

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20241002

Location: 17 High Street Northfleet Gravesend Kent

Description: Demolition of the existing shop and erection of three storey building consisting of 6no residential units 5x 2 bed and 1x 1 bed.

Applicant: Mr I Perla, JB Properties Ltd

Site Visit Date: 21st January 2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form received 19.12.25;
Site Location Plan received 05.11.24;
Drawing No. 20211205-PL03 – Existing floor plans and elevations received 17.12.24;
Drawing No. 1587-02 Rev J – Proposed Floor Plans received 29.09.25;
Drawing No. 1587-03 Rev F – Proposed Elevations & Section received 29.09.25;
Drawing No. 1587-04 Rev C – Existing and Proposed Block Plan received 29.09.25;
Supporting Information: Google Image of Site received 15.01.25;
Supporting Information: Design & Access Statement and Planning Statement received 15.01.25;
and
Supporting Information: Self Build Form received 09.12.24.

~~Drawing No. 20211205-PL01 – Proposed Plan;~~
~~Drawing No. 20211205-PL02 – Proposed Elevation;~~
~~Drawing No. 20211205-PL04 – Existing and Proposed Block Plan.~~

Relevant Planning History

The site is subject to a number of previous applications, however the following are the most relevant:

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision
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			Date
20070681	Demolition of existing building and erection of a part three storey and part two storey building to provide five 2-bedroom self contained flats; erection of 1.1m high railings along front boundary and laying out of five car parking spaces at the rear with vehicular access on to Council Avenue.	Permitted	09.10.2007
20070120	Demolition of existing building and erection of a part three storey, part two storey building to provide seven one and two bedroom flats; erection of 1.1 metre high railings on front boundary and laying out of seven car parking spaces at the rear with vehicular access on to Council Avenue.	Refused	29.03.2007

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS07 – Economy, Employment and Skills
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS14 – Housing Type and Size
- CS15 – Housing Density
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network

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 4 – Decision-making
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 – Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)

- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

External

KCC – Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period background archaeological potential. However, based on existing Historic Environment Record data for the area and the past development of the site, I consider it unlikely that these proposals would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

KCC – Highways and Transportation

The proposed development for 8 flats, is in a sustainable location, with access to local amenities and public transport within walking distance.

Six parking spaces are proposed, which will utilise the existing access from Council Avenue. Whilst this falls below the requirements, as set out in KCC Residential Parking Standards, IGN3, this is specified as a maximum standard. On balance, provided the following measures are considered, the proposed parking provision would be considered acceptable.

It would be preferred that the parking spaces are not allocated to individual units to add flexibility. At least one electric vehicle charging point should be provided.

I would also recommend the provision of a Travel Information Pack, to encourage sustainable travel, which should contain information on things such as local walking and cycling routes, with the distances to key destinations.

Information regarding KCC Green corridors scheme, that is due to come forward along the High Street Green Corridors Programme and information on the Fastrack service which is planned to run through the Northfleet West site to the north, could also be included.

Whilst some cycle storage has been shown on the submitted plans, I would recommend a minimum of one cycle space is provided per unit. Any cycle storage will need to be covered and secure, or it is likely to be underutilised. Subject to the above and provided the following requirements are secured by condition or planning obligation, then I would raise no objection on behalf of the local highway authority:-

- Submission of a Construction Management Plan before the commencement of any development on site to include the following:
 - (a) Routing of construction and delivery vehicles to / from site.
 - (b) Parking and turning areas for construction and delivery vehicles and site personnel, which may require supporting vehicle tracking/swept paths.
 - (c) Timing of deliveries, avoiding network and school peaks where possible.
 - (d) Provision of wheel washing facilities.
 - (e) Measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway.
 - (f) Temporary traffic management / signage.
- Provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing.

