

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 September 2025

by **C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/25/3368497

69 Central Avenue, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5AW

- 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 Harikant Awotorsing against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref. is 20250306.
 - The development proposed is for a dropped kerb and new driveway.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. At my site visit, I saw that the development has been completed, and I note that the application has been submitted retrospectively.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on a) the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene; and b) highway safety

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal site is a two-storey, mid-terrace property opposite the junction between Central Avenue and Ascot Road in the outskirts of Gravesend. The local environs are predominantly residential in nature.
5. The Council does not appear to object to the hardstanding area in principle, rather that the property frontage has a severe and hardened appearance with insufficient soft landscaping/planting. I agree, and there is nothing on the layout plan or from my observations on site to show that an area would be made available for vegetation to soften the extent of paving that has been installed.
6. Whilst other existing frontages in the neighbourhood are similarly bereft of planting, I am of the view that this should not be encouraged as cumulatively such urbanisation detracts from the locale. In the absence of any indication of borders for shrubs or hedges to establish and mature, I consider that the scheme represents a harsh and intrusive form of development.
7. Consequently, there is harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and street scene, This is in contravention of Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local

Plan Core Strategy 2014 (CS), which seeks to secure proposals of acceptable scale and appearance, and the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Highway safety

8. The Council argues that the scheme raises concerns given the close proximity to the junction between Central Avenue and Ascot Road, which could cause a highway hazard due to manoeuvres on and off the highway. I appreciate that a vehicle emerging from the driveway near to the intersection is an obvious safety threat.
9. However, I observed that visibility along the pavements and highway at and around the junction is clear. Furthermore, similar vehicular manoeuvres into and out of domestic accesses occur along local roads, with these being infrequent, of short duration and normally conducted at low speed. The prospect of reversing to and from the appeal site would therefore be little different to the existing situation with other properties elsewhere, and there is no suggestion that any incidents have arisen due to conflict between highway users in the neighbourhood.
10. I have read the appeal decision provided by the Council; still, this relates to a site on a classified highway where this is a significant volume of traffic and is not, therefore, directly comparable to the proposal before me.
11. The Highway Authority has indicated that the crossover would not be approved due to the proximity of a street tree; this is a separate issue and does not accrue weight in the planning balance.
12. In the absence of any compelling evidence to the contrary, I am drawn to conclude that the development would not have a detrimental impact on highway safety. It would comply with CS Policy CS11, the Council's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021), Kent County Council's Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self Assessment 2023 and the Framework as far as they relate to reducing road danger and improving street safety, comfort, convenience and amenity.

Other matters

13. I recognise that the development would provide safety and convenience for the appellant and his family and would allow for practical charging of electric vehicles. Moreover, that a new care home has recently opened opposite the site. However, these matters do not outweigh the detriment I have reasoned above.

Conclusion

14. Having regard to the above and all other issues advanced, the appeal is dismissed.

C Hall

INSPECTOR