

ERECTION OF NEW DWELLING WITH ASSOCIATED WORKS

388 Rochester Road, Gravesend. DA12 4TT

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



Introduction

This proposal has been prepared following the previous application reference no. 20231051 that was permitted for the construction of a new 3-bedroom dwelling to the side of 388 Rochester Road. The new proposed development is altered slightly from the original scheme with the existing building remaining unchanged. This follows planning application

no. 20240303, which was not permitted. However, the changes to this proposal are scaled back from the previous application.

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as well as the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Amendment) Order 2006.

The Planning Statement is incorporated within this document and should be read alongside the proposed development. Its purpose is to outline the planning merits of the application in the context of relevant planning policies and guidance.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and supporting information,

Existing and Proposed Drawings:

- *01 Site Plan*
- *02 Existing plans*
- *03 Existing elevations*
- *04 Permitted*
- *05 Proposed plans*
- *06 Proposed elevations*
- *07 Existing street scene*
- *08 Proposed street scene*
- *09 Block plan*

This application should also be considered in the context of previously approved applications and their associated documentation, including,

Approved Planning Application 20231051:

- *D-06 Proposed block plan*
- *D-02 Proposed floor plans & elevations*
- *Document 5423 - Design & Access Statement*

Lawful Development Certificate 20230170:

- *D-03A Proposed Block Plan*
- *D-04 Proposed Outbuilding Floor Plans and Elevations*

The most recent application that was refused should also be highlighted to highlight the changes to this proposal,

Refused Planning Application 20240303:

- *D-13A Proposed Block Plan*
- *D-14A Proposed Floor Plans*
- *D-15A Proposed Elevations*

Site

The application site is located at 388 Rochester Road, a well-proportioned detached dwelling occupying a prominent corner plot at the intersection of Rochester Road and Thong Lane. The property is detached at the end of a row of smaller two-storey terraced dwellings and benefits from rear vehicular access, which serves a double garage and associated hardstanding area.

The surrounding built environment exhibits a diverse architectural character, incorporating a range of styles and materials including traditional red brick, rendered facades and instances of mock Tudor detailing. To the northern side of Rochester Road, the prevailing housing stock appears to comprise more recent local authority residential development. Conversely, the land situated to the east, beyond Thong Lane, comprises open agricultural fields designated as Green Belt, contributing to the rural setting and visual openness of the area.

The dwellings along this section of Rochester Road and Thong Lane are generally set well back from the highway, creating a clear and defined separation between the public realm and the residential frontage. The plot to the side of the existing dwelling is notably generous, and the applicant seeks to make optimal and efficient use of the available land.

The interface between rural and urban character is a significant and sensitive transition. The current eastern gable elevation, which faces the approach road, presents a weak architectural presence. This proposal is therefore viewed as an opportunity to enhance the streetscape through the introduction of a high-quality built form that improves the visual experience when approaching the urban edge and travelling towards Gravesend.

In addition to its positive contribution to local character, the proposed dwelling will be constructed to modern, high-performance standards, delivering a well-designed, energy-efficient home that meets or exceeds current regulatory requirements.

The appendix highlights precedents of double storey extensions in close vicinity that have extended close to site boundaries (i.e. up to the path of corresponding roads).

Planning Policy Statement

Policy QL1 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (KMSP) requires all development proposals to respond positively to the scale, layout, pattern, and character of the surrounding area. This principle is echoed in **Policy TC1** of the Gravesham Local Plan (GLP), which emphasises that the scale and massing of new buildings must be sympathetic to their context. Additionally, **Policy H3** of the GLP seeks to safeguard the established character and quality of residential areas from inappropriate forms of development.

Supplementary design guidance is provided through the Kent Design Guide and national planning guidance, including **Planning Policy Statement 1** (PPS1), both of which underline the importance of new development responding appropriately to its local context and reinforcing local distinctiveness.

Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) further reinforces the need for the efficient and effective use of land, encouraging the delivery of new housing in locations that are sustainable and contextually appropriate. It also builds on the design principles set out in PPS1, affirming that high-quality design is fundamental to the creation of well-designed, sustainable residential environments.

The plot identifies underutilised land, in line with **Policy CS02** (Lapsed and Underused Sites) and **Policy CS15** (Housing Development and Density) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014). The site is on the boundary between the Urban / Rural Boundary Green Belt.

Planning History

Relevant previous applications,

Ref. No: 19980185 | Status: Application Permitted

Erection of two storey side extension to form living room with two bedrooms over, single storey rear extension to form dining room and continuation of the new pitched roof over the existing flat roofed rear extension.

Ref. No: 20090099 | Status: Application Refused

Erection of a detached two storey, four bedroom dwelling with rooms in the roof space.

Ref. No: 20230170 | Status: Application Permitted

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of outbuilding to provide gym, WC/shower room and home office.

Ref. No: 20231051 | Status: Application Permitted

Extension to existing dwellinghouse to create building, containing 2no. semi-detached dwellinghouses.

Ref. No: 20240303 | Status: Application Refused

Extensions to existing dwellinghouse to create a building containing 2no. semi-detached dwellinghouses and associated works.

Relevant previous appeals,

Ref. No: 09/00015/REF | Status: Appeal dismissed

Erection of a detached two storey, four bedroom dwelling with rooms in the roof space.

Flood Risk Assessment

Refer to the appendix for illustration.

The site is located at grid reference 567074 (easting) / 172785 (northing). It lies within Flood Zone 1, as defined by the Environment Agency, indicating that it is situated in an area with a low probability of flooding.

Proposal

This application is submitted subsequent to the approval of planning application 20231051 and the later refusal of application 20240303. The red line site boundary remains consistent with that of the previously approved scheme.

The revised proposal has been developed in consultation with the applicant and their extended family, who intend to occupy the existing dwelling with the applicant moving into the new dwelling. Following this engagement, a number of relatively minor amendments have been requested to better meet the evolving needs of the future occupants.

The proposed amendments include the following:

- *Alterations to the eastern gable elevation to improve the internal stair configuration. This includes the retention of the previously approved hipped roof with a gable end.*
- *The front bay windows of the new dwelling have been redesigned with squared forms in place of the previously approved angled bays.*
- *The proposal has been widened to have improved access and usability for a wheelchair user and has provisions for the use of a wheelchair lift in the future.*
- *The external layout has been revised to provide five off-street car parking spaces, inclusive of two spaces within the existing garage.*
- *The design is not extended at the rear in keeping with the originally permitted design.*
- *This design reverts back to the approved scheme, wherein the main roof has not been altered for habitation and remains a hipped roof.*

These amendments are considered to be modest in scale and consistent with the character of the original approval, while delivering improved functionality and amenity for the occupants.

Design

Scale & Bulk

The proposed development introduces one three-bedroom, four-person dwelling, designed in accordance with the nationally described space standards and reflecting Policy CS15 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), which seeks to ensure the delivery of high-quality residential accommodation.

The scheme makes efficient and sustainable use of the generous side plot adjacent to the existing dwelling, while also improving the architectural treatment of the eastern elevation. This contributes positively to the local streetscape and the transition between built form and the adjacent open countryside.

The proposal also provides appropriately allocated private amenity space and complies with adopted parking standards, including the provision of five off-street vehicular parking spaces. This aligns with the guidance set out in the Kent Design Guide and Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines, ensuring that the development is well-integrated, functional, and capable of supporting the needs of future occupants without adverse impact on the surrounding area.

Design Character

The proposed dwelling will be constructed to a high internal specification and will fully comply with current Building Regulations, including the provisions of Part M, which address accessibility standards and the inclusion of ground floor WC facilities. The revised design allows for an enhanced eastern elevation, offering a more positive architectural contribution to the streetscape while ensuring there is no significant adverse impact on the surrounding built form, highways or the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The proposed materials palette has been carefully selected to complement the existing context and includes,

- *Red facing brick*
- *Rendered finishes*

-
- *Roof tiles to match the existing dwelling*
 - *Wall-hung tiles for visual interest and textural continuity*

Principle of Development

In accordance with the adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy, the proposed development introduces a well-proportioned, high-quality family dwelling that aligns with the objectives of Policy CS15, which promotes the delivery of sustainable housing in appropriate urban locations. The scheme has been designed in a manner consistent with Policy CS19, ensuring that it responds positively to the surrounding context in terms of scale, massing, and layout, while also respecting the character and appearance of the local area.

The revised proposal represents a reduction in scale and visual impact compared to earlier schemes. It has been carefully redesigned to address issues previously raised through the planning process, including concerns related to massing, design detail, and neighbour amenity. This demonstrates a considered and responsive design approach, as encouraged under Policy CS02, which seeks to guide sustainable and context-sensitive growth.

It is also noted that a Certificate of Lawful Development has been granted for a single-storey outbuilding on the site. The approved structure occupies a footprint that broadly corresponds with the siting of the proposed new dwelling, providing further evidence that the introduction of built form in this location is acceptable in principle.

Parking & Highways

The proposal complies fully with the provisions of Kent County Council's Residential Parking Standards (IGN 3). In line with the guidance provided by Kent Highways in response to the previously approved application, the scheme makes provision for a total of five off-street parking spaces—two allocated to the proposed three-bedroom dwelling and three retained for the existing property (inclusive of the double garage space.) The shared parking court has been increased to ensure sufficient space for vehicle manoeuvring within the site, thereby facilitating safe and convenient forward-facing access and egress onto the public highway.

