



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250892

Location: 56 Whitehill Road Gravesend Kent DA12 5PG

Description: Extension of existing driveway and dropped kerb to provide parking for two cars.

Applicant: Mr Richard Aucott

Site Visit Date: 27.11.25

Preliminary Matters

Upon review of the original application, there were plan inconsistencies and some other concerns that were required to be addressed. The applicant was contacted and provided revised plans. Reconsultation was carried out.

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Block Plan – Proposed (received on 02.02.26);
Site Location Plan (received on 15.09.25);
Drawing No. 1 – Front Layout Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 2 – Front Layout Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. 3 – Front Layout Plan – Elevation View of Front Garden – Existing; and
Drawing No. 4 – Elevation View of Front Garden – Proposed.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19920316	Erection of single storey side extension to form enlarged porch	Permitted	03.07.1992
19910549	Erection of two storey side extension to form study and shower room with dressing room and shower room over; demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a replacement conservatory at the rear and demolition of the side porch.	Permitted	20.09.1991

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development

- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 – Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2023)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

KCC Highways

KCC Highways provided comments on the original proposal and of the current proposal. These are separated accordingly below:

Initial Comments

Thank you for your consultation in relation to the above planning application. I have the following comments to make with respect to highway matters:

It is unclear from the submitted plans, whether there is the necessary 5m depth in front of the bay window at the front of the property, to provide the additional parking space. The plan appears to show the bay

window in line with the front of the garage, which is incorrect and I would request that the exact dimensions, both in front of the garage and the bay window, are shown on a revised scaled drawing.

2m x 2m pedestrian visibility splays are required either side of the access, which should be shown on any revised plans. These should be drawn behind the footway on both sides of the access, with no obstruction over 0.6m within the splays. There is currently a mirror in situ when turning out of the driveway and it should be noted that KCC would not accept mirrors as an alternative to adequate visibility.

There is also a utilities cover within the proposed vehicle crossover and a water hydrant marker on the wall and the utility company and Southern Water should also be consulted on these proposals.

The driveway would require a bound surface for the first 5m from the edge of the highway and the provision of measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway.

Please note: Planning permission does not convey any approval for construction of the required vehicular crossing, or any other works within the highway for which a statutory licence must be obtained. Applicants should contact Kent County Council - Highways and Transportation (web: www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport.aspx or telephone: 03000 418181) in order to obtain the necessary Application Pack.

I look forward to the additional information being provided, to assist me in determining this application from a highway perspective.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped->

kerb-contractor-information

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

Current Comments

Thank you for your further consultation in relation to the above planning application. I have the following comments to make with respect to highway matters:

Based on the submitted plans, it appears that the property does not meet the minimum parking space dimensions. Parking spaces in front of an access to a dwelling must be a minimum of 2.5 metres wide and a minimum depth of 6m. While parallel parking could be possible, the proposed dropped kerb would need to be increased in width to 7.2m (including tapers) to meet KCC Vehicle Crossing standards. The applicant must prove that there is sufficient space to prevent vehicles from overhanging onto the footpath when parked in any parking spaces.

The proposed access would be subject to a separate vehicle crossover application with KCC Vehicle Crossing Team. Guidance on applying for a dropped kerb can be found via this link:
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-droppedkerb>.

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Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

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Neighbouring properties

Six surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The overall consultation period expired on 23.02.26.

Site Description

56 Whitehill Road is a two-storey detached dwelling located to the northwest of the highway. The property has an existing vehicular access located to the side within the property frontage which leads to an existing garage. It was noted on the site visit that the existing hardstanding area in front of the garage is used to park a car currently.

