

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250014

Location: Multi Storey Car Park Thamesgate Shopping Centre Gravesend Kent

Description: Installation of safety fencing around perimeter of top deck car park.

Applicant: Hands, Signal RP II Ltd (Gravesend)

Site Visit Date: 26/02/25

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form
AP001 – Location Plan
AP002 – A – Site Block Plan
AP003 – Floor Plan
AP004 – A – Building Elevations (South)
AP005 – A – Building Elevations (East and West)
AP006 – A – Building Elevations (North)
AP007 – Fencing Detail
Design and Access Statement

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20000676	Installation of an equipment cabin in the car park at roof level; installation of 6 no. identical replacement antennae's incorporating their associated feeder cables; replacement of 1 no. 300mm microwave dish antennae with a 600mm microwave dish antennae and installation of a new 600mm microwave dish antennae, both with associated cables and replacement of 3 no. 600mm microwave dish antennae with 3 no. identical dish antennae on the top of the lift tower.	Permitted	14.11.2000
19860683	Erection of a free standing entrance gantry over the existing car park ramp in Clive Road	Permitted	19.12.1986
19750496	Erection of a plant room at roof level	Permitted	09.10.1975

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS05 – Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres

- 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 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

32 surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice placed near the site and 0 comments were received from members of the public. The overall consultation period expired on 21 February 2025.

Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

This application is located inside the Urban Boundary, where alterations and extensions to buildings are generally acceptable in principle as per Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development. However, all other relevant matters should be considered. In this instance, the main points to consider would be the potential impact on; Town Centre Opportunity Area, the Primary Shopping Area, Visual Amenity (Design, Character and Appearance), Residential Amenity of neighbours, Parking and Highways.

Town Centre Opportunity Area and Primary Shopping Area.

This site is within the Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area and falls to be considered under policy CS05 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy. It is in Sub Area 3.1 (Town Centre), which comprises the main commercial part of Gravesend town centre. It is relatively compact and has the main concentration of retail, leisure, cultural, tourist, civic and service facilities in the Borough. This includes shops, banks, restaurants, bars, the Towncentric visitor and information centre, Gravesham Community Hospital, The

Woodville, and the Council's offices. These serve the whole Borough. It also acts as a transport hub for both conventional and high speed train services as well as buses. Gravesend's main shopping area is centred around the St George's Centre, Thamesgate Centre and the pedestrianised part of New Road. This sub-area wholly contains the defined Primary Shopping Area on the Policies Map (Policy CS08). Policy CS05 states that within the Opportunity Area, the council will:

- Seek to improve pedestrian access between the town centre, the River Thames and surrounding areas and reduce the physical barriers created by the one-way system;
- Manage traffic accessing and passing through the area through its approach towards the provision and distribution of public car parks;
- Support improved public transport access, including the provision of an integrated transport interchange at Garrick Street/Barrack Row;
- Support and enhance retail, leisure, entertainment, cultural and tourism provision in accordance with the sequential approach;
- Support the provision of new offices in accordance with the sequential approach, in particular where they have good access to the proposed integrated transport interchange;
- Support the provision of new residential development where a satisfactory living environment can be achieved;
- Support the redevelopment of under-used sites where this makes more efficient use of the sites and improves townscape character; and
- Support existing retail, commercial and service functions on the ground floors and the provision of offices and residential uses on upper floors subject to achieving a satisfactory living environment.

In this case, the proposed fencing would not impact any of the above matters, either positively or negatively. The retail use and character would also not be altered. The scheme is therefore considered to uphold the qualities of the site within the Town Centre Opportunity Area and Primary Shopping Area. The scheme would therefore comply with policies CD05 and CS08 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