In addition to the on-site provision, there is ample on-street parking capacity within the surrounding area. The proposed development is not anticipated to generate any adverse impacts on the local road network or junction performance. The built form is set well back from the highway, and the site's frontage to Thong Lane includes a wide grass verge, further enhancing visibility and reducing any potential conflict with vehicular or pedestrian movements.

Refuse and Cycle Storage

Dedicated and secure storage areas for both refuse and recycling bins, as well as for bicycles, have been incorporated into the design of the proposed dwelling. These facilities are positioned to ensure ease of access for future occupants while maintaining a clean and orderly site layout. The inclusion of covered cycle storage also aligns with wider objectives around sustainable transport and active travel.

Services & Facilities

The application site is located within a well-established suburban residential area and benefits from convenient access to a wide range of local amenities and community facilities, many of which are within comfortable walking distance. These nearby services contribute to the site's sustainability and support its suitability for residential development. Local facilities include,

- *Cascades Leisure Centre, Riverview Park*
- *Vanquisher Walk Community Centre*
- *Thamesview School, Gravesend*
- *Southern Valley Golf Course*
- *Viewpoint Community Centre*
- *Chalk Parish Hall*
- *A local parade of shops offering a variety of services including a café, pharmacy, newsagent, hairdresser, hot food takeaways, massage therapy, funeral directors and a convenience supermarket*
- *Car service garage*
- *Tymberwood Academy*
- *Harvester restaurant*
- *North West Kent College*

In addition to these local amenities, the site is also well connected to a broader range of regional facilities, including,

- *Bluewater Shopping Centre*
- *Gravesend Town Centre*
- *Darent Valley Hospital*
- *Gravesend Mainline Railway Station (with direct links to London and Medway towns)*
- *Ebbsfleet International Railway Station (with high speed links to Stratford & London St. Pancras Railway Station within 22 minutes)*
- *Shorne Woods Country Park*
- *Jeskyns Community Woodland*
- *The Inn on the Lake Hotel*

These facilities contribute to the high level of accessibility and quality of life available to future occupants, reinforcing the site's suitability for sustainable residential development.

The alterations to this application have no adverse effect on the above.

Public transport

The area is well served by a range of bus services that provide frequent connections to nearby town centres, schools, and transport interchanges. Local routes include:

- *Route 480 – Bluewater*
- *Route 481 – Ebbsfleet*
- *Route 416 – Meopham*
- *Route 417 – Gravesend*
- *Route 111 – Northfleet*
- *Route 735 – Gravesend*

In addition, Gravesend Mainline Railway Station is located within easy reach of the site, providing high-speed rail services to London St Pancras International, London Bridge, and Charing Cross, as well as connections to Ebbsfleet International, the Medway towns, and beyond. Journey times to London are typically under 25 minutes via High Speed 1.

Cycling & Walking

The site is located within an established residential area that offers safe and direct pedestrian routes to local shops, schools, and community facilities. The surrounding road network is generally low-speed and conducive to cycling, with the opportunity to enhance

sustainable travel further through the provision of secure cycle parking and connections to nearby green spaces and recreational routes.

The proposal aligns with national and local planning policy objectives aimed at reducing reliance on private vehicles, encouraging active travel, and promoting sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Gravesham Core Strategy Policies CS11 (Transport) and CS19 (Design and Sustainability).

The alterations to this application have no adverse effect on the above.

National space standards

The proposed dwelling will be fully compliant with the nationally described space standards, ensuring the provision of adequate internal floor space to meet the needs of future occupants.

Green belt

The site is situated within a suburban residential area, clearly defined as falling outside the Green Belt. While land to the east of the site, beyond Thong Lane, remains designated as Green Belt and comprises predominantly arable farmland, it is noted that recent residential development has taken place in this transitional edge zone. This pattern of development reflects a gradual and managed interface between the built environment and the open countryside.

The proposed scheme has been sensitively designed to respect this boundary and to minimise any potential visual or environmental impact on the adjoining rural land. The layout and massing have been carefully considered to ensure that the development preserves the openness of the nearby Green Belt and does not compromise its function or character, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance on Green Belt land.

Furthermore, the site is recorded as falling within an area of urban land cover based on historical mapping from 1961, 1972, and 1990. This classification denotes areas where the

original rural settlement structure has been completely absorbed by extensive urban expansion.

From a landscape perspective, the site lies within a zone identified as a suburban fringe under local landscape character assessments. As such, the proposed development reflects a continuation of the prevailing built form and supports the aims of Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy Policies CS02 (Sustainable Growth) and CS19 (Design and Landscape Character), which seek to ensure that new development is well integrated, contextually responsive, and respectful of key environmental constraints.

