

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Application No:	20241015
Location:	Harjit House, 7 Wrotham Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 0PD
Description:	Creation of new window openings, replacement windows and associated alterations.
Applicant:	Mr J Johal, Forma Property Ltd
Site Visit:	24 September 2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form – dated 06 November 2024;
- Covering Letter – dated 25 April 2025;
- Supplementary Information – Ecoslide Window Brochure;
- Supplementary Information – Traditional Sash Windows Brochure;
- Supplementary Information – Sash Window – Technical Guide;
- Supplementary Information – Timber Sash Window Details (W02 – W21);
- Drawing no. A01 – Site Location Plan and Block Plan;
- Drawing no. DW01-7WR – Rev. A-1 – Door and Window Schedule;
- Drawing no. EX01-7WR – Existing Basement and Ground Floor Plans;
- Drawing no. EX02-7WR – Existing First Floor and Loft Plans;
- Drawing no. EX03-7WR – Existing Roof Plan;
- Drawing no. EX04-7WR – Existing Elevations;
- Drawing no. EX05-7WR – Existing Sections;
- Drawing no. PL01-7WR – Proposed Basement and Ground Floor Plans;
- Drawing no. PL02-7WR – Proposed First Floor and Loft Plans;
- Drawing no. PL03-7WR – Proposed Roof Plan;
- Drawing no. PL04-7WR – Proposed Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20240070	Roof level extension to create 1x 1 bed flat and 1x 2 bed flat additional units (Use Class C3); first floor rear extension to make 1x 2 bed flat; altered external staircase access and internal rearrangement to make 1x 1 bed flat; new entrance and internal rearrangement to studio unit; and new window openings on the front and rear elevation.	REFUSED	04.04.2024

20231143	Application for a determination pursuant to Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the proposed change of use from office to 11 Flats, internal reconfiguration and all associated works.	PRIOR APPROVAL GRANTED	04.01.2024
19910077	Erection of two storey rear extension at first and second floor levels to form boardroom at first floor level with document store over.	PERMITTED	18.07.1991
19880706	Erection of single storey extension on the north elevation to form a document store.	PERMITTED	13.09.1988

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS05 – Gravesham Town Centre Opportunity Area
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

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

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other Material Considerations

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.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 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)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009)
- Darnley Road Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009)
- Management Plan Gravesend Town Centre Conservation Areas (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal Consultees

GBC Conservation Officer – The proposal now looks to be acceptable, subject to the timber sashes being finished in off-white colour.

Local Ward Councillors – No comment received.

Neighbouring properties

Ten surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 11 December 2024.

Preliminary Matters

During a site visit, the Local Planning Authority became aware of unauthorised works to the windows on the rear extension and to the front dormer. As the site is approved for flats and within the Conservation Area, the applicant does not benefit from permitted development rights and permission is required.

The windows replaced without planning permission were all within the rear extension (as shown in the images below), with the panel details removed. In addition, the front dormer windows have also been replaced with a uPVC sash unit.



Following this visit, ongoing discussions were undertaken to improve the appearance of the windows installed and provide additional details relating to the proposed sash windows in the original building. The revised plans and updated details were accepted by the Local Planning Authority.

The Local Planning Authority were also made aware of a large utility box installed to the front of the building, without planning consent. As part of the negotiations, the applicant has worked with UK power networks and the utility box will be relocated to the rear of the property to preserve the character and appearance of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area.

Officer's Analysis

Site Description

7 Wrotham Rd is a two storey building with a basement and rooms within the roof space, located on a prominent corner of Wrotham Rd and Cobham St.

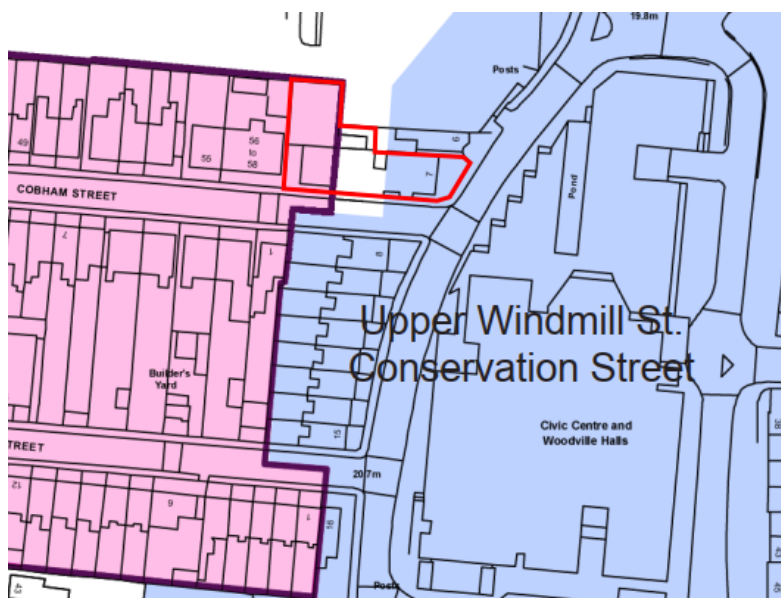


The property has been extended to the rear with a 1960s flat roof rear extension and a box roof dormer extensions to the front and rear.





The building is located within the Darnley Road and Upper Windmill Street Conservation Areas.



Proposed Development

This application proposes the creation of new window openings, replacement windows and associated alterations to the building. There are to be a total of 24 windows replaced and 8 new window opening created. The windows are a mixture of traditional timber sash and UPVC sash style windows.



KEY
 RED OUTLINE: PROPOSED WINDOWS
 GREEN: uPVC SASH WINDOWS
 BLUE: TIMBER SASH WINDOWS
 GREY: STONE WINDOW SILL
 ANY WINDOWS NOT HIGHLIGHTED WILL BE RETAINED (NO ALTERATION)



Principle of Development

The principle considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Design and Impact on Conservation Area
- Amenity of Future Occupiers

Design and Impact on the Conservation Area

Development Plan policy places considerable emphasis on the importance of achieving high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 (LPCS) reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The NPPF (2024) also places great significance on the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets, and on new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 216). This is echoed in Policy CS20 (LPCS), which states that the significance of the Borough's heritage assets and their setting should always be preserved or enhanced. Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) sets out that for development affecting the setting of listed buildings, the primary consideration is the maintenance of the integrity of the original listed building, and whether the character or appearance of the listed building will suffer as a result. Proposals must be sympathetic in terms of their appearance and materials.

Saved Policy TC3 (LPFR) also states that development is expected to make a positive contribution to the conservation area. As the application site lies within the Upper Windmill Street and Darnley Road Conservation Areas, these policies are all relevant to the consideration of this application.

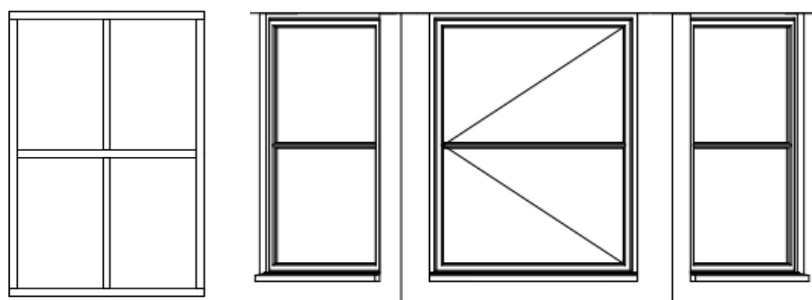
Whilst it is recognised that development which makes effective use of land should be supported (paragraph 124 of the NPPF (2024)), this comes with the proviso that it should safeguard and improve the environment and not conflict with other policies in the NPPF (2024). Relevant to this proposal, paragraph 129 of the NPPF (2024) which states that developments that makes efficient use of land should be supported, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing, the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting, and the importance of securing well-designed places.

