

Design & Access Statement

34 Dogwood Close, Northfleet, DA11 8PJ

**Proposed extensions and Change of Use ;
Open Amenity land to Residential at 34
Dogwood Close, Northfleet, DA11 8PJ**

November, 2021

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Gravesham Borough Council

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1 Introduction

Please also refer to the following submitted with this application :-

Photo Selection of Proposal Property – Appendix A
Existing Block site plan, Floorplans, Roof plan and Elevations
Proposed Block site plan, Floorplans, Roof plan and Elevations
Site Location Plan
Photographs of Nearby Integrated Extension

The proposal property comprises an existing two storey, 3-bed family house and adjoining open amenity land in the same ownership. It is located at the end of a terrace of 4 similar houses of repeating width and depth and unified under a common double-pitch roof and with land extending to a public footpath.

The existing house is the last in a cul-de-sac on the rim of a 1970's estate lying off Coldharbour Road and set either side of Mulberry Road on the south edge of the Gravesend/Northfleet urban area.

The property is uniquely a double-width plot, half of which remains vacant and open to public view.

The proposal is to extend the property into the vacant open land, elongating the terrace by a little less than a whole further house width. The façade elevation of the proposed extension would be set back by 0.45m from the existing façade and additional private garden area would be added to the rear of the proposed extension, with a new enclosing fence line

A new single storey rear extension to the existing house width is also proposed.

The property is not listed and is not within a conservation area.

2 Context

The proposal plot lies at the south perimeter of the estate and adjoins a local pedestrian footpath that runs past in a grass verge between the ends of all the cul-de-sacs that approach this boundary. Beyond is a green swathe area of trees running along the north boundary and beyond that a further tract of parkland to the A2 to the south.

The estate is set out in an informal pattern of cul-de-sacs with generally repeating two-storey, predominantly 3-bedroom freehold houses at a regular 5.7m plot width.

There has been considerable alteration and many extensions throughout the estate but the characteristic original pattern of rectilinear terraces with vertical brick panels and wide horizontal timber cladding remains predominant.

The terraces generally run up close to the linking pedestrian path to the SW in most cases as does the terrace running parallel to the host terrace.

The plots align back-to-back between this and the terrace to the east (No.s 26-30 Dogwood Close) but that terrace is complete with an additional unit approaching the linking path to the SW.

3. Proposals

Side Extension

The applicant's plot ownership extends to the edge of the linking path to the SW and includes a "vacant plot" of open land that varies from just under 8m to 9.85m wide against the meander of the path.

This additional width would accommodate a further full house as proposed at Pre-app enquiry, leaving a margin of open amenity land of some 3m width on the north side of the path.

Following advice from the Council in Pre-App, the proposed extension has been reduced to become "subservient" to the existing house. It now sets back from the front façade of the existing house by 450mm with a lower ridge than the existing house - and has a width approx. 450 mm less than the existing house.

This size of extension is accommodated comfortably within the vacant plot matching with the developed equivalent plot to the rear at 26 Dogwood Close and sits comfortably against the extensive open amenity landscape reserve immediately to the south stretching some considerable way towards the A2.

The elevational style of the proposed extension follows the cues of the existing houses with predominant buff brick to closely match the existing and white horizontal wood panelling and introducing some secondary infill render panels. This provision is much the same (slightly greater) than exists alongside the neighbouring garden and plot at 26 Dogwood Close.

The new upper windows to the proposed property that face west have fixed obscured glazing up to at least 1.7m AFFL to prevent overlooking into the rear private garden at 35 Dogwood Close.

Precedents

There are examples of full width and near full width façade extensions nearby at 58 Kelmsley Close and at 47 Mulberry Road.

As with this proposal, these both set back slightly from the host façade as subservient extensions.

The character of the open amenity space between the public footpath passing 26 Dogwood Close and the side of the house and garden fence is very similar to that proposed adjacent.

Open land

Following discussion with Mrs Kelly on site the proposal extension has shrunk further away from the footpath to the SW boundary compared with the pre-app scheme. This reduction in the size of the proposed extension will increase the open amenity land remaining between the public footpath and the proposed extension to an average of 3.61m width (from approx. 2.7 to 4.55m). This is in addition to the extensive open amenity landscape reserve immediately to the south.

Rear Extension

The rear extension is proposed in harmony with the existing rear extensions to all the other houses in this terrace. It would merely repeat the same general depth and width. This was accepted in the pre-app stage.

Parking provision

Although the proposal increases the occupancy capacity of this family home, the property ownership benefits from including a garage with space in front nearby in the close. It was accepted within the pre-app response that "given the presence of these spaces and the sustainable location of the site, it is considered there would be no adverse parking or highways impact from the proposal.

4 Policy

The following policy documents have been considered in coming to these proposals ;

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014:
CS01 – Sustainable Development
CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
CS11 – Transport
CS12 – Green Infrastructure
CS19 – Design and Development Principle

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994:
P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

National Planning Policy Framework 2021:
Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Gravesham Local Plan First Review Saved Policies
SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines and SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards.

5 Access

A new entrance doorway and external garden path to it are proposed into the existing building. Because the floor level is raised above the external garden level the pathway will be ramped up to gain a level threshold, with landscape sloped away.

6 Summary

- 6.1 The Pre-app response advised that the proposed extension would only be considered favourably if the design and amenity considerations set out in it were addressed appropriately.
- 6.2 The pre-app design is adjusted as advised to overcome overlooking challenges identified relative to 35 Dogwood Close, and there are no others.
- 6.3 The retained open amenity proposed is the same as exists alongside at the adjoining property at 26 Dogwood Close and blends well with that. (A photograph is submitted with this application).

- 6.4 The proposal sits comfortably with the estate boundary it approaches and provides acceptable extent of retained open amenity space within the ownership in addition to the extensive open amenity landscape reserve immediately to the south.
- 6.5 The proposed side extension has been made generally subordinate to the host building as advised in the pre-app response. There are precedents to this type of extension within the estate as cited and exemplified earlier in this statement. (Photos are also submitted with this application.
- 6.6 The car parking provisions are below maximum and there would be no adverse parking or highways impact from the proposal.
- 6.7 The proposal is respectful to and maintains the character of the immediate vicinity and of the estate and neighbourhood. As such it ought to be an acceptable proposal.