

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompany an application for a Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed) under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The proposal seeks Certificate for the change of use from a C3 dwelling to a C4 6 person HMO. Proposed construction of a dormer within the side roof slope to facilitate habitable rooms, and conversion of existing garage to a gym with alterations to internal walls and roof from pitched to flat.

The scheme has been assessed against:

- The General Permitted Development Order (GPDO)
- Nationally prescribed HMO space standards
- Gravesham Borough Council HMO Amenity Standards

2. Site and Context

The site comprises an existing residential dwelling within an established residential area of Gravesend. The surrounding area is predominantly residential and includes properties operating as HMOs.

The proposal does not introduce any increase in footprint to the principal building and does not result in material harm to the character or appearance of the surrounding area.

3. Use and Amount

Existing Use

- Lawful residential use as a Class C3 dwellinghouse.

Proposed Use

- The change of use from a C3 dwelling to a C4 6 person HMO. Proposed construction of a dormer within the side roof slope to facilitate habitable rooms, and conversion of existing garage to a gym with alterations to internal walls and roof from pitched to flat
- The proposed bedroom does not exceed six

4. Layout and Accommodation

The proposal provides a mix of bedsit accommodation and standard bedrooms, supported by shared facilities.

Ground Floor

- Bedroom G-1: Bedsit – 16.5 m²
- Bedroom G-2: Bedsit – 13.4 m²

Both rooms exceed the minimum Gravesham bedsit size of 13.0 m².

First Floor

- Bedroom F-1 (Double): 10.0 m²
 - Of sufficient size to accommodate sleeping and living functions.
- Bedroom F-2: 7.3 m²
- Bedroom F-3: 6.6 m²

Bedrooms F-2 and F-3 meet minimum national standards and utilise shared facilities.

Loft Floor

- Loft Bedsit: 17.4 m² usable floor area
- Formed via a rear dormer.

All habitable rooms meet or exceed nationally prescribed minimum room sizes.

5. Communal Facilities

A shared kitchen, dining, and living area is provided at ground floor level.

- Living / dining area: 17.0 m², exceeding the Gravesham minimum requirement of 14.0 m².
- Kitchen provision includes:
 - Minimum 1000 mm × 600 mm fixed worktop.
 - 300 mm tiled splashback (or equivalent impervious finish) to sink, worktop, and cooker.
 - Layout compliant with Gravesham HMO standards.

As Bedroom F-1 includes its own living space, the overall communal provision remains proportionate and technically compliant.

6. Design

6.1 Loft Conversion (Permitted Development)

The loft conversion includes a rear dormer and has been designed to comply with permitted development tolerances:

- Additional roof volume below 40 cubic metres.
- No extension beyond the principal elevation fronting the highway.
- Materials to match the existing dwelling.

6.2 Garage Conversion (Permitted Development)

The proposal includes the **conversion of the existing garage to an ancillary Building**

The garage conversion will:

- Be carried out entirely within the existing footprint.
- Involve the conversion of existing garage to a gym with alterations to internal walls and roof from pitched to flat, with a maximum height of less than 2.5 metres above finished ground level.
- Be located within 2 metres of the site boundary, with the proposed roof height complying with permitted development limits.

Sections of the existing garage walls will be partially demolished and rebuilt where required to meet current Building Regulations standards, with all remaining walls made good, without increasing height or footprint.

The garage conversion is ancillary to the main use and results in no material impact on neighbouring amenity.

7. Fire Safety and Means of Escape

The property will be provided with a Grade D, Category LD2 fire detection system, including:

- Interlinked smoke alarms in circulation spaces.
- Heat detector in the kitchen.
- Fire blankets within kitchens.
- Carbon monoxide alarms where required.
- Fire alarm test logbook maintained on site.

Means of escape will be protected and kept clear in accordance with Gravesham Borough Council HMO standards.

8. Access

- Existing access arrangements retained.
- Safe and logical internal circulation provided.
- Refuse and servicing arrangements unchanged.

9. Compliance with Gravesham Borough Council HMO Amenity Standards

The proposal is fully compliant with Gravesham standards, including:

- Occupancy (6 Bed)
- Minimum bedroom and bedsit sizes.
- Communal living and kitchen provision.
- Bathroom and WC provision.
- Natural light, ventilation, and circulation.

(Refer to submitted HMO Compliance Table.)

10. Precedent

The proposal aligns with similar approved developments within the Borough, including:

- **Ref: 20250106** – LDC granted for 6-bed HMO with loft conversion/dormer.
- **Ref: 20250220** – LDC granted for C3 to C4 HMO with rear extension and loft conversion.
- **Ref: 20250546** – Permission granted for 7-person HMO with loft conversion.
- **Ref: 20251196** – Permission granted for 67-person HMO with loft conversion

11. Permitted Development Justification (GPDO)

The proposed loft conversion and garage conversion comply with Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, specifically:

- Part 1, Class B – Loft extensions within volume limits.
- Part 1, Class A – Alterations within the existing footprint.
- Part 1, Class E – Buildings and structures incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse.

The garage conversion retains the existing footprint and complies with the 2.5-metre height restriction for buildings within 2 metres of a boundary.

Accordingly, the operational development constitutes permitted development.

12. Conclusion

The proposed change of use, loft conversion, and garage conversion:

- Comply with permitted development legislation.
- Meet national HMO space standards.
- Fully satisfy Gravesham Borough Council HMO Amenity Standards; and
- Constitute lawful development under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The applicant respectfully requests that the Local Planning Authority grants a Lawful Development Certificate (Proposed)