



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 July 2025

by **C Hall BSc MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/H2265/W/25/3364087

111 Douglas Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2UD

- 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 and Mrs Songhurst against the decision of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.
 - The application ref. is TM/24/01150/PA.
 - The development proposed is for the erection of a two storey side extension to create an additional two bedroom dwelling, including reconfiguration of the roof, new dormer windows, internal reconfiguration of the existing dwelling and associated access and landscaping works.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the erection of a two storey side extension to create an additional two bedroom dwelling, including reconfiguration of the roof, new dormer windows, internal reconfiguration of the existing dwelling and associated access and landscaping works at 111 Douglas Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2UD in accordance with the application ref. TM/24/01150/PA, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a detached, two-storey dwelling on Douglas Road in a wider estate consisting of predominantly residential properties. Buildings are broadly two-storey in nature with detached, semi-detached and terraced units evident, of different design, external materials and detailing. Taken in the round these characteristics demonstrate the variation in built form within the street scene, and such diversity adds to the visual interest of the area.
 4. The development would be attached to no.111, with its front and rear elevations aligning alongside the host property. Although it would result in the loss of part of the side garden area, the proposed site plan demonstrates that a reasonable extent of land would still be retained between the two-storey flank wall of the proposal and the access drive serving the parking court at the rear. This would ensure that a degree of spaciousness would endure, and allow the scheme to assimilate with the neighbourhood without appearing over-developed or discordant.
 5. Furthermore, I am satisfied that adequate space would be available at the front and side to allow for new trees and shrubs to be planted and mature; such measures would be the subject of a condition. This notwithstanding, I agree with the Council that a tall closeboard fence would be undesirable along the front and side borders, a hard and soft landscaping scheme would provide for an alternative solution to the benefit of the area.
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6. In design terms, I am satisfied that the extension would visually connect with the overall appearance of the existing residence, and moreover in the context of the multi-faceted character of the street scene I find that there would be no material harm as a result. The new dormer windows in the rear roof slope are shown to be small and with pitched roofs; to my mind their diminutive scale and modest positioning would not have an adverse impact upon the local environs. The resultant amenity space for both dwellings, whilst modest in extent, would be of useable size and shape with sufficient distances to the boundaries so as to prevent a cramped form of development.
7. I therefore conclude that the scheme would integrate with the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would be compliant with Policy CP24 of the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007 (CS) and Policy SQ1 of the Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan Document 2010 (DPD), which expect schemes to be of high quality, of appropriate scale and to reflect local distinctiveness.

Other Matters

8. In its appeal statement the Council has introduced new matters that did not form part of the decision notice, noting firstly the adoption of updated parking standards from Kent County Council. The layout plan shows that the parking space for the new dwelling would be located in the court at the rear of the site; whilst the width would be slightly less than expected I am satisfied that the shortfall would be marginal and this deficit would not affect the usability of the space. In any event, space could be provided to ensure the standards are met by re-positioning the proximal boundary treatment, which can be incorporated into the landscaping scheme.
9. The Council also argues that a legal agreement is required to secure the new house as a self-build development. The appellant has provided a document to this effect duly signed and dated; I am satisfied that the obligation is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
10. Local residents have expressed a range of other concerns over the impact of the proposal, however these issues would either be dealt with through the imposition of conditions, or have been previously addressed in the planning officer's Committee report or the appellant's submissions. I sympathise with the strength of feeling on the issue, nevertheless there are no sound planning reasons for the appeal to be dismissed based on the policy provisions before me.

Conditions

11. I have considered the imposition of conditions in light of advice in Planning Policy Guidance and the Framework. I have altered the wording of some of the conditions suggested by the Council in the interests of clarity and necessity.
12. In addition to the standard implementation condition, a condition requiring the development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted drawings is reasonable and necessary for the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning. As render is not prevalent to the front elevations of properties in the immediate street scene a condition requiring external materials to be submitted would provide for a satisfactory appearance.
13. The submission of details concerning hard and soft landscaping would ensure that the external appearance of the proposal is satisfactory to integrate with the area. Given the close relationship between the new plots, removing Classes A, B, D and E and change of use permitted development rights is both reasonable and necessary to protect the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. Conditions relating to car parking, cycle storage and refuse would ensure the provision and retention of such facilities on site.

Conclusion

14. Having regard to the above and all other relevant issues, I allow the appeal.

C Hall

INSPECTOR

Schedule of conditions

- 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: TBO2410-01A, TBO2410-03A, TBO2410-06, TBO2410-07.
- 3) No development above the damp proof course shall take place until details of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces 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.
- 4) Prior to the first occupation of the new dwelling, a scheme of hard and soft landscaping shall submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall include details of all existing trees and hedgerows on the land, identify those to be retained and set out measures for their protection throughout the course of development.

The approved hard landscaping scheme shall be implemented prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved and maintained thereafter. All planting, seeding or turfing comprised in the approved details of soft landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding seasons following the occupation of the building or the completion of the development, whichever is the sooner; and any trees or plants which within a period of 5 years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.

- 5) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), no development permitted by virtue of Classes A, B, D and E of Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Order shall be undertaken.
- 6) The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the vehicle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with drawing no TBO2410-03A. Thereafter those spaces shall be retained for the parking of vehicles only.
- 7) Prior to occupation of the development, details of secure cycle storage facilities shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented on site prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter permanently retained in accordance with the approved details.
- 8) Prior to occupation of the development hereby approved, full details of a refuse and recycling area shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall be implemented in full prior to occupation of the development and retained thereafter.