
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 January 2021 by Hannah Ellison BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by R C Kirby BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 February 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/M4320/D/20/3262505

Pygons Hill House, Pygons Hill Lane, Lydiate L31 4JE

- 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 Simon Holmes against the decision of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref DC/2020/01643, dated 19 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 19 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is front boundary metal railings above the existing brick wall and two sets of double metal gates on existing vehicular access points.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site includes a large detached dwelling, which is set back from the highway within generous grounds behind a low brick wall. The immediate locality has a distinctive rural character and appearance due to vast expanses of open countryside and limited built form, with hedgerows and low walls/fences comprising the predominant boundary treatment. The site's open and spacious nature contributes positively to the character of the area and to the significance of the dwelling, which the Council identify as a non-designated heritage asset.
5. The proposed railings and gates would have a stark domestic appearance. They would be constructed of metal and would be of a considerable overall height and width along the front perimeter of the site. They would be readily apparent from the public realm due to their extent, siting and design, and would read as an obtrusive and incongruous addition to the rural characteristics of the street scene.
6. Furthermore, whilst the open design of the railings would allow for some views through to the host dwelling, they would nevertheless considerably enclose this

part of the street scene, thus detracting from the significance of the host dwelling and eroding the spacious characteristics of the locality.

7. I observed some examples of gates and railings in the street scene however I am not aware of the full circumstances in which they were approved. My attention has also been drawn to other examples of boundary treatments elsewhere although I am not certain that they are in a similar rural context and thus directly comparable to the appeal proposal. The examples do not therefore justify this appeal proposal.
8. I note the appellant's desire to increase security at his property and whilst I do not set aside this matter lightly, it is likely that there are other forms of boundary treatment that could be employed that are more in keeping with the area and could achieve the same objective.
9. Whilst the existing gate posts show evidence of previous gates, I cannot determine whether their design was directly comparable to the proposal before me. As such, this matter lends limited weight in favour of the appeal proposal.
10. Consequently, taking all the above into consideration, I conclude that this proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area. It would therefore conflict with Policies EQ2 and NH15 of A Local Plan for Sefton (April 2017), Policy LNP Dev 1 of the Lydiate Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2030 (January 2019) and the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (June 2018) which, whilst varying slightly in their wording, collectively seek to ensure developments conserve, respect and respond positively to the character of the area and the built environment.

Other Matters

11. The appeal site is located within the Green Belt however the Council has not raised concerns in this regard. Given my findings above, there is no need for me to further consider the effect of the proposal on the Green Belt.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is dismissed.

H Ellison

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

RC Kirby

INSPECTOR