- Provision and permanent retention of secure, covered cycle parking facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- Provision and permanent retention of electric vehicle charging facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

All Electric Vehicle chargers provided for homeowners in residential developments must be provided to Mode 3 standard (providing a 7kw output) and SMART (enabling Wifi connection). Approved models are shown on the Office for Low Emission Vehicles Homecharge Scheme approved chargepoint model list: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/electric-vehicle-homecharge-scheme-approved-chargepoint-model-list>

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process. Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway. Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Internal

GBC – Environmental Protection

There is no objection to this application. Due to the current use of the site as a motor bike workshop a contaminated land watching brief condition is advised. In addition to this, the following are to be considered:

Watching Brief

The applicant shall undertake a watching brief during construction in case any contamination issue is encountered. If during development any contamination is found, the local planning authority should be informed as soon as practical and the work shall not continue until written agreement is provided by the LPA as to the appropriate measures to be taken to resolve the matter and they are satisfied that those measures have been carried out.

Code of Practice on Construction and Demolition

Please apply as appropriate.

Lighting

Artificial lighting can cause a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is important that the applicants are not permitted to install external lighting that illuminate anything other than the ground within the curtilage of the new properties in order to assist in preventing a nuisance

from occurring (which would be most likely if the bedrooms on neighbouring properties are illuminated).

Smoke Control Informative

The proposed development is situated in a smoke control area. As such, only authorised smokeless fuels as listed in the Smoke Control Areas (Authorised Fuels) Regulations 1991 shall be burnt or fireplaces/appliances exempted by Smoke Control (Exempted Fireplaces) Orders shall be utilised. Exempt appliances are appliances (ovens including pizza and tandoori ovens, wood burners and stoves) which have been exempted by Statutory Instruments (Orders) under the Clean Air Act 1993. These have passed tests to confirm that they are capable of burning an unauthorised or inherently smoky solid fuel without emitting smoke. They must be fitted and used according to manufacturer's instructions and they can only be used for the fuel for which they are designed. When purchasing fuels and fireplaces the applicant should clarify with the vendor their suitability with respect to use in Smoke Control Areas. For further information, including confirmation that an appliance and/or fuel is suitable for use in a smoke control area, the applicant should contact the Council's Regulatory Services air.quality@gravesham.gov.uk

Drainage/sewerage informative

The foul sewage shall be removed by means of the mains drainage system and not by the use of non-mains sewerage systems, unless connection to the drainage system is not reasonably practicable.

GBC – Waste Services

I have reviewed this planning application and the application does not detail on any waste storage details.

For this type of development we would expect to the below minimum levels

- **Refuse** - 1 x 1100ltr bin per six flats
- **Recycling** - 1 x 1100ltr bin per six flats with specialised recycling lid
- **Food Waste** - 1 x 140ltr bin per ten flats with an individual 5ltr caddy per flat

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by the displaying of a site notice and individual letters sent to thirteen surrounding properties with an overall expiry date of 14th February 2025. One letter of representation was received not objecting to the principle but objection to the scale of the development and quality of the submission with inaccuracies on the parking plan and in the Design and Access Statement.

Officer's Analysis

Procedural Matters

The initial submission was deemed unacceptable due to the design, bulk, scale and massing, together with detrimental impact on both occupier amenity due to undersized units/rooms and neighbour amenity due to the extent of the rear projection.

Initial Proposals





In accordance with Article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended), and paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024, the Local Planning Authority has approached the assessment of this application in a positive and proactive way and secured a revised scheme with the applicant to address the concerns raised.

The original proposal was for the *Demolition of the existing shop and erection of three storey building consisting of 6 one bed flats and 3 two bed flats*. In order to address the concerns raised, the proposal has been amended to the *Demolition of the existing shop and erection of three storey building consisting 6no residential units 5x 2 bed and 1x 1 bed*.

Proposal

This application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing shop and erection of three storey building consisting 6no residential units 5x 2 bed and 1x 1 bed.

The application building is a single storey flat roof commercial unit serving as a motorbike repair shop. The proposed building presents itself as a two storey building with accommodation over three floors with large windows within the gables at the front and rear, therefore giving the appearance of a three storey building. The building has been laid out to be in line with the building line of No. 15 on the eastern elevation and steps back to be line with the building line with No. 21 to the west. The building would be attached to No. 15, but set away from No. 21 by 1.2m to provide side access.

The building would have a depth of 11.43m along the western boundary at three storey, with partial two storey central projection of 2.28m.

The building has been designed to be incorporated into the streetscene with an eaves height of 6.93m and ridge height of 10.16m which would be line with No. 21. The roof would be a gable and hip roof with bay windows which incorporates design features of the adjacent properties.

To the rear there would be 6no. parking spaces, one with EV charging, bin store and cycle store. There is further cycle store located to the front, with a total of 6no. cycle spaces. Flats 1 and 2 have a small private garden each and there is also a shared amenity space.

The accommodation would be laid out over three floors, with the ground floor consisting of the central entrance hall and stairwell and 2no. two-bed flats on the ground floor with open plan kitchen/living/diner with one double and one single bedroom. Flat 1 would have its own entrance to the side. The first floor would have 2no. two-bed units with the same layout as the ground floor and

the second floor would have 1no. two-bed unit with the same layout as Flat 2 and 3 below and 1no. one-bed unit.

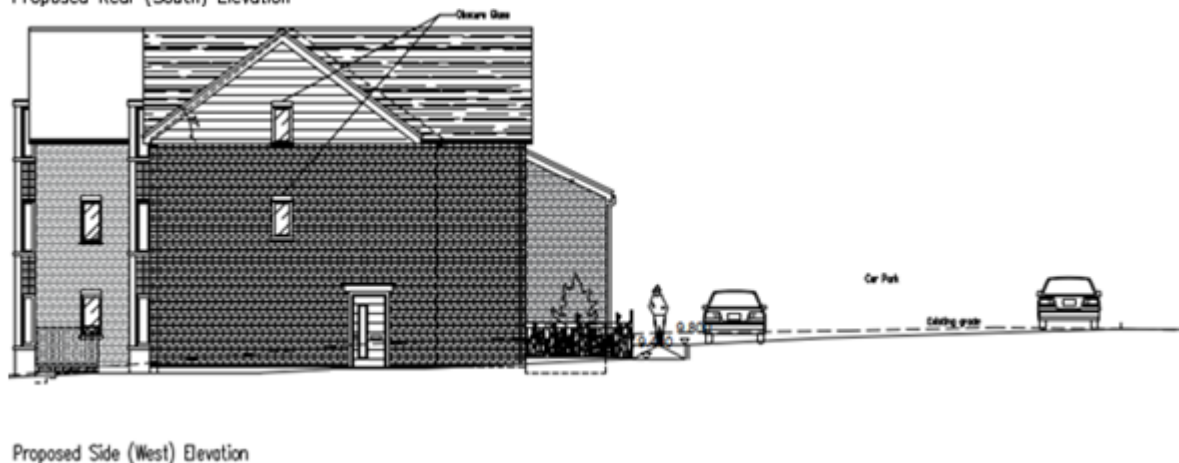
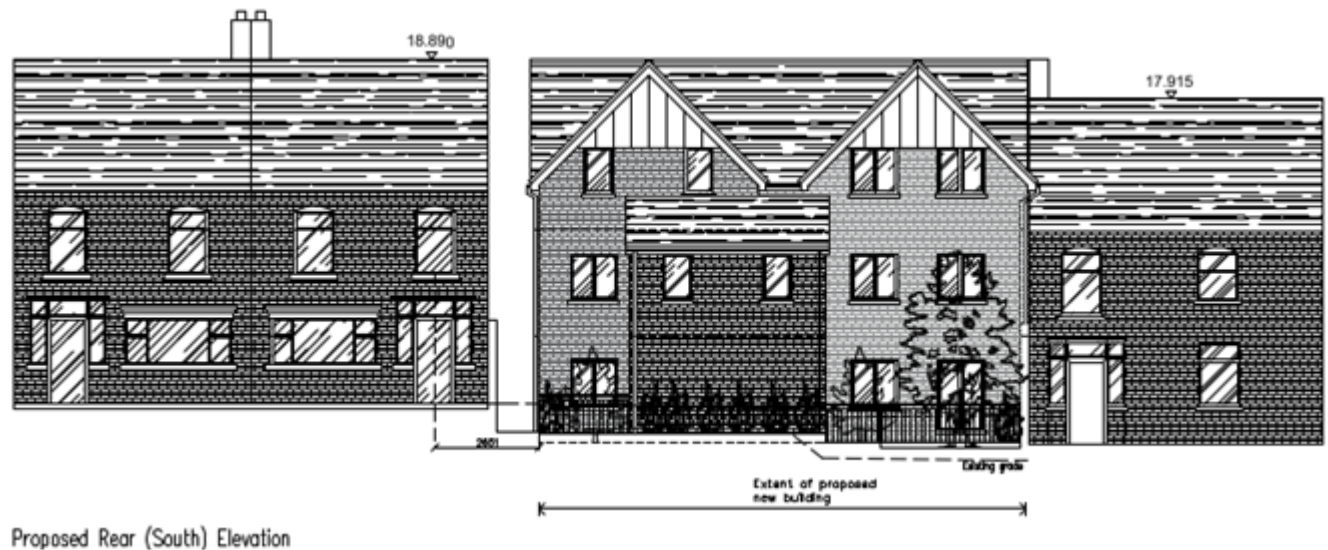
Existing and Proposed Block Plans



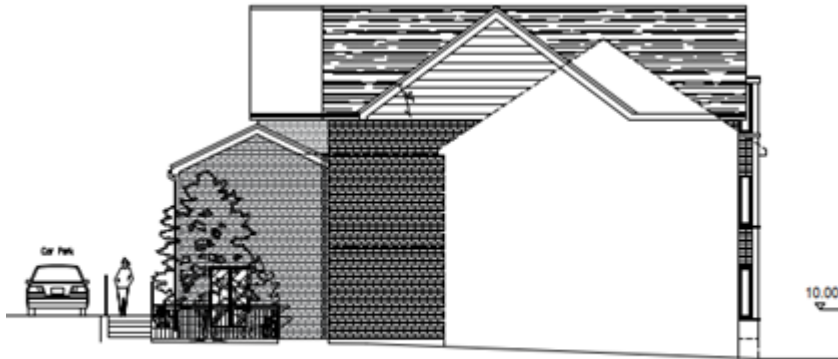
Existing Elevations



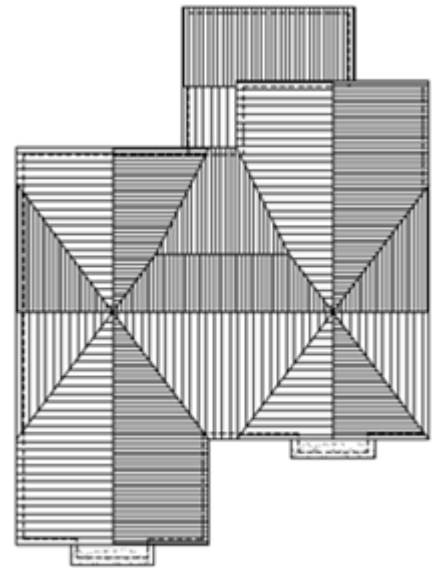
Proposed Elevations



Proposed Roof Plan

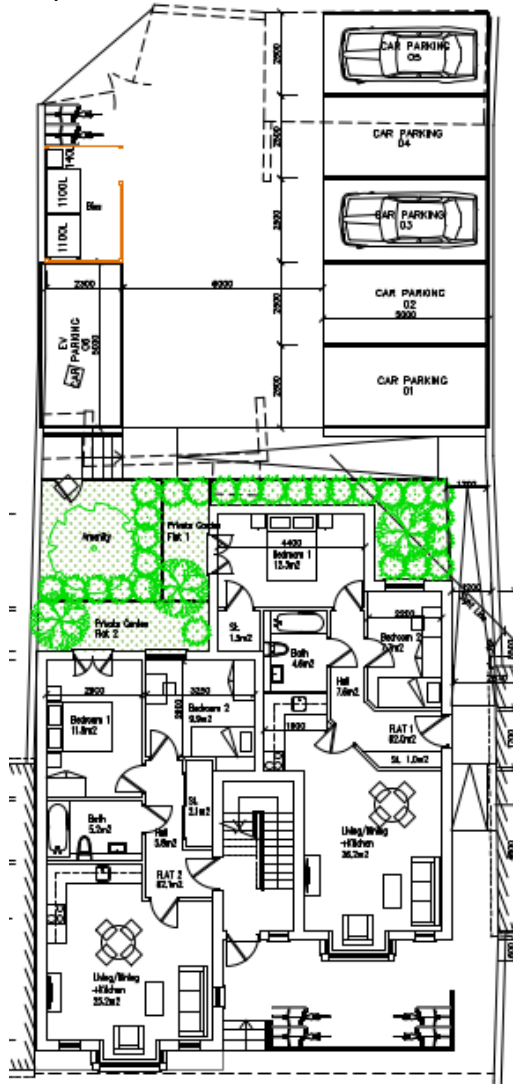


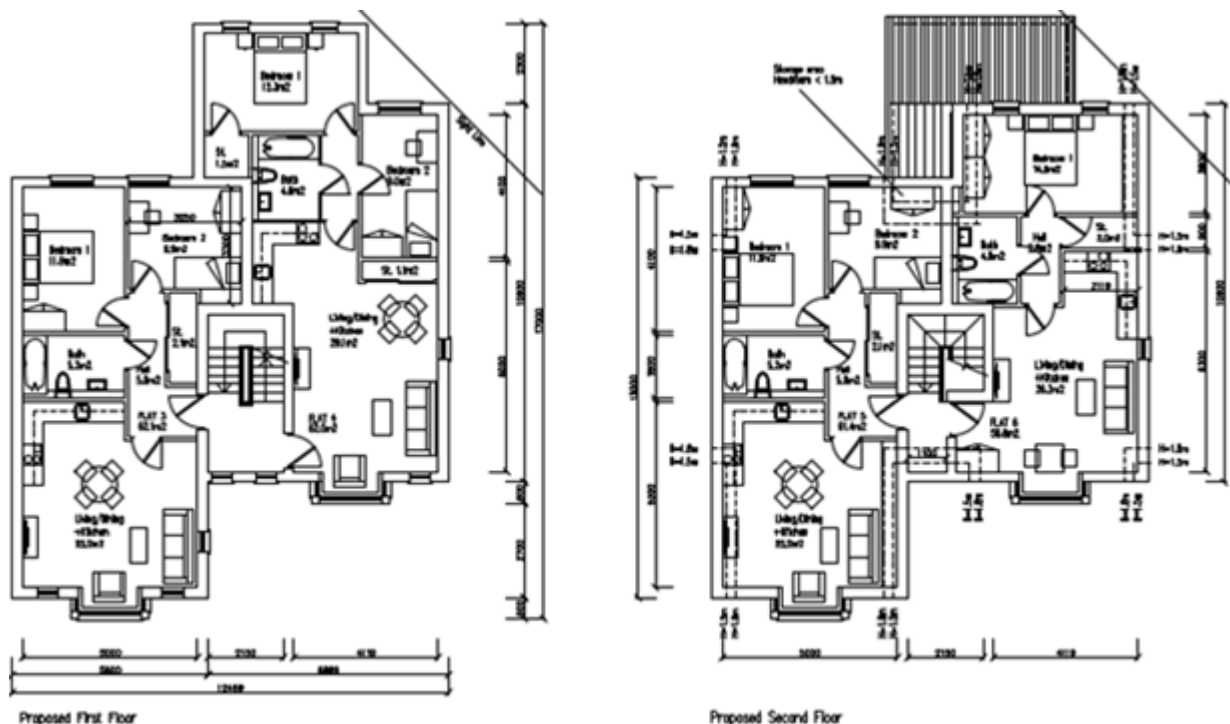
Proposed Side (East) Elevation



Proposed Roof Plan

Proposed Floor Plans





Principle Issues

The site lies within the urban boundary of Gravesend and has no particular site constraints or designations, with the exception of being in an existing local centre and in an archaeological notification area (with regards to the latter, due to the built-up nature of the site there are unlikely to be any significant below-ground archaeological impacts). In addition, as the planning history shows, a proposal for the redevelopment of the site providing 5no. 2-bedroom residential flats was permitted on 9th October 2007, which shows that the principle of redevelopment was established. However since this permission, there has been significant change to both local and national planning policy and the current proposal would need assessed under current legislation. As such, the main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are as follows:

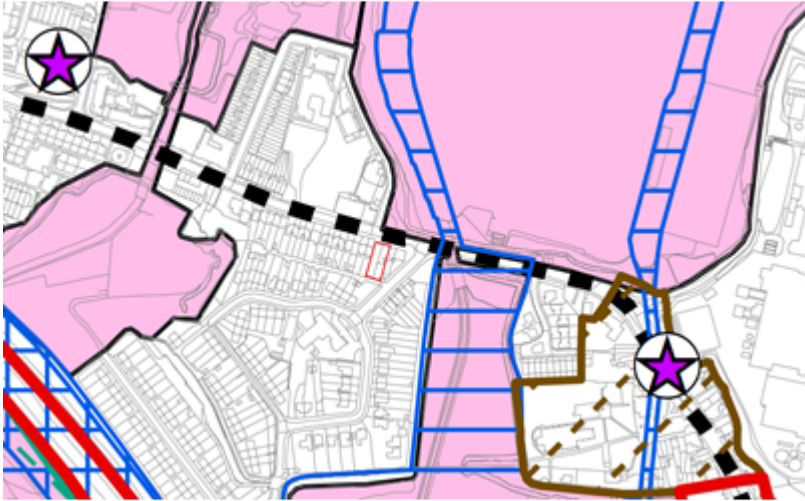
- Impact on commercial use
