



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240052

Location: 66 St Albans Close Gravesend Kent DA12 5SE

Description: Erection of a two storey side extension.

Applicant: Mr Fan

Site Visit Date: 07 February 2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP1R Existing ground and first floor layouts;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP2R Existing roof plan and proposed ground floor layout;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP3R Proposed first floor layout and roof plan;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP4R Existing and proposed front and rear elevations;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP5R Existing and proposed side elevations;
Site location plan;
Existing block plan; and
Proposed block plan.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. DA12AFPP1 Existing ground and first floor layouts;~~
~~Drawing no. DA12AFPP2 Existing roof plan and proposed ground floor layout;~~
~~Drawing no. DA12AFPP3 Proposed first floor layout and roof plan;~~
~~Drawing no. DA12AFPP4 Existing and proposed front and rear elevations; and~~
~~Drawing no. DA12AFPP5 Existing and proposed side elevations.~~

Procedural issues

The originally submitted proposed side and front elevation drawings were inaccurate, but following an amendment to the overall design approach, these were superseded.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230813	Erection of a two storey side extension.	Refused	22.09.2023

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 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful 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)
- Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3 Residential Parking (2008)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Highways Officer

This proposal increases the number of bedrooms from three to five and gives no opportunity for off street parking at the property, instead relying on communal parking in laybys on St Albans Close. The layout of the property precludes the parking of a car in the front garden due to its width the high probability access to the front door would be obstructed. It is noted the narrow service road that serves the property is registered as adopted highway on Find My Street.

There is limited information on the existing parking on St Albans Close as there are only four sets of images on Google Street View 2008, 2012, 2018 and November 2022, none shows the car parking is at capacity, but these are only snap shots with no details on the day or time of the survey. The 2012 and 2018 surveys show at least one car parked outside the property obstructing the use of the highway.



Whilst the service road may not be a through route it does appear to be the only vehicular access to the amenity ground and its obstruction could cause maintenance issues and in the worst-case access by the emergency services so should be kept clear.

Given there is no off street parking on site, this is considered to be significant as all parking would be in the communal areas and the majority of properties on St Albans Close do not have access to off street parking, potentially placing strain on the parking provision, particularly as the population of the Close changes.

So, my view is the extension should be refused as it is only likely to increase pressures on, on street parking. However, if you are minded to approve two cycle parking spaces should be provided to comply with the requirements of SPG4 of one cycle parking space per bedroom.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and to six neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received. The consultation period expired on 03 March 2024.

Officer's Analysis

Background

This application has been submitted following a refusal for the erection of a two storey side extension under reference 20230813. The application was refused on the following grounds;

- 1. The proposed development, by virtue of its size, bulk and design, would not be subservient to the existing building, would add significant bulk to a very publicly visible side elevation, would introduce inappropriate fenestration on the front and rear elevations and a blank façade on the side elevation. As such, the proposal would be out of character with the existing building, would have an unbalancing impact, would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene and would be 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 2021.*
- 2. The proposal would make insufficient provision for the parking of cars within the site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and would be likely to lead to cars parking on the public highway, inconvenient to other road users and detrimental to highway safety. As such, the proposal would be contrary to 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.*

This application seeks to address these grounds of refusals.

Design, Character and Appearance

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 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.

The application property is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling with three bedrooms located in a

residential area. The existing side elevation of the building is a prominent feature of the street scene, as the adjacent land is open and used for recreational purposes.

The proposed development would result in a large, two storey addition to the application building, which would extend almost the full height of the building. The proposal would have a width of 3.9 metres and the existing building is 6.8 metres wide. Therefore, the extension would be in excess of half the width of the building. These design features mean that the proposed development would result in a significant increase in built form.

The proposed front and rear elevations would include new first floor windows in the existing building, which although matching in design with the existing, would unbalance the pair of semi-detached buildings, of which the application property is a part. It is noted that no other dwelling of the same design, in the area surrounding the application site, has introduced any additional windows in the existing front elevation, at first floor level.

However, the proposed extension would be set back from the front building line by 1 metre and the roof would be set down 0.3 metres from the main ridgeline, which would reduce the size and bulk of the addition overall. The proposed side elevation would include four windows, which add interest and break up the extent of the proposed brickwork. The proposed roof and general window design and the proposed facing materials would match with the existing building.

It should be noted that planning permission was recently refused for a similar proposal (20230813) but the current proposal has been amended to overcome the major design issues of the previous scheme.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would be subservient in size to the existing building and would not detract from the character or appearance of the application property. Despite some departures from the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide and the proposal having a slightly unbalancing impact, the proposal would not be detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene and therefore, would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014). The application has overcome the first ground of refusal from 20230813.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

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 bedrooms would exceed the minimum floor area requirements for single rooms in the NDSS and there would be no alteration to the existing rear garden, which exceeds the requirements for a dwelling with four or more bedrooms in the RLG.

It is noted that the proposal would result in the loss of four windows from the existing side elevation (a bedroom, bathroom and two hallway windows) but due to the provision of replacement windows for the bedroom and bathroom and the fact that the hallway is a non-habitable area, then there would be no significant detriment to the living conditions of future occupiers.

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 proposed development would improve the living conditions for future occupiers and as such, the proposal would not be detrimental to residential amenity and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

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. 64 St Albans Close (located to the south east), nos. 72, 74 and 76 Winchester Crescent (located to the north) and nos. 55 and 57 St Albans Close (located to the south west) across open, recreational land.

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 proposed rear windows would be to a bedroom and bathroom (first floor). The bathroom window would be obscure glazed, therefore this window would cause no adverse overlooking impacts. For the bedroom window, a privacy distance of 35 metres would be available to the rear elevation of no. 76 Winchester Crescent (the closest neighbour at the rear). Therefore, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the rear windows or the private garden area of that property.

The proposed front windows would be to a dining room (ground floor) and to two bedrooms (first floor). A privacy distance of at least 27 metres would be available to the front elevation of no. 57 St Albans Close (the closest neighbour at the front). Therefore, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the front windows of that property.

The proposed side windows would face open, recreational land and obliquely face no. 72 Winchester Crescent, with a privacy distance of some 35 metres. Therefore, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the rear windows or the private garden area of that property.

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 surrounding dwellings.

Overall, 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).

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.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF 2023 sets out that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The application property has three bedrooms and no on-site parking. The proposed development would result in the building increasing from three to five bedrooms with no on-site car parking provision. The GBC Highways Officer has raised an objection to the proposed development.

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a five bedroom dwelling should have three vehicle parking spaces and a three bedroom dwelling should have two parking spaces. However, it is noted that the Highway Authority have more recent guidance that requires a minimum of two spaces to be provided for a four or more bedroom property and 1.5 spaces for a three bedroom property in

a suburban area (Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3 Residential Parking).

It is noted that the layout of the application site precludes the parking of a car in the front garden due to its width and the probability of obstruction of access to the front door. On-street parking in St Albans Close is available but would appear to be under significant demand.

It is noted that the application site is located in a sustainable location, close to local shops and services and various bus routes. The proposed development would result in a small increase in demand for on-street parking in the surrounding area but this would not undermine highway safety. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014, Policy P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 and paragraph 115 of the NPPF 2023.

The GBC Highways Officer seeks the provision of cycle parking spaces to comply with the KCC Parking Standards (2006). However, as sufficient space would be available at the application site to provide cycle parking, should the applicant wish to provide it, then there would be no need to condition cycle parking provision in any planning permission granted.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential, Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2 and is in close proximity to a gas pipeline (along the site frontage). However, as the proposed development would be 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, gas infrastructure 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 applicant should be made aware of the gas pipeline via an informative on 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

Materials to match existing

Obscure glazing to en-suite/w.c. windows

Conclusion & Recommendation

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

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	27th March 2024	Dated:	03 March 2024