
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 August 2017

by R Norman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 06 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/W0530/D/17/3176421
156, Girton Road, Girton CB3 0PQ

- 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 Mr R Eggo against the decision of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
 - The application Ref S/0129/17/FL, dated 12 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 16 March 2017.
 - The development proposed is fences and gates to road front.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the development on:
 - the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
 - highway safety.

Reasons

Character and Appearance

3. The site is located within an area of residential properties. The immediate character of Girton Road consists of front boundaries comprising of hedging. There are some examples of fencing to the side boundaries of the nearby properties and further along Girton Road there are some low level walls. However, the established character is of soft landscaping adjacent to the footpaths, which continues along Girton Road and into the immediate part of Mayfield Road. The existing frontage of the appeal site itself comprises hedging and whilst its condition is somewhat poor in places it still reflects the existing character and appearance of the area.
4. The development would introduce a solid wall with set-back gates along the front boundary of the property. The combination of the height, design and materials would result in a dominant and intrusive addition which would be severely at odds with the existing frontages along this part of Girton Road. Whilst the existing hedging is not in good condition in all areas it nevertheless respects the existing character and I do not consider that the replacement of this with a wall would improve the appearance of the site.

5. I note the Appellants requirements for increased privacy and security and the issues that occur with people waiting for buses. However, whilst I have sympathy with this, these would reflect a personal benefit and would not be sufficient to outweigh the harm caused to the character and appearance of the surrounding area that would result from the development.
6. Given the above considerations the proposal would be in conflict with Policies DP/2 and DP/3(2) of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007 which requires new development to be of a high quality design and to preserve or enhance the character of the local area.

Highway Safety

7. The development would include gates to the site frontage which would be within the 5 metre minimum set back required by the Council. Girton Road is a main route for traffic and appeared reasonably busy with vehicular traffic and cyclists. As such, should a car not be able to clear the highway fully whilst the gates opened then this would result in potential highway safety issues involving conflict with other road users. As such the proposal would not accord with Policy DP/3 of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Development Framework Development Control Policies which requires new development to provide appropriate access from the highway network that does not compromise safety.

Other Matters

8. I note the photographs submitted by the Appellant which show other examples of gates and fencing in the wider area. I do not, however, know the circumstances behind these and the immediate character that I identified during my visit was one of hedging to the front boundaries. As such, these examples do not establish a different character and I can give these limited weight in my considerations of the development.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Norman

INSPECTOR