
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 July 2023

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 16 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/23/3319755

324 Singlewell Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7RZ

- 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 B Sanghera against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20221249, dated 21 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2023.
 - The development proposed is described as infill painted metal railings between existing brick piers to the frontage boundary enclosing walls, details to match existing vehicle and pedestrian gates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The appellant's submissions include reference to a possible revised scheme which had been sent to the Council. It appears that the Council did not respond to this. However, it is clear that the Council's decision was based on the original submission and it is this that forms the appeal scheme. I have determined the appeal on this basis and not the amended scheme.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to this 2 storey detached house set within a generously sized plot. The immediate area consists of similarly proportioned houses appearing to date mainly from the inter-war period.
5. Within the area, the houses generally have frontages which accommodate car parking and soft landscaping. Generally, the front boundaries are formed by low walls and the overriding character is one where the low walls are backed by landscaping to give a soft and pleasant suburban character. I accept that there are some exceptions to this but the prevailing character that I describe remains.
6. The frontage of the appeal property is large and almost entirely hard-surfaced. The front boundary is formed by a brick wall with brick piers and metal

- pedestrian and vehicle gates. The brick piers are taller than many walls in the area and the 2 sets of double vehicle gates are significantly taller due to their arched design; the pedestrian gate is also of a similar appearance. The design of the gates is quite intricate and includes various decorative features.
7. The appeal seeks permission to erect railings between the brick piers which would match the gates. The existing piers are said to be 1.53m in height and it is stated that the railings would have a maximum height of 1.85m.
 8. The proposed railings would appear intricate and formal. Along with their height, they would appear considerably at odds with the prevailing and far less formal appearance that exists within the area. The width that they would cover, combined with their positioning would mean that they would be visible and prominent within the street-scene. I consider that they would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the locality due to these factors.
 9. The existing gates have an obvious visual effect on the character and appearance of the area. I understand that they were given planning permission by the Council, along with the wall and other matters, in 2008. The Council indicates that this initial proposal contained railing but were removed from the application at the request of Officers. I have taken account of the presence of the gates when determining the appeal. Whilst they exist and have been approved, they do not conform with the prevailing character that I have identified and, in my judgement, the proposed railing would have a negative effect on the area, as set out above.
 10. The appellant indicates that the railings are required to increase security for him and his family. Although no specific incidents are referred to, I can appreciate such concerns. However, I consider that the unacceptable effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area are not outweighed by this matter. As a consequence, the proposal is contrary to those relevant part of Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and there are no matters to outweigh this conflict. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

T Wood

INSPECTOR