

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20211200
Location:	4 Harden Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 7HF
Description:	Formation of vehicular access and hardstanding.
Applicant:	Ivan Chavdarov
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form - dated 07/10/2021;
Supplementary Information - Site Photograph;
Ordnance Survey Site Location Plan (scale - 1:1250);
Existing Block Plan (scale - 1:500);
Un-numbered Plan Drawing - Existing and Proposed Block Plans (sheet 1) (dated 29/12/2021);
Un-numbered Plan Drawing - Existing and Proposed Elevations (sheet 1) (dated 29/12/2021).

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history.

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- T5 - Access to the Identified Highway Network

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)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 - amended June 2020;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006).

Other Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Kent County Council Vehicle Crossing Guidance:- Self Assessment (2018)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

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.

KCC - Highways and Transportation - The development proposed does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority. However, if permission is to be granted relevant highway informatives should be attached to the decision notice.

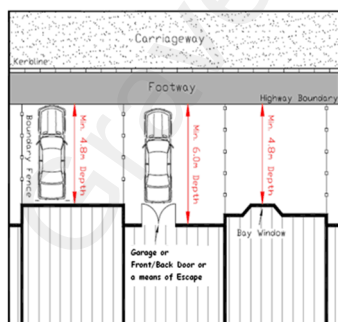
GBC - Highways Officer - As presented I consider this proposal is unacceptable.

Any parking space in front of a door to a property should be a minimum of 6 metres deep to ensure there is adequate pedestrian access/egress to a property particularly in the event of an emergency.

Also to conform to the requirements of SPG4 a parking bay should be 5 metres deep and not 4.8 metres, the depth of the front garden. However, Kent County Council guidance is confusing as their published guidance for carriage crossovers differs to the adopted supplementary planning guidance.

Given the confusion in the depth of parking spaces given the published guidance from KCC I would accept a depth of 4.8 metres, but cannot reduce the depth in front of a door to the property as this relates to emergency access as well as normal access.

* Or at least 6m long where the parking area is in front of a garage or door where adequate means of escape needs to be provided, like a front/back door, escape window etc. If you have any questions on the adequate means of escape please contact your local Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Safety Office.



Kent County Council Vehicle Crossing:- Guidance and Self Assessment (2018)

Given the situation, I can only recommend refusal, but if the applicant were to move the crossover to the opposite end of the front garden, an acceptable layout should be possible. This however will conflict with a lamp column and a utility box on the front wall, both of which will require attention.

Neighbouring properties

Three surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 2nd November 2021.

Preliminary Matters

The application was originally submitted with a tarmac, angled crossover which was considered to be contrary to planning policy and harmful to the street scene. The Local Planning Authority would not ordinarily support applicants that tarmac a grass verge of amenity land, and therefore the applicant was contacted regarding a change in materials to grasscrete.

After negotiation on materials and other matters such as the fencing, the revised plans were received and accepted on 31st December 2021.

Officer's Analysis

4 Harden Road is a two storey semi-detached property located on the northern side of the highway, opposite the triangular area of amenity land. There is a grass verge separating the front boundary of the property from the footway and highway, which is a characteristic of the surrounding estate. The garden and grass verge in front of the property has been part block paved, with the garden being used informally as a parking space.

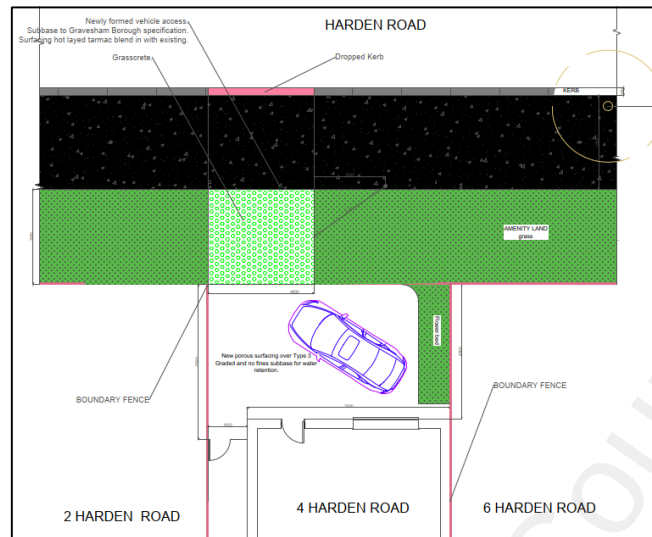


Design, Character and Appearance

Developments are required to be visually attractive, integrate well with their surroundings and to conserve and enhance the character of the local environment in order to comply with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014).

The grass verge is considered to contribute significantly to the character of the area and is a consistent feature throughout the housing estate. It is acknowledged that the quality of the grass verge in front of the application site has been eroded by the block paving and that the frontage has been used for parking. However, it is considered that the loss of the grass verge, by virtue of creating a crossover and hardstanding would fail to conserve or enhance the character of the area and will detrimentally impact on the appearance of the street scene.

This application proposes the creation of a dropped kerb and the formation of a crossover and hardstanding driveway. The grasscrete crossover proposed will improve the appearance of the street scene and maintain the character of the grass verge. The grasscrete surface treatment provides spaces between the hardstanding which allows grass to grow and will blend the crossover with the surrounding grass verge.



It is acknowledge that a neighbouring property was recently granted permission for a tarmac crossover. This decision goes against other recent decision within the surrounding area, whereby the Local Planning Authority have refused similar developments with the exception of in very special circumstances. Nevertheless, the applicant's willingness to use grasscrete as a material for the crossover will significantly improve the visual appearance, reduce the urbanising effect of the crossover and is considered good design.

The proposal would not negatively impact the appearance of the street scene. The vehicle crossover would will be formed using grasscrete which mitigates the potential impact of the crossover and will integrate it with the grass verge. The fencing will be retained along the front boundary up to the edge of the crossover and the driveway will be formed using porous materials with a planting bed along the western boundary. Therefore, the application is considered to be in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021).

Residential Amenity

The proposed development will have no impact on residential amenity and is therefore in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Parking and Highways

There are not considered to be any parking or highway issues related to this proposal. The Highways Officer raised concerns regarding insufficient depth of parking spaces and parking impeding the front door, which is an emergency exit. These concerns have been addressed during the amendments to the proposal. The crossover has been reduced in width and the fencing extended along the frontage, the proposed hardstanding will allow for a vehicle to park at an angle so as not to overhang the curtilage or block the access to the property.

As such, the proposed dropped kerb, crossover and formalisation of the frontage for vehicular parking is considered acceptable in terms of highway policy and guidance.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on Biodiversity – the development will reduce the biodiversity on the site by creating a hardstanding within the front garden. Section 15 of the NPPF states that development should result in a biodiversity net gain. Although the development will reduce some lawn area within the front garden, the grasscrete crossover and planting bed proposed will reintroduce and retain some greenery. These are considered to be positive in terms of biodiversity given that the front garden of the property could be changed under permitted development.

Conclusion and Balancing Exercise

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

The development will introduce a dropped kerb, introduce a crossover across the grass verge and create a hardstanding for use as a driveway. The crossover will be formed using grasscrete, which will blend with the grass verge, reducing any significant impact on biodiversity or the street scene. There will be a new planting bed formed on the western boundary and the front boundary fencing will be retained. The hardstanding will be formed using porous materials and will allow for vehicles to park at an angle to not overhang the access to the property or over the curtilage.

As such, it is recommended that planning permission is granted.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	31 st December 2021	Dated:	5 th January 2021