



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 April 2025

by **C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 13 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/D/25/3361988

13 Totnes Road, Welling, Bexley DA16 1BU

- 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 G Ghafoor against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application ref. is 24/02868/FUL.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of a single storey side and rear extension following demolition of existing garage and conservatory and alterations to front driveway.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on a) the character and appearance of the local area; and b) highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is a two-storey, semi-detached dwelling with off-street parking on a driveway to the front, in a predominantly residential neighbourhood. Other properties in the street scene generally consist of detached and semi-detached houses of similar size but with varying detailing and external materials.
 4. The new retaining walls to either side of the proposed driveway are shown on the elevation plans to be 1.658 metres tall, projecting forwards such that they would abut the public highway at this height. The scale would be considerably greater than other domestic boundary treatments to the front of properties in the street scene, and the size and solid nature of the walls would appear dominant and discordant. This would be injurious to the setting.
 5. I appreciate that the existing driveway is too narrow and makes it difficult to park a car on the slope, nonetheless this does not outweigh the harm I have identified. I saw that other dwellings in the area have redeveloped front driveways, yet these are generally bordered by lower supporting walls and as such are not comparable to the proposal before me. I also acknowledge the appellant's willingness to revise the scheme, however I have not been presented with any alternative plans in this respect.
 6. I therefore conclude that the scheme would result in detriment to the character and appearance of the local area. This would run contrary to Policies SP5 and DP11 of the Bexley Local Plan April 2023 (LP), which requires development to be of an acceptable scale and design.
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Highway safety

7. The parking area would be obscured for the most part due to the height of supporting walls. The use of the drive would involve either reversal into or off the highway, with consequent manoeuvres taking place on the road. A vehicle reversing out of the appeal site in particular would not be clearly identifiable by other drivers, nor would they be able to see oncoming traffic and pedestrians, which has the potential to cause conflict.
8. The Highway Authority have also indicated that the dimensions of the proposed parking spaces would not meet the standard bay size. This would not be an acceptable situation for pedestrians, who are vulnerable to vehicles obstructing the pavement as they reduce the useable width of the path and may have to walk on the road. Consequently, I find that the proposals would result in safety implications due to the potential conflict between highway users.
9. The development would therefore undermine highway safety, contravening Policies SP10 and DP24 of the LP and Policy T6 of the London Plan in relation to impacts on the transport network and car parking. The proposal is also inconsistent with the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, which advocates that proposals should not have an unacceptable effect on highway safety.

Conclusion

10. Having regard to the above and all other issues advanced, the appeal fails.

C Hall

INSPECTOR