



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2025

by **S Simms BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H0520/D/24/3355277

22 Colne Road, Bluntisham, Cambridgeshire PE28 3LU

- 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 Barrie Stoneham against the decision of Huntingdonshire District Council.
 - The application reference number is 24/00735/HHFUL.
 - The development is the erection of a 1.8m fence.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission granted for the erection of a 1.8m fence at 22 Colne Road, Bluntisham, PE28 3LU, in accordance with the application, Ref 24/00735/HHFUL, dated 24 April 2024, and with Block Plan number TQRQM24147112708818, Dimensioned Schematic Plan (unnumbered) and Dimensioned Photograph (unnumbered), subject to the condition below.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development on the application form included additional information, explanation and justification. I have used the description on the decision notice as it describes the development in a more succinct manner than the application form.
3. I observed on site that the development has already been implemented as shown and described in the application.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the proposed development would be out of keeping with the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

5. The site is a corner plot at the entrance to a residential area that appears to have been laid out on an open plan. It contains a two-storey house, the rear garden of which adjoins the main access road. Prior to the development, a conifer hedge of about two metres' height had formed this boundary.
6. Many plots retain open front gardens, but some have hedges of various species and heights. Whilst uncommon, there are several examples of walls and fences of a similar height to that proposed where rear gardens adjoin side roads or the side of a front garden. In these relationships, they are common as they assist in

defining public and private space, so it is safe and enjoyable for the resident, and are not out of keeping with the locality.

7. The Huntingdonshire Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) section on defensible space depicts similar treatments of such relationships. Whilst the section on boundary treatment refers to ensuring surveillance whilst maintaining privacy in rear gardens, its later advice against close boarded fencing seems related primarily to these issues, rather than to appearance.
8. As such, I find no conflict with Huntingdonshire Local Plan (HLP) Policy LP11, which supports proposals inspired by characteristics of their surroundings and design guidance, with HLP Policy LP12, which requires understanding of context, or, as the footway is well surveilled from houses across the access road, the SPD. Staining the fence would improve its appearance and I attach a condition on this.

Other Matters

9. I am mindful that maintaining a hedge could be more difficult for elderly residents and, having regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, the development could minimise this disadvantage, so I attach additional weight to this.

Condition

10. The fence must be removed and the site returned to its former condition unless, within six months ("the compliance period"), it has been stained in a colour approved in writing by the local planning authority or by the Secretary of State on appeal against a refusal of such approval or a failure to determine an application for same. The compliance period shall be suspended during any appeal, statutory challenge or judicial review until the determination or disposal thereof.

Conclusion

11. As the development reflects characteristics of its surroundings, does not impede pedestrians and assists in securing the garden, I conclude that it is not out of keeping with the area, reflects design guidance and, therefore, does not conflict with the development plan as a whole.
12. As it could also minimise disadvantage due to age, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed subject to the above condition.

S Simms

INSPECTOR