



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20211514

Location: 23 Britannia Drive Gravesend Kent DA12 4RP

Description: Demolition of existing rear extension and erection of a two storey side extension including internal alterations.

Applicant: Mr B Norris

Site Visit Date: 18 November 2021

Submitted Documents/Plans

Drawing no. 53-PL-1000 Rev. A Red line site boundary plan;
Drawing no. 53A-PL-10 Rev. A Existing and proposed block plans;
Drawing no. 53-PL-100 Rev. A Existing layout and elevations;
Drawing no. 53A-PL-101 Rev. A Proposed layout and elevations;
Design and Access Statement December 2021; and
Email from the agent dated 01 February 2022.

Procedural issue

It is noted that the applicant confirmed at the site visit, that the works to demolish the garage could be done without encroaching over the boundary with no. 25 Britannia Drive.

The applicant submitted two alternative proposed parking layouts. However these were not accepted as amendments to the proposed development but were subject to consideration by the GBC Highways Officer.

Relevant Planning History

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Decision</u>
20211208	Demolition of existing single storey rear extension and detached garage, and erection of a front porch and a two storey side extension.	Refused	25.11.2021

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
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P5 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

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)

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

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021)

Other documents

- Nationally Described Space Standard 2015

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC - Highways Officer

Initial comments:

This proposal increases the number of bedrooms from 3 to a minimum of 4, so no car parking should be lost as a result. With the need to retain 2 spaces care must be applied to ensure as far as possible the layout conforms to guidance

First, generally Kent County Council will not allow two accesses to a property unless a clear need can be demonstrated and it is considered safe to do so. Whilst it is a matter for Kent County Council, as Highway Authority. Given the guidance issues by K.C.C. I can only assume a second access will not get approval. In addition the same guidance requires vehicles to be parked perpendicular to the highway. The extracts from https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/27688/Vehicle-crossing-pre-application-guidance.pdf are;

“The parking space must be:-

- At a right angle to the highway with the vehicle able to enter and exit the property in one movement.
- There must be no adjusting movements of a vehicle made on the highway when entering or exiting the property.”

&

3. Separate entrance and exit

The general rule is that increasing the number of points on a highway where vehicles turn, increases the potential for traffic conflict. Therefore, applications for two access crossings to a single property, or a second access point where one already exists, will not normally be approved for domestic dwellings unless there is strong evidence that it will add significantly to highway safety.

For such applications to be considered, the applicant will need to show:-

- How a second access will add to the safety of the access arrangements
- Why such added safety cannot be achieved from a single access, or by improving or repositioning an existing access.

Parking at an angle to the highway can result in safety issues as visibility can be more restricted at least in one direction, however it is not an uncommon practice. But given the revised Highway Code, I believe it is essential that visibility should be maximised to ensure a driver can see pedestrians and cyclists.

Looking at the drawings and as there are no swept path/tracked drawings given the width of the existing access it appears to be very restrictive to gain access to the front garden and it is doubtful that a vehicle can gain access to the front garden, at least from the south without some shunting movements.

I consider a second access should be provided to a second parking space which would be perpendicular to the highway in the interests of highway safety.

Comments regarding alternative parking layouts:

Cars parking in front of doors require a 6 metres long space, but if the car were moved away from the door a standard space can probably be achieved without conflict with the door, the alternative would be an open porch.

As they have submitted an indicative drawing of what may be possible, can it just be conditioned that a second parking space is constructed with a separate unhindered access to the highway prior to the rest of the works taking place. They will then just have to discuss the matter with Kent Highways and come up with an acceptable solution.

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 below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

National Grid

This application falls outside of Cadent's distribution network. Please contact your local Gas distributor and/or National Grid for comments on this application.

