

19/01107/FUL

483 ASHINGDON ROAD, ASHINGDON

**RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION TO REPLACE PICKET
FENCE WITH 6FT FENCE FRONTING ONTO ASHINGDON
ROAD**

APPLICANT: **MR SHAUN BARLOW**
ZONING: **RESIDENTIAL**
PARISH: **HAWKWELL PARISH COUNCIL**
WARD: **HAWKWELL EAST**

1 RECOMMENDATION

1.1 It is proposed that the Committee RESOLVES

That planning permission be refused for the following reason:-

1. The replacement timber fence is harmful to visual amenity, particularly given the location on a corner plot, in close proximity to a main road and pedestrian footway. The fence is a conspicuous feature significantly reducing the open character of Ashingdon Road. The fence significantly reduces the existing open, soft landscaped green character which would detract from the overall character and appearance of the area and would have an adverse impact upon the street scene. The proposed development would lie contrary to policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan and relevant parts of the National Planning Policy Framework relating to achieving good design.

2 PLANNING APPLICATION DETAILS

- 2.1 This application is to be considered by the Development Committee as the applicant is a relative of a Rochford District Council employee.
- 2.2 Planning permission is being sought to replace a low picket fence on the boundary fronting Ashingdon Road with a 1.8m high close boarded timber fence.

- 2.3 The development has already been carried out and consequently is retrospective in nature. This application has led from an enforcement investigation.
- 2.4 The boundary of the site along Albert Road is also demarcated by a 1.8m high close boarded fence. As this section of the boundary treatment is a replacement of a fence of the same height and in the same position it would not require planning permission from the Local Planning Authority. The application therefore only relates to the newly erected boundary fence to the Ashingdon Road frontage which requires planning permission.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 3.1 The application site is situated on a prominent corner at the junction of Ashingdon Road and Albert Road. The host dwelling is a semi-detached bungalow which fronts Ashingdon Road. The main entrance to the host dwelling is situated in the northern elevation flanking Albert Road. The host site benefits from a detached garage and on-site car parking space at the rear of the dwelling.
- 3.2 The street scene in this part of Ashingdon Road and Albert Road has an eclectic mix of architectural styles and design containing bungalows, chalet-style bungalows and two storey dwellings on quite closely knitted plots. A two-storey public house known as the 'Victory Inn' is situated on the corner plot opposite the application site.
- 3.3 The host site and neighbouring dwellings are set approximately 11m back from the back edge of the highway along Ashingdon Road. The rear garden is set on the western side of the dwelling and is enclosed by a brick wall along the flank boundary facing Albert Road. The front garden is set on the eastern side of the dwelling and is enclosed by a closed bordered timber fence at least 0.5m from the public footpath along the highway fronting Albert Road and Ashingdon Road.
- 3.4 The grass verge surrounding the site is under the ownership of the Highway Authority and acts as visibility for the junction and should be maintained free from obstruction.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 15/00644/FUL - Installation of Ramp to Front – APPROVED
- 4.2 20/00132/LDC - Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for proposed hip to gable roof extension with flat roof rear dormer and roof light to front – APPROVED - PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

5 MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

- 5.1 Good design is promoted by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as an essential element of sustainable development. It advises that planning permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.
- 5.2 Policy CP1 of the Rochford District Council Core Strategy (2011) promotes high quality design, which has regard to the character of the local area. Design is expected to enhance the local identity of an area. This point is expanded in policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan (2014) which states that 'The design of new developments should promote the character of the locality to ensure that the development positively contributes to the surrounding natural and built environment and residential amenity, without discouraging originality, innovation or initiative'. Policies DM1 and CP1 advise that proposals should have regard to the detailed advice and guidance in Supplementary Planning Document 2 (SPD2).
- 5.3 Policy DM1 seeks a high standard of design requiring that developments promote the character of the locality to ensure that development positively contributes to the surrounding built environment. Part (ix) of this policy specifically relates to the promotion of visual amenity and regard must also be had to the detailed advice and guidance in Supplementary Planning Document 2 - Housing Design, as well as to the Essex Design Guide.
- 5.4 The key material consideration in the determination of this application is the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

Impact on the Character of the Area

- 5.5 The application site comprises soft vegetation and landscaping to the front of the host dwelling. In its original state, the open nature of the site once contributed towards a soft landscaped buffer within the street scene. The development has replaced a low picket fence with a close boarded timber fence 1.8m in height, in close proximity to the highway fronting Ashingdon Road. Whilst the grass verge remains between the fence and the public footway, this grass verge is height land and there is therefore no space to accommodate any soft landscaping to the front of the fence in the site. Planting cannot take place on the grass verge as this contributes towards visibility at the junction with Ashingdon Road and should be maintained free from obstruction.
- 5.6 The appearance and height of the fence is of a similar height and appearance as the existing fence that is situated on the flank elevation fronting Albert Road. Notwithstanding this, the street scene along Ashingdon Road is characterised by detached and semi-detached dwellings with open frontages

which incorporate soft landscaping and comprise of low boundary treatments with well-established vegetation creating a soft and pleasant environment along this part of the street scene, providing some visual relief from the densely built form and a buffer between the houses and the passage of vehicles and pedestrians.

- 5.7 Fully enclosing the frontage of the host site introduces a prominent barrier that appears as an incongruous feature fronting Ashingdon Road. The fence detracts from the visual quality of the space, devaluing the site's contribution to the street scene. Additionally, the host site's location on a prominent corner plot on a main distributor road also means the site is prominent and seen easily from the public realm and the previously visible soft landscaped open frontage contributed significantly to the character and appearance of the street scene. The proposed fence would run for a significant length, across the whole frontage resulting in an increased degree of prominence. The introduction of a 1.8m timber fence in close proximity to the highway would be conspicuous, resulting in a visual change and would detract from the overall character and appearance of the street scene, having an adverse impact upon the street scene contrary to policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan and the NPPF.

Other Matters

- 5.8 Although the proposed boundary fence would have a significant impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding area, the proposal would not have a detrimental impact upon neighbouring properties or highway safety.

6 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Hawkwell Parish Council

- 6.1 My Council objects to this application on the grounds that where a fence adjoins a road or footpath the height limit is restricted to 1m or 3ft.

Essex County Council – Highway Authority

- 6.2 The fence is located clear of highway, and the visibility for the junction appears to be kept free from obstruction, therefore from a highways perspective no objection is raised.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and found there to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The close boarded fence to the Ashingdon Road frontage of the site results in a visual change that would significantly detract from the overall character and appearance of the street scene whilst having an adverse impact on the street scene contrary to policy CP1 of the Core Strategy and policy DM1 of the Development Management Plan and national policy relating to the achievement of good design contained within the NPPF.



Marcus Hotten

Assistant Director, Place & Environment

Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy Adopted Version (December 2011) –

- Policy CP1 “Design”

Rochford District Council Local Development Framework Development Management Plan adopted 16th December 2014 -

- Policy DM1 - “Design of New Development”

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Katie Ellis on: -

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

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