

TITLE: **Planning Support Statement**
CLIENT: Allison Franks
LOCATION: Chestnut Green Cottage, Racefield Close, Shorne DA12 3EL
ISSUED: Tuesday, 18 July 2023

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Support Statement (PSS) has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, Allison Franks in respect of 'the site', comprising Chestnut Green Cottage, Racefield Close, Shorne, Kent DA12 3EL. The application proposes;
 - Retention of detached outbuilding, log store and insertion of rooflight
- 1.2. This Planning Support Statement is authored by Charles Raven, a Principal Planner at Axiom Planning.
- 1.3. Charles is a Chartered Town Planner with over 20 years of both Local Authority and private practice experience, holding an RTPI accredited BSc degree in City and Regional Planning and an RTPI accredited Diploma in Town Planning.
- 1.4. The main purposes of this planning statement are to:
 - Describe the site and surrounding area, along with any notable land designations.
 - Set out the full planning Policy context in relation to the proposed development.
 - Detail, in policy terms, the extent to which the development accords with the requirements of each identified relevant Local Plan Policy.
 - Provide an overall, objective and professional conclusion on whether the proposed development has the appropriate attributes to warrant being granted planning permission.

Documents included within this Planning Application

- Design and Access Statement
- Existing Plans
- Proposed Plans

2. Site Description

- 2.1. The application site comprises a fairly recent detached chalet style bungalow located on the corner of Racefield Close and Tanyard Hill within the village of Shorne. The site is located within, but on the edge of the Chestnut Green Conservation Area, designated in 1999. The terrace of properties to the south of the site are known as Park Cottages and also sit within the conservation area. Racefield Close is a post-war crescent of close knit bungalows and semi-detached dwellings and are located outside of the conservation area.
- 2.2. The principal elevation of the application property faces Racefield Close, off of which there is a vehicular access, which also provides a right of access to the adjacent Park Cottages. Although this is rarely used by the occupiers of the cottages.



3. Planning History

3.1. Inspection of the Gravesham Borough Council's online planning database has revealed the following relevant planning history;

Application Number	Description	Decision
20070461	Erection of a detached single storey, two bedroom dwelling	Granted
20120179	Erection of a detached single storey, two bedroom dwelling	Granted
20131023	Non-material amendment to planning permission ref 20120179 to move plot boundary to allow more space in adjoining property, 1 Park Cottages	Granted
20140809	Erection of a detached three bedroom bungalow fronting Racefield Close with two dormer windows in the front roof slope and rooms in the roof space *Revised Drawings*	Granted
20150247	Application for approval of various conditions in relation to the above (inc etched garden shed and bin store)	Granted
20150684	Non-material amendment to planning permission ref 20140809 to replace living room window with French doors, remove kitchen door and installation of one additional roof light in rear (south) elevation	Granted

3.2. Consideration of the site's planning history will be discussed later on in this document where relevant.

4. Planning Policy

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK 2021 (NPPF)

- 4.1. In July 2021, the Government published an updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This provides an overarching framework for the production of local policy documents and the consideration of development proposals.
- 4.2. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (NPPF paragraph 2).
- 4.3. The policies in the Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication (NPPF paragraph 218).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 4.4. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF which, as already stated, is a material consideration in planning decisions (NPPF, paragraph 2) states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.5. Sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. There was no specific definition of sustainable development within the original 2012 NPPF but its Ministerial Foreword stated that it concerned making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. These comments were formalised in paragraph 8 of the 2019 NPPF. The 2021 version strengthens the wording in relation to the environmental objective which is now, “to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment”.
- 4.6. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that at its heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 states that for decision taking this means,

“approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. The application of policies in this Framework” (the NPPF)” that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.

DECISION MAKING

- 4.7. Local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive and creative way (NPPF, paragraph 38). They should use “the full range of planning tools available” and “work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve economic, social and environment conditions of the area. Decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible” (paragraph 38).
- 4.8. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible and within the statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicants in writing (NPPF, paragraph 47).
- 4.9. Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions (NPPF, paragraph 55).
- 4.10. Conditions that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided, unless there is a clear justification and the applicants writing consent is first obtained (NPPF, paragraph 56).

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

- 4.11. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that in considering development proposals it should be ensured that, “appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be - or have been - taken up, given the type of development and its location and that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users...”.
- 4.12. “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe” (NPPF, paragraph 111).

WELL DESIGNED PLACES

- 4.13. Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states, “the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”.
- 4.14. Paragraph 130 states planning decisions should ensure developments:
 - a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

4.15. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

4.16. Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states,

“when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any

potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance”.

4.17. Paragraph 202 states,

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

4.18. Paragraph 203 states,

“The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset”.

NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NPPG)

4.19. The Department for Communities and Local Government operates the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The following sections of the NPPG have been assessed in relation to this appraisal:

- Design: Process and Tools
- Historic Environment

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.20. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that development be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that in the determination of applications, the authority shall have regard to:

- The provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application;
- Any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application;
- Any other material consideration.

4.21. In Gravesham Borough Council (GBC), the adopted Development Plan consists of:

- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)
- Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) - saved Policies

- Kent County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 (2020)

4.22. Other material policy considerations will arise from the following documents;

- Conservation Areas Maintenance/Replacement Windows and Doors Guidance SPD
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD
- Chestnut Green Conservation Area Appraisal SPD
- Kent Vehicle Parking Standards SPG

4.23. Policies considered material to this appraisal are identified below;

Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

Policy	Page No.	Description
Policy CS01	26	Sustainable Development
Policy CS11	113	Transport
Policy CS19	147	Development and Design Principles
Policy CS20	150	Heritage and the Historic Environment

Local Plan First Review 1994 - saved Policies

Policy	Page No.	Description
Policy TC3	50	Development Affecting Conservation Areas - reviewed as part of Development Management Policies DPD (Regulation 18 consultation carried out)

5. Material Planning Considerations

DECISION MAKING

- 5.1. The determination of an application for planning permission is to be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 70(2) TCPA 1990 provides that the decision-maker shall have regard to the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ('PCPA 2004') provides:

‘If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise’.

- 5.2. The NPPF is a material consideration for these purposes, but it is policy guidance not statute, and does not displace the statutory presumption in favour of the development plan: see NPPF paragraph 2 and 12. It must be exercised consistently with the statutory scheme giving primacy to the development plan, and not displace or distort it: *Suffolk Coastal DC v Hopkins Homes Ltd*¹.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 5.3. The proposed development entails the retention of a detached outbuilding, log store and roof light to the host dwelling. The outbuilding was constructed in the same location as the previously approved garden shed and bin store. For clarity, the full development would usually constitute permitted development, however, these rights were removed at the time of the approval of the host dwelling.
- 5.4. The outbuilding was built upon an existing raised garden slab and measures 3.96m to 4.12m in width, 5.3m in length, with a height of 2.27m measured on the boundary. The structure is finished in a timber dark stained weatherboard, with a red clay hipped roof, part of which is flat but not readily visible. The small flank area protruding above the boundary fence is finished in a featheredge board to reflect the finish of the fence. Historic cast iron diamond lattice casement windows which were left over from the refurbishment of the adjacent No.1 Park Cottages have been used, together with black cast iron rainwater goods. A black finished roller shutter door compliments the appearance of the building, matching the colour of the elevations. The outbuilding is used for louder kitchen appliances, the storage of bins, bicycles and a motorcycle, together with other garden paraphernalia.

¹ [2017] UKSC 37, per Lord Carnwath at [21]

- 5.5. The open log store has been built to compliment the finish of the outbuilding and is located at the end of the driveway, adjacent to the outbuilding. The additional roof light is located on the rear facing southern roof slope and is identical to the previously approved three roof lights (the third being permitted as a non-material amendment).
- 5.6. The justification for the works has been fully articulated within the submitted Design & Access Statement, there is no need to repeat those reasons here.

IMPACT ON CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA

- 5.7. As stated, the application site is located within the designated Chestnut Green Conservation Area. The adopted Conservation Area Appraisal recognises the view up Tanyard Hill past the Park Cottages, as one of the most important into the Conservation Area. The scale and siting of the outbuilding ensures that these important views are not compromised in any way. As figure 2 demonstrates, the development is not at all visible. The outbuilding is set back approximately 8.5m from the end elevation of the application property facing on to Tanyard Hill. Even without the mature boundary screening currently in place, the structure would barely be visible from within the conservation area boundary and in no way diminishes the character, appearance or experience of the heritage asset. As with the approved garden shed, the outbuilding remains subservient to the host dwelling and is commensurate with the multitude of existing garden buildings found throughout the area, both within and outside of the conservation area.



Figure 2: View from Tanyard Hill

- 5.8. This lack of impact, harmful or otherwise, is compounded by the use of the highest quality materials, further ensuring the appearance of the structure is entirely in keeping with the prevailing development within the conservation area. The scale of building, siting, set back from the host dwelling as well as neighbouring Park Cottages ensures there is no visible impact on the setting of the cottages. The development also maintains the sense of openness at the corner of Tanyard Hill and Racefield Close. The siting of the outbuilding is in the most unobtrusive location within the plot, as previously agreed with the LPA through the siting of the previous garden shed and bin store.
- 5.9. In addition, the outbuilding and log store are only glimpsed momentarily when travelling down Racefield Close. As demonstrated in figure 3, the building presents the appearance of a garage in the most logical position, complementing and entirely subservient to the host dwelling. The outbuilding and store are located at the end of the parking area and easily assimilate into the domestic character of the plot. The informed use of materials ensures the built form does not compete with the main dwelling. The large garden structure serving No.1 Park Cottages is clearly visible beyond the outbuilding and log store. It should be noted that the eaves level of the outbuilding is clearly lower than this adjacent garden structure, further reducing the physical impact of the built form.



Figure 3: View from Racefield Close

IMPACT ON AMENITY

- 5.10. The height of the outbuilding is the same height as the garden shed it replaced, which was approved under the previous application for the dwelling. Whilst the full height of the built form is closer to the boundary, it would still be significantly below the height that would usually be permissible under permitted development and a few centimetres over the 2m height of fence also permissible. Figure 4 clearly demonstrates the minimal impact the built form has on the living conditions of the occupiers of the adjacent property, and also demonstrates the level and extent of existing garden outbuildings found throughout the immediate area.



Figure 4: Aerial view from South

- 5.11. The siting of the outbuilding ensures the host dwelling remains entirely accessible and does not have any harmful impact on the living conditions of the occupiers of the property. The use of the outbuilding for large kitchen appliances such as washing machines and tumble dryers means the occupiers now enjoy more peaceful use of their open plan living space.
- 5.12. The additional roof light is also visible in this image and is identical to the previously agreed three roof lights. The roof light does not have any harmful impact on the appearance of the dwelling, on the character of the area, or on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers. As stated, the LPA previously considered the third roof light to be de minimis.

PARKING AND TRANSPORT

- 5.13. Off road parking for motor vehicles remains unchanged and as approved. The outbuilding provides secure, fully accessible and covered storage for a motorcycle and bicycles. This therefore facilitates increased use of sustainable modes of transport and should be welcomed. The development fully complies with **Policy CS11** in this regard.

CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTED POLICY

- 5.14. The sections of **Policy CS19** of the Core Strategy (CS) which are relevant to the proposed development, states that “New development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It will conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment, integrate well with the surrounding local area and meet anti-crime standards...New development will be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land. New development will incorporate appropriate facilities for the storage and recycling of waste; and the layout of new development will create a safe and secure environment and provide surveillance to minimise opportunities for crime and vandalism”.
- 5.15. It has been demonstrated that the development uses the highest quality of materials to ensure the character and appearance of the conservation area is not diminished. The development successfully integrates with the host dwelling whilst ensuring it remains subservient. The amenities of existing and neighbouring occupiers are fully respected and no harmful impact has occurred. The secure outbuilding ensures the safe storage of bicycles, garden equipment and the applicants’ motorcycle. Unsightly refuse and recycling bins are also accommodated within the outbuilding. The development is in full compliance with the relevant sections of this policy.
- 5.16. The CS states that the Council will expect any proposals for development to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the heritage significance of any affected assets, their context and setting. Proposals should have regard to any relevant conservation area appraisals. **Policy CS20** goes on to state that “Proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough’s heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough”.
- 5.17. This statement confirms that the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal has been considered and subsequently demonstrated that the impact on the important view into the Chestnut Green Conservation Area as identified within the appraisal, has been preserved. The development results in a replacement structure which is a significantly higher quality than the wooden

structures previously in situ, providing an enhancement to the appearance of the conservation area.

- 5.18. It has been demonstrated that the development fully complies with the relevant policies contained within the CS and therefore, under **Policy CS01**, “planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan for Gravesham will be approved without delay”.
- 5.19. Saved **Policy TC3** of the Local Plan Review states that “Where development is acceptable in relation to other policies in this Plan, it will be carefully judged for its impact and will be expected to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. The Borough Council will expect applications to contain sufficient details to enable the impact of the proposal upon the conservation area to be assessed”.
- 5.20. It has been demonstrated that the development is fully compliant with all relevant policies contained within the Core Strategy. It has further been demonstrated that the development does not have any harmful impact on the character or appearance of the Chestnut Green Conservation Area and that its siting, scale, and high quality finish compared to the previous garden shed and bin store, is a positive addition to the area.
- 5.21. The Council’s adopted design guide for householders has been fully taken into consideration. As demonstrated throughout this statement, the outbuilding, log store and roof light are in full compliance with the requirements of the design guide. Adequate private amenity space is retained and the outbuilding is subordinate in scale to the existing dwelling and plot. The scale, siting and design of the building ensures that the development does not detract from the character of the area and does not result in any harmful impacts to residential amenity. Similarly, the provision of a visually identical rooflight and low-scale bin store, both being entirely in keeping with the scale, style and appearance of the host dwelling, are fully compliant with the design guide and relevant development plan policies.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. This Planning Appraisal has been prepared on behalf of Allison Franks in respect of 'the site' at Chestnut Green Cottage, Racefield Close, Shorne. The application proposes;
- Retention of detached outbuilding, log store and insertion of rooflight
- 6.2. The outbuilding has been located in the least obtrusive position available, is entirely subservient to the host dwelling, does not have any harmful impact on the character or appearance of the Chestnut Green Conservation Area, has been finished in high quality materials, allows the applicants the quiet enjoyment of their open plan living space, increases the security of high value goods, and replaces an amalgamation of unsightly garden structures.
- 6.3. It has been demonstrated that the development fully accords with the up-to-date development plan and that there are not any other material planning considerations which would indicate that the development should not be supported. The Local Planning Authority is therefore invited to grant planning permission.
- 6.4. If the Local Planning Authority requires any further clarification on any points raised, or if there are any issues that arise during the consideration of this application which would preclude the granting of planning permission, we would be grateful if we could be made aware and given the opportunity to respond prior to determination.
- 6.5. This concludes the Planning Support Statement.



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