National Grid:

assetprotection@nationalgrid.com

Gas Distribution Networks:

SGN

Wales and West Utilities (WWU)

Northern Gas Networks (NGN)

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised to nine neighbouring properties by letter. One representation has been received and is summarised as follows;

- Drawing no. 53-PL-100 Rev. A does not show the adjoining garage at no. 25 Britannia Drive.
- If the garage at the application site is proposed to be demolished, who will pay for any damage to the wall and roof waterproofing?
- Requests mitigation of adverse dust and rubble impacts associated with the demolition works.
- Loss of light to the kitchen window of no. 25 Britannia Drive.

- The side elevation window to bedroom one is unnecessary as the room has windows in the front elevation.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) sets out various design requirements and includes the need for the development to add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

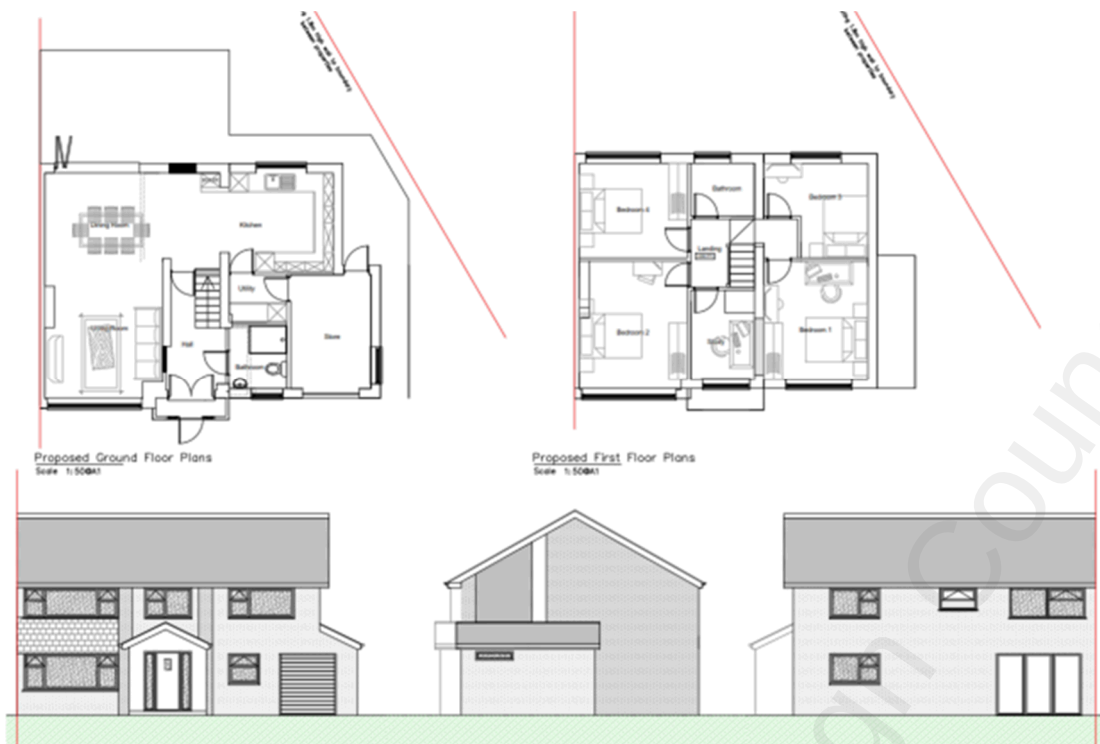
The application site is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling located within a generous plot. The building is one of a number that have been designed specifically to respond to the curving nature of Britannia Drive. The side elevations of the application site and the neighbouring properties present a positive frontage, with front doors in well-articulated side elevations, set back behind generous gardens. As the following images illustrate;



It is usual practice and in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD 2021, for a two storey side extension to be designed to match with, and appear subservient to, the host building and amongst other things, to be set back from the front building line.

The proposed extension would match with the facing materials of the application property but it would add significant size and bulk to the building and have a roof design and some fenestration that does not match with existing.

It is noted that a previous proposal for a side extension at the application site was recently refused on design grounds (application 20211208). The proposed elevations and design (not to scale) were as follows;



The current proposal is as follows (not to scale);



The current proposal overcomes a number of the previous design issues. In particular;

- The proposed extension would be set back from the front and rear building lines of the application property and the proposed hipped roof would ensure that the size and bulk of the extension are not excessive. Although not a feature of the application property, a hipped roof is a design feature on some existing buildings in the immediate vicinity of the application site.

- Openings in the proposed side elevation would ensure that the extension would better address the street scene and would retain a side access to the property.
- A roller shutter feature has been removed from the proposed front elevation, which is an improvement visually.
- The proposed rear elevation has one more opening, which is an improvement visually.
- The gap between the proposed extension and no. 25 Britannia Drive would be increased slightly.
- The proposed layout of the front garden would include more green space, which would soften the built development at the application site.

Whilst it would be preferable for the proposed windows to match the proportions and design of the existing fenestration and for the existing gap between the application property and no. 25 Britannia Drive to be retained, it is considered that these issues would not result in a proposal that would be significantly out of character with the existing building or its surroundings. The proposed development would be broadly in line with the guidance in the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD 2021 for two storey side extensions, as it would appear subservient to the host building and would retain some space between the proposed extension and the flank boundary.

Overall it is considered that the proposed design approach would broadly respect the existing character of the building and the street scene and as such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD 2021 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would result in the application property increasing from three bedrooms to five. It should be noted that the existing third bedroom is not altered as part of the proposal but is shown as a study on the proposed layout plan. Whilst the area of this room is below the minimum set out in the Nationally Described Space Standard 2015 (NDSS), the room was originally designed to be used as a bedroom and is a common feature of dwellings all over the housing estate, in which the application property is situated. As such, the proposed study should be assessed as a bedroom, even if it is very small.

According to the Borough Council's Residential Layout Guidelines 2020 (RLG) a dwelling with four or more bedrooms should have a minimum garden area of 100 square metres and a depth of 10 metres. Following the removal of the existing rear extension, the proposed garden would have area in excess of this figure and a depth of between 3 and 17 metres. Therefore the proposed development would provide sufficient amenity space for future occupiers.

The proposed new bedrooms would be 11.6 square metres (bedroom 1) and 7.4 square metres (bedroom 3) in area. Bedroom 1 would exceed the minimum requirements for a double bedroom and Bedroom 3 would be just below the minimum requirement for a single bedroom in the NDSS. Despite Bedroom 3 being slightly small, it is considered that these rooms would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers.

Bedroom 3 would have one window which would be obscure glazed and as such, would restrict outlook for future occupiers, to the detriment of their living conditions. This, combined with the small size of the room would, result in some harm to residential amenity however it is considered that the level of harm would not be a justifiable ground of refusal.

The proposed development would result in the loss of two existing windows in the first floor, side elevation of the application property (a hallway and a bedroom). The bedroom window would be relocated to the front elevation but the hallway would have no alternative window. Whilst it would be preferable for the hallway to retain natural light, as a non-habitable room, the loss of light would not be significantly detrimental to the living conditions of future occupiers.

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would provide an adequate standard of living for future occupiers and be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines 2020 and be broadly in line with the Nationally Described

Space Standard 2015.

Neighbouring Amenity

The closest neighbouring properties to the application site are nos. 21 and 25 Britannia Drive (which adjoin to the south and north respectively). Nos. 20-28 Britannia Drive are located across the roadway to the east and nos. 14 and 16 Vanessa Walk are located to the south west.

It is noted that a local resident has raised concerns regarding the loss of light to the kitchen of no. 25 Britannia Drive. However, due to the distance between the application site and the surrounding properties and their orientation, it is considered that there would be no significant adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of no. 25 Britannia Drive or any of the surrounding residential occupiers.

The proposed development would introduce five new windows (three ground and two first floor windows) and a new front door to the front elevation of the dwelling. The privacy distance to the properties opposite the front elevation of the application property would be at least 20 metres and as such, there would be no significant adverse overlooking impacts from the proposed front bedroom windows to the occupiers of nos. 22 and 24 Britannia Drive (the two closest dwellings opposite). The proposed bathroom and store windows would be to non-habitable rooms and would not cause any adverse overlooking impacts. In addition, the bathroom window would be conditioned to be obscure glazed to protect the privacy of the occupiers.

The proposed development would introduce two new windows in the rear elevation (one at ground and one at first floor level). The existing boundary treatments would screen any overlooking from the ground floor window and the first floor window (to a bedroom) would be obscure glazed. Therefore there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to any surrounding residential occupiers.

The proposed development would result in one less window than existing, in the side elevation facing no. 25 Britannia Drive but the windows would be located closer to that property. There are existing first floor windows at no. 25 that face the side elevation at the application site. The proposed side windows would also face nos. 28 and 30 Britannia Drive, although the privacy distance for these properties would be at least 24 metres. Therefore, in order to ensure that there is no loss of privacy to the occupiers of no. 25 Britannia Drive, the proposed side windows should be conditioned to be obscure glazed.

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines 2020.

Parking and Highways

The proposed development would result in the loss of an existing garage and an increase in the number of bedrooms at the application property from three to five. It would also include the widening of an existing vehicle parking area and the construction of a new crossover.

The Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards require a dwelling with four or more bedrooms to provide off road parking for a maximum of three vehicles. However whilst the application details refer to the provision of three spaces, the proposed parking plan only shows two. No objection has been raised by the GBC Highways Officer and because sufficient on street parking would be available, it is considered that two off road parking spaces would be acceptable.

The GBC Highways Officer initially raised concerns regarding the proposed parking layout (that the new parking space would be detrimental to highway safety and the new crossover would be unlikely to be approved by Kent Highways). The applicant then provided details of alternative layouts, which the GBC Highways Officer has further commented upon (concluding that with amendment and the approval of Kent Highways, the proposed parking would be acceptable).

The applicant has shown that the provision of adequate car parking at the application site would be achievable, subject to Kent Highways approval (for a second crossover). Therefore, subject to the inclusion

of a pre-commencement condition on any planning permission granted, which requires the construction of a second car parking space with a separate unhindered access to the highway, then it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to highway safety. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

A local resident has raised a number of concerns regarding the proposed development. One concern has been addressed in the neighbouring amenity section above. The remaining issues are outlined and commented upon below;

- Drawing no. 53-PL-100 Rev. A does not show the adjoining garage at no. 25 Britannia Drive – this is noted. The position of the garage is shown on other drawings and was noted at the case officer's site visit.
- If the garage at the application site is proposed to be demolished, who will pay for any damage to the wall and roof waterproofing? – The applicant has confirmed that the proposal can be built without encroachment over the boundary with no. 25. Any adverse impacts to, and the making good of, the adjoining garage are civil matters that must be addressed between the affected land owners. This issue can be drawn to the attention of the applicant via an informative attached to any planning permission granted.
- Requests mitigation of adverse dust and rubble impacts associated with the demolition works – any planning permission granted would contain a works of construction informative, which would provide guidance on good practice during construction.
- The side elevation window to bedroom one is unnecessary as the room has windows in the front elevation – this window has been included to add interest to the proposed flank elevation, which in design terms would be welcomed.

The application site is located in an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However KCC Heritage raise no objection to the proposed development. As such, the proposal would have no adverse impacts archaeology and would be in line with Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

There is a lower pressure gas pipeline located close to the front (eastern) boundary of the application site and the proposed development would involve a widened parking area on the site frontage. It is unlikely that the proposal would adversely impact upon the gas pipeline but the applicant should be advised of its existence via an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

The application site is located in a smoke control area. As such, advice regarding smokeless fuels/appliances can be given to the applicant in an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Suggested conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Submission and approval of details of a new car parking space with a separate unhindered access to the highway pre-commencement

Materials to match existing

No further openings in flank elevation

Obscure glazing to bathroom windows

Retention of existing frontage parking

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	09 February 2022	Dated:	10 February 2022