

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250968

Location: 21 St Chads Drive Gravesend Kent DA12 4EL

Description: Installation of a dropped kerb and associated works.

Applicant: Ms Julie Bennell

Site Visit Date: 27th November 2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form
- Proposed Plans
- Existing Plans
- Location Map

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history.

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

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out those 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 The review 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 a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) general conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- SPD4 - Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2023)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by way of site notice and letters to 4 surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 26.12.2025 and one objection was received.

The main points raised were:

- There is sufficient parking in the area
- Concerns relating to the occupancy of the property

Some of the issues raised are not material planning considerations, any issues relating to occupancy would be a matter for the housing department to consider.

Analysis

Proposal

The proposal seeks to install a dropped kerb and hardstanding to allow for off road parking.

Character and Appearance

St Chads Drive is a residential area which has unrestricted on road parking, however many properties have front driveways which are served by dropped kerbs.

Many of the front parking arrangements comprise large areas of hardstanding with little or no soft landscaping. This gives the road an urbanised feel and is detrimental to the character and appearance of the streetscene. The below images show examples of such hardstandings.



The application site at present comprises a soft landscaped front garden area which contributes positively to the streetscene. The garden is set behind a wall and high hedging, the dwelling is situated on a lower level to the garden and there is a path with some footsteps which lead to the front door.





The proposal seeks to demolish the front wall and remove the entire soft landscaped area to the property frontage. The applicant has stated on the application form:

“This would involve building a supporting wall, levelling the garden and then paving.”

The proposal does not include any details regarding the height of the supporting wall, nor any details regarding the proposed finish of the driveway, although this could be conditioned should permission be forthcoming.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) seeks to ensure that development will add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development. 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.

In relation to frontage parking, relevant considerations in the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) and the GBC Front Driveway Guidance 2023 are that;

- Hardstanding should be proportionate to the size of the dwelling and the relevant car parking standards and avoid paving over a significant amount of the forecourt.
- Soft landscaped planted border along all boundaries should be provided in all spaces not specifically defined as parking or turning spaces.
- Allow sufficient space between the car and the dwelling to allow access to the front door and side of the property.
- Must be designed to avoid cars overhanging the pavement. Minimum car parking space dimensions of 2.5 metres wide (or 2.7 metres where adjoining an enclosed boundary) and 5 metres deep.
- Should not include gates but if so, they should not open outwards, have sufficient space to open inwards whilst a car is parked and should not block visibility.
- Avoid removing any existing trees or established hedges and introduce new planting wherever possible.
- Introduce permeable paving to new areas of hardstanding to minimise rainwater run-off issues.
- There should be no water run-off from the forecourt onto the public highway.
- Where loose surfacing is proposed, include a minimum of one metre depth non-loose hardstanding at the front edge of the driveway.
- Repair or restore any original decorative tiled paths.
- Pedestrian and vehicle visibility splays should be provided.

Gravesham’s Front Driveway Design Guidance provides the below examples for acceptable frontages:

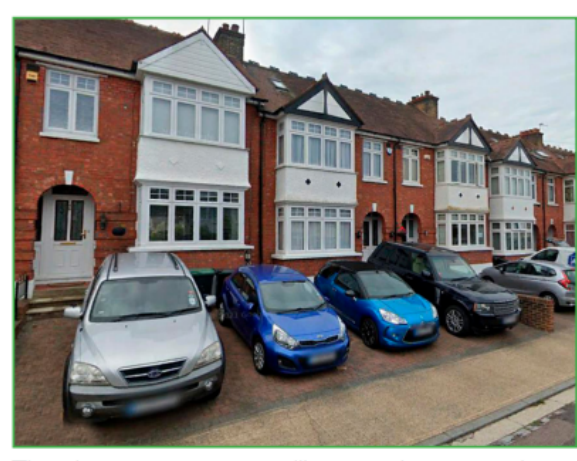


Avoid removing existing trees and shrubs and paving over a significant amount of the forecourt.



Boundary treatment responding to the style of the dwelling with planting to enhance biodiversity and increase wildlife habitat.

The below examples are considered unacceptable and contrary to guidance:



The proposed hardstanding will occupy a large and unnecessary proportion of frontage, furthermore it will introduce a tokenistic level of soft landscaping for which details are limited. This would result in a significant loss of biodiversity and further harden the streetscene, the minimal retention of biodiversity in this proposal is directly comparable to what is deemed unacceptable in the Council's design guidance. The resultant driveway depth will amount to some 4.5m which is below the minimum standard set by the guidance, this will be further investigated in the latter sections of this report.

It should also be noted that the property has a rear access for which the entrance can be found as St Margarets Crescent as demonstrated below:



This evidences that there is scope for alternative parking on site which would safeguard the property frontage from unnecessary development. In a similar appeal under reference APP/K2230/D/24/3358170 (Appendix 1) the inspector agreed with the Council that an applicant could use a rear access for parking. The appeal inspector also noted stated:

New planting on the site would not sufficiently mitigate the harm arising from the opening up of the frontage and the degree of hardstanding created.

This appeal was particularly pertinent due to the design of the hardstanding, the scope for alternative parking and applicant's circumstances being similar to that of the current application.

The permanent loss of the soft landscaped frontage to large and unnecessary level of hardstanding would have an urbanising effect. The plans fail to demonstrate adequate retention of biodiversity which would reduce the harsh impact of a hard-paved driveway and therefore the proposal is considered to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the street scene and is contrary to Policies CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), SPD4 – Householder Alterations and Extensions Guidance 2021 as well as Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal would not result in any harm to the amenity of future occupiers of the property. As such in respect of amenity of future occupiers the proposal is considered to comply with SPG2 and Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

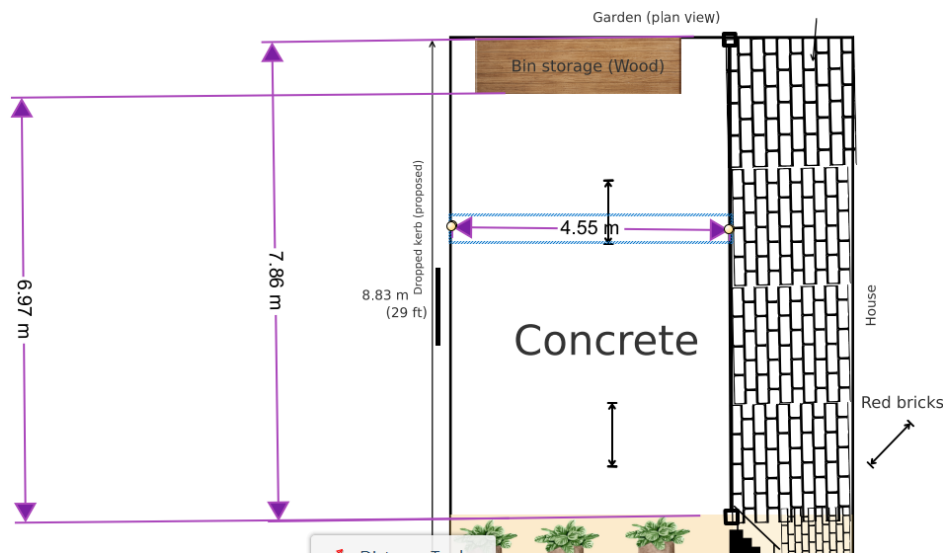
Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal would not result in any harm to the amenity of occupiers of surrounding properties. There would be no loss of sunlight, overlooking, overbearing or loss of outlook as a result of the proposal. As such in respect of amenity of occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Parking and Highways

The Council's design guidance was adopted in 2021, and states:

Front garden parking must be designed to avoid cars overhanging the pavement. Car parking spaces a minimum of 2.5m wide (2.7m where spaces adjoin an enclosed boundary) and 5m deep should be provided.



The proposed parking will have a depth of 4.5m which will likely cause vehicles to overhang the highway and the excessive width will result in over development by way of extensive harstanding.

The proposal fails to provide sufficient parking and the proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards 2006.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The permanent loss of the soft landscaped frontage to large and unnecessary level of hardstanding would have an urbanising effect. The plans fail to demonstrate adequate retention of biodiversity which would reduce the harsh impact of a hard-paved driveway and therefore the proposal is considered to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the street scene and is contrary to Policies CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), SPD4 – Householder Alterations and Extensions Guidance 2021 as well as Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) achieving well-designed and beautiful places.

The proposed hardstanding is unable to provide sufficient parking provision to meet the needs of the development. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards 2006.

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Sharon Sahota	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	07.01.2026	Dated:	9 th January 2026