



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 September 2025

by **SJ Desai BSc MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U2235/D/25/3369244

82 Mote Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6EW

- 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 Mr Shalim Karim against the decision of Maidstone Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/501428/FULL.
 - The development is described as: 'Single storey side and rear extension, hip to gable loft conversion with rear dormer and front elevation roof lights, front elevation retaining wall and off street parking for 2no cars and dropped kerb to Mote Road.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have used the description on the planning application form in the banner heading removing words that are not development.
3. The Council accepts that the proposed single storey side and rear extension, single storey rear extension and roof extensions are subservient and acceptable. Based upon the evidence before me, and my observations on site, I agree.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed off-street parking and associated alterations to the site frontage on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a two-storey semi-detached dwelling positioned on the southern side of Mote Road, close to the junction with Square Hill Road. A detached garage is positioned at the rear of the property, accessed from Hastings Road.
6. The property has an elevated front garden enclosed by a brick retaining wall with elements of fencing. This frontage forms part of generally consistent and cohesive boundary treatment evident at 76, 78, 80, 84 and 86 Mote Road. Similar treatments, front gardens set behind traditional brick and stone walls, are also reflected at 88 Mote Road and fronting properties directly opposite. Collectively, these features establish a coherent and well-defined localised streetscape.

7. The existing frontage makes a positive contribution to the street scene, providing enclosure and visual softness that reinforces the consistent and unified character along this otherwise relatively heavily trafficked route.
8. The proposal seeks to replace this arrangement with a markedly lowered boundary wall, a substantial opening for vehicle access and the loss of a significant proportion of soft landscaping in favour of extensive hardstanding.
9. Such alterations would appear discordant and incongruous when set against the prevailing and established character of front gardens enclosed by boundary walls. The loss of enclosure, combined with the dominance of hard surfacing, would create a stark and visually intrusive frontage, at odds with the softer, more traditional settings that define neighbouring dwellings.
10. The proposal would be highly visible in the street scene, as well as from wider public vantage points from Square Hill Road, thereby compounding its detrimental impact on local character.
11. The appellant has referred to examples of similar developments in the area, but no substantive details have been provided regarding specific examples. In any case, each proposal must be determined on its own merits. While off-street parking may be present elsewhere along Mote Road, the immediate group of dwellings remain notably intact in terms of frontage character, and it is this localised context that would be harmed.
12. For the reasons set out above, I conclude the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. Therefore, it would conflict with Policies LPRSP15 and LPRHOU2 of the Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Review 2021-2028 (2024), which seek to ensure that development retains traditional boundary treatments and respects local character.

Other Matters

13. The appellant has provided evidence of personal circumstances, including medical needs. In considering this, I have had due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. The proposal would offer the appellant more convenient parking, and I attach moderate weight to this consideration. However, the harm arising from the development outweighs these benefits, including those relating to eliminating discrimination against persons with the protected characteristics of disability, advancing equality of opportunity for those persons and fostering good relations between them and others.
14. There were no objections from the Council in respect of highway safety subject to details being secured by condition. However, the absence of such harm would be a neutral matter in the balance and does not weigh in favour of the appeal proposal, nor does it mitigate or outweigh the harm identified.

Conclusion

15. The proposal does not accord with the development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision should be made other than in accordance with it.
16. For the reasons given above, I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

SJ Desai

INSPECTOR