Site Photo

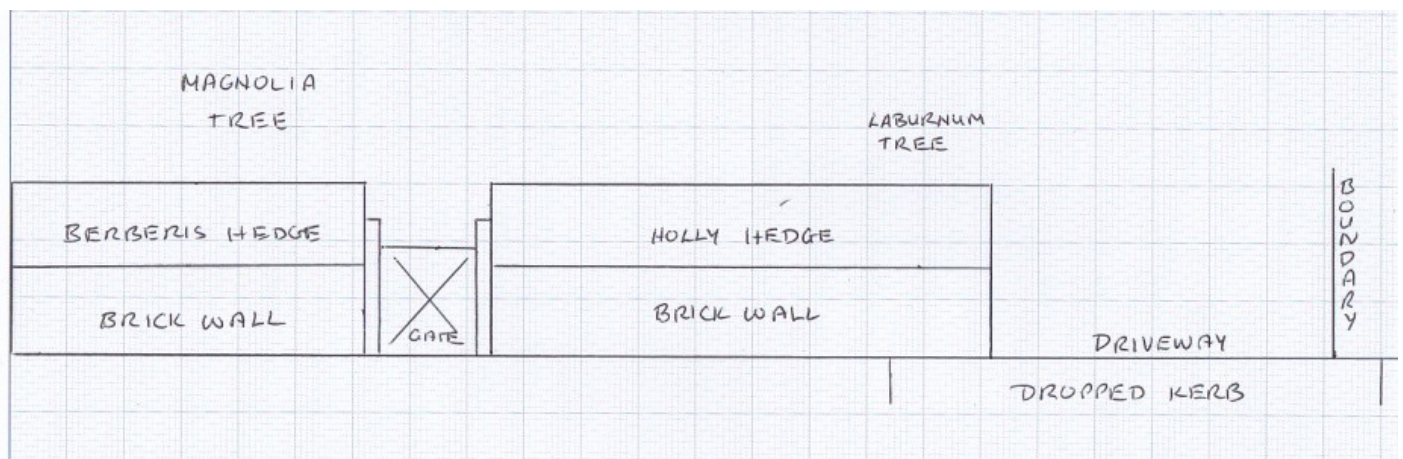


This application proposes the extension of the existing driveway area and dropped kerb to facilitate off-street parking for two cars.

Proposed Development

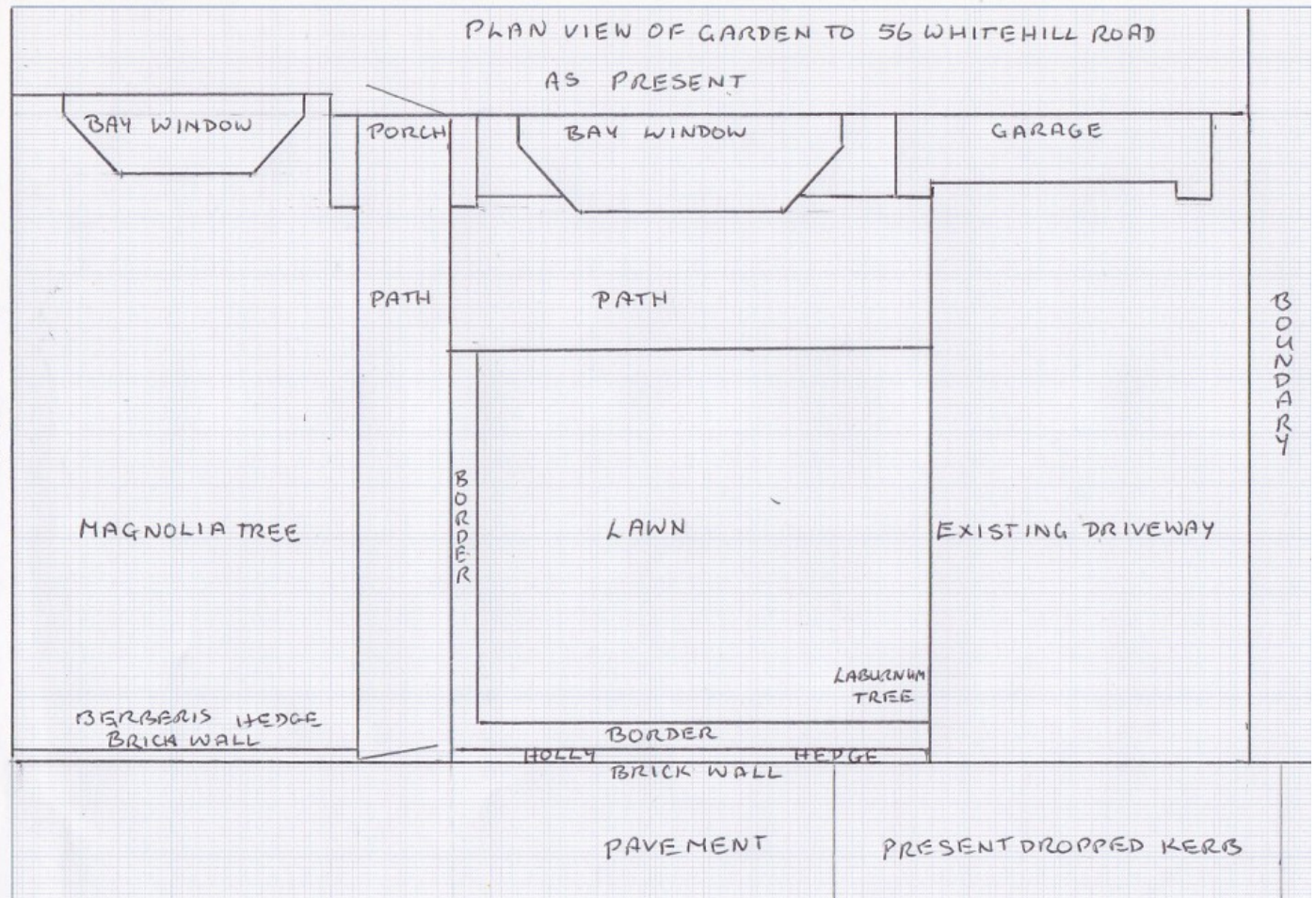
The development would include removal of the hedges along the front boundary, with part of the front boundary wall retained. The hardstanding area would be extended using permeable paving (as confirmed by the applicant via email), and additional planting would be provided in the northern side of the frontage with the existing magnolia tree to be retained.

Existing:

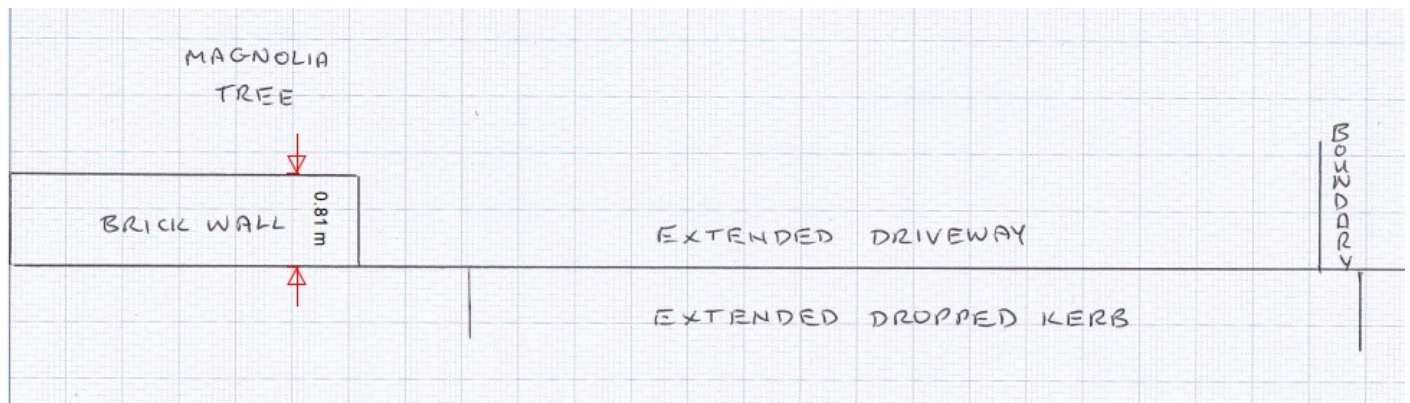


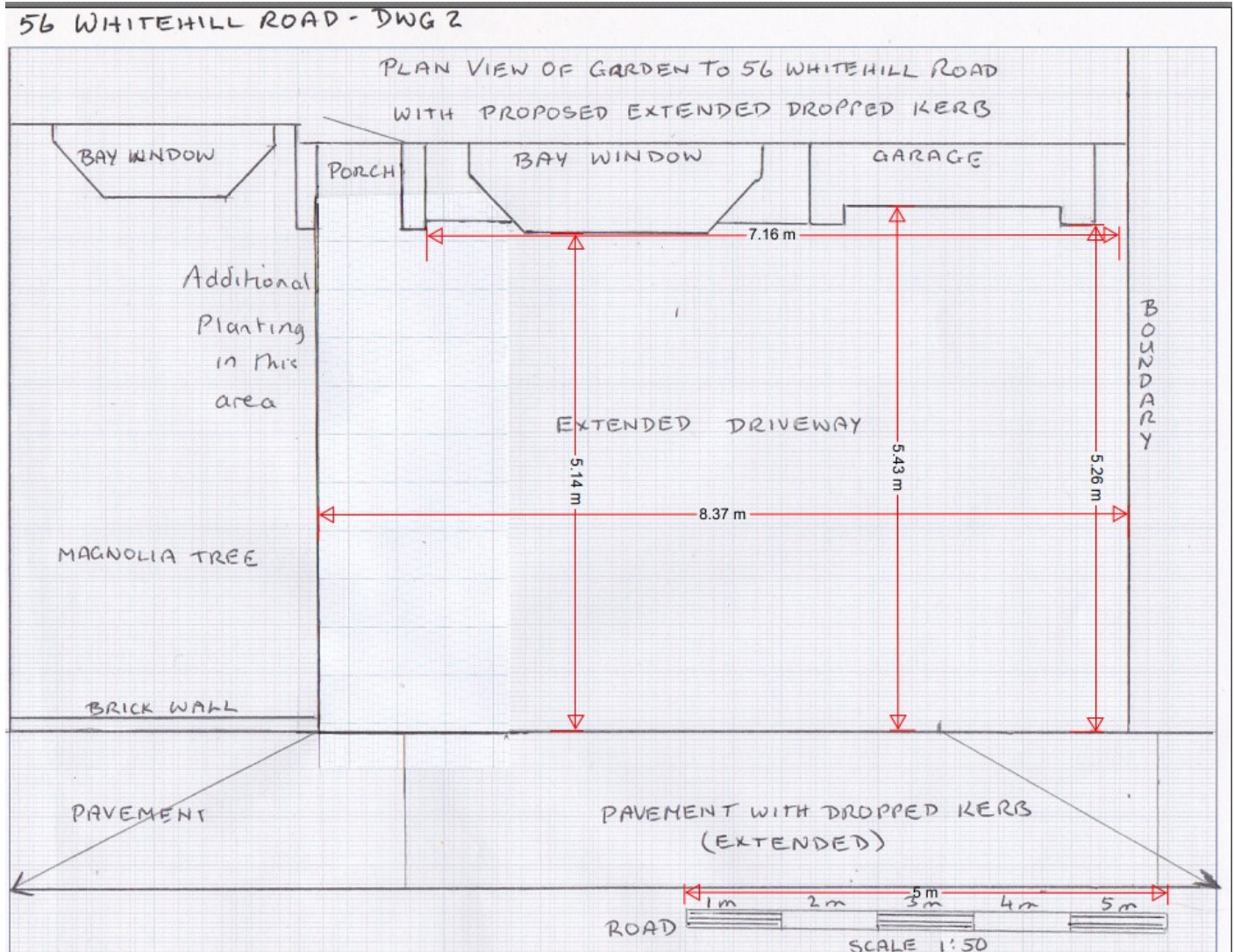


56 WHITEHILL ROAD - DWG 1



Proposed:





Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed places) of the NPPF (2024) sets out that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It states developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

The Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. Generally, the SPD (2021) highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context.

In terms of the character of the area, it is evident that vehicular crossovers and driveways along this part of Whitehill Road are not uncommon. Some of these driveways are devoid of planting which negatively impacts the appearance of the area. In the case of this application, a widening of the existing driveway is proposed, which would result in a larger expanse of hard paved area, partial loss of the front boundary wall, loss of the hedging and some loss of lawn/planting/tree within the property frontage. Whilst the loss of some



of these features is a shame, it is noted that the northern section of the garden including the wall, existing magnolia tree and additional planting is to be retained/proposed. Additional planting and soft landscaping can be secured via condition if planning permission were to be forthcoming to ensure a satisfactory visual appearance, and to soften the additional hard landscaping.

On balance, considering the surrounding context, and the proposed soft landscaping, the development is considered to be acceptable and accords with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

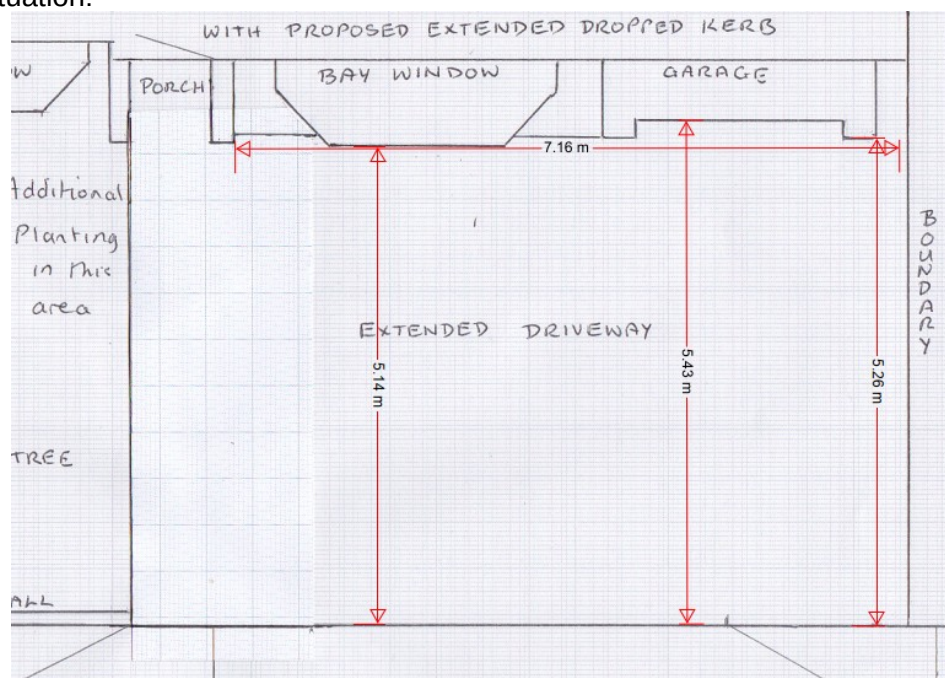
The works would provide off-street parking provision for future occupiers. Therefore, the proposed development would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

There would be no impact on neighbouring amenity as a result of the proposal. Therefore, the proposal is considered to safeguard neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

As aforementioned previously in this report, KCC Highways have provided comments raising concerns that there would not be 6.00m between the access (garage) and the highway. In addition to KCC Highways comments, it is noted that visibility splays have not been provided on the plans and the remaining dwarf wall measures at 0.81m, which is above the 0.60m requirement. However, in this instance, the existing situation must be considered. Currently, the driveway and garage is accessed via a narrower access, with the hardstanding area currently already in use to park a car. The hardstanding area is bordered by a fence and neighbouring property's tree with high branches on the southern side, and the application site's wall and hedge (1.49m) on the northern side. The proposal to extend the driveway, and to reduce the front boundary treatment within the property frontage in terms of height and width is considered an improvement to the existing situation:



On balance, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of parking and highways from the Local

Planning Authorities view. The Highways Authority (Kent County Council (KCC)) provide guidance on the provision of dropped kerbs, the Residential Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (April 2025). This document sets out that, for a dropped kerb to be acceptable, various criteria must be met. Therefore, although the proposal is considered to be acceptable by Gravesham, KCC may or may not allow the formation of the proposed dropped kerb. As such, it would be necessary for the applicant to contact KCC direct to discuss the access to the proposed parking area. The applicant can be made aware of this in an informative attached to the decision.

Biodiversity

Although it is a shame to lose soft landscaping within the property frontage, the plans do incorporate additional planting into the design, which can be secured via condition in order to provide biodiversity opportunity.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Utilities

There is utilities cover within the proposed vehicle crossover and a water hydrant marker on the wall. As such, the applicant would need to contact the relevant the utility company along with Southern Water regarding this proposal.

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Groundwater Protection Zone

The site is located within a Groundwater Protection Zone 1 area, however, the proposal would be unlikely to be impacted by this constraint.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

In situ, in this instance, the formation of the vehicle crossover and associated hardstanding is acceptable in terms of design character and appearance. In addition, there is no detrimental impact on amenity, and no significant concerns in terms of highways and parking as the proposal is an improvement on the existing situation.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	12th March 2026	Dated:	16th March 2026

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