



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230561

Location: 109 Darnley Road Gravesend Kent DA11 0SH

Description: Erection of a part rear double storey extension, additional roof solar panels, extension to basement and external wall covering to insulated.

Applicant: Matt Lenton-Magor

Site Visit Date: 16/11/2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form
- Drawing No: PO Rev 1 (Location plan and Block Plan)
- Drawing No: P1 (Existing/Proposed Basement Level Plans and Section)
- Drawing No: P2 (Existing/Proposed Ground Floor Plans)
- Drawing No: P3 (Existing/Proposed First Floor Plans)
- Drawing No: P2 (Existing/Proposed Second Floor Plans)
- Drawing No: P5 (Existing/Proposed Front Elevation)
- Drawing No: P6 (Existing/Proposed Rear Elevation)
- Drawing No: P7 (Existing/Proposed Right Side Elevation)
- Drawing No: P8 (Existing/Proposed Left Side Elevation)
- Drawing No: P13 (Existing/Proposed Roof Plans)
- Drawing No: P9 (Existing/Proposed 3D Image front Elevation)
- Drawing No: P10 (Existing/Proposed 3D Image Front Elevation)
- Drawing No: P11 (Existing/Proposed 3D Image Rear Elevation)
- Drawing No: P12 (Existing/Proposed 3D Image Rear Elevation)

Supplementary Information

- Arboriculture Report
- Tree Data Spread Sheet
- Tree Protection Plan
- Tree Constraints Plan
- Impact Assessment Plan
- Heritage Statement

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Outcome	Decision Date
20130785	Replacement of old wooden casement-style windows to the front of the property at first and second floor levels with wooden sash windows.	Permitted	05.11.2013

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 & the Historic Environment

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

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC3 - Development Affecting Conservation Areas

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

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

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
- SPD4 - Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- Darnley Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2009)
- Management Plan – Suburban Conservation Areas (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

GBC – Conservation Officer

No Comments received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by way of site notice and letters to 8 surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 15/12/2023 and no comments were received.

Analysis

Procedural Matters

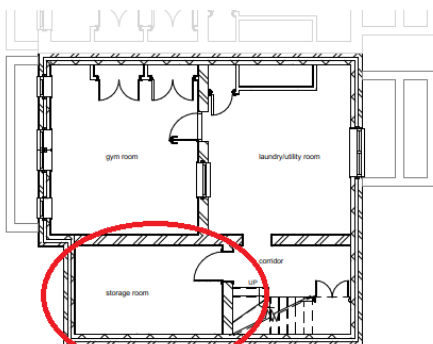
The description for the proposal is:

Erection of a part rear double storey extension, additional roof solar panels, extension to basement and external wall covering to insulated.

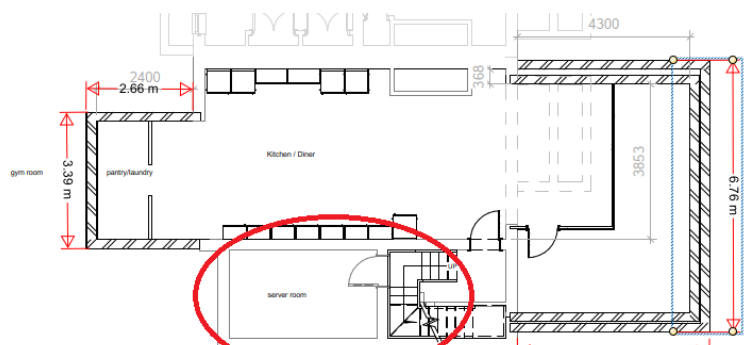
Firstly it is noted that the application property does not have any existing solar panels and so “additional roof solar panels” is incorrect.



The plans also show a “server room” at basement floor level, it is not clear from the plans whether this room will be made redundant post development or what its purpose would be as the entrance will be blocked by a staircase.



Basement floor

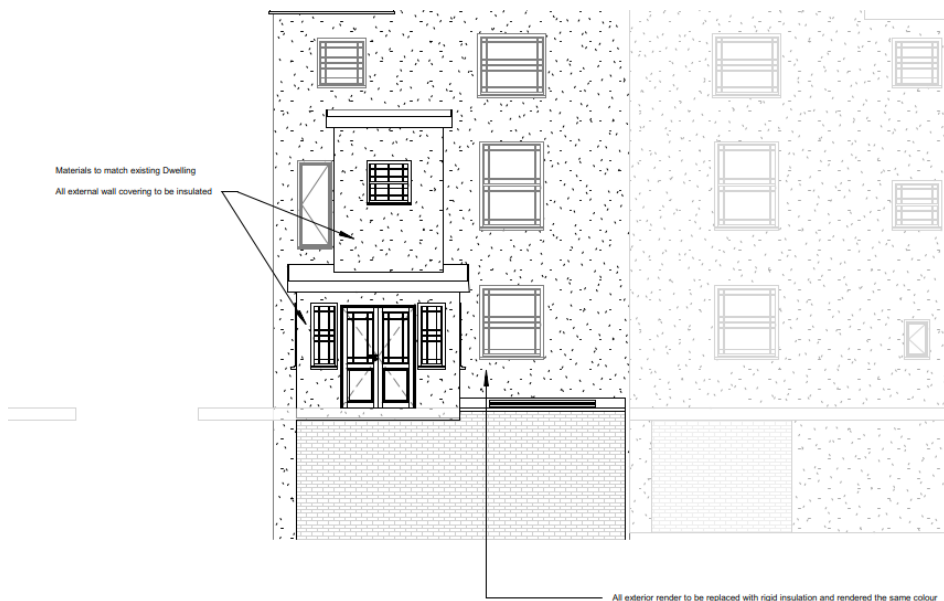


Proposed Basement floor

1 : 100



Drawing No: P6 states that all external wall coverings to be insulated. No details have been provided in relation to the extent of the insulation, the only details giving is that it will be replaced with “rigid” insulation and rendered in the same colour.

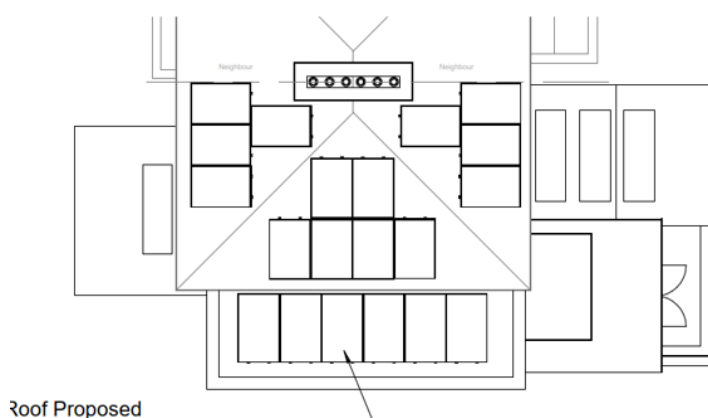


Proposed Elevation-Rear

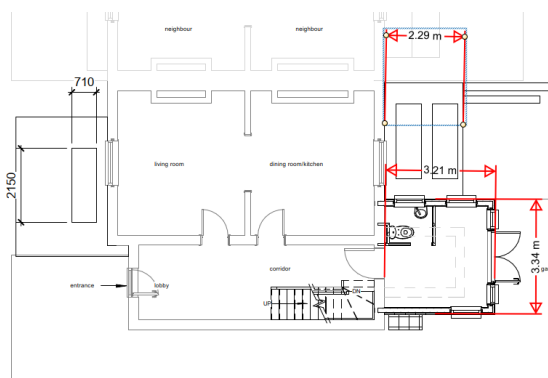
The proposed block plan does not show the extent of the front and rear basements nor is there any information in relation to the subsequent landscaping arrangements post development as there will inevitably be a loss of biodiversity on site, especially in the front garden area.



The proposed roof plan shows the insertion of three rear roof lights to serve the basement whereas the proposed ground floor plan shows the insertion of two rear roof lights.



Roof Proposed



Proposed Ground Floor

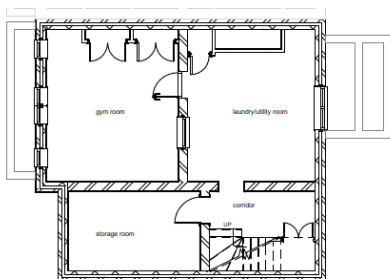
It is noted that the submitted plans include several anomalies, however the application will be determined as submitted.

Proposal

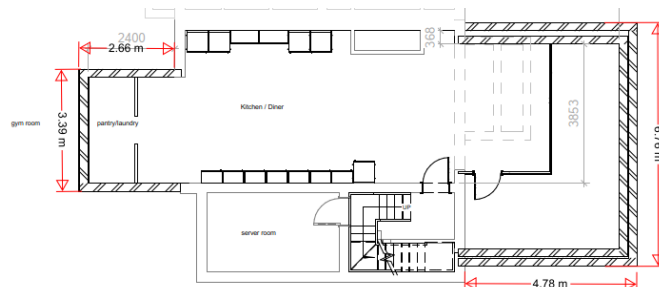
The first element of the proposal shows an extension to the front elevation of the basement. The extension will include a roof light which will serve a pantry/laundry.

The second element of the proposal will extend the basement to the rear to allow for a larger secondary kitchen/diner which will be served by two roof lights.

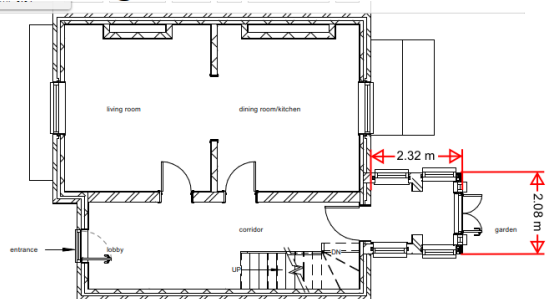
The third element of the proposal will see the erection of a part ground/first floor rear extensions.



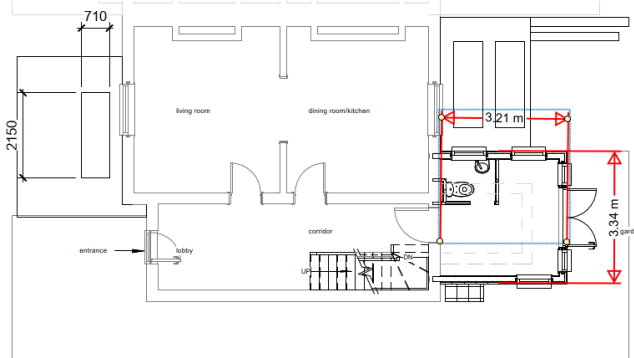
Existing Basement floor



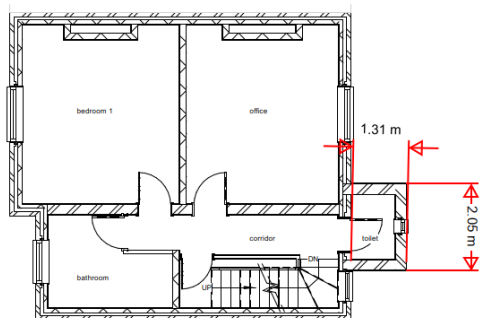
Proposed Basement floor



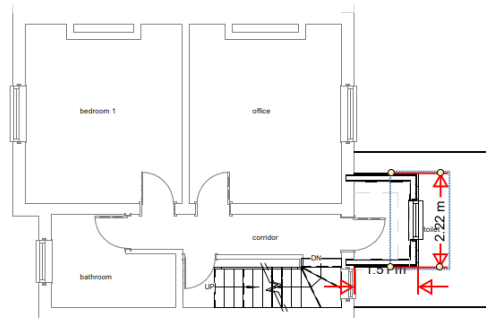
Existing Ground Floor



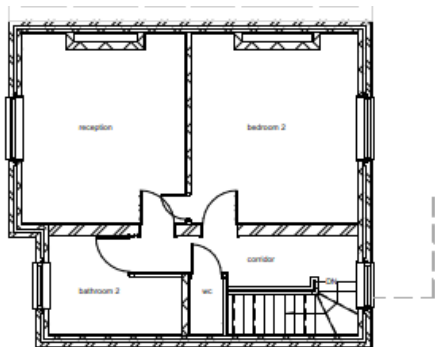
Proposed Ground Floor



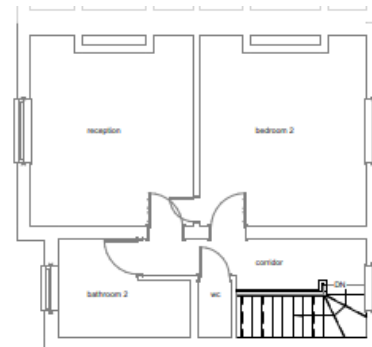
Existing First Floor



Proposed First Floor



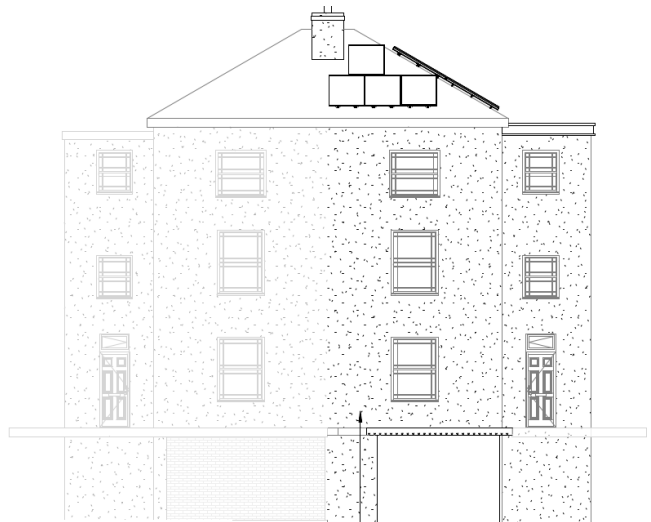
Existing Second floor



Proposed Second floor



Existing Elevation-Front



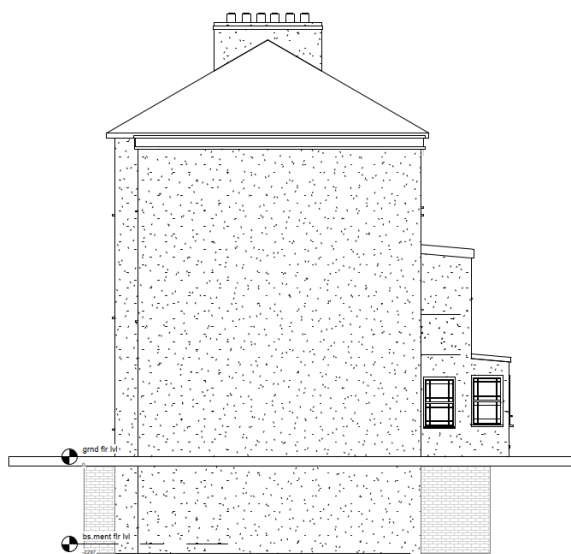
Proposed Elevation-Front

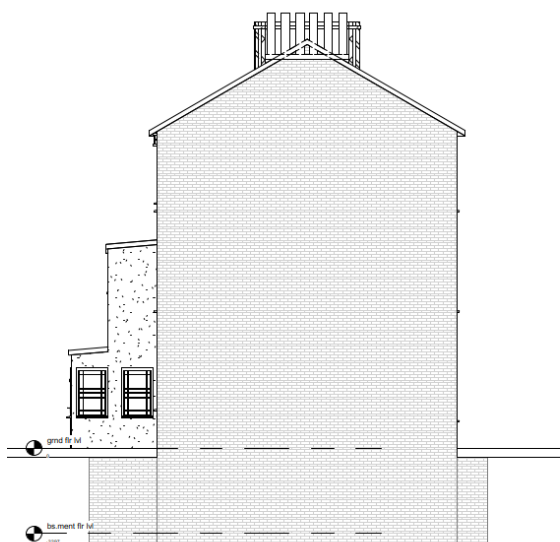


Existing Elevation-Right side

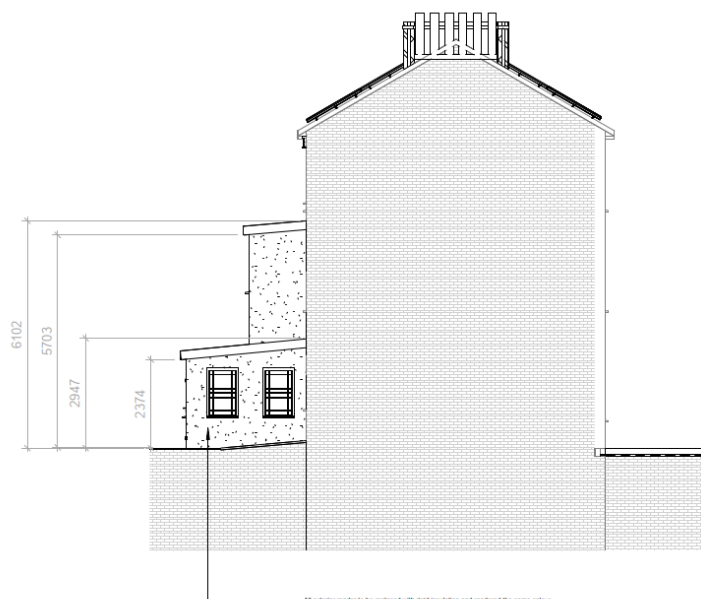


Proposed Elevation-Right side

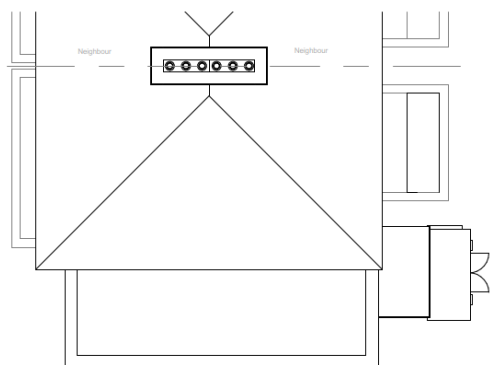




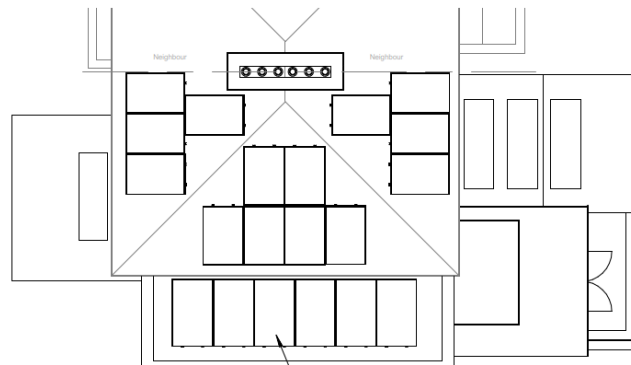
Existing Elevation-Left side



Proposed Elevation-Left side



Roof Existing



Roof Proposed

Character and Appearance

The application property is a semi detached dwelling situated in the Darnley Road conservation area, the property is covered under an Article 4 Direction which came into force on 12th November 2010. The property is described as a "Positive Property" under the Darnley Road Conservation Area Appraisals Map and so the principle issue in determining this application is whether the proposed development will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Darnley Road Conservation Area.



The Article 4 direction makes particular reference to Class C of the GPDO which covers any alterations to the main roof of the dwelling and Class C Part 2 which covers painting of the exterior of any building or

work.

The proposal seeks to extend the basement level of the property which post development would not be immediately visible from the street scene, however the proposal would result in a significant engineering operation to excavate the frontage of the property. The application property is characterised by an attractive soft landscaped front garden with a mature cherry tree set behind a dwarf wall and hedging. There is a driveway with some gravel to the side for a parked vehicle and the hard landscaping is not excessive.



There are a number of mature trees in the front gardens of properties in Darnley Road. These provide an increased sense of enclosure in this suburban thoroughfare and serve to soften the hard edges of the urban landscape. There are concerns relating to the potential impact of the development on the existing Cherry tree which contributes positively to the wider area and so the protection of this tree is imperative. The submitted arboriculture report states:

A tiny portion of the theoretical RPA of T₅ shall be affected by the proposed basement. Such a tiny incursion (less than 1.5%) is considered to be extremely minor. So long as excavation is limited to the basement footprint and the soils beyond it remain undisturbed, there shall be no detrimental impact on T₅.

The submission does not provide a landscaping plan and instead relies on the submitted tree protection plan which shows the retained and removed trees. There will be removal of the hedging shared along the common boundary with the adjoining semi however as mentioned above the mature cherry tree will be retained. The excavation of the soil will result in the loss of a large area of grass in the front garden which will be replaced with the roof of the basement, this is considered to have a harmful effect on the conservation area as there will be a large area of soft landscaping lost to a hardscape. The proposed basement would also disrupt the existing established building line where there are no other examples of a basement extension to the property frontage and so this could set a harmful precedence in the area

The proposed front basement and resulting hardscape would result in the removal of a large section of existing soft landscaping and biodiversity which currently contributes positively to the quality of the street scene. Its removal would result in excessive built form which disrupts the existing building line and returns an overly developed appearance which adversely impacts on the character and appearance of the streetscene and the visual qualities of the wider conservation area. As such the proposal fails to conserve or enhance the setting of the Darnley Road Conservation Area and so the application is contrary to Policies CS19 (Development and Design Principles) and CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy TC3 (Development Affecting Conservation Areas) of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review 1994 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.



The proposal also shows the installation of solar panels on the front, side and rear parts of the roof. The proposed solar panels will cover large parts of the attractive roof which will be overwhelmed in solar panels. Whilst there are sustainability benefits to be considered from the installation of such panels, the harm that they will cause in the conservation area is not justified. Furthermore, there are no such panels in the conservation area and where such alterations are given consideration, they are generally discreetly located to the rear roof slopes.

The introduction of solar panels, especially on the front and side roof slopes, fail to respect the character and appearance of the application property and wider conservation area. The panels would overwhelm the original roofscape and fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such, the proposal is contrary to Section 12 (Achieving well-designed Beautiful Places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and Policy TC3 (Development Affecting Conservation Areas) of the Local Plan First Review (November 1994) and Policies CS19 (Development and Design Principles) and CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment) of the Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) which require development to be visually attractive and to conserve or enhance the character of the local built environment and the Conservation Area.

The proposed two storey rear extension is not of an excessive scale, its design is acceptable and due to its rearward location it is not liable to harm the character and appearance of the Darnley road conservation area.

The proposed rear basement is discreetly located, however there are concerns relating to the scale of the development, especially when considering the increase in size of the front part of the basement. The current basement has a footprint of 57.17sqm, however post development the basement will have a footprint of 98.86sqm. This is almost double the footprint of the existing basement level and is considered on the larger size however on balance a refusal on this basis would not be something that would be defensible should there be a subsequent appeal.

Adopted Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment, in line with the NPPF, and saved Policy TC3: Development Affecting Conservation Areas require development to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area. Where located within a conservation area, the design of an extension and materials used for construction, must preserve or enhance the character of the area and compliment the original property and adjoining properties. The proposal does not provide any detailed information relating to the finishing of the property, however from the submitted plans it is evident that there is an intention to apply insulation boards and then render them. Changes to the external elevations of the property if not sympathetically carried out are liable to unbalance the pair of semis and harm the character and appearance of the conservation area. Rigid insulation will potentially increase the footprint of the dwelling as it will require a rigid insulation board to be applied to the original external walls which is unacceptable due to its detrimental harm to the property and wider area.

The proposed rigid insulation and subsequent render would result in the loss of the original rendered walls of the property and the proposed insulation and render constitute unsympathetic alterations which unbalance the pair of semis. As such the proposal would not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Darnley Road Conservation Area. The development is therefore contrary to Section 12 (Achieving well-designed Beautiful Places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and Policy TC3 (Development Affecting Conservation Areas) of the Local Plan First Review (November 1994) and Policies CS19 (Development and Design Principles) and CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment) of the Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) which require development to be visually attractive and to conserve or enhance the character of the local built environment and the Conservation Area.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed kitchen in the basement level will be served by three roof lights in the rear part of the kitchen. There are no details given as to whether the roof lights are openable or not. Below is an extract from the Council's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)

“Whenever practical, all kitchens and bathrooms shall be provided with openable windows”

It is considered that in this instance due to the basement level of the kitchen it would not be possible to install an openable kitchen window.

Post development there is sufficient garden space to meet the requirements of the occupants and so the proposal is compliant with the requirements of SPG2 - Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal is not liable to harm the amenity of neighbouring properties. However should permission be forthcoming a condition will be imposed to ensure all windows serving a w/c or shower room are obscure glazed and top hung.

Parking and Highways

There is currently one off road parking space on site with an EV charging point. Post development it would appear that the number of bedrooms in the property will be retained,

Given the proximity of the dwelling to local public transport links and the local town centre there is no concern that any further parking requirement is needed.

It is not clear whether there is an further parking addition to be introduced on site as the submission does not include a landscape plan or a parking plan and so it is assumed the parking situation will remain as it is.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The submitted arboriculture report states that the existing cherry tree will remain unaffected by the proposed development and it will be retained. The submitted report provides adequate information showing how the tree will be protected from development and so there are no further concerns in this regard.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The Proposal is recommended for refusal owing to the below grounds as it fails to preserve/enhance the Darney Road conservation area.

The proposed front basement and resulting hardscape would result in the removal of a large section of existing soft landscaping and biodiversity which currently contributes positively to the quality of the street scene. Its removal would result in excessive built form which disrupts the existing building line and returns an overly developed appearance which adversely impacts on the character and appearance of the streetscene and the visual qualities of the wider conservation area. As such the proposal fails to conserve or enhance the setting of the Darnley Road Conservation Area and so the application is contrary to Policies CS19 (Development and Design Principles) and CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy TC3 (Development Affecting Conservation Areas) of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review 1994 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

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(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:	02.01.2024	Dated:	4th January 2024