
Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 12/07/21

gan **C MacFarlane, BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 22/7/21

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12/07/21

by **C MacFarlane, BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 22/7/21

Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/D/21/3276766

Site address: 112 Norman Road, Wrexham, LL13 7BE

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Dr Jem Warren against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: WRO P/2021/0003 dated 11 November 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 April 2021.
 - The development proposed is boundary fence.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of the proposal contained in the application and appeal forms includes superfluous information relating to the background to the application and an explanation of the proposal. The Council's decision notice refers to the proposal as 'boundary fence (in retrospect)', which I consider to be a more concise description. I have therefore used this in the banner heading above, with the omission of the phrase 'in retrospect' as this does not describe an act of development.
3. No plans of the proposal were submitted with the application; however the Council's Delegated Report includes a description of the proposed modifications to the fence currently in situ, which accords with the description provided in the application and appeal forms. The Council have assessed the proposal based on these modifications, and I have also determined the appeal on this basis. As the proposal has been carried out, except for the proposed modifications, I have considered the appeal as partly retrospective.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
-

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located on a corner plot at the junction of Norman Road and Bennion's Road, and close to the Fairy Road Conservation Area. The surrounding area is residential, and the majority of front boundaries are marked by low walls, hedges and planting, which gives the area an attractive, verdant and open character.
6. The site occupies a generous plot and the close-boarded fence runs for a considerable length along Norman Road and Bennion's Road. Although the proposal includes the removal of the existing trellis along Norman Road, the remaining fence would still be of a significant height. Whilst part of this section of fencing would eventually be replaced by hedgerow planting, there is a lack of certainty as to whether the desired height and density could be achieved, and in the timescales stated by the appellant. Even if the desired screening could be achieved, this would result in the removal of only part of the fence, with much of its length to be retained.
7. Given its height, length and prominent location, the fence would appear as a large, obtrusive and incongruous feature in the street scene. The application of green paint and use of climbing plants, whilst more in keeping with the soft-landscaped surroundings, would, however, fail to overcome the harm arising from the considerable scale and blank form of the fence.
8. The proposal would therefore cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and would not comply with Policies GDP1 and EC7 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011 which, amongst other things, seek to ensure that all development accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality, and preserves and/or enhances the character of Conservation Areas.

Other Matters

9. I acknowledge that there are differences between the ground level of the site and the surrounding highways, and that the proposal would address the safety and privacy concerns raised by the appellant. However, there is no substantive evidence to demonstrate that these objectives could not be achieved by means other than the appeal proposal. Whilst the removal of the previous vegetation, and additional planting within the site, may have some ecological benefits, these would be limited in scale. I therefore do not consider that the benefits of the proposal would outweigh the harm to the wider street scene and the conflict with the adopted development plan.
10. I note that the proposal seeks to address the concerns raised previously by the Council, and that some form of fencing may have previously been erected along the boundary. I also note the appellant's statement that some neighbouring occupiers are supportive of the proposal. However, these matters do not alter my findings on the planning merits of the scheme before me and that it is unacceptable for the reasons given above.
11. In reaching my decision, I have considered the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG Act). I have taken into account the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act and consider that this decision is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives, as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons given above, the appeal is dismissed.

Claire MacFarlane

INSPECTOR