- Design, character and appearance
- Residential amenity
- Parking and highways

Impact on Commercial Use

The NPPF 2024 states at paragraph 90 that planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Policy CS08 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 states that local centres will be protected and enhanced.

The site lies within an existing local centre and the proposal will involve the demolition of the motorbike workshop (Use Class E) and therefore the loss of a commercial unit. The supporting design and access statement states that the workshop has been vacant since 2022 and states that *there is evidence of active marketing of the site for re-use or redevelopment for business uses through the commercial agent that show this business use is no longer suitable and viable for its existing*. However, the marketing information was not submitted with this application. As such the proposal would result in a loss of the commercial use. The site itself is not located within a local centre and is located on a portion of the High Street that is predominantly residential.

Site Context with Local Centres



Satellite Image of Site and Local Area



Therefore, whilst the loss of the commercial unit would be regrettable, it would not directly contravene Policy CS08 (LPCS).

Design, Character and Appearance

Section 12 of the NPPF 2024 relates to achieving well-designed and sets out the Government's requirements in relation to design issues. Paragraph 131 emphasises the importance of achieving high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 also seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The property lies within the urban boundary and comprises of a single storey flat roof building of an existing commercial use and in terms of design, does not enhance the character of the area or the streetscene. The site is predominantly located within a residential area..

Front Elevation:



Rear:



The proposed building would be attached to No. 15 to the east and would be set away from No. 21 by 1.2m to create side access, thus leaving a visual gap between the adjacent properties. The eaves and ridge height would be in line with No. 21 to the west which would result in a visual flow along the roofline within the streetscene. The fenestration of the building would have square dormer windows at ground and first floor with gables above, which incorporates design features of the residential dwellings to the west. The roof design has taken account of the existing built form.