From a historic building/conservation point of view, the main building offers a contribution to the overall quality of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area, but the building has been extended into the loft and to the rear which have detracted from its historic qualities and negatively impact the character of the Conservation Areas. Specifically, the prominence of the 1960s rear extension is highlighted in the Conservation Area Appraisals (for both Darnley Rd and Upper Windmill St) as a negative feature encroaching into the character area. Moreover, the windows and panelling on the rear extension are metal framed and incongruous, which serve to further detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area.

The replacement windows in the extension are uPVC sash units, which have been installed and the panel details removed without planning permission. Although the Local Planning Authority would expect slimmer glazing bars on the uPVC units, they are sash style and an improvement on the pre-existing aluminium frames. Moreover, the extension is a modern addition and the proposed brick infills will match the grey

brick, with appropriate stone cills installed which will improve the overall appearance of the extension. The cills are to be buff colour and the bricks are grey to match the extension. It is noted that the windows on the extension would retain trickle vents, however these are to be flush with the window which reduces their impact. Therefore, the proposed UPVC windows are considered to be acceptable, and the other improvements are considered to enhance the character and appearance of the Darnley Road Conservation Area. As these windows are already installed, a condition will be attached to the decision notice to ensure, within 6 months of the date of permission, that the trickle vents are replaced, and the brick infills and cills are installed in accordance with the approved details.

The replacement windows within the main building are to be timber sliding sash units, that match the existing windows that will be replaced and are suitable for a historic building within a Conservation Area. The profiles of the window are shown in the scaled drawings below as examples:



The new window openings will be predominantly inserted on the northern side of the building, with the exception of one first floor window and basement level window on the prominent and visible southern elevation of the main property. The first floor window would be the most visible new window opening and will be sliding timber sash unit with profiles that match the existing windows on the elevation. The basement window will be a three pane uPVC unit, which would not be suitable for a building within the Conservation Area, however this is screened from view by the boundary wall and being below ground level is not visible. As such, this would not have a detrimental impact on the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area.

The northern windows include 2no. first floor level timber sash units on the main building and 4no. uPVC sash windows on the extension. As discussed above, these proposed units are considered to be acceptable with traditional windows more visible on the main building and the uPVC units afforded limited visibility from public vantage points.

Throughout the negotiations, the Conservation Officer has provided feedback and sought improvements to the details. The latest revisions and timber sash details have been reviewed, with no objections. This is subject to the timber sash windows being finished in an off-white colour, which has been confirmed in writing by the agent. A condition will be attached to ensure, that within 6 months of the date of permission, windows W21 on the front dormer is replaced by a timber sash window in accordance with the approved details.

Overall, the windows proposed are acceptable within the Conservation Areas, with the replacement and new openings on the main building being timber sliding sash in visible locations and the windows on the more modern extensions being uPVC sash windows with appropriate proportions and stone sills. Therefore, the proposal will preserve and enhance the character of the Upper Windmill Street and Darnley Road Conservation Areas meeting the statutory test of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and is in accordance with Policies CS19 (Development and Design Principles) and CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment) (LPCS), saved policy TC3 (Development Affecting Conservation Areas) of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) as well as Sections 12 (Achieving well-designed places) and 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires that all development should be fit for purpose and be adaptable to allow changes to meet the need of users. The proposed windows will provide suitable living conditions for future occupiers of the flats by virtue of delivering thermal efficiency and noise mitigation. Therefore, the proposal will safeguard amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

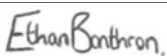
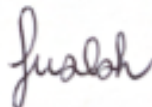
The proposed windows are appropriate for the property and within the Conservation Area. The traditional timber sash windows will preserve the character of the original building and the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area, while the uPVC sash windows, stone cills and brick infills will enhance the extension and the Darnley Road Conservation Area. Moreover, the new windows will improve the living environment for future occupiers of the flats.

Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	21 st July 2025	Dated:	23 July 2025