



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 December 2018

by Lynne Evans BA MA MRTPI MRICS

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 December 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/V2255/D/18/3212571

Jack Russell Place, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7AB

- 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 Mrs Georgina Beaney against the decision of Swale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 18/502771/FULL dated 11 May 2018, was refused by notice dated 23 July 2018.
 - The development proposed is brick walls and gates to front entrance.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Appellant and the Council have indicated that the works had commenced at the date the application was submitted but not completed. At my site visit I noted that brick walls and piers had been built but no gates installed. As the works have not been completed, I have considered this as a proposal on the basis of the submitted plans and information before me, as I am required to do.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site relates to a linear plot of land on the north side of Halstow Lane which I am advised is a permanent gypsy/traveller site. Most of the structures on the site are set deep into the site with a small shed near the frontage. The site lies in a very rural location, outside of any settlement. The land in the immediate vicinity is generally very open with hedgerows and/or low post and rail fences along boundaries.
5. The proposal relates to the installation of brick walls and piers along part of the frontage on either side of the entrance driveway and wooden gates across the driveway.
6. Given the very open and rural nature of the surrounding area, I consider that the height and solid form of the walls, piers and gates, together with their siting at the front of the driveway would appear as an urbanising and intrusive,

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alien feature along the lane. The proposed materials and their solid form would have a formal enclosing effect which would be incongruous and out of character with the open and rural landscape character of the local area, including the low scale post and rail fences and verdant boundary treatments which are characteristic of the local area.

7. I therefore conclude that the proposal would harm the character and appearance of the local area. It would conflict with Policies CP4, DM14 and DM26 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2017 and the Swale Landscape Character and Biodiversity Appraisal as well as the National Planning Policy Framework, all of which seek a high standard of design which respects the local context and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
8. I have sympathy with the Appellant's reasons for the proposal, but they do not outweigh the harm from the particular solution proposed. I have also taken into account the proposal to accept a condition to introduce soft landscaping in front of the walls but I am not persuaded that this would satisfactorily address the harm I have found.
9. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L J Evans

INSPECTOR