

71711 – Rowlands House, Rowlands Road, Summerseat

Installation of automated gate at entrance

The application site is a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA) and is within Brooksbottoms and Rowlands conservation Area- a designated heritage asset.

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 Section 72(1) states -

In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Subsection 2 - The provisions referred to in subsection (1) are the planning Acts and Part I of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 and sections 70 and 73 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993.

Paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The conservation area is on the Historic England Heritage at Risk Register as being in poor condition and deteriorating with medium vulnerability. This has been caused in the main by inappropriate changes and alterations to windows, doors, boundary treatments and development in front gardens especially on Miller Street.

The application site is within the Rowlands area of the conservation area to the south and east of the River Irwell and the East Lancashire Railway.

The house is one of a pair semi-detached villas dating from the mid-19th century in the Italianate style in red brick with mouldings, balconies and a natural blue slate roof. It has a red brick stone coped boundary wall with hedgerow in places.

The pair of villas and their boundary treatments make a strong contribution to the special distinctiveness of the conservation area preserving its character and appearance.

The part of the conservation area of which the application site forms part contains predominantly a domestic building typology with the exception of the Summerseat Primary School and Methodist Church and a few former East Lancashire Railway Buildings which date from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. As such the earlier domestic properties have boundary treatments characterised by low stone walls with later buildings having brick and low hedgerows, in some instances both.

The original Summerseat Methodist Church and Primary School boundary treatment along Rowlands Road is characterised by a low stone plinth supplanted with iron railings, this is the only building typology characterised by this type of treatment.

The proposal is for a single leaf swing steel gate in a railing design electrically operated and controlled remotely. It would be of no historic or architectural merit and as such it represents a generic design and form. There would also be an associated steel swing post and slam post, intercom and fob. It would be sited on the original historic access track that runs north to south adjacent to the western boundary of the building.

Large steel gates are not an historic architectural feature of this late 18th early 19th century semi-rural conservation area. The use of vernacular materials, the local skills available and the building typology would not have resulted in a requirement for large, hinged gates for access for larger non-motorised and later motorised vehicles, or for the security of domestic properties given many were mill workers cottages.

Furthermore the gate in an open or closed position would have a visually detrimental impact on the setting of the Non-Designated Heritage Assets The Rowlands, Rowlands House and their boundary treatments and as such would cause an unacceptable loss of their heritage significance and therefore their contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

As such the gates would represent an urbanising, utilitarian and incongruous architectural feature that would not preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area. This harm would equate to less than substantial harm within the meaning of paragraph 215 of the NPPF. There appears to be no overriding public benefit that would outweigh the harm identified to the conservation area and NDHAs that would allow the proposal to be supported in heritage conservation terms.

The proposal would either not comply with or be contrary to paragraphs 215 and 216 of the NPPF and adopted UDP policies EN2/1 – Character of Conservation Areas and EN2/2 – Conservation Area Control and would not align with the aims of the Manchester Joint Plan policy JP-P2 (Historic Environment).

Conservation Officer

23/4/25