposed, and which if repeated along this section of road would substantially diminish the verdant character of the area.

6. The potential for meaningful planting is constrained as the wall is positioned on the boundary and there are likely to be limitations to prevent interference with the electronic gates. The appellant has proposed climbing plants; however, these would take time to establish, and coverage and retention would be difficult to enforce through a condition. Moreover, I do not consider that this would mitigate the visual impact of the scale and form of the proposed development.
7. Occupying an elevated position and sited closer to the road, Hillside is more visible than many of the other properties along Springfield Road. The wall would provide an increased level of privacy and security to the front of the property, and I understand the appellant's desire for such provisions following a number of incidents. Nonetheless, whilst it is advised that the hedge was of a similar height and was dying, there is nothing before me to suggest that security measures and a well-defined boundary could not be achieved in other ways. Additionally, the loss of landscaping to the front reduces the property's integration with the surrounding area.
8. In conclusion, I find that the proposed boundary treatment would be a visually imposing feature and would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. Thus, the development would conflict with Policy DM9 of the Core Strategy and Management Policies Document 2012 (the Core Strategy), Residential Design Guide - Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the WUACA. Together these require high-quality design, that development respects and enhances the local environment and does not erode the existing positive character of the Character Area.
9. I have had regard to the appellant's reasons for the development and their willingness to enhance the aesthetics of the wall, nonetheless, none of these considerations nor any other personal circumstances outweigh the adverse harm I have found to the character and appearance of the area.
10. For the reasons set out the appeal is dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR