

NEWBURY 17/00846/HOUSE Pins Ref 3180623	19 Conifer Crest Newbury Mr Clothier	Build brick wall along the front border of the property approximately 19 metres in length. The wall will be made up of a 600mm tall double brick width wall, 1.8 metre pillars approx. 3 metres apart and infilled with close board fencing (retrospective).	Dele. Refusal	Dismissed 29.12.17
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Preliminary Matter

During his site visit, the Inspector saw that the development had already taken place.

Main Issue

The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Conifer Crest is a residential road comprising mostly detached homes set back from the highway with generally open plan frontages or boundaries demarcated with natural vegetation. There is an overwhelming and natural sense of openness that is derived by the plentiful amounts of mature landscaping and the soft edges between the highway and the private front gardens beyond.

The boundary that has been erected is positioned immediately adjoining the back edge of the pavement and comprises a dwarf brick wall interspersed with brick piers up to 1.8m high with the spaces between filled with close board fencing. It reaches for approximately 20m along the frontage of the property and is visually prominent in the street scene.

The wall and fence stand out as an isolated means of enclosure that is both harsh and visually impenetrable, contrasting noticeably with the verdant character of the street scene that otherwise prevails and which provides a soft transition between the public and private domains along Conifer Crest. As such, it fails to make a positive contribution to the area, and detracts from its landscape character. It therefore conflicts with Policies CS 14 and CS 19 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026 (CS) and with a core principle of the National Planning Policy Framework, which is to always seek to secure high quality design.

The Inspector noted the Council has referenced CS Policy CS 18 in its decision. This deals with green infrastructure. However, despite his findings as they relate to the effect of the development upon the character of the street scene, he was unable to identify any harm in this case to any of the examples of green infrastructure that have been defined at paragraph 5.124 of the CS for the purpose of this policy. Nevertheless, this does not diminish the level of harm and conflict with the development plan and national policy that he had identified.

Conclusion

For the reasons given, and having regard to all other matters raised, the Inspector concluded that the development is harmful to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore, and having regard to all other matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

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