



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 April 2025

by **C J Leigh BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/25/3360101

9 Wheatcroft, South Hill Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1LA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Olivia Young against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 20240350.
 - The development proposed is creation of vehicular access and hard standing.
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Preliminary matters

1. I have used the description of development contained in the Council's decision notice as that is more accurate and concise than the description on the application form.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for creation of vehicular access and hard standing at 9 Wheatcroft, South Hill Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 1LA in accordance with the terms of the application ref 20240350, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) No development shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the hardstanding and the boundary wall of the development hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
 - 3) Prior to the approved hardstanding first coming into use, the applicant must provide a vehicle crossover to the full width of the proposed hardstanding to the requirements of Kent County Council Highways and Transportation .
 - 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no gates shall be installed across the vehicular access and driveway hereby permitted.
 - 5) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site location plan, Existing block plan, Proposed block plan, Drawing 1A (existing site layout), Drawing 2A (proposed site layout).

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Windmill Hill Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a modern end of terrace house that lies within the wider Windmill Hill Conservation Area. The Conservation Area covers a wider area of Gravesend where there are narrow lanes that wind up the hill with terraces and pairs of villas set back from the pavements, and houses generally appear of good quality. There are green spaces within the Area which, together with the set-back of houses, presents a spacious character to the street. The significance of the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset derives from these features.
5. The terrace of which the appeal property forms part is different in appearance to the historic houses, though being a two storey terrace that fronts the road has some consistency with other properties in the area. There is a short set-back back from the road, with the appeal property having a larger front/side garden, which turns the corner and fronts a turning head and garage access to the Wheatcroft properties. The proposed works would see the removal of part of a low wall to provide a new off-street parking area.
6. I acknowledge that the Council's Windmill Hill Conservation Area Character Appraisal identifies the loss of front gardens and boundary walls and railings as detrimental to the appearance of historic character of the area. In this instance, though, I consider the changes would have very little effect on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The new parking area would be seen next to the large area of street parking, turning area and access to the garages, largely to the side of the house and the end of the terrace. A front garden area would be retained between No. 9 and the highway. There would not be a noticeable 'hardening' in the appearance of the street scene, with the character of the wider Area remaining spacious with houses set back from the roads.
7. Thus, on the main issue I conclude that the character and appearance would be preserved, and there would be no effect on the significance of the heritage asset. The proposal would therefore satisfy saved Policy TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994, and Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014, whose overall objective is to require development proposals to integrate with the surrounding area and be of good design, and to protect and enhance the historic environment including conservation areas. There would also be no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework that places great weight on the conservation of designated heritage assets.
8. Planning permission is therefore granted. I have attached conditions suggested by the Council requiring the submission of details relating to materials, and for works to be undertaken in accordance with the approved drawings, to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development. I have attached conditions requiring the provision of a crossover before use of the hardstanding, and to prevent the installation of gates, in the interests of highway safety. I have modified some conditions to ensure precision and enforceability.

C J Leigh
INSPECTOR