



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2025

by Chris Couper BA (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4625/D/25/3369294

109 Longdon Road, Knowle, Solihull B93 9HY

- 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 Vinay Desai against the decision of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is PL/2025/00466/MINFHO.
 - The development is described as the erection of a garden fence along the side of the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The submitted drawings include extensions to the house. However, I have dealt with the appeal on the basis of the garden fence only, as depicted on the drawings, and as set out in the description on the application form and in the Council's decision. That fence is already in place.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the garden fence on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. This part of Longdon Road, along with some nearby streets, is tree-lined and contains sections of grass verge. The properties are set back from the highway on fairly large plots, which typically either have no boundary treatment to the front, or are modestly contained by low walls or vegetation. These attributes contribute to the area's spacious, open and well-landscaped character.
5. That said, I observed a few examples of tall side boundary features on corner plots. That includes a close boarded timber fence next to the pavement at 105 Longdon Road, which is opposite this site on the other side of Landor Road. There are also side boundary walls at 102 and 108 Longdon Road, although they are set back behind trees and verges from Copt Heath Drive.
6. As depicted on the drawings, I understand that the fence on the appeal site replaced an approximately 2 metre high wall. However, it is clear from interested parties' representations, including photographic evidence submitted by email dated 16 April 2025, that the pre-existing wall was set back from Landor Road behind a

grass verge, which significantly softened its impact on the streetscene, such that it reflected the area's prevailing character.

7. In contrast, the replacement fence abuts the pavement, and extends further towards Longdon Road. Moreover, whilst it does not project beyond the front face of the house, given its length, height, siting and very dark coloured panels, it is an obtrusive and stark feature on this prominent corner plot. It has therefore had a significantly harmful impact on the streetscene, and it does not reflect the area's prevailing open and landscaped character.
8. The appellant says that the fence was erected due to the refurbishment and re-orientation of the host property. However, I am not persuaded that this scheme is the only way in which a reasonable degree of privacy within the garden could be secured. Whilst he points out that a 1 metre high fence could be erected adjacent to the highway under permitted development rights¹, as that would create less of a sense of enclosure in the streetscene, it would be less harmful compared to this development.
9. For these reasons, the fence has significantly harmed the character and appearance of the area. As Policy P10 of the Solihull Local Plan (2013) ('SLP') addresses the natural environment and biodiversity, and as the fence replaced a pre-existing wall, it is of limited relevance on this issue. However, the scheme conflicts with those parts of SLP Policy P15, and Policy D1 of the Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2033 (2019), which require good design that conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality, taking account of matters such as the arrangement of front gardens, walls, railings, hedges and other means of enclosure.
10. It also conflicts with the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 requirement for good design which responds to local character; and with the stance in the Solihull House Extension Guidelines Supplementary Planning Document (2010) that boundary walls and fences adjacent to the road should harmonise with the character and local distinctiveness of the streetscene, and that particular care is needed when proposing side garden walls/fences on corner plots in order to avoid over prominence.
11. Having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is therefore dismissed.

Chris Couper

INSPECTOR

¹ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)