



PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Redevelopment of 41 The Hill

Site Address: 41 The Hill, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 9EX

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CONTENTS

1. Scope of the Report
2. Executive Summary
3. Introduction
4. Site Description
5. Planning History
6. Proposed Development
7. Planning & Heritage Considerations
8. Response to The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal
9. Conclusion
10. References

1. Scope of the Report

This Planning & Heritage Statement has been prepared by Echoz CIC on behalf of the applicant in support of a planning application relating to the proposed redevelopment of 41 The Hill, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 9EX.

The purpose of this Statement is to describe the proposed development, explain the planning and heritage context of the application site and demonstrate how the proposal has been designed having regard to the character and appearance of The Hill Conservation Area, the significance of nearby heritage assets and the relevant national and local planning policy framework.

This Statement has been prepared following a review of the submitted architectural drawings relating specifically to 41 The Hill, available planning history, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant planning policies adopted by Gravesham Borough Council, the published *The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal*, Historic England information relating to the Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Botolph and observations recorded during a site inspection undertaken by Echoz CIC.

This Statement should be read alongside the accompanying planning application documents, architectural drawings and supporting technical information submitted as part of the application.



2. Executive Summary

This Planning & Heritage Statement accompanies a planning application for the proposed redevelopment of 41 The Hill, Northfleet.

The proposal seeks to improve and redevelop the existing building at No. 41