



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 July 2025

by **D Wilson BSc (Hons) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H1705/W/25/3366255

Collingwood, Newnham Road, Newnham, Hampshire RG27 9AE

- 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 Mrs P Barrett against the decision of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02271/FUL.
 - The development proposed is erection of 1.8m high closeboard fence on the repositioned west boundary and change of use of land to residential.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of development in the banner heading above, on the basis that it accurately and clearly describes the proposed development and I have assessed the appeal on that basis.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed development on:
 - the character and appearance of the area, and
 - green infrastructure network.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site relates to a strip of land next to Collingwood, which is a bungalow that occupies a large plot. Kingsbridge Copse is a small cul-de-sac, and its entrance runs next to the appeal site. The strip of land is located next to the entrance road and while it is under the ownership of the appellant, it is outside of the existing garden which is marked by a fence.
5. The wider area is predominantly residential with properties mostly being situated on the same side of the road as the appeal site. Dwellings mostly occupy large plots and have particularly large and open frontages. The opposite side of the road is densely vegetated, which combined with the open frontages and large plot sizes results in a verdant and spacious character and appearance.

6. The Council's Design and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document July 2018 (SPD) states that boundary treatment is an important characteristic of the built environment and plays a significant role in delineating space and local distinctiveness.
7. The strip of land subject to this appeal plays a role in delineating the space between the garden of Collingwood and access road. It also contributes to the spacious and verdant character and appearance of the area. The strip of land provides a buffer between properties and the road, which softens the impact of the cluster of houses at Kingsbridge Copse. The erection of the fencing and enclosing of this space into the garden would erode the spaciousness that is character of the area.
8. I note that the strip of land on other side of the access road to Kingsbridge Copse has a smaller width, which would be similar to the resulting width of the appeal proposal. However, the smaller width is due to a dense hedgerow which is a positive contribution to the verdant character of the area and still appears as part of the open space, as appose to the fencing proposed which would be a harsh and obvious boundary to a garden which would be harmful.
9. I note that the Council have suggested that the open space is valuable, which is not a specific test of Policy EM1 of the Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011 – 2029) Adopted May 2016 (LP). Nonetheless, it is clear that the Council consider the space to be an important open area and has a function in enhancing the character and appearance of the area, rather than being left over after planning. For the reasons outlined, I have also found that the appeal site makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area and its loss would be harmful.
10. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would harm the character and appearance of the area. It would be contrary to Policies EM1 and EM10 of the LP and guidance contained with the SPD. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that proposals are sympathetic to the character and visual quality of the area concerned and positively contribute to local distinctiveness, the sense of place and the existing street scene.

Green Infrastructure

11. Policy EM5 of the LP relates to green infrastructure and defines it as a network of green spaces and other environmental features which provides a multi-functional green space resource. Amongst other things, incidental areas of green spaces such as grass verges are listed. I note that the appellant owns the section of grass verge, and suggests that access has not been permitted, it nonetheless would still meet the definition of green infrastructure as the policy wording specially references private spaces.
12. The redevelopment of public and private open spaces is only permitted subject to certain criteria, none of which would be met by the proposal. As such, the proposed development would result of a loss of green infrastructure within the area without any replacement or any assessment that the strip of land is surplus.

13. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would be harmful to the provision of green infrastructure. It would be contrary to Policies EM5 and EM10 of the LP and Paragraph 96 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Amongst other things, these seek to ensure that development positively contributes to the appearance and use of streets and other public spaces.

Other Matters

14. I note that the appellant suggests that the appeal site is not an important habitat for wildlife and is not accessible due to being under private ownership. However, these matters do not outweigh my concerns.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

D Wilson

INSPECTOR