

Planning Statement

Site Description

The application site lies on the south-western side of Old Road East, which is a Highways Network Distributor road. The site is located within the urban area of Gravesend. There are no designations on the site in planning policy terms.

The site currently contains large two single storey buildings to the front and rear with areas of grass and vegetation around them. The buildings on the site were built for uses ancilliary to a Church that previously existed next door, and are now vacant. They were most recently leased to a pre-school educational company.

Proposal

The proposal involves the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the erection of a 3 storey building comprising 9 two bedroom flats on the road frontage, and a terrace of 5 no. houses at the rear. There are 22 car parking spaces in total.

Relevant Planning History

There is no planning history relating to the proposal site itself . The adjacent site to the west (20 Old Road East) was redeveloped under planning approval ref. 1988 04844 ("Redevelopment of the site by the erection of a part three and part four storey block of ten 2 bedroom flats, involving alterations to the existing vehicular access to Old Road East and the formation of a car park for 15 cars at the rear").

Pre Planning Advice

An earlier proposal was subject to pre-planning advice ref. PRE20210209 by Katherine Parkin, and advice from Design South East & Peter Price of Gravesham planning dept. have been used to inform this scheme and planning statement

Planning Policy

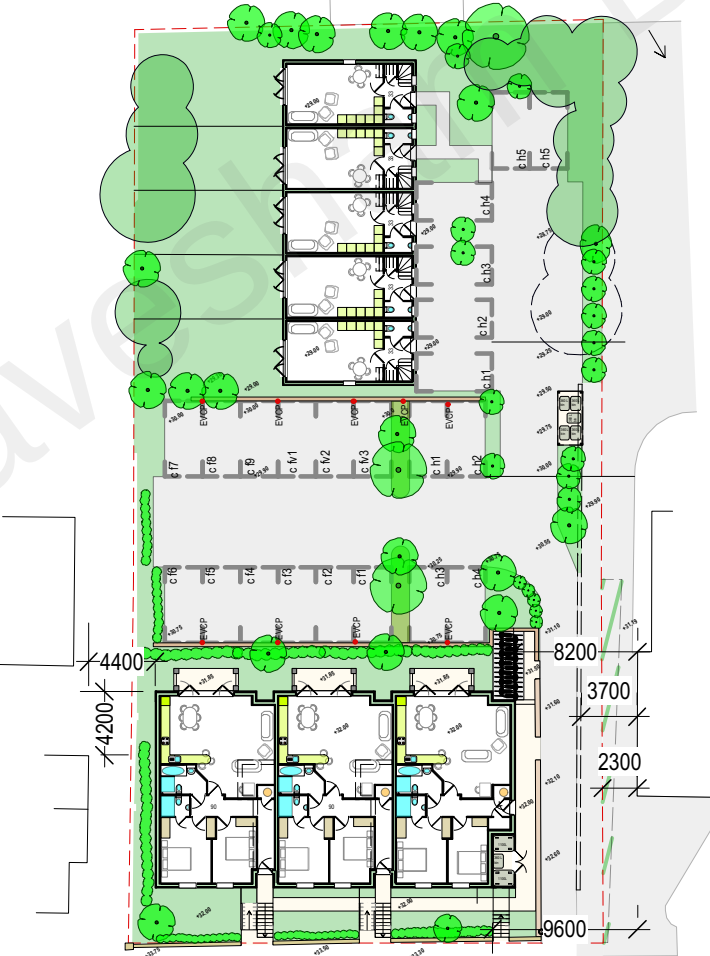
- The Development Plan for Gravesham currently comprises:
- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies Map, September 2014; and
 - Saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review, November 1994.
- The relevant policies for this proposal are as follows:
- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):
 - CS01 Sustainable Development
 - CS02 Scale and Distribution of Development
 - CS10 Physical and Social Infrastructure
 - CS11 Transport
 - CS12 Green Infrastructure
 - CS18 Climate Change
 - CS19 Design and Development Principles
- Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):
- T1 Impact of Development on the Highway Network
 - T2 Channelling of Traffic onto the Primary and District Distributor Network
 - T5 New Accesses onto Highway Network
 - P3 Vehicle Parking Standards
- National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019):
- Section 2 Achieving sustainable development
 - Section 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 - Section 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities
 - Section 9 Promoting sustainable transport
 - Section 11 Making effective use of land
 - Section 12 Achieving well-designed places
 - Section 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- KCC Development Contributions Guide (2007)
- SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
 - SPG4 KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Nationally Described Space Standards (March 2015)

Existing Use

There is no existing use being lost on the site as the buildings are empty having most recently been leased to a pre-school educational company. Policy CS10 of the Core Strategy 2014 relates to physical and social infrastructure such as schools, and states that where there is the threat of loss of such existing infrastructure, consideration will be given to viability and whether sufficient alternative provision is available. On this occasion, Caxtons circulated the property particulars to a specialist list they maintain of local and national community users, and the welfare/community sector was reached widely via the Estate Agent's Clearing House. Both local paper and national advisements were placed too. No educational provider expressed an interest. A viability assessment accompanies this application, covering the issues of re-use and alternative facilities.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of the Area

The existing site does not contain any buildings of merit in architectural terms. The surrounding area is largely residential and made up of a mix of building styles and ages, and of varying heights. The apartment building immediately to the west is 3 storeys high to the road and four storeys to the rear, as the land slopes down to the south. The single dwelling to the east (No. 22) is two 1/2 storeys to the roadside and three storeys at the rear, with a 2 storey outbuilding. The proposed frontage building footprint is not as deep as the block on no.20 to the west and the height is similar, so it is appropriate and not overly dominant, with the proposed eaves height between gables being 0.4m higher. Gables face the road, following the example of nos.22, 10, 8 and others. London yellow stock brick walls with window surrounds and string courses highlighted in reconstituted portland stone will emphasise the classical proportions and provide a lively but traditional appearance, all below slate roofs. The proposed parking area to the rear is similar to the apartment block at No. 20. The vehicular access is considered under 'Parking & Highways' below There is a good sized and useable amenity area for residents at the rear, and landscape screening along the rear (southern) and flank (eastern) boundaries to protect residential amenity. The scheme has been developed in response to an earlier scheme from Design South East, having a narrower frontage block and a sepearate terrace of houses at the rear. The flat entrances face the road and have separate steps to lower and upper ground floors, connecting the building to the street in a similar way to grand 18th & 19th century villas.



Residential Amenity

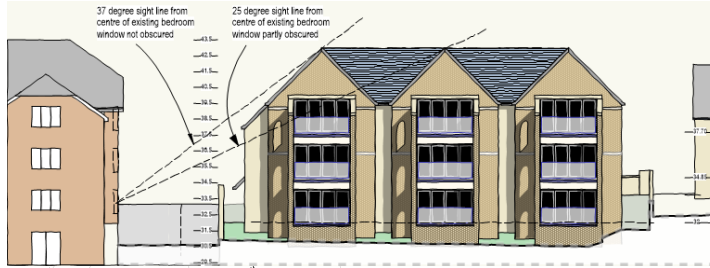
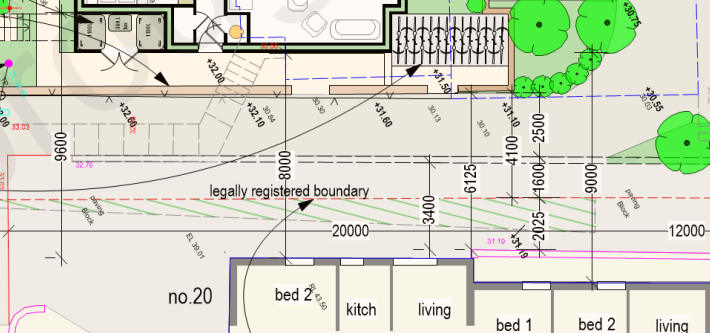
Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land.

Future Occupiers

The proposed flats exceed the minimum requirements set out in the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) 2015 of 70 sqm (for a 2 bedroom, 4 person apartment) between. They are between 76sqm and 90sqm. The Council's Residential Layout Guidelines recommendations have been followed, with no living rooms of one flat adjacent the bedroom of another. There are separate entrances to the lower ground flats and entrances from the road to the upper flats.

Neighbouring Occupiers

The windows in the flank walls of the neighbouring properties to the east and west have been considered. Those to no.20 serve bedrooms and livingrooms, and are 2.3m from the legal boundary or 3.7m from the physical boundary being the edge of the drive. The proposal will only directly alter the aspect from 2nd bedroom of the front flat, the living room widows aspecting beyond the rear of the proposed flats. Looking from the centre of the lowest bedroom window , the proposed eaves would be seen at 31 degrees above horizontal, and the ridge beyond at 37 degrees. From all other windows the ridge would be well below the 25 degrees suggested in the Gravesham SPG2 Residential layout Guidleines. Allowing bedroom windows to face a boundary just 3.7m away is a planning anomaly, and the RICS suggests a 45 degree vision line will maintain reasonable light to existing rooms. The building is 9.6m from the existing at the front and 9m at the rear, and there are no proposed windows that overlook those existing. The roof dips down to an eaves level just 4.8m above road level so the building will not be overly dominant.



The houses at the rear have a gable end that is on average 16m distant from the rear elevation of the neighbouring house, with no overlooking.

Neighbouring Properties

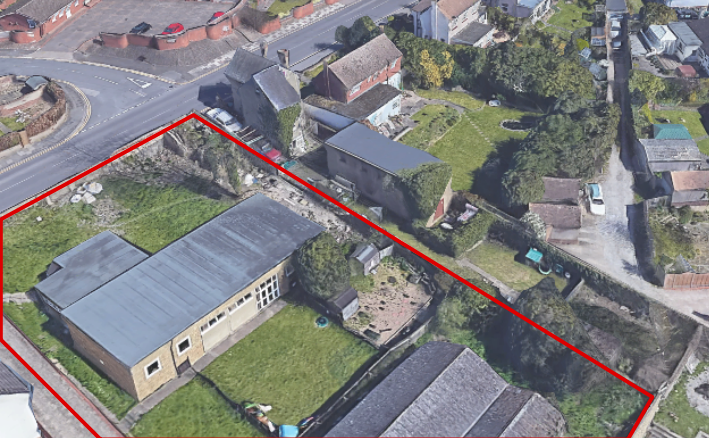
The car parking at the rear follows the precedent set by no.20, and additional planting will add to the existing landscape screening. The frontage building is over 50m from the residential properties to the rear of the site and partially obscured by the proposed terrace of houses at the rear, ensuring no over dominance or significant overlooking will occur. There is space retained to the sides of the frontage building to minimise the sense of visual dominance and any reduction in outlook for neighbouring residential properties either side. It extends 4.2m beyond the rear of no.22 but is 4.4m away. The main garden area for No. 22 is behind an existing detached garage and electricity sub station immediately to the rear of this house, and shadowing from the proposed building to the garden of No. 22 will be little affected. No.20 extends well beyond the rear of the proposed frontage block. The proposal thereby complies with paragraph 127 of the NPPF 2019 and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Parking and Highways

The existing 3.4m (min.) vehicular access to no.20 was built partly on the applicants land, by agreement. It is widened by 2.5m, with the wall removed to provide 6.125m total width. About 2m of this is within the ownership of no.20, leaving 4.1m width within the applicants ownership. There is a right of access for the applicant to use a wedge of land owned by no.20 and there is a right of access for no.20 over the 1.6m width existing on the applicants land. There will be no physical division between the differently owned parts of the drive. Sight lines of 43m x 2.4m x 43m above 1.05m are provided, unaffected by the gradient of the drive as the 5m closest to the road are fairly flat. 12 car parking spaces are provided for the flats (Kent Highways requirement of a minimum of one space per flat plus 2 visitor spaces is exceeded), and 2 spaces for each house. Bicycle parking of one secure and weather protected space per dwelling is provided. Four electric vehicle charging points are provided for both cars and bicycles, and every car parking space will be wired for a minimum 7.2kW/hr electric vehicle charging point.



aerial view showing no.20 to the west



aerial view showing no.22 to the east

S106 Contributions

Contribution figures from KCC are awaited to agree with GBC. A management scheme for the entire development, including all communal areas (internal and external) and the maintenance of the car park will be prepared. The applicant agrees to a SAMMS mitigation contribution of £253.83 per dwelling paid prior to the issue of any approval.

Landscaping, trees, & biodiversity

The existing trees are retained. A tree survey accompanies the application, showing that all trees are low grade. The site has been maintained as it was when in use for pre-school education, with the grassed areas kept closely cut and all areas managed for easy access. There are currently no areas that provide a habitat for protected species. The proposal will improve the land in this respect. A bat survey accompanies the application.

A- general. GB/31/01/22

Client:	Wakes
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