Biodiversity

An assessment of biodiversity has previously been carried out and this application has no material effect upon that consultation process. An ecological report has been included with this application.

Conclusion

This proposal has been carefully revised in response to the previous refusal and the concerns raised during the pre-application process. The updated design reduces the overall density and is more in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

It is important to note that the urban boundary begins at the edge of the eastern fields and careful consideration has been given to the eastern elevation towards the green fields. The proposal aims to enhance the elevation at this critical point, contributing positively to the visual approach to Gravesend town centre.

The revised scheme effectively balances the 'harm versus benefit' principle outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), introducing a high-quality dwelling that is well suited to its setting. The incremental impact of such developments can contribute positively to the local housing stock, helping the Local Authority to address its housing supply shortfall, as currently outlined in the 5-year Housing Land Supply Report.

As Table 7 indicates, Gravesham Borough is presently unable to demonstrate a sufficient supply of deliverable housing sites to meet its five-year requirement for the period 2020-2025, triggering the presumption in favour of sustainable development under the NPPF.

Furthermore, the principle of a single-storey extension to the side of the existing property has already been established through a Certificate of Lawful Development granted in April 2023. While this work commenced, it was put on hold pending the outcome of the current application.

The new design widens the footprint from the approved scheme. There are numerous examples (as shown in the appendix) in close proximity that have extended closer to the boundary than this proposal. The site benefits from the grass verge to the side of the property, which provides an even wider berth from the public path in comparison to the aforementioned examples. Permitting a wider development would make a significant difference to the quality of the property and inhabitants, allowing future proofing for disabled access throughout the property - in this case allowing the applicant to be close to family to provide ongoing support and care. This is to maintain a quality of life and independence, whilst reducing dependency on health and social services.

The proposal will result in the addition of a high-quality family home with the existing property being retained as a separate dwelling.

It should be noted that with the previously approved scheme, a SAMMs payment was made - we trust this can be applied to this application.

Appendix (selection of images to be read in conjunction with Design & Access Statement)



aerial view of site context



rear view of property



aerial view from east looking west towards
Gravesend



aerial view from south looking north towards
Rochester Road



east elevation from Thong Lane



Rochester Road - Thong Lane junction



Barr Road - Thong Lane junction



1 Leander Drive & 2 Leander Drive - view from Thong Lane



247 Rochester Road



251 Rochester Road



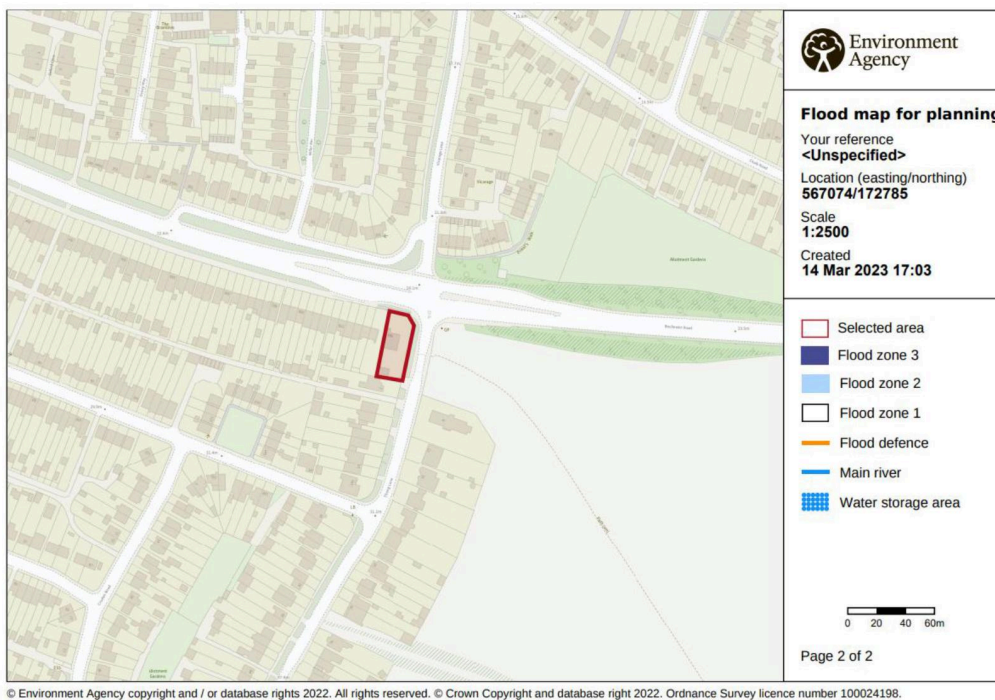
253 Rochester Road



257 Rochester Road



279 Vicarage Lane & 281 Vicarage Lane - view from Rochester Road



Flood risk assessment map from previous planning applications.



Map showing urban rural Green Belt boundary