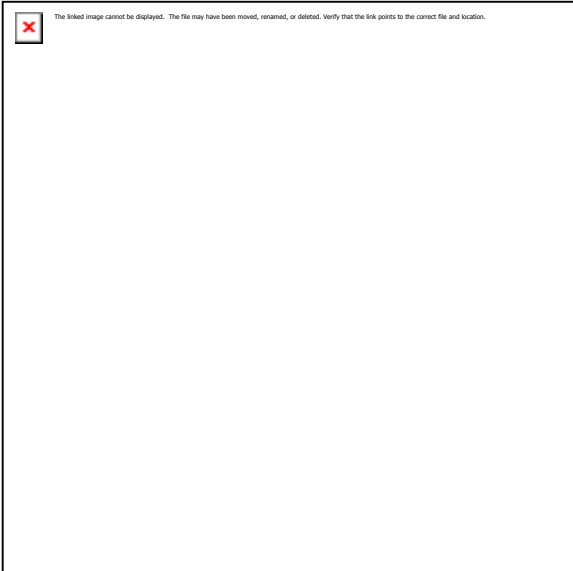




Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20220468

Location: 51 St Hildas Way Gravesend Kent DA12 4AL

Description: REVISED Creation of a vehicle access and hardstanding

Applicant: Pradeep Valsala Gopinathan

Site Visit Date:

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form
- Proposed Site Plan
- Proposed Block Plan
- Existing/Proposed Site Location Map

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history.

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

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

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T5 – Formation of new Accesses onto Highway Network

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)

Other relevant guidance

- Kent County Council Vehicle Crossing: - Guidance and Self-Assessment (2018)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC – Highways Officer

As presented this application requires some modification to make it acceptable.

Kent County Council, require in their carriage crossover (dropped kerb) guidance for any access to be a minimum of 10 metres away from a junction, to reduce the risk of motorists being confused which could result in an accident (crash). In addition there should be pedestrian visibility spays either side of the access, ideally these should be 2m x 2m but the Kent Design Guide does permit 1m x 1m.

Vehicle Crossing Guidance and Self-Assessment document published by KCC in October 2018 states;

	Typical parameter	Notes	Recommended parameter range (required min or max standard shown in bold)
Width	3.0m	minimum width 3.0m if access required for fire tender	2.4 m / 4.8m
Anticipated vehicle types	car, fire tender	see section 6.16 for guidance on access for fire appliances	
pedestrian visibility at junction with highway	2.0m x 2.0m		>1.0m x 1.0m
Maximum gradient	10%	measures may be needed for driveways having a steep downward gradient to prevent vehicles grounding. This can include providing a roll over as shown below or modifying footway cross fall gradients	0.13

All figures are for guidance; design specification should be guided by local context and agreed with the local authority.

Google Street view for August 2021 show properties on either side to have hedge boundaries which can obstruct pedestrian visibility and these are outside the control of the applicant.

Towards number 49 the shared footpath to the properties provides sufficient space to meet the minimum requirements, whilst towards number 53, given the width of the front garden, there is space to reduce the width of the parking area, whilst retaining adequate space for two vehicles, it has the added benefit of providing some space for low level planting. Two parking spaces that are constrained by enclosed boundaries' or changes in level require a combined width of 5.4 metres, unless disabled access is required in which case there is also a need to provide a suitable path to meet the needs of the mobility impaired, but does not alter the access/egress requirements for the vehicle to/from the highway. It is therefore suggested the crossover should be reduced in width to 5.4 metres measured from the edge of the shared access, giving a reduction of 1.69metres, which would then form the pedestrian visibility splay towards number 53 and be within the control of the applicant. In terms of depth 6.6 metres appears to be excessive for cars with 5 or perhaps 6 metres being more appropriate depending on whether pedestrian access is required around the vehicle. This again gives some scope for a narrow border for planting, although there may be some merit in providing a wider footpath to the property.

Subject to these revisions I would have no objections, but as submitted there are no pedestrian visibility splays towards number 53 and I would recommend refusal on highway safety grounds, particularly given the proximity of the adjacent junction and the emerging driver may be concentrating more on vehicle traffic rather than pedestrian.

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by way of letter to 5 surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 15th July 2022 and no comments were received.

Analysis

Proposal

The proposal seeks the creation of a vehicle access and hardstanding. This application proposes the removal of the front lawn and creation of a hardstanding for vehicular parking. The driveway will be constructed using permeable material and will have a width of 7m and an approximate depth of 6.6m. It is assumed that the proposal will not alter the ground level and retain the existing land level as no section details have been provided. The application form states that the driveway is to accommodate one car.

Character and Appearance

The application site is a two storey mid terrace house located on the northern side of St Hilda's Way. The frontage is retained by a dwarf wall fronting the highway. The garden has a central tree located on a lawn with planting on the boundaries. It is acknowledged that some properties have formed driveways on the northern side of St Hilda's Way, however the gardens of the application property and close neighbours contribute significantly to the visual appearance and improve the amenity of the local street scene considerably.

As such the proposed development will have an urbanising effect by virtue of removing the boundary wall and all of the existing soft landscaping to form the hardstanding. The plans fail to demonstrate the retention of biodiversity and soft landscaping which would reduce the harsh impact of a hard-paved driveway and therefore the proposal is considered to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the street scene, specifically the northern side of highway. The extent of hardstanding is also considered excessive given the application form states that the driveway is to accommodate one car. The proposed development is therefore contrary to Policies CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) as well as Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) achieving well-designed places and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

It is also worth noting that there is a vehicular access to the rear of the properties that has potential to serve off road parking.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will provide acceptable living conditions that safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposed vehicular crossover would not materially impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and is in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Parking and Highways

The proposal as submitted fails to demonstrate how it is compliant in terms of highway safety as the submission does not show any visibility splays. Although with some amendments it may be possible to achieve the required sightlines, this involves a reduction in the width of the driveway and crossover which the applicant may or may not be agreeable to. If the proposal was acceptable in design, this issue could be resolved via negotiations, but given the other concerns, the application needs to be determined as submitted.

As such the proposal fails to demonstrate adequate visibility splays which results in the vehicle access and hardstanding posing a danger to pedestrian and highway safety. As such the development is considered to be unacceptable and contrary Policy CS11 (Transport) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved policies P3 (Vehicle Parking Standards) and T5 (Access to the Identified Highway Network) of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994, the Adopted Kent Vehicle Parking Standards (SPG4), Kent County Council vehicle crossing guidance (2016) and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

As mentioned previously there is space at the rear for vehicular parking. The screenshot below from Google Earth was from 2022 which shows access to what appears to be a garage which demonstrates that the site may not be in need of additional parking which would result in a loss of biodiversity.



Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on Biodiversity - as highlighted previously the driveway will result in a loss of biodiversity. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 states that developments should result in biodiversity net gain which is not the case with this application. The applicant has failed to demonstrate how the loss of biodiversity will be offset and as such should not be supported.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The application has been fully considered and it is recommended that planning permission is refused.

The proposed driveway and resulting hardstanding will result in the removal of all existing soft landscaping and biodiversity which currently contribute positively to the quality of the street scene and its removal would result in a harsh, developed appearance which adversely impacts on the character and appearance of the streetscene and the visual qualities of the wider area in general. As such the proposal is contrary to Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 as well as Sections 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Additionally the proposal fails to demonstrate adequate visibility splays which results in the vehicle access and hardstanding posing a danger to pedestrian and highway safety. As such the development is considered to be unacceptable and contrary Policy CS11 (Transport) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved policies P3 (Vehicle Parking Standards) and T5 (Access to the Identified Highway Network) of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994, the Adopted Kent Vehicle Parking Standards (SPG4), Kent County Council vehicle crossing guidance (2016) and Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

As such the proposed driveway fails to comply with both local and national planning policy and cannot be supported.

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Sharon Sahota	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	

Dated:	3rd August 2022	Dated:	08 August 2022
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Gravesham Borough Council