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Your reference

Our reference
T/APP/5277/A/81/09149/09

Date

26 OCT 1981

Gentlemen

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1971, SECTION 36 AND SCHEDULE 9
APPLICATION NO:- GR/81/272

1. I refer to your appeal, which I have been appointed to determine, against the decision of the Gravesham Borough Council to refuse planning permission to excavate front gardens to allow vehicle parking on respective properties on land at No. 14 and at No. 16 Old Road West, Gravesend, Kent. I have considered the written representations made by you and by the council. I inspected the site on 7 October 1981.
2. From my inspection of the site and its surroundings and from the representations made, I am of the opinion that the main issue is whether provision of the access and parking area under appeal would be likely to result in danger to pedestrians or vehicles, or to obstruct the free flow of traffic on Old Road West.
3. Old Road West, the B261, is classified as a District Distributor. It was carrying a heavy flow of traffic at the time of my site visit in the middle of the afternoon, much of it apparently moving it well up to the permitted 30 mph. It is likely to be heavier at other times of the day, and I accept the council's evidence that the volume of traffic at peak hours is approaching the road's capacity. Continuous yellow lines on both sides of the road prohibit parking between 0700 and 1900 hrs.
4. Although the proposal is to develop the 2 parking areas and vehicle access in front of both your adjoining houses in cooperation, I understand it is your intention that the land in each ownership should be capable of parking and access use on its own, without the vehicles using the land owned by the other. That is the only basis on which I could consider the proposal, because the future owner of one of your houses might decide not to allow the owner of the other house the use of his land.
5. On that basis, the area available for each is not sufficient to allow an average car to enter one of the proposed parking areas in forward gear, turn round on it, and leave it in forward gear. The frontage available to each house of little over 7 m is far less than the design figure of 10.5 m in Design Bulletin No. 32 (as quoted by the council) to allow turning to take place.
6. I gather that you considered driving into the proposed parking spaces from west to east, parking parallel to the road, and driving out also from west to east. I appreciate that this idea is intended to achieve driving both in and out in forward gear, and the intention would be to avoid turning a car round within the

appeal site. But the 7 m or so frontage available to each of you would not allow this method of parking without the risk of driving obliquely over a length of footpath (partly outside your combined frontages), and a risk of oblique movements in reverse along the footpath. The manoeuvre would also be made more difficult by other cars parked at permitted hours in front of neighbouring houses.

7. The visibility for an emerging driver is very severely restricted by boundary walls, both to the west of No. 16 and to the east of No. 14. Both are high walls, coming right up to the rear edge of the footpath, and it would be impossible for an emerging driver to have the necessary visibility to see pedestrians on the footpath and see vehicles on the carriageway.

8. You mention that the nearest permitted daytime parking is in Elmfield Close, but this is only a few yards away. Parking either there or on some other side road would not involve the hazards to pedestrians or vehicles or obstruction to the free flow of traffic which would arise from the manoeuvring in and out of your proposed space.

9. You quoted earlier appeal decisions in favour of allowing parking in what you regard as comparable situations, but there are differences. In the case of No. 15, the Inspector considered the visibility adequate, and the appeal at No. 38 was decided some 6 years ago when traffic flows were lighter than they are today.

10. I have considered the other matters raised, but they are outweighed by the considerations which have led to my decision.

11. For the above reasons, and in exercise of the powers transferred to me, I hereby dismiss your appeal.

I am Gentlemen
Your obedient Servant

G V HAYWARD BSc FICE FIMECHE
Inspector