



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 April 2025

by J Davis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 01 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D3640/D/25/3361597

2 Crees Meadow, Windlesham, Surrey, GU20 6QA

- 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 Ben Bowers against the decision of Surrey Heath Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/0999/FFU.
 - The development proposed is construction of a front and side boundary wall. Additional fencing added to existing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a detached dwelling located in a corner plot at the junction of Crees Meadow and Windmill Field. It is situated at the entrance to the Windmill Field 1980's housing estate which has an open plan character and appearance, largely derived from its verges and open front gardens or front gardens with natural, planted boundaries. The dwelling has a detached two storey garage to the front and a large, open front garden which is currently hardsurfaced. Whilst the extensive hardsurfacing has detracted from the appearance of the site, its open frontage reflects the character and appearance of the area.
4. The proposal is to enclose the area to the front of the house with a dwarf wall of about 0.7m in height, with 2m high brick piers and railings of a curved design above the dwarf wall. The proposed wall and railings would return along the boundary of the site with Windmill Field, virtually abutting the footway in a similar manner to the existing side boundary fence and wall which it would adjoin.
5. Given their location at the entrance into the estate, the proposed piers, walls and railings would be highly prominent in the street scene. Whilst views into the site would be possible through the railings, the enclosure would significantly detract from the open appearance of the site due to its siting and prominence at the entrance to the estate, its proximity to the footway, the height of the brick piers and railings and its overall extent. It would appear as an unduly urban, incongruous feature which would jar and contrast sharply with the natural boundary treatment to

the front of the adjacent dwelling and the largely open frontages of other dwellings in the road.

6. I acknowledge that there is a dwarf wall, with brick piers and railings of a similar height on the opposite corner of Crees Meadow / Windmill Field. However, this boundary appears to be part of the original design of the estate and has a different function to that of the appeal proposal, as it encloses the large landscaped and parking area to the front of Nos 1, 3 and 5 Crees Meadow, with these dwellings fronting onto Windmill Field rather than Crees Meadow. I therefore find that the presence of this boundary structure does not justify a similar boundary treatment around the individual open frontage of the appeal property.
7. There are also examples of higher boundary walls and fences throughout the estate, however most of these enclose the side or rear gardens of dwellings rather than open frontages and are not directly comparable to the appeal scheme.
8. The fence panels along the existing side boundary adjacent to Windmill Field would be replaced with higher panels, to a height of around 2m. Fencing panels of about 20cm in height would also be added to the existing sections of wall. Whilst the boundary is adjacent to the footway along Windmill Field, the increase in height of the boundary would not be significant and would not be oppressive for users of the footway nor would its height detract from the character and appearance of the area. However, the timber panels would exceed the height of the original walled sections and the fencing above the walled sections would not appear well integrated with the existing walls and piers. Overall, the boundary would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the existing forms of enclosure in the surrounding area and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area.
9. I note the 'bolt-on' trellis along the top of the wall at 5 Crees Meadow, opposite the appeal property. However, the Council confirm that this boundary treatment does not benefit from planning permission and should not therefore, set a precedent for similar enclosures. I have considered the other examples given by the appellant but these are either distant from the site with a different context or are not directly comparable to the appeal scheme.
10. Whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would improve security to the existing property, this consideration does not outweigh the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the area.
11. In conclusion, I find that the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and would be contrary to Policy DM9 of the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2012); Policies WNP2.1 and WNP 3.2 of the Windlesham Neighbourhood Plan (2018) and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). Collectively these policies promote high quality design which respects and enhances the character of the local environment. It would also be contrary to Principle 9.1 of the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2017) which states that boundary treatments to the public realm will be expected to be of a high quality and reflect the character of the surrounding context.

Conclusion

12. For the above reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

J Davis

INSPECTOR