



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 March 2025

by **SJ Desai BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 April 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E2205/D/25/3358517

39 Gordon Close, Ashford, Kent TN24 8RG

- 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 Bushra Sheeza against the decision of Ashford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is PA/2024/1517.
 - The development proposed is a two-storey side extension.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description of the development on the planning application form in the banner heading, removing references that do not relate to development.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposed development upon the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the area; and
 - the effect upon parking provision and highway safety;

Reasons

Character and appearance

4. The appeal property is a two storey, semi-detached dwelling, within an area of relatively modern planned housing development. The dwelling, and the attached pair of No 41 Gordon Close, appear largely unaltered and present a strongly symmetrical appearance.
5. Properties within the area are generally semi-detached or form part of small groups of terraces. Many appear to present in their originally planned form, with limited numbers of significant alterations visible. Dwellings are visible as being set well back from the road and characterised by a variety of separation gaps between buildings, giving the area a fairly spacious, unified and identifiable character clearly apparent in the street scene.
6. The proposed development would have a width of approximately 3m, be built in line with the front building line of the main dwelling and extend the ridgeline of the

existing roof. It would extend the host dwelling towards the neighbouring, end of terrace property, 37 Gordon Close.

7. As a result of its significant scale, position and lack of setbacks, the proposed development would fail to be subordinate to the host dwelling. It would result in a somewhat dominant and harmful addition to the host dwelling.
8. The proposed development would also significantly unbalance the pair of semi-detached dwellings of which it forms part. It would also close the existing gap between the appeal site dwelling and neighbouring No. 37 to create a 'terracing effect' when viewed from the street scene, removing the existing sense of spaciousness between buildings.
9. My attention has been drawn to an extension at 37 Gordon Close. Whilst I do not have the full details of the circumstances that led to the extension being developed, I note that this is an end of terrace dwelling. That extension is also of a different design and its development still maintained a sizeable gap between it and the gable elevation of the appeal property at that time. Its circumstances do not represent a direct parallel to the appeal property and I cannot conclude the appellant's scheme has been viewed unequally in-light of its effects, or that this appeal scheme would result in improved cohesion with No 37, or be of benefit to symmetry or the street scene. Its existence does not justify development which would otherwise result in harmful effects, and I have determined the appeal based on its own planning merits.
10. I therefore find the proposal would result in significant harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the surrounding area. As such, it would conflict with Policies SP6 and HOU8 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 (2019) (the ALP) and Supplementary Guidance Note 10 'Domestic Extensions in Urban and Rural Areas' (2004). These require, amongst other matters, that extensions or alterations are suitable in terms of size and scale, maintain an appropriate level of spaciousness and contribute positively to the character of the area. The proposal would also conflict with the Framework, which seeks to ensure that developments are visually attractive and add to the overall quality of the area.

Parking provision and highway safety

11. Properties within the street largely benefit from off-street parking within front forecourts. On-street parking opportunities are available within Gordon Close, albeit these are limited by vehicle accesses, road markings and traffic slowing measures.
12. The proposal would result in the loss of an area of the existing front driveway, which currently contributes to off-street parking within the appeal property. In consequence, only one adequately sized off-street parking space would be available for the host property residents rather than the two that currently exist and are sought by Local Plan Policy TRA3a.
13. It has not been substantiated in the Council's case that any additional on-street parking resulting from the proposal is likely to have a significant impact upon the free flow or movement of vehicles in Gordon Close. However, inadequately sized parking spaces have the potential to result in parked vehicles overhanging the adjacent footway. This has the potential to obstruct or impede users of the footway, result in user conflict, and so be harmful to highway convenience and safety.

14. The appellant refers to the potential to provide for adequately sized off-street parking spaces by making alterations to the front garden. However, the proposed plans do not show how this would be achieved to ensure there would be satisfactory arrangements, and I have determined the appeal based on the plans before me and upon which the Council determined the application. Even were it to have been demonstrated to be the case, provision of adequate parking as is similar to currently exists, would be a neutral matter.
15. However, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, the proposal would not make suitable provision for off-street car parking, resulting in harm to highway safety. As such, I find conflict with Policy TRA3a of the ALP and the Residential Parking SPD (2010) which, amongst other matters, seek to avoid adverse impacts on the use of footways and highway safety.

Other matters

16. The Council concluded the proposal would not result in harmful living conditions to the host dwelling and neighbouring occupiers, and based upon the evidence before me, I see no reason to disagree. However, compliance with such policies would be a neutral matter in the balance and does not weigh in favour of the appeal scheme.
17. I recognise the appellants' desire to upgrade the dwelling to secure additional living space for the appellant's family. However, it has not been demonstrated that this could not be achieved in a more sympathetic manner, or that other alternative solutions are not available to meet the appellant's accommodation requirements. Therefore, I do not consider that the personal circumstances outlined provide sufficient justification to outweigh the harm I have identified from the proposal.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above, the development conflicts with the development plan and there are no material considerations of sufficient weight to indicate that the proposed development should be determined otherwise than in accordance with the development plan. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

SJ DESAI

INSPECTOR