
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024 by T Morris BA (Hons) MSc

Decision by B Plenty BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 March 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/C3430/D/24/3351668

Three Ridings, Radford Lane, Lower Penn, Staffordshire WV3 8JT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr P Singh against the decision of South Staffordshire District Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/00390/FULHH.
 - The development proposed is front boundary wall and gates.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. I have taken the description of the development from the application form although I have removed reference to the appeal being retrospective as that is not a description of development. Nevertheless, as the front boundary wall and gates are already in situ, I have assessed the appeal as a retrospective proposal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. Three Ridings is a detached dwelling situated on Radford Lane which is within a semi-rural area. It is set back from the highway behind a sizeable front garden. The front boundary to the street features the wall and gates which are subject of this appeal. The front boundaries of dwellings on this part of Radford Lane are predominantly formed of open frontages with an abundance of hedges and trees. Where there are solid walls at the front boundaries, these are typically low stone and brick walls combined with generous planting. Whilst there are some gates in the vicinity, these are generally modest in height and tend to feature open railings which allow views into the front gardens. The prevalence of the greenery at the front boundaries, together with the grass verges and trees within the wider street scene, makes a positive contribution to the area's verdant and semi-rural character.

6. The front boundary wall and gates are an incongruous feature on this part of Radford Lane due to their height together with their mostly solid design, forming an overall mass that would be out of scale with surrounding enclosures. Whilst it is designed to be in keeping with the host dwelling, viewed in the street scene the boundary has a bulky and enclosing presence compared to the more open and natural frontages in the area, having a design unsuited to the rural context. The white render and grey sandstone finish has a modern appearance, and this further emphasises the contrast of the development against the prevailing verdant and semi-rural characteristics of the area.
7. Although the boundary is partially setback from the road and it might weather over time, these are not sufficient factors to overcome the unacceptable scale and design of the development. In addition, during my visit I observed that shrubs have been planted in front of the wall, these are young and would take some time to develop. Also, even when established these would not provide sufficient coverage to screen the proposal and in any event, landscaping screening, or other screening measures secured by condition, would not mitigate the identified harm. Consequently, the front boundary wall and gates are an incongruous feature which unacceptably detracts from the character and appearance of the area.
8. The appellant has referred to modern additions to nearby houses under construction which will further alter the aesthetics of the street. However, no specific evidence of such examples has been provided.
9. I conclude, the development has a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. It conflicts with Policy EQ11 (Wider Design Considerations) of the South Staffordshire Council Core Strategy (2012), which requires that the design of all developments must be of the highest quality, should respect local character and distinctiveness including that of the surrounding development and should contribute positively to the street scene including in terms of scale and materials.

Other Matter

10. Whilst I acknowledge that the development was installed to provide site security, there is no substantive evidence before me of a specific need for enhanced security at the appeal site. Therefore, this does not justify the identified harm.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

T Morris

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

B Plenty

INSPECTOR