



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2025

by **Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X4725/D/24/3357538

2 High Meadows, Walton, Wakefield, WF2 6TN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Frank Hough against the decision of Wakefield Council
 - The application Ref is 24/01016/FUL.
 - The development proposed is described as 'construction of boundary wall/fence'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for a boundary wall/fence at 2 High Meadows, Walton, Wakefield, WF2 6TN in accordance with the application Ref 24/01016/FUL subject to the following condition: -
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: 0020.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed development on: -
 - the character and appearance of the area;
 - highway safety in regard to exiting the site into High Meadows and visibility when turning from High Meadow into The Balk.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located within a residential area on a corner plot with a frontage to High Meadows and The Balk. It is accessed from High Meadows and occupied by a detached bungalow. The proposed development, which has already been constructed, comprises a 2m high wall and fence, following the site boundary from the access on High Meadows around the corner and along the frontage onto The Balk, replacing a previous hedge of a lower height and a mature oak tree (with TPO consent). The wall is constructed of random-coursed stone with pillars above in a cream render and vertically boarded fence panels in an oak-coloured finish.
4. The properties on High Meadows were built at the same time and to a consistent, modern style. They generally have open frontages and where there are front boundaries those are mainly hedges of a low height, resulting in an open character.

5. The Balk comprises dwellings of various ages and style, from the terraced Victorian cottages next to the appeal site to the 1960's dwellings on the opposite side of the road set back behind grass verges and mature roadside trees and the more recent dwellings on the other side of the junction with High Meadows. Here there is a much greater variety in front boundary treatments that often reflect the character of the dwellings. They include both evergreen and deciduous hedges, walls of brick or stone, fence panels of various designs, pillars and both solid and open gates. In general, they are considerably higher, some up to 3m or so in height, and enclose the front gardens of the properties, providing a strong sense of enclosure along the lane.
6. The proposal is seen clearly in the approach in both directions along The Balk and to a lesser extent from High Meadows. As most of the frontage to High Meadows remains open, it does not harm the open character of that road. Although cream render is not a material generally seen in The Balk, the boundary is seen as a continuation of the style of the appeal dwelling, with matching stone and render materials. The stonework and fence panels sit comfortably when seen from The Balk against the backdrop of the stone gable end of the nearest cottage and fit in well with the stone boundary wall of the dwelling on the opposite side of the junction and with the other fencing elsewhere along the lane. The height is not disproportionate to that of other boundary treatments in The Balk and continues the sense of enclosure there. From what I have seen, the previous hedge was not continuous with a break where the tree had been removed and comprised different heights and species. Its condition and appearance did not sufficiently merit its retention and for the reasons given, the proposal is an acceptable replacement. It accords, therefore, with development plan policy LP57 in the Wakefield District Local Plan (2024) (LP) which seeks to ensure that alterations to dwellings accord with the style of the dwelling and do not harm the character of the area.

Highway safety

7. At my visit I saw that High Meadows is a winding, residential cul-de-sac with low vehicle speeds and a limited amount of traffic. In regard to the exiting of the appeal site into High Meadows, the appellant's highways statement points out that the proposal has no impact on visibility for drivers when looking towards the end of the cul-de-sac. When looking towards the junction, even though the proposal is set slightly further forward of the previous hedge, the impact is marginal and has no detrimental impact given the low speeds and traffic volumes on High Meadows. From what I have seen, I would agree.
8. In regard to visibility at the junction of High Meadows and The Balk, the highways statement is evidenced by a speed survey report and demonstrates that both High Meadows and The Balk are lightly trafficked and subject to low vehicle speeds. When the speed survey results and relevant national guidance (Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2) are taken into account, the appropriate visibility requirement has been calculated at 35m to the north and 37m to the south, with an X distance of 2.4m at the junction. The highways statement includes a plan that shows the required visibility splays are achieved. My site visit findings confirm that, and the Council has not submitted any detailed evidence on this matter.
9. I conclude then that the proposal has not resulted in any harm to highway safety and accords with development plan policy LP27 in the LP which requires that

development provides suitable access and does not unacceptably impact highway safety.

Other matter

10. Representations received at the planning application stage referred to covenants imposed on the original development of High Meadows. Whilst those may be in place, this matter is not within the remit of the planning system and is a separate legal matter.

Conditions

11. A condition specifying the approved plans is necessary for reasons of certainty. As the proposal has been completed and I have found that materials are acceptable, no further conditions are necessary.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal accords with the development plan and there are no material considerations that would outweigh that. The appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

INSPECTOR