

Heritage Impact Statement

151 Milton Road, Gravesend, Kent DA12 2RG



Project no. 1983

Dated: 23.05.2023

Client:

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1. Introduction

This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Design and Plan Consultants Ltd on behalf of Mr. Avtar Singh. This Heritage and Conservation Strategy document supports a full planning application for the conversion, refurbishment and extension to 151 Milton Road.

The purpose of this assessment is to comply with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by demonstrating that the applicant has understood the heritage significance of the listed building and the implications of proposed works.

The objective of this document is to detail how the fabric detail of the building will be respected and 151 Milton Road distinctive qualities sympathetically maintained, restored and enhanced. The conversion strategy has been developed following a broad understanding of the history and context of the buildings and will ensure a sensitive, practical and appropriate fabric strategy. All new elements will be carefully considered to ensure they fully respect the character and appearance of the building and conservation area context.

The development site is located in the Adjoining Conservation Area. 151 Milton Road is a three-storey building; the site is occupied for a shop on the ground floor and a studio and flat on the floor above, located on the southern side of the highway and adjacent to the Edwin Street.

Proposed Development

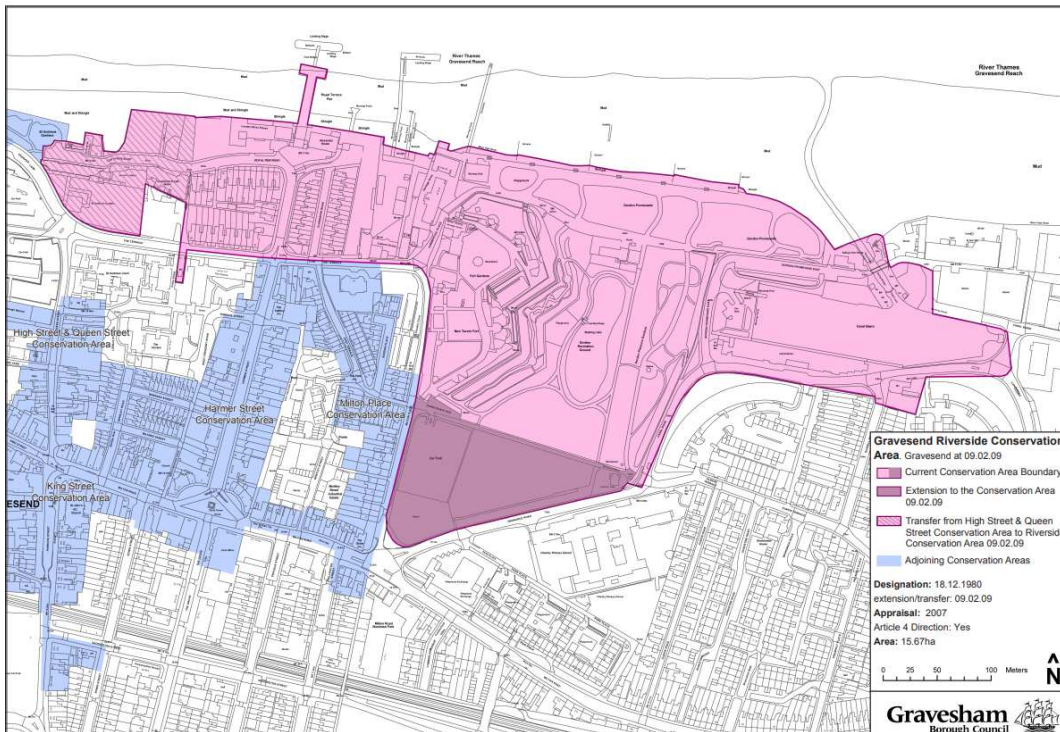
The intention for this application is the erection of single storey rear at first floor with ground floor remains unchanged. The extensions will increase the number of flats within the existing building. The development will comprise of a single storey rear extension to the main property.

2. Site and Surrounding

The application site is located on the southern side of the highway and adjacent to the Edwin Street. The site consists of a 3 storey building with 1 studio and 1 self contained flat.

Access to the flats is via the front shop fronting Milton Road. There is no provision for off-street car parking on site.

The site lies within the Gravesend Riverside Conservation Area. The Gravesend Riverside Conservation Area encompasses a long stretch of the Thames river frontage to the east of the town of Gravesend in Kent. The setting, close to London and at the mouth of the Thames estuary, defined the importance of Gravesend for many centuries. The town was the first port coming up the river toward London and a natural breaking point for ships on the tide. Traditionally, ships would land here on entering the river or complete victualling or embarking passengers before leaving.



The areas that have been identified as having a higher heritage significance the design intent has been to conserve and refurbish the existing fabric of the buildings with any necessary changes to be sensitive and kept to the absolute minimum. Where the heritage significance is deemed to be lower or neutral the scope for change has logically been considered to increase, albeit within the respectful context of the building.

A number of unlisted buildings have been identified as being buildings of townscape merit. Buildings identified as having 'townscape merit' will vary, but commonly they will be good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings where their style, detailing and building materials provides the streetscape with interest and variety. Most importantly, they make a

positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. Where a building has been heavily altered, and restoration would be impractical, they are excluded.

The site is situated within the Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area as defined by the adopted Local Plan Policies Map and is in a sustainable location. It is a few minutes' walking distance from the town centre where a range of services and facilities, including transport links are available. Educational and recreational facilities are within close proximity to the site.

