



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 September 2019 by Mariam Noorgat BSc (Hons)

Decision by Andrew Owen BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 October 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/D/19/3230743

Downend, Norwood Lane, Meopham, Gravesend DA13 0YE

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Knowlson against the decision of Gravesham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20180878, is dated 20 August 2018, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2019.
 - The development proposed is erection of a 2 bay garage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the development on the character and appearance of the area and the settings of the nearby Grade II listed building, Nevill House, and the Hook Green Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a two-storey detached house, located on the south side of Norwood Lane and is adjacent to the Conservation Area. It is setback a fair distance from the public highway of Norwood Lane. The immediate neighbouring property to the west (Elmo), properties to the east and north vary in scale and design but a common shared feature is the spacious front gardens and significant setback of any built form from the front boundaries. As such, this provides an open and spacious feel and view. In particular, the attached front garage at The Bield is significantly setback from the front boundary treatment and so does not diminish the open and spacious feel. There are properties beyond Elmo to the west and north west which are close to the public highway, such as Alexandra House, however, this is a small section of the road leading up to the junction with Wrotham Road and is distinctively different to the majority of Norwood Lane.
5. The proposed development would introduce built form close to the front boundary which is an uncommon feature along Norwood Lane. Although

landscaping is proposed to the front boundary, this would not be likely to screen the proposal satisfactorily, including from views from the east, due to the limited space available for it within the appeal site, and as such I do not consider that a condition requiring landscaping would be effective. Moreover, any existing retained planting cannot be relied upon in the long term as evidenced by fact that the mature trees outside Elmo, in situ at the time of the application, are no longer present, allowing clear views from the west. As such the proposal would be a prominent and visually intrusive development in the street scene which would erode the otherwise open and spacious character of the area.

6. The Grade II Listed Building, Nevill House, is described as being originally set in a rural context and is set within the Conservation Area. I consider the openness, described above, created by the undeveloped front gardens of nearby properties provides part of the listed building's setting and significance and this openness contributes positively to the setting of the conservation area. The proposed development, although on the opposite side of Nevill House, would detract from the open nature of the building's setting when viewed from the east and west along Norwood Lane.
7. As such, the proposal would harm the setting of the listed building and the setting of the conservation area. Although the harm would be less than substantial, the benefit of the proposal; being able to manoeuvre within the site such that it would no longer be necessary to reverse out of the site onto the road, would not outweigh that harm. Particularly as I see no reason why the development would facilitate manoeuvres that the current site could not.
8. For these reasons, therefore, the proposed development would conflict with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy, (September 2014), which seek to ensure developments respect the local character and preserve the historic environment respectively. It further conflicts with Saved Policy TC2 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review, November 1994, which seeks to preserve the integrity of listed buildings. These policies are echoed in the National Planning Policy Framework under sections 12 and 16.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Mariam Noorgat

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

10. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR