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PLANNING

DESIGN MANAGEMENT

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

21 DARNLEY ROAD
GRAVESEND, KENT

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Front 'Street' Elevation – 21 Darnley Road - Image courtesy of Google Maps

INTRODUCTION

This design and access statement relates to the proposed development to 21 Darnley Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0RZ. The statement is intended to provide relevant information about the site, the circumstances surrounding the case and the relevant planning policy context set by national government guidance and the Development Plan in force for the area. It is also intended to help inform and assist statutory consultees and any interested third parties or members of the public as well as providing supporting information for consideration by the Local Planning Authority's professional planning staff and elected Members.

The property is situated in a conservation area in a small parade of shops which all have an additional first floor for residential use. This application relates to the change of use of the existing ground floor commercial unit and the construction of a new mechanical extract ventilation system / ducting at the rear of the property.

LOCATION AND SETTING

The property occupies a prominent location on Darnley Road which is classed as a conservation area, the property itself forms the end unit to an existing parade of long established shops / businesses. There are residential units at first floor level above each commercial premises and the area is largely residential with a scattering of shops and other businesses located along the street which is a stones throw from the main train station located across the street.

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PROPERTY HISTORY

The property has been adapted over time and presently has commercial class E (former class B) use. There appears to be some previous planning history for this site on Council online records, some of which relate to a change of use to a restaurant.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The main issues which relate the development of this site are :

- Principle of change of use and addition of a mechanical extraction at rear of property
- Design and impact on character and appearance of surrounding area
- Residential amenity
- Highways and parking
- Ecological impact on the Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar/SPA

The objectives in respect of the development are to:

- Improve and upgrade the site with a newly built infill structure as indicated on proposed plans
- Provide well designed quality residential units within the constraints of the site
- Provide additional residential accommodation in this predominantly residential area

CURRENT / PROPOSED USE

The existing use of the ground floor space is presently commercial class E (former class B1). The owner is now seeking approval from the local authority to change the use of the ground floor to Class E - restaurant / hot-food takeaway.

SCALE

The scale of the existing property will not be adversely affected by the proposals – furthermore the proposals are entirely reversible.



Satellite Ariel Image (bigger scale) – 21 Darnley Road - Image courtesy of Google Maps

PROPOSAL

The owner wishes to apply for change of use for the ground floor unit for a new gourmet burger bar / take away facility which would require minor internal alterations and the installation of new mechanical extraction at the rear of the property.

The layout will be modified and tweaked to accommodate a new service area with small bar / stool seating together with modifications to the existing kitchen in the rear to provide more preparation and cooking areas to facilitate the new business. The proposal will full internal ground floor unit previous occupied by a gaming centre.

Externally the existing modern shopfront will be adapted to match the new décor / branding of the business together with alterations to the existing low level ceramic tiles by the windows which will be replace with new more appropriate durable and weather resistant porcelain tiling in a colour to compliment the existing exterior finish on the property and adjoining properties.

LAYOUT

The new layout as indicated on the plans submitted as part of this application highlight the proposals for interior layout , zoning and exterior alterations. No extension is proposed to the exterior of the property.

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ACCESS

The existing access arrangements will not be significantly altered by the proposals. The ground floor entrance to the unit will be via the existing private forecourt at the front of the property. This area could potentially become an exterior seating space in the future to prevent vehicles parking up against the property blocking access / means of escape.

In regards to parking, several of the surrounding roads provide parking opportunities so there is no need for unauthorised parking on site on roadside. The majority of customers are expected to be from the town centre / commuters passing by on foot so additional vehicle parking measures are not currently proposed.



Satellite Ariel Image (rear facing)– 21 Darnley Road - Image courtesy of Google Maps

APPEARANCE

The appearance of the building will be altered and significantly improved and upgraded by virtue of the proposed changes to the exterior through the careful selection of materials and décor proposed.

PLANNING POLICES RELATING TO PROPOSAL

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) looks to encourage sustainable forms of development whilst seeking to ensure that any development is appropriately designed and safeguards the character and amenity of an area. Although there is a strengthened requirement to ensure that developments feature an appropriate quality in terms of their design and construction there are also a number of other key changes to policy in relation to housing provision levels, affordable housing, the Green Belt and development density. The revised NPPF places a greater pressure on Local Planning Authorities to ensure the use of land more efficiently where it is sensible to do so. Paragraph 80 emphasises that planning decisions should help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account local business needs.

Paragraph 91 of the NPPF (2018) directs that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places whilst Paragraph 127 of the Framework demands high levels of design and seeks to safeguard the appearance and functioning of the built environment.

The proposals are not considered to give rise to any threat to highway safety or be likely to generate problems of vehicles causing congestion or any notable demand for use of nearby residential streets.

CONCLUSION

The proposal seeks to revive the existing unoccupied premises and the exterior of the premises through careful and considered design intervention to rejuvenate the street scene and attract customers.

It is considered that the proposals generally will have a neutral impact to the existing local context and would therefore not impact upon local visual amenities nor give rise to any material harm to the appearance of the site or character of the wider locality. In fact quite the opposite it would smarten up the appearance of this part of the street, which lies within the Darnley Street Conservation Area and make the entrance to property more attractive and inviting to potential customers thus preserving its commercial use in keeping with the existing parade of shops.

The proposals have no substantive impacts upon local visual amenities therefore and they will not alter the street scene or the wider area to any notable degree. If the council has any concerns about the proposals, the applicant would be happy for further details to be requested for submission and prior approval via a suitable planning condition(s). Indeed, such a condition is invited.

The application site is found within a defined urban area and within an established parade of shops and other commercial premises located next to the main high street in Gravesend town centre. In such a location a premises / use of this nature is entirely normal and expected. Thus permission should be granted for the exterior renovations to the existing premises.

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REFERENCES

NATION PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- 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

GRAVESHAM LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS19 – Design and Development Principles

Gravesham Council Conservation Area Appraisal

PLANNING PORTAL