



St Columba's Close

Affordable Housing Statement

Gravesham Borough Council

October 2022

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For and on behalf of BPTW

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1.0 Introduction

1.1. This Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared in support of a detailed planning application submitted to Gravesham Borough Council (**the Council**) by BPTW, on behalf of Gravesham Borough Council (**the Applicant**), for the redevelopment of St Columba's Close (**the Site**).

1.2. This application seeks full planning permission for the following description of development:

Demolition of Nos. 1 -12 St Patricks Gardens, Nos. 36 – 41 St Patricks Gardens, and Nos. 28 – 42 (even nos. only) St Columba's Close, and associated caretaker's facility. Erection of 2no. 2 storey buildings, 1no. 3 storey building and 1no. part3/part4 storey building to provide 46 residential dwellings (Class C3 residential use), with associated vehicle and pedestrian access, amenity space with hard and soft landscaping, car and cycle parking, refuse and recycling storage provision, and other associated works

1.3. The purpose of this Affordable Housing Statement is to set out the key information about the proposed affordable housing that is provided by the development.

Structure of this Statement

1.4. This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- > **Section 2** outlines the affordable housing proposed.
- > **Section 3** identifies the relevant planning policy.
- > **Section 4** outlines the housing need.
- > **Section 5** concludes the report.

2.0 Affordable Housing Proposed

- 2.1. The proposal will see the demolition of 26 existing dwellings and the construction of 46 dwellings. The development therefore provides an uplift of 20 dwellings on the Site.
- 2.2. All of the existing 26 households would have the option of returning to the Site once the development is completed. They would all be offered suitable alternative accommodation as part of the decant process while works to implement the development takes place.
- 2.3. The affordable housing tenure mix of the proposed 46 dwellings will be Social and Affordable . As explained in the Planning Obligations Statement by BPTW, the applicant would like to agree full details of the proposed affordable housing through a planning condition.
- 2.4. There is no intermediate housing proposed for the development.
- 2.5. The layout of the affordable housing is shown in the site plan in appendix 1.
- 2.6. The proposed development provides the following mix.

Tenure	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
Social and Affordable Rent	15 (32.6%)	19 (41.3%)	10 (21.7 %)	2 (4%)

3.0 Planning Legislation and Policy Framework

- 3.1. This section outlines the relevant development plan policies and material considerations, to aid the subsequent discussion of how the proposal meets these requirements.

Local Development Plan

- 3.2. The development plan for the area comprises the following:
- > Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014);
 - > Gravesham Local Plan First Review (Saved Policies 2007);

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 3.3. Regard has been given to the following national planning policy and guidance:
- > The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
 - > The National Planning Practice Guidance (2018, as amended)

NPPF (2021)

- 3.4. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England, and how these are expected to be applied and taken into consideration in planning decisions. The following policies are considered most relevant to this application.

Chapter 5: Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

- 3.5. The NPPF requires a local housing needs assessment to be conducted using the standard methodology and sets out that the Local Planning Authority should apply the weighted test set out in paragraph 11 (d) unless it can demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.
- 3.6. **Para. 60** states: "to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay."
- 3.7. **Para. 63** states: "Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required, and expect it to be met on-site unless:

- a) Off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and*
- b) The agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities".*

Local Planning Policy

- 3.8. The Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2021)
- 3.9. The Gravesham Core Strategy was adopted in 2014 and covers the period to 2028. The following policies are considered to be particularly relevant:
- 3.10. **Policy CS14 (Housing Type and Size)** requires new housing development to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes taking into the account existing character and need in the area.
- 3.11. **Policy CS16 (Affordable Housing)** defines affordable housing as "housing with sale prices or rent levels which are set substantially lower than the prevailing market price or rent, so that it will be accessible to local people

in priority housing need, whose incomes are insufficient to enable them to afford housing on the open market.”.

- 3.12. **Policy CS16 (Affordable Housing)** states that the provision of affordable housing will be required on all new housing developments of 15 dwellings or more or on sites of 0.5 hectares or more in the urban area; and 3 units or more or on sites of 0.1 hectares or more in the rural area. The amount of affordable housing to be provided by private housing development sites above the threshold will be 30% in the urban area and 35% in the rural area.

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4.0 Housing Need

- 4.1. The development would be 100% Social Rent and Affordable Rent due to the high need for affordable housing in the local area. This exceeds the policy requirement of 30% affordable housing outlined by policy CS16 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 4.2. Tenancies of the Social Rented and Affordable Rented units would be offered to qualifying people in housing need. The Council use a banding system to determine priority for housing. Assessment is based on an applicant's housing circumstances, suitability of the property, and any long-term medical problems. Persons eligible to join the housing list have their application assessed by an officer and placed into one of four bands, in accordance with the 'fair and flexible' statutory guidance. The bands are referred to as 'A, B, C and D'. Applications in band A are given the highest priority for re-housing, band B the next highest, then C with band D applicants having the lowest priority.
- 4.3. The Council have shared their latest data from their housing register which shows the number of people waiting for housing and the size of property required. The data from the housing register from September 2022 is shown in the table below.

Band	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed
A	67	34	10	3	7
B	35	16	10	13	23
C	106	308	196	26	69
D	123	8	196	26	2
Total	331	366	220	42	101

- 4.4. The housing register data has informed the proposed housing mix of the development. This is in line with policy CS14 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy which requires new housing development to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes taking into account existing character and need in the area.
- 4.5. The housing register clearly shows there is the greatest need for 1 and 2 bed dwellings within the highest category A and B bands. This high demand is reflected in the housing mix of the proposed development with 73.9% of the dwellings having 1 or 2 bedrooms.
- 4.6. The number of 1- and 2-bedroom dwellings as part of the proposal is fully justified by the housing demand within the local area.
- 4.7. The housing mix is shown below.

Tenure	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
Social and Affordable	15 (32.6%)	19 (41.3%)	10 (21.7 %)	2 (4%)

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1. This Affordable Housing Statement supports the submission of a full planning application to Gravesham Borough Council for the following description of development:

Demolition of Nos. 1 -12 St Patricks Gardens, Nos. 36 – 41 St Patricks Gardens, and Nos. 28 – 42 (even nos. only) St Columba's Close, and associated caretaker's facility. Erection of 2no. 2 storey buildings, 1no. 3 storey building and 1no. part3/part4 storey building to provide 46 residential dwellings (Class C3 residential use), with associated vehicle and pedestrian access, amenity space with hard and soft landscaping, car and cycle parking, refuse and recycling storage provision, and other associated works.

- 5.2. The development would provide an uplift of 20 Affordable and Social Rented dwellings which would significantly boost the supply of affordable housing in Gravesham.
- 5.3. All of the 46 proposed dwellings will be for either Affordable or Social Rent.
- 5.4. The locally assessed high demand for 1- and 2-bedroom smaller dwellings has informed and is reflected in the housing mix of the proposal. However, to assist in meeting the need for larger family sized accommodation family homes of 3 and 4 bedrooms are also included in the application.
- 5.5. The applicant would welcome the inclusion of a planning condition to secure the exact tenure mix and whether a local lettings plan will apply to the homes.

APPENDIX 1 – SITE PLANS

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