The depth of the building would extend beyond the rear building line of the adjacent terrace block at two storey by 2.57m approx. at the closest point, extending to 4.84m at the central point. This layout has been incorporated to ensure the 45-degree outlook line from the rear windows of No. 21 has not been breached.

Overall, the proposed flatted building has been located and designed to fit well between the adjacent

buildings and has incorporate good design features to be respectful of the streetscene and the character of the area. As such, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2024 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 135f). Paragraph 198 of the NPPF 2024 seeks to ensure that new development takes into account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria within Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, which 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 and avoid adverse impacts from pollution.

Future Occupiers

The Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) 2015 sets out the minimum gross internal floor area (GIFA) standard for new dwellings. The table below shows the minimum standard set out in the NDSS 2015 against the size of the proposed flat within the development:

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bedspaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings (NDSS) (m²)	Proposed flat GIFA (m²)
Ground Floor			
Flat 1 - 2b	3p	61	61.61
Flat 2 - 2b	3p	61	61.08
First Floor			
Flat 3 - 2b	3p	61	61.61
Flat 4 - 2b	3p	61	61.08
Second Floor			
Flat 5 - 2b	3p	61	61.61
Flat 6 - 1b	2p	50	50

All proposed units accord with the minimum space standards and would comply with the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards in terms of the size of the proposed accommodation for the relative sized units proposed.

In addition, in relation to the more up-to-date Council standards set out in the Residential Layout Guidelines SPD (2020), the proposed room sizes would be acceptable in relation to the bedrooms, all of the proposed bedrooms exceed the 11.2m² standard for a double and 6.5m² for a single. All of the units are laid out with open plan living/kitchen/diner, which all measure between 25.2m². Whilst there is no standard for living/kitchen/diner, there is a minimum of 12.0m² for kitchen/diner and 18m² for lounge/diner. Taking this into account, it is considered that the proposed floorspace would therefore be capable of accommodating the furniture and fittings that would normally be associated with the use of this space, in compliance with the requirements of the SPD. Overall, the floorspace is considered to be acceptable in relation to amenity standards.

All habitable rooms have good access to outlook and natural light.

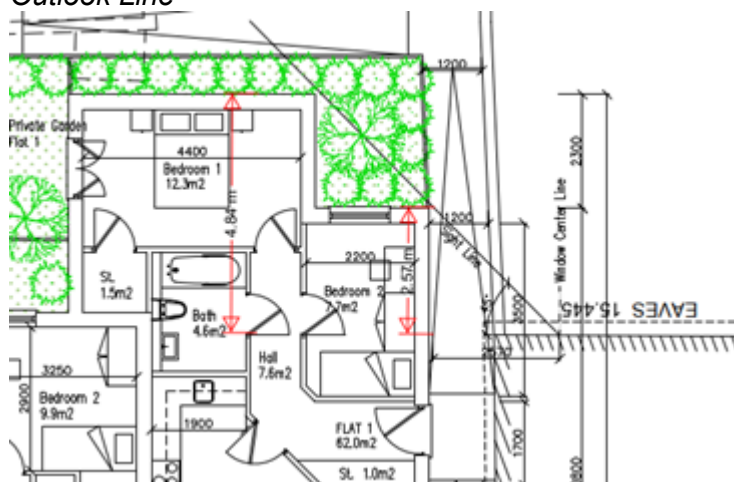
The area is mixed used commercial and residential, however the residential is more prominent in this location and it is therefore considered that the living conditions of any future occupants would not differ from the existing residential dwellings.

