
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 October 2017

by J L Cheesley BA(Hons) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 27 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/17/3181699

62 Mackenzie Way, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5UB

- 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 Mrs Sivasubramarniam Muraliharan against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20170160 was refused by notice dated 31 July 2017.
 - The development proposed is the creation of a vehicular access over grass verge to hardstanding in front garden.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal property lies within a row of dwellings fronting Mackenzie Way. A grass verge is situated along the frontage of these properties. I consider that this grass verge, alongside others in the vicinity, make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area by providing verdant soft landscaping in this built up area.
 4. The proposal includes the removal of a large part of the front boundary wall and the construction of a new tarmac crossover across the pavement and grass verge to the front of the property.
 5. From my observations, I consider that the loss of the grass verge would significantly erode the soft landscape quality of the streetscape. The stark appearance of the proposed tarmac and loss of the existing soft landscaping quality of the grass verge would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
 6. I have seen the crossover at 68 Mackenzie Way and understand from the Council that there is no record of planning permission having been granted for that crossover. I am of the opinion that the loss of the grass verge at the front
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of that property detracts from the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The presence of harmful development elsewhere is not a good reason to allow similar development. Therefore, I have attributed limited weight to this example in my determination of this appeal.

7. The Council has raised concern regarding precedent. I have determined the proposal before me on its individual merits, but acknowledge that to allow the proposal would make it very difficult for the Council to resist similar development.
8. I note the personal circumstances of the appellant and sympathise with the problems associated with parking close to the premises. However, for the reasons stated above, I have found in the wider public interest.
9. For the reasons stated above and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Thus, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) where it seeks to ensure that new development is visually attractive and conserves and enhances local character.

J L Cheesley

INSPECTOR