



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 August 2022

by C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5th September 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/22/3294499

41 High Street, Northfleet, Gravesend DA11 9EZ

- 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 Augustin DaCosta against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20211393, dated 30 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2022.
 - The proposed development is for a dropped kerb on the pedestrian footpath in front of the house.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. At my site visit I saw that the hardstanding in the front garden has been completed.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the development having regard to:
 - a) highway safety; and
 - b) the character of the dwelling and the surrounding area.

Reasons

Highway safety

4. The appeal property is a mid-terrace house that fronts High Street, a class 'B' road that runs through Northfleet where on-street parking restrictions apply. The dwelling lies opposite the pedestrian entrance to a primary school and there are 'keep clear' markings on the tarmac outside the entrance.
 5. At the time of my site visit, whilst only a snap shot in time, High Street appears to be a busy thoroughfare, as expected of a main route. Given the overall size of the available space, and based on all I have seen and read, I am satisfied that a vehicle could not manoeuvre within the driveway, and as such would need to either reverse into or out of the area.
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6. The lack of turning facility on site would mean that reversing into the drive would lead to vehicles slowing, stopping and turning off the busy road in reverse gear. This would be detrimental to the free flow of traffic along the road, and cause inconvenience to other drivers and pedestrians. Reversing out of the space into the road would be hazardous to other highway users already driving along High Street, and pedestrians using the footway or nearby pedestrian crossing.
7. The appellant states that forecourt parking is available at other houses along the road, although I note that none have dropped kerbs outside. I am also aware that the County Council Highways Authority raise no objection, nevertheless I have read that Dartford Borough Council's Highways Officer has recommended refusal.
8. I conclude that the scheme would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. It would be contrary to Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 (CS), saved Policy T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994, and to the Council's Planning Guidance Note 6: Planning Policy for Vehicular Accesses to Classified Highways (February 2009), which promote safe access for vehicles and pedestrians. It would also be inconsistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to ensure development has an acceptable impact on highway safety.

Character and appearance

9. The existing front garden has been hard landscaped to create the parking area, this is similar in its design and extent to other forecourt areas in the locality. Whilst the loss of the low level brick wall is unfortunate, the alteration to the frontage is not significant taking into account the local context. I consider that the hardstanding is not sufficiently harmful as to warrant a refusal of permission on this ground.
10. The extent of hard landscaping would not be detrimental to the character of the dwelling and the surrounding area. Consequently, the proposal would meet Policy CS19 of the CS, which seeks to secure new development of acceptable scale and appearance. It would also be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Conclusion

11. Having regard to all matters raised and based on the reasoning above, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR