

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20211208

Location: 23 Britannia Drive Gravesend Kent DA12 4RP

Description: Demolition of existing single storey rear extension and detached garage, and erection of a front porch and a two storey side extension.

Applicant: Mr B Norris

Site Visit Date: 18 November 2021

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder application form;
Drawing no. 53-PL-10 Rev. A Existing and proposed block plans;
Drawing no. 53-PL-100 Rev. A Existing layout and elevations;
Drawing no. 53-PL-1000 Rev. A Red line site boundary plan;
Drawing no. 53-PL-101 Rev. A Proposed layout and elevations; and
Drawing no. 53-PL-11 Rev. A Existing and proposed parking plans.

It is noted that the applicant confirmed at the site visit, that the works to demolish the garage could be done without encroaching over the boundary with no. 25 Britannia Drive.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles
- CS20 - Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P5 – Exceptions to the Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021)

Other documents

- Nationally Described Space Standard 2015

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC – Highways Officer

This proposal gives concern, as the location of some of the car parking will have to move, with the potential for a restricted turning movement into the new driveway. The new area of driveway should be provided with its own carriage crossover, prior to the rest of the development taking place. Subject to this revision I have no objections.

KCC Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential, however, I consider it unlikely that the proposed works will have a significant archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

National Grid

No response received.

Design South East

Background:

The application site comprises of a semi-detached, two storey dwelling on a large housing estate.

Summary of proposal as follows:

- Demolition of existing rear extension and detached garage.
- Erection of a two storey side extension.

The local authority is seeking advice on design, layout and appropriateness in the street scene.

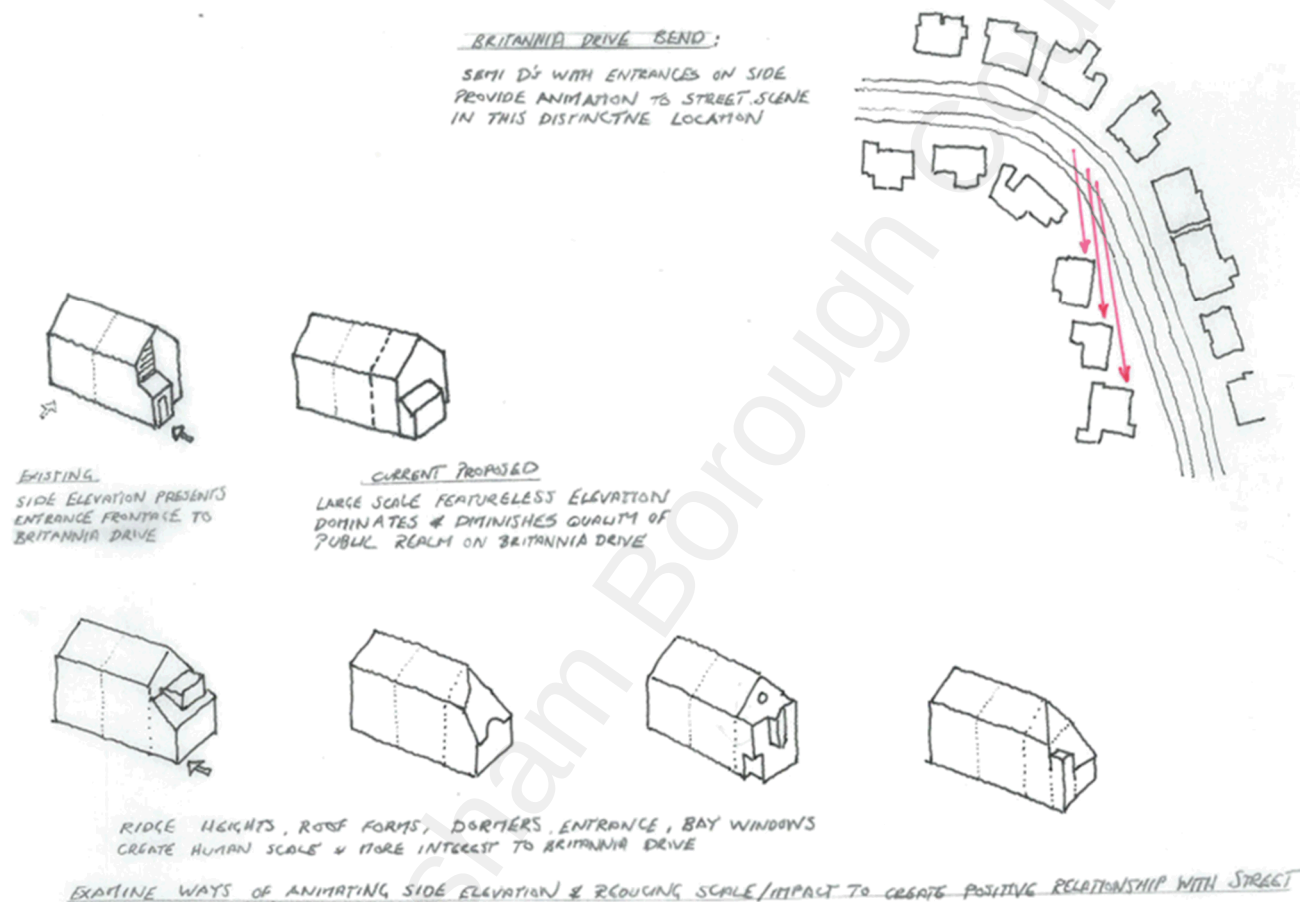
Comments:

- The existing building is of a unique and interesting typology, designed specifically for the curving nature of Britannia Drive. As one travels southwards, the side elevations of no.23 and neighbouring properties present a positive frontage, with front doors to the semi-detached properties set back behind generous gardens.
- The principle of a side extension is acceptable. However, the design approach does not respect the existing character of the building and streetscene.
- The proposal would replace a well articulated side elevation with an overbearing, two storey blank wall, which would reduce the quality of the view southwards and the streetscene.
- The loss of the front garden to a paved car parking area would diminish the quality of the streetscene.
- The gap between no.23 and no.25 to the north would reduce substantially, which would result in a loss of

light and sense of spaciousness in the garden of no.25.

- The rear elevation would be bland and featureless with a large expanse of blank wall. Greater fenestration and articulation should be explored.
- The application should include a Design and Access Statement, which sets out the design approach and response to context. The elevations should include the attached home at no.21 to demonstrate the changes to the overall composition of the semi-detached pair. A street scene drawing should also be provided.
- The applicant should explore other design approaches, which animate the side elevation while reducing its scale and impact on the streetscene. One approach could be to set the side extension back from the front building line, bring the roof and eaves down, and retain the side entrance. Consider introducing elements of articulation on the side elevation such as a bay window.

Sketch:



Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised to ten neighbouring properties by letter. One representation has been received and is summarised as follows;

- Drawing no. 53-PL-100 Rev. A does not show the adjoining garage at no. 25 Britannia Drive.
- There are no details of the impacts of the proposal on the garage at no. 25 Britannia Drive.
- Loss of daylight to the kitchen and bedroom of no. 25 Britannia Drive.
- Queries whether the proposal can mitigate dust and rubble.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) sets out various design requirements and includes the need for the development to add to the overall quality of an area; be visually

attractive; and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

The application site is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling located within a generous plot. The building is one of a number that have been designed specifically to respond to the curving nature of Britannia Drive. The side elevations of the application site and the neighbouring properties present a positive frontage, with front doors in well-articulated side elevations, set back behind generous gardens. As the following images illustrate;



The proposed extension would match with the facing materials of the application property but it would add significant size and bulk to the building and have an incongruous design. The extension would replace a well-articulated side elevation with an overbearing, two storey blank wall, which would reduce the quality of the view southwards and the street scene. The proposed rear elevation would be bland and featureless, with a large expanse of brick wall and ill matching fenestration and the gap between the application site and no. 25 Britannia Drive would reduce substantially, which would result in a loss of the existing sense of spaciousness between the properties. Lastly the proposed paved parking area in the front garden would result in the loss of a large vegetated area, which at present softens the built development at the site, the loss of which would further diminish the quality of the street scene.

It is usual practice and in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD 2021, for a two storey side extension to be designed to match with, and appear subservient to, the host building and amongst other things, to be set back from the front building line. Therefore the principle of a side extension at the application site would be acceptable. However the design for the proposed development would require significant alteration. It is noted that the comments from Design South East provide some design guidance and raise significant concerns regarding the proposed design approach.

It is also usual practice and in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD 2021, for frontage parking proposals to retain as much green space as possible and to avoid large expanses of hard surfacing. Therefore the design of the proposed parking would also require amendment.

Overall it is considered that the proposed design approach does not respect the existing character of the building and the street scene and as such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design

Guide SPD 2021 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF. Therefore in line with paragraph 134 of the NPPF, planning permission should be refused.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would result in the application property increasing from three bedrooms to five. It should be noted that the existing third bedroom is not altered as part of the proposal but is shown as a study on the proposed layout plan. Whilst the area of this room is below the minimum set out in the Nationally Described Space Standard 2015 (NDSS), the room was originally designed to be used as a bedroom and is a common feature of dwellings all over the housing estate, in which the application property is situated. As such, the proposed study should be assessed as a bedroom, even if it is very small.

According to the Borough Council's Residential Layout Guidelines 2020 (RLG) a dwelling with four or more bedrooms should have a minimum garden area of 100 square metres and a depth of 10 metres. Following the removal of the existing rear extension, the proposed garden would have area in excess of this figure and a depth of between 3 and 17 metres. Therefore the proposed development would provide sufficient amenity space for future occupiers.

The proposed new bedrooms would be 12.5 square metres (bedroom 1) and 8.3 square metres (bedroom 3) in area, which would exceed the minimum requirements for a double and single bedroom in the NDSS. Although it is noted that both rooms are shown as doubles on the proposed layout plan.

The proposed development would result in the loss of two existing windows in the first floor, side elevation of the application property (a hallway and a bedroom). The bedroom window would be relocated to the front elevation but the hallway would have no alternative window. Whilst it would preferable for the hallway to retain natural light, as a non-habitable room, the loss of light would not be significantly detrimental to the living conditions of future occupiers.

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would provide a good standard of living for future occupiers and be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), the Nationally Described Space Standard 2015 and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines 2020.

Neighbouring Amenity

The closest neighbouring properties to the application site are nos. 21 and 25 Britannia Drive (which adjoin to the south and north respectively). Nos. 20-28 Britannia Drive are located across the roadway to the east and nos. 14 and 16 Vanessa Walk are located to the south west.

It is noted that a local resident has raised concerns regarding the loss of daylight to the kitchen and bedroom of no. 25 Britannia Drive. However, due to the distance between the application site and the surrounding properties and their orientation, it is considered that there would be no significant adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to no. 25 or any of the surrounding residential occupiers.

The proposed development would introduce new bedroom windows at first floor level in the front and rear elevations, a high level store room window in the ground floor of the side elevation facing no. 25 Britannia Drive and a new front door and bathroom window in the ground floor of the front elevation.

The privacy distance to the properties opposite the front elevation of the application property would be at least 20 metres and as such, there would be no significant adverse overlooking impacts from the proposed front bedroom windows to the occupiers of nos. 22 and 24 Britannia Drive (the two closest dwellings opposite). The proposed bathroom and hallway would be non-habitable rooms and would not cause any overlooking. In addition, the bathroom window would be conditioned to be obscure glazed to protect the privacy of the occupiers.

As the proposed side window would be to a non-habitable room and would be high level, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the occupiers of no. 25 Britannia Drive. However the proposed rear bedroom window would almost directly face the private garden area of no. 25 Britannia Drive and be some three metres from the boundary. The following image shows the view from the existing rear bedroom

window at the application site;



Whilst it is noted that the existing first floor rear bedroom window already faces the neighbouring private garden, the proposed development would increase the level of overlooking (as it would be much closer and the overlooking more direct) and as such, would result in a loss of privacy for the adjacent occupiers.

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would cause adverse overlooking impacts to the occupiers of no. 25 Britannia Drive, to the detriment of residential amenity and be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines 2020.

Parking and Highways

The proposed development would result in the loss of an existing garage and an increase in the number of bedrooms at the application property from three to five. It would also include the widening of an existing vehicle parking area to accommodate three/four vehicles.

The Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards require a dwelling with four or more bedrooms to provide off road parking for a maximum of three vehicles and no objection has been raised by the GBC Highways Officer. Therefore the proposed development would not be detrimental to highway safety and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P5 of the of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994.

It is noted that the GBC Highways Officer has highlighted the need for a new crossover to be constructed to provide access to the proposed parking area (not the widening of the existing crossover). The completion of this work should be subject to a condition attached to any planning permission granted.

It is also noted that the frontage parking area could be reduced in size whilst still providing space for three vehicles to park. Such an amendment would allow for planting around the hard surfaced parking areas, which would be an improvement visually and in terms of biodiversity.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

A local resident has raised a number of concerns regarding the proposed development. One concern has been addressed in the neighbouring amenity section above. The remaining issues are outlined and commented upon below;

- Drawing no. 53-PL-100 Rev. A does not show the adjoining garage at no. 25 Britannia Drive – this is noted. The position of the garage is shown on other drawings and was noted at the case officer's site visit.
- There are no details of the impacts of the proposal on the garage at no. 25 Britannia Drive – the applicant has confirmed that the proposal can be built without encroachment over the boundary with no.

25. Any adverse impacts to, and the making good of, the adjoining garage are civil matters that must be addressed between the affected land owners.

- Queries whether the proposal can mitigate dust and rubble – any planning permission granted would contain a works of construction informative, which would provide guidance on good practice during construction.

The application site is located in an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However KCC Heritage raise no objection to the proposed development. As such, the proposal would have no adverse impacts archaeology and would be in line with Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

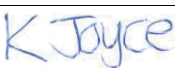
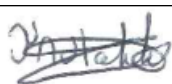
There is a lower pressure gas pipeline located close to the front (eastern) boundary of the application site and the proposed development would involve a widened parking area on the site frontage. It is unlikely that the proposal would adversely impact upon the gas pipeline but the applicant should be advised of its existence via an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

The application site is located in a smoke control area. As such, advice regarding smokeless fuels/appliances can be given to the applicant in an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development would have an incongruous design; be out of character with the existing building; be detrimental to the visual amenities of the surrounding street scene; and be detrimental to residential amenity. The positive features of the proposal (that the facing materials would match existing, the room sizes would be acceptable, that there would be no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts and that sufficient parking and garden space would be provided), would not overcome these negative aspects and as such, planning permission should be refused.

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	25th November 2021	Dated:	25 November 2021