



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 December 2025

by David Reed BSc DipTP DMS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 3rd March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/A1530/D/25/3375443

7 Barncroft Close, Highwoods, Colchester CO4 9SF

- 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 Dr & Mrs H Ighoyivwi against the decision of Colchester City Council.
 - The application Ref 251238, dated 12 June 2025, was refused on 15 August 2025.
 - The development proposed is a garden wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the street scene; and
 - whether the proposal would adversely affect the safety of road users.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The proposal is for a 1.8 m high structure along the front and a short section of the side boundary of No 7, a detached property on the eastern side of Barncroft Close. The structure would comprise the existing low brick wall with concrete block piers at intervals, both rendered and painted white to match the house, with close set black metal railings between the piers.
4. The front elevation of the house is set back just 2.4 m from the property boundary with a pedestrian footway running immediately in front. This is unusually close for this particular road, and the wall/railings would benefit the appellant by improving the level of privacy in the front rooms. However, the property seems to have had an open frontage to the road since it was first built and blinds were used in June 2023 as a suitable alternative¹.
5. Barncroft Close, together with its offshoots Briarwood End, Thistledown and Hillridge, are designed as an open plan estate with low front boundary treatments, frequently low walls, sometimes supplemented by a hedge, and often no front boundary enclosure at all. The exception is where screening is necessary for private rear gardens on corner plots, when there are higher brick walls. The

¹ Streetview image

examples given by the appellant show such cases and one on Eastwood Drive, a busier distributor road rather than a cul-de-sac.

6. The overall soft, landscaped, open plan nature of the Barncroft Road estate forms an important part of its attractive residential environment. The wall/railings would detract from this, substituting a hard front boundary feature that would unnecessarily erode the generally harmonious design character of the area.
7. For these reasons the proposal would significantly harm the existing character and appearance of the street scene in conflict with Policies SP7 of the North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan 2021 and Policies DM13 and DM15 of the Colchester Borough Local Plan 2022. These require high standards of urban design that preserves the quality of existing places, ensures no adverse impact on the appearance of the street scene/character of the area and requires respect for the context of the site.

Safety of road users

8. The proposed 1.8 m high wall/railings would extend hard up to the boundary of the adjacent property, 1 Briarwood End, close to its driveway. This would restrict the visibility of passing pedestrians and perhaps cyclists when reversing a vehicle out of the driveway, adversely affecting the safety of those road users. Visibility would also be restricted when reversing a vehicle out of the driveway of No 7. Increasing highway safety risks in this way would conflict with Policy DM21 of the Colchester Borough Local Plan which seeks to minimise conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians.

Conclusion

9. Whilst the proposal would have some benefits for the appellant, these benefits are outweighed by the harm that would be caused to the character and appearance of the area and the increased risks to passing road users.
10. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

David Reed

INSPECTOR