



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 2 August 2022 by N Unwin BSc (hons) MSc

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P2365/D/22/3299966

82 Winifred Lane, Aughton, Ormskirk L39 5DL

- 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 Carl Roberts against the decision of West Lancashire Borough Council.
 - The application ref. 2022/0114/FUL, dated 4 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 10 May 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'flat roof with lantern covered patio area to rear, new Juliet balconies to rear openings, front boundary wall and gates'.
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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.

Preliminary Matters

3. It is clear from my site visit and the submitted plans that part of the proposed boundary treatment with the highway has been constructed. Nevertheless, this recommendation has been determined based on the plans submitted.

Main Issue

4. The Council had no concerns in respect of the development at the rear of the house and I find no reason to disagree. Therefore, the main issue to be considered is the effect of the proposed front boundary wall and gates on the character of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site forms a detached two storey dwelling set back from the highway by a generous open area of front garden. The area surrounding the appeal site is characterised by detached dwellings set back from the highway by open areas of front garden. The boundary treatments with the highway primarily comprise low walls, accentuating this openness. These attributes combine to give the street scene an attractive open and spacious character. There are instances of vegetation at higher levels forming these boundaries, however by virtue of their natural character these are visually softer and do not degrade the open character of the area.
6. The proposed development includes the construction of a rendered pillared wall with brick at the base and railings between the pillars. A single large pillar and

high wall approximately 2 metres in height flank a broad sliding gated entrance with pedestrian access adjacent. The substantial nature of the totality of the proposed boundary treatment would result in a dominant and incongruous feature when viewed from the public highway harming the existing character of the area described above. The proposed boundary treatment would form a prominent visual barrier with the open front garden which would be detrimental to the existing open and spacious character of the street scene.

7. The appeal statement describes the proposal as replicating the adjacent neighbour's boundary wall. The proposed boundary treatment appears much larger in scale in comparison to the more unobtrusive boundary treatment of the adjacent dwelling, with the render finish appearing stark which increases its prominence. I therefore do not consider the proposal comparable to any existing boundary treatment within the vicinity.
8. The appellant has raised the precedent of other boundary treatments and buildings erected adjacent to the highway at Lime Tree Farm and 31 Winifred Lane. These examples are approximately 400 metres and 600 metres respectively from the appeal site and are therefore not viewed within the context of the proposal. Furthermore, the character of the wider street scene within which these examples are located appears more enclosed and therefore I do not consider them comparable to the proposal. In any event, the presence of these does not outweigh the harm I have identified in relation to the character of the area.
9. For the above reasons I conclude that the proposed boundary wall and gates would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area. Accordingly, I find the proposal would conflict with the objectives of Policy GN3 of the West Lancashire Local Plan (2013) and the West Lancashire District Council Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2008) which require development to have regard for local distinctiveness and integrate within the street scene.

Other Matters

10. The appellant suggests that the boundary would deter crime and offer greater security for the occupants of the appeal property, however no evidence of this has been presented to me. Furthermore, no reason has been given as to why more sensitive security measures such as an alarm system could not be utilised. I therefore afford this limited weight which does not outweigh the harm to the character of the area.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

N Unwin

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

K Taylor

INSPECTOR