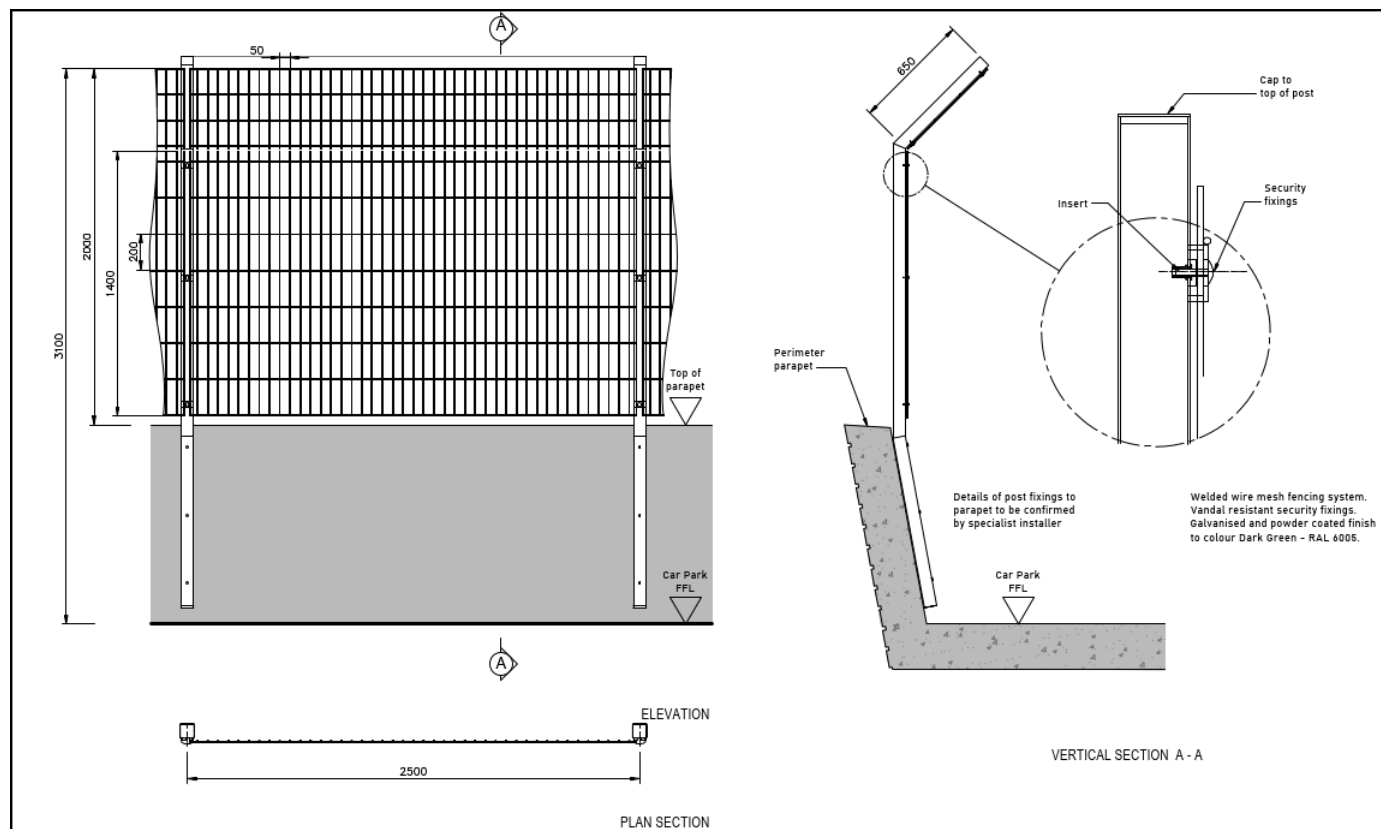
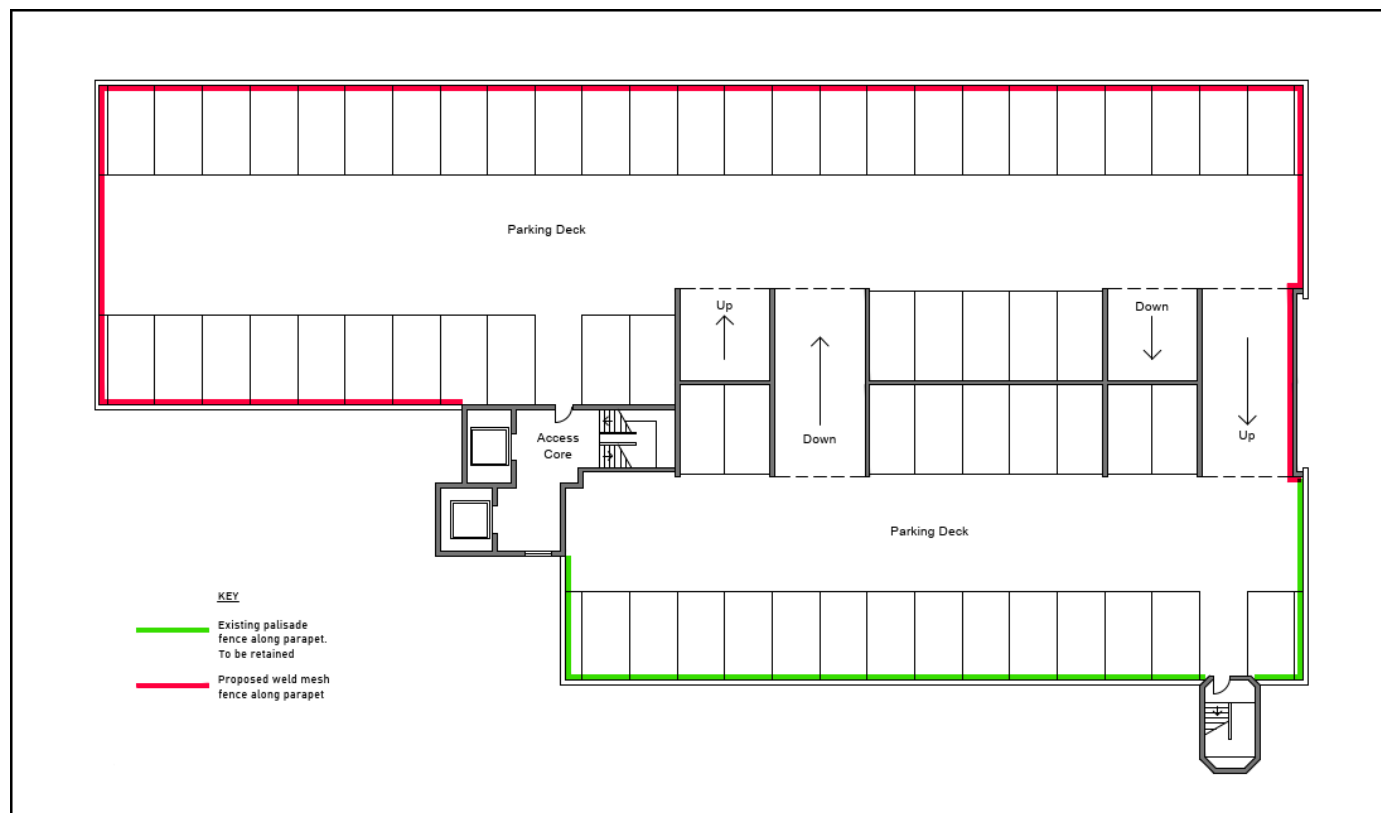
Design, Character and Appearance

This application relates to the roof car park area, to the Thamesgate Shopping centre. The roof level car park is surrounded by concrete walls and has existing palisade fencing around some of the perimeter but not all. The below image taken on 26th February 2025, shows the building.

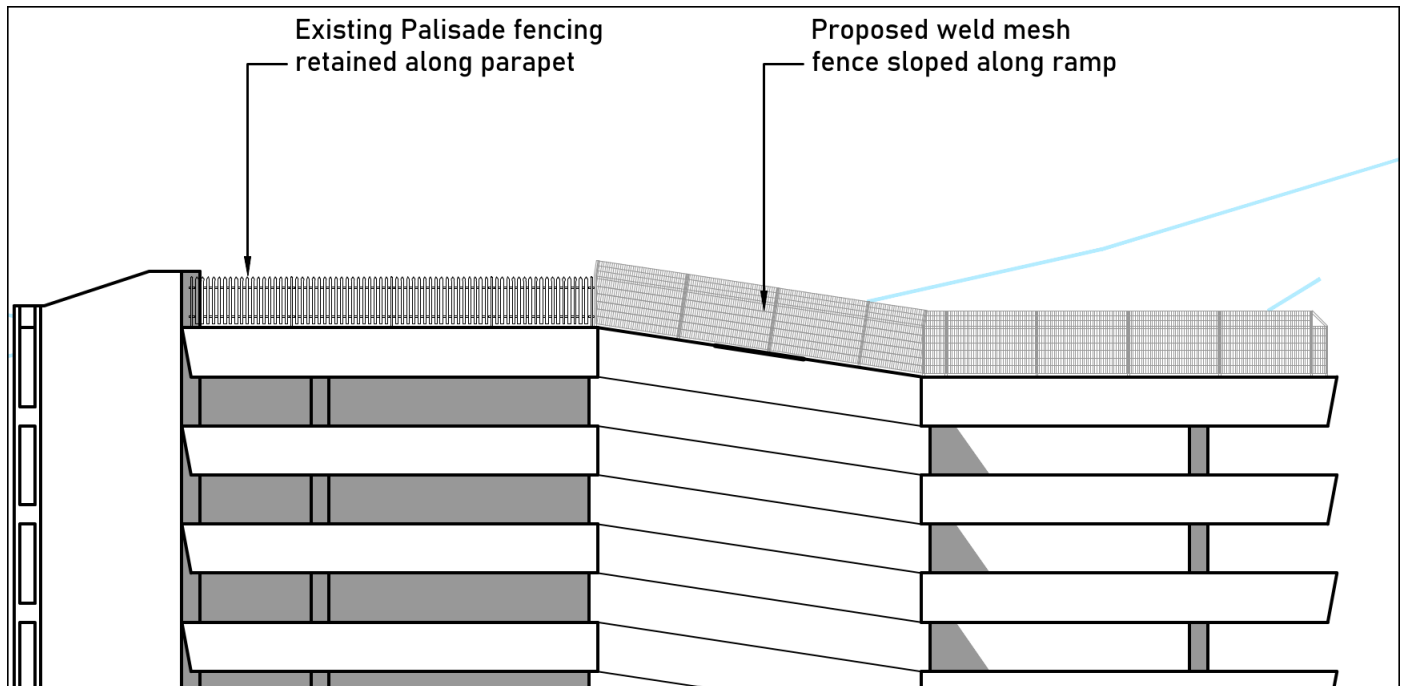


This application seeks to erect 2m high fencing above the concrete wall on the roof level car park, located above the Thamesgate Shopping Centre. This fencing would be visible on all elevations, but the existing

fencing to the south and part of the east and west elevations would be retained. The below plans (Not to Scale), show the location of existing and proposed fencing and details of the fencing proposed.



The proposed east elevation as per the below image (Not to Scale), shows how the proposed fencing compares to the existing fencing.



As can be seen, the design of the new fencing is different. It would also be approximately 0.6m higher. Whilst ideally the fencing would match the existing to provide a cohesive appearance, in this case the existing fencing is not considered to be of particularly high merit, in appearance. The height difference is marginal and, the new fencing would be largely located to the north elevation, which does not face onto the street. It is noted that there would be some sections of the new fencing facing the street, but this would not be substantial. Overall, the design is not considered to result in significant harm to the appearance of the building in its totality, and its presence and character within the local area.

On balance, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Neighbouring Amenity

It is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, no objection to the proposal was received.

The site is in the Town Centre, and is an existing shopping centre. The proposed fencing is not considered to be likely to significantly impact any residential neighbours, given the minor change in appearance and scale.

The proposal is therefore considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in compliance with policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Parking and Highways

The proposed development would not alter the existing parking arrangement and so there would be no impact on parking and highway matters.

Adequate vehicle and cycle parking provision is therefore available in accordance with paragraphs 109 to 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 subject to further details of cycle parking provision.

Conclusion

The proposed development is considered to comply with all relevant national and local planning policies.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to approve.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	26th February 2025	Dated:	28 February 2025