3. Principle of Development

The NPPF set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Paragraph 2 notes that planning law requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and Paragraph 8 sets out the three objectives of achieving sustainable development being economic, social and environmental.

In terms of decision-making, Paragraph 11 states that where a development accords with a local plan, applications should be approved without delay. Where a plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. The NPPF further goes on to state at Paragraph 38 that LPAs should approach decisions on proposed developments in a positive and creative way and decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and consists of a mixture of single family dwellings and flats. The proposal would involve the creation of rear extension for 1 new flat within a few minutes walking distance from the Gravesend town centre which is an accessible and sustainable location for such development. Core Strategy Policy CS02 seeks to ensure the Borough's objectively assessed need for at least 6,170 new dwellings is met and prioritises development in the urban area. The Gravesham Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (2016 – 2021) states a need for 2,166 new dwellings up to the year 2021. The proposed development for a net increase of a flat would offer a modest contribution towards meeting this local need. Additionally, the site is situated within the Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area where Core Strategy Policy CS05 supports the provision of new residential development subject to a satisfactory living environment being achieved.

In terms of the sitting of the proposed building on the site, whilst this space would be amenity land, it is not being used for the same and remains under utilised. The proposal will bring this part of the site back into beneficial use and help in considerably improving the

street scene in line with Policy CS05 which states that within the Opportunity Area, the Council will support the redevelopment of under-used sites where this makes more efficient use of the sites and improves townscape character.

The proposed development on this site would therefore be in accordance with Policy CS02 of Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) which prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. It is also broadly in line with the referenced policies in the NPPF and as such, Gravesham Borough Council would be acceptable in principle.

Impact of the proposal on the Conservation Area

Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy accords a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of the heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource, central to the regeneration of the area and the reinforcement of sense of place. The policy states that securing viable, sustainable and appropriate futures for such assets at risk will need to be reconciled with the sensitivity to change that many present. Saved Policy TC3 of the Local Plan First Review states "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 Milton Road appraisal acknowledges that properties in this street are generally in a reasonable state of repair but suffer from the flow of traffic around the ring road and air quality issues. Many of the properties have been converted to flats and/or bedsits and as such many of the properties suffer from neglect.

In terms of appearance, the building is typical of the Victorian era constructed of painted brickwork on the ground floor and bare stock brick on the floors above. The proposed extension to the building seeks to replicate the existing appearance with windows on the floor above. Internally, the flats will replicate the existing building's features with high ceilings and large timber sash windows.

National planning policy clearly establishes that conservation and enhancement of the historic environment should be afforded considerable importance within the planning process and that decisions should be made on the basis of an informed evaluation of the significance of designated and nondesignated assets. The weight accorded to the heritage interest in any decision will depend on the significance of the asset and the degree of harm caused to it or its setting compared to the public benefit that may derive from the development proposed. It also allows local authorities to consider the benefits of enabling development to secure the future conservation of a heritage asset. In determining applications, Para 192 of the NPPF require LPAs to take account of:

- a) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- b) The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

The proposal can only be considered to improve and enhance the visual impact of the building and the Conservation Area as a whole. The detail provided clearly shows that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed development without having any detrimental effect on the street scene or the amenity of neighbouring properties. The design proposed in this application and the materials to be used are both of high quality and sympathetic to the surrounding area thereby according with policy.

4. Heritage Impact Considerations

This section of the assessment describes the proposed change, and its effect on the significance of heritage assets.

It is proposed to do rear extension to the property to create additional flat within the existing building. The extensions are subservient to the main building in height and are not excessive in size and bulk. All materials to be used keeping in line with existing fabric on site which are appropriated to the historic character of the building. There will be some internal structural alterations to the property and will have a little effect on the interior of the building.

It is a sympathetic insertion that would suit today's life style and requirements of a growing number of populations.

The new rear extension is of have historic interest as part rear extension that facing toward Edwin Street, the proposed extension to the building seeks to replicated the existing appearance with the windows on the floor above. The construction of part rear extension is of no archaeological interest. The extension has been design keeping all the relevant features and facade designs matching to the existing building.

The proposed works will restore the rear facade much closer to its original form, and will be beneficial as far as the significance of the building is concerned. Effect on the exterior of the building will be kept to minimum.

The interior of the building will be altered due to the layout of the room change and achieved minimum required room sizes and amenity spaces for dwelling house or flats for The Council's Residential Layout Guidelines indicate the required room sizes and amenity spaces for dwelling houses. This will not have any effect on the character and appearance of the building.

5. Conclusion

The applicant has taken on board all the Council's and National policies to provide a sustainable residential use for the property given its proximity to the Town Centre and with its shopping facilities and public transport modes being within easy walking distance. The prospective layout and design are in keeping with the good design principles outlined in the NPPF and Council's policies and would be in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area.

It is a site that fulfils the requirements of the NPPF in supporting a presumption in favour of sustainable development and particularly residential development. The proposal would make a positive contribution to the enhancement of the existing built development and street scene. It would reinstate the original historic features of the existing building and provide an enhancement to the conservation area and listed building.

There would be no adverse impact on the amenities of any nearby residents nor would it have any detrimental impact on the vitality and visual amenity of the area. It is our view that the application should be supported and permission for the proposed development granted.