



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 September 2010

by **D R Cullingford** BA MPhil MRTPI

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

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Decision date:
13 October 2010

Appeal Ref: APP/N1350/A/10/2135308 9 Grassholme, Darlington, DL1 4UT

- 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 Mrs Marjorie Hird against the decision of the Darlington Borough Council.
- The application (ref: 10/00336/FUL and dated 20 May 2010) was refused by notice dated 14 July 2010.
- The development is described as the 'erection of boundary wall around front garden'.

Decision

1. For the reasons given below, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I dismiss the appeal.

Reasons

2. I saw that the appeal property is a neat semi-detached dwelling set, with the adjacent terraces, around a central 'green' and laid out, with the rest of the estate, in an 'open plan Radburn' pattern. Although many of the small front gardens remain 'open plan', those at several properties are now enclosed behind low picket fencing or open wrought iron railings; in both cases, the 'openness' of those enclosing structures serves to maintain much of the open character of the estate. There are, nevertheless, one or two instances where solid walls have been erected and I saw that such structures formed incongruous intrusions into the street scene, interrupting the open sweep of the front gardens and marring the simple swathe of green space so characteristic of this estate. I am afraid that the proposed boundary wall around this front garden, with its pillars over 1.5m high, would have just such harmful effects. It would appear particularly incongruous here because the gardens around this 'green' remain largely open, serving to reinforce the connection between that space and the encompassing dwellings. And, the wall would be especially intrusive because it would be at a prominent focal point within this 'green square' and at an entrance into Grassholme. For those reasons, I find that this proposal would spoil the street scene and contravene the requirements of 'saved' policy H12.
3. I fully accept, as the planning officer indicates, that the position of this front garden beside a footpath into Grassholme and at a corner of the 'green' might warrant some provision to prevent passers by from intruding into private areas or cutting across the corner here. But I think that the installation of suitable railings would suffice. Moreover, such a means of enclosure would create an area of 'defensible space' at the front of the appeal property that would

continue to contribute to the pleasant open character of the dwellings around this 'green'. Hence, and having considered all the other matters raised, I am afraid that I can find nothing sufficiently compelling to alter my conclusion that this appeal should be dismissed.



INSPECTOR