



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230825

Location: 61 Boucher Drive Northfleet Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of part two storey side and rear extension; part first floor side extension; and part first floor rear extension.

Applicant: Rebaz Abdullah

Site Visit Date: 18 October 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Red line site boundary plan;
Drawing no. 00 Proposed block and site plans;
Drawing no. A101 Existing and proposed 3D illustrations;
Drawing no. A102 Existing and proposed layouts and roof plans; and
Drawing no. A103 Existing and proposed elevations.

Procedural Issues

It is noted that drawing no. 00 (proposed block and site plans) shows a different red line boundary to the red line site boundary plan and does not include the existing outbuilding located adjacent to the boundary with no. 72 Packham Road. Following the case officer's site visit, it is noted that the site boundary is incorrectly shown on drawing no. 00. As such, the application has been determined with reference to the site area shown on the red line site boundary plan only. As the outbuilding located adjacent to the boundary with no. 72 Packham Road is accurately illustrated on the other drawings, its omission from drawing 00 has not undermined the assessment of the proposal.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220666	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a dormer in the rear roof slope, installation of 3 rooflights in the front elevation and conversion of the roofspace to form habitable rooms.	Granted	04.07.2022

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)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Highways Officer

The proposal increases the number of bedrooms from 2 to 4 so two secure cycle parking spaces are required with the requirements of SPG4 issued by Kent County Council and adopted by Gravesham Borough Council. I note that the kerb has been dropped to form a carriage crossover to the paved front garden, but this raises a question.

The front drive has been constructed using block paving and provided with a channel at the back edge of footway. However, the block paving does not appear to be of the permeable type, and it is unknown how the drainage channel drains. The use of soakaways within 5 metres of a building or road is not permitted by building regulations.

Soakaways and other infiltration drainage systems

3.23 Infiltration devices include soakaways, swales, infiltration basins and filter drains.

3.24 Further information on the design of infiltration drainage systems can be found in CIRIA Report 156 – *Infiltration drainage – Manual of good practice*.

3.25 Infiltration drainage is not always possible. Infiltration devices should not be built:

- a. within 5m of a building or road or in areas of unstable land (see Planning Policy Guidance Note 14 Annex 1);

This would mean the drainage channel would need to drain to a drainage field under the driveway to mimic a permeable paving.

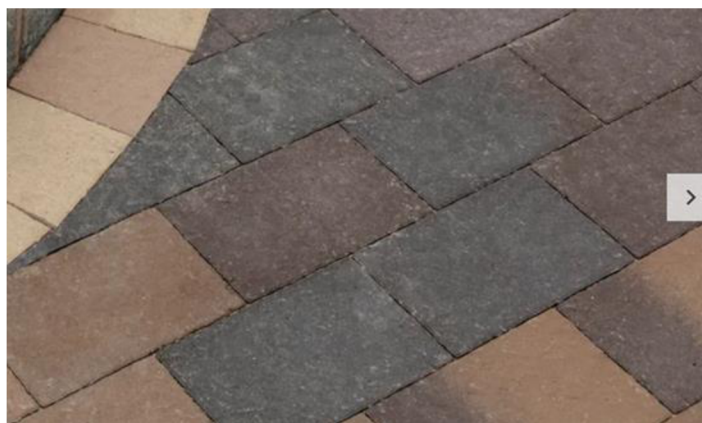
With regards to the blocks there are two types permeable and nonpermeable, permeable blocks having a larger gap between the main block determined by nibs on the block.

Each block features a series of six patented Priora nibs around its edge, which interlock on eight separate faces in three different directions. These nibs also create the voids through which water run-off percolates into the sub-base.



Marshalls Permeable Block.

Other manufacturers supply other products, but the sub-base system used must be designed and installed to serve a drainage purpose.



Traditional non-permeable block paving.

It is noted the driveway was constructed between May 2018 and November 2022, although in November last year the carriage crossover had not been constructed.

I have no objections to the extension works.

GBC Service Manager (Housing Landlord Services)

No response received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and to five neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received.

Officer's Analysis

Background

A lawful development certificate for the proposed erection of a dormer in the rear roof slope, the installation

of three rooflights in the front elevation and the conversion of the roof space to form habitable rooms was granted in July 2022 (reference 20220666). As the following image illustrates works were ongoing at the application site in November 2023;



Google street view November 2022

The works include a front extension incorporating a pitched roof over an existing bay window and an outbuilding (located adjacent to the boundary with no. 72 Packham Road), which would have required planning permission but do not have it. Recent works also include the erection of a single storey rear extension, the application of render at first floor level and the formation of a frontage parking area, all of which may be permitted development.

Relevant to the determination of this application is that the existing front extension and the existing outbuilding (located adjacent to the boundary with no. 72 Packham Road) are unauthorised works.

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (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 2023 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.

In relation to two storey side extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that care is needed when considering the relationship between the proposal and the boundary with the neighbouring property, as the separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of the property and in some locations be part of the character of the area. In addition, side extensions should appear subservient to the original building; be no greater than half the width of the original building; incorporate roof designs to reflect the main roof; and window designs and proportions to reflect those existing and local character.

In relation to two storey rear extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that they should not dominate the host property in terms of depth (extensions to extensions will not generally be supported); should not be of greater width than the original building; should generally not be built adjoining the side boundaries of the site, should have roof designs that reflect and not overwhelm the main roof and window patterns and proportions that are in keeping with the host building and local

character.

Boucher Drive is residential in character with two storey, semi-detached and terraced dwellings that have a uniform appearance. The existing alterations to the application property (render at first floor level, a front extension, three roof lights, a rear extension, a rear dormer and an outbuilding) have resulted in a dwelling that is different from the surrounding properties and a plot that is significantly more built up than those surrounding it.

The application site is highly visible in the surrounding area, by virtue of its corner location;



The proposed development would add a part two storey side and rear extension, a part first floor side extension and a part first floor rear extension, which would connect an existing unauthorised outbuilding to the dwelling and result in a significant increase in built form at the side and rear of the building.

The proposed side extension, as it would be connected to the existing outbuilding, would have a width of some seven metres, which would be well in excess of half of the width of the original building and would remove the existing side external access to the rear garden. Whilst it would be set back behind front building line of the dwelling, the side extension would adjoin the proposed rear extension, wrapping around the corner of the building. As such, it would not appear subservient to the dwelling. In addition, there would be no features on the front elevation at ground floor level, which would provide a partially blank façade on a publicly visible elevation.

The proposed rear extension would extend beyond the side elevation of the host building and would introduce fenestration that would not match with existing.

The positive design features of the proposal would be that the depth of the rear extension would not be excessive and that it would not adjoin the side boundaries. Furthermore, that the roof design and external facing materials would match with the existing building.

Cumulatively, with the existing unauthorised works and the other built development at the application site, the proposed development would result in a significant area of the land being either built up or hard surfaced over. As such, there would be an overdevelopment of the site, which would be at odds with the original building and the surrounding area.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development, by virtue of its size, bulk and design, would not be subservient to the existing building and would result an overdevelopment of the application site. It would add significant bulk to a very publicly visible side/rear elevation, introduce inappropriate fenestration on the rear elevation and a partially blank façade on the front elevation. As such, the proposal would be out of character with the existing building and would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), to paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design

Guide 2023.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Paragraph 130(f) of the NPPF 2023 sets out that developments should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants. In this regard, the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The proposed development would result in a reduction in the size of the rear garden at the application site by some 14 square metres. As a four or more bedroom dwelling the RLG require a minimum garden area of 100 square metres. The current garden area is significantly below this figure (some 83 square metres) and as such, any further reduction would undermine the living conditions for future occupiers.

The proposed development would remove a substandard existing single bedroom and would increase the size of a substandard existing double bedroom, so that it meets the minimum floor area requirement set out in the NDSS. The two new bedrooms would meet the minimum floor area requirement for single bedrooms set out in the NDSS. Therefore, the internal layout would be acceptable.

It is noted that the proposal would result in the loss of a first floor hallway window. However, due to the hall being a non-habitable room, then the loss of natural light would not be a justifiable ground of refusal.

In order to prevent a loss of privacy for future occupiers, any proposed bathroom/w.c./en-suite windows should be conditioned to be permanently obscure glazed.

The proposal would result in the loss of an existing access to the rear garden located at the side of the dwelling. Whilst it is noted that the application site has access onto a rear alleyway, the loss of convenient access to the side would be building, would be detrimental to the living conditions of future occupiers.

The proposed development would result in the application property having a substandard rear garden area, which would undermine the living conditions for future occupiers. As such, the proposal would be detrimental to residential amenity and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), to Paragraph 130(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and the RLG.

Neighbouring Amenity

Paragraph 130(f) of the NPPF 2023 sets out that developments should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of neighbouring occupiers. In this regard, the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The closest residential properties to the application site are nos. 59 Boucher Drive and 72 Packham Road (located to the north west and the south east respectively). Nos. 54 Grieves Road is located to the north east and nos. 66 to 70 Packham Road are located to the east. No. 2 Mulberry Road is located to the south west, across two roadways.

The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows to the application property. The RLG set out that privacy distances between facing windows should be met, in order to prevent overlooking. A privacy distance of 21 metres is required for facing windows where there is no private garden area in

between and a privacy distance of 26 metres is required where a private garden is within the field of view.

The two proposed side bedroom windows would face the rear elevation and garden area of no. 72 Packham Road with a privacy distance of around 10/11 metres and as such, they would cause adverse overlooking impacts to the occupiers of that property. Whilst it is noted that some existing overlooking occurs from the rear windows at the application site to no. 72, by virtue of the proximity of the proposed development to the site boundary, the proposed level of overlooking would lead to an unacceptable loss of privacy for its occupiers.

The proposed rear first floor windows would face the rear elevation and gardens of no. 54 Grieves Road and nos. 66 to 72 Packham Road. The privacy distance for no. 54 Grieves Road would be some 31 metres, the view to nos. 66 to 72 Packham Road would be oblique and the proposed bathroom window could be conditioned to be obscure glazed. Therefore, it is considered that there would be no significant adverse overlooking impacts to the occupiers of these properties.

The proposed front bedroom window and ground floor window to the outbuilding would face the side elevation of no. 2 Mulberry Road. The privacy distance would be over 55 metres. Therefore, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts.

For the proposed rear ground floor window, any overlooking impacts would be screened by existing boundary treatments.

Due to the design of the proposed development and to the layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surroundings dwellings.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development, by virtue of the inclusion of windows in the side elevation and its proximity to the boundary with no. 72 Packham Road, would lead to a detrimental level of overlooking and an unacceptable loss of privacy from the rear windows and private garden area of that property. The proposal would therefore be detrimental to the residential amenity of the occupants of no. 72 Packham Road and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and Paragraph 130(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Parking and Highways

Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 require new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

The proposed development would retain the existing number of bedrooms at the application property (four) and there would be no alteration to the existing parking or access arrangements. The existing frontage parking area could accommodate three vehicles, which would be in line with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and the GBC Highways Officer has not raised an objection.

The GBC Highways Officer seeks the provision of two cycle parking spaces to comply with the KCC Parking Standards (2006). However, as the proposed development would not alter the amount of bedrooms at the application property, then there would be no need to provide cycle parking provision.

The GBC Highways Officer also raises concerns regarding the drainage for the frontage parking area. These concerns appear to be mainly building regulations issues but can be brought to the attention of GBC Planning Enforcement for consideration.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The proposed development includes the attachment of an existing large outbuilding to the dwelling at the application site. The proposed use for the former outbuilding is shown as an office/study area but it is noted that no details of the proposed use have been provided. If planning permission was proposed to be granted, then clarification would have been sought and conditions attached, to ensure that there would be no commercial use of the office, that there could be no separate use of the space from the dwelling and that the proposed use was incidental/ancillary to the dwelling.

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2. However, as the proposed development is within the confines of an existing residential garden and only a relatively small amount of groundworks would occur, then it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to groundwater or archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

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.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development would match with the roof design and external facing materials of the existing building, would have no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to surrounding residential occupiers, would have no adverse impacts to groundwater or archaeology and would provide sufficient car parking. All of which weigh in support of the proposal. However, the design of the proposed development would lead to a bulky extension, with excessive width, that would not be subservient to the existing building, would introduce inappropriate fenestration and a partially blank façade and be an overdevelopment of the site, which would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene. Furthermore, the proposal would result in the application property having a substandard rear garden area, which would undermine the living conditions for future occupiers and would lead to a detrimental level of overlooking and an unacceptable loss of privacy to the occupiers of no. 72 Packham Road, which would be detrimental to residential amenity.

Overall, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and therefore planning permission should be refused on design and residential amenity grounds.

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	19th October 2023	Dated:	19th October 2023