Neighbouring Properties

In terms of the impact on neighbouring properties, as laid out in the design section, the proposed

building would project both further to the rear of the adjacent residential dwelling, being No. 21 High Street. The building would be set away from the boundary of No. 21 by 1.2m and the 45 degree outlook line from the nearest habitable room window has not been breached due to the modest depth and location of the rear projection, as show in the following plan excerpt:

Outlook Line



Google Earth Image of Rear Elevations of Neighbouring Properties



Due to the orientation of the application site, the proposed building would result in additional shadow over the adjacent building to the west. However due to the separation of the built form, together with the modest projection, the overshadowing would not be significant enough to result in a refusal and the path of the sun would move round, therefore resulting in no overshadowing later in the day.

The rear windows of the development would afford views over neighbouring properties, however this would be the same for the existing dwellings within the terrace and therefore no loss of privacy would occur.

Overall the proposed development would result in a good standard of living for future occupiers and would not have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring properties in terms of loss of outlook, light, privacy or overshadowing.

The development would be in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Noise

The proposal is for residential units located within a predominantly residential area. The site is located on a relatively busy road that serves as a main highway network route and as such, there could be a significant level of vehicle noise. However taking into consideration the existing use of the site and the predominantly residential character of the area, there are no objections to noise. The proposal is in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and Section 12 of the Nation Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Parking and Highways

The proposal has incorporated parking to the rear for 6 cars (one with EV charging), together with a cycle store for 2no. bikes and 4no. bikes to the front. Whilst the site is not located within a local centre, there are two local centres within close proximity and the road is a main highway network, accessible by public transport.

6no. parking spaces would provide for one space per flat which would comply with the KCC Parking Standards.

6no. cycle parking also provides one space per unit which is sufficient.

Subject to conditions, adequate vehicle and cycle parking provision would be available in accordance with Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, paragraphs 115 to 117 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and subject to further details of cycle parking provision.

Waste and Refuse

The proposed bins storage is shown on the plans and would provide 2no. 1100 litre bins for waste and recycling and 140L food waste bin, which would accord with the standard laid out within the Gravesham Planning Guidance on Waste Collection Requirements (2024).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Ecology and Biodiversity

The Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar site and Special Protection Area (SPA) are internationally important for nature conservation as the area is a wetland and supports important numbers of wintering waterbirds and migrating birds. There has been a decline in the number of birds using these sites in recent years. Studies show that this could be due to people using the estuary and marshes for recreation purposes. The North Kent Bird Disturbance Report concludes that all new housing development within 6km of the North Kent Ramsar Sites or Special Protection Areas (including the Thames Estuary and Marshes) and larger housing development beyond 6km from the sites could have an adverse impact on them. This is because new housing development is likely to lead to further increases in recreational use of the sites which means that further declines in the bird population cannot be ruled out. Possible mitigation measures are set out in the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy. Having considered a number of options, the Council have decided to impose a tariff on new housing development. Developers will need to pay £337.49 for every new dwelling provided within 6km of the Ramsar site and SPA and for larger housing developments beyond 6km from them. The money raised will be used to pay for schemes to avoid the adverse impacts of new housing development on the birds.

The applicants have made the payment towards the mitigation and therefore the proposal secures a contribution towards strategic mitigation measures within Special Protection Areas, and therefore the development is in accordance with the requirements of the Habitat Regulations and Section 15 (specifically paragraphs 193 and 194) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This statutory framework is referred to as 'biodiversity net gain' in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.

Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met ("the biodiversity gain condition"). This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

In this case, the proposed development is covered by an exemption: it is a development below the threshold as it does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat and 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows. There is no existing 'habitat' on the site, and any space that could be used as such measures 10m². BNG is therefore not required in this case.

Conclusion

The principle of residential development in this location has been accepted, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of the design, bulk and massing and would have a respectful appearance and visual impact on the streetscene and character and appearance of the surrounding. The proposed units would result in a good level of amenity for future occupiers and there would be no detrimental impact on neighbouring amenities in terms of outlook, loss of light or overshadowing or loss of privacy. The proposals would therefore be in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024.

Recommendation

Permission subject to conditions

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

Case Officer:	Ms Amanda Cue	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	A Cue	Signed:	R Hart
Dated:	15 th October 2025	Dated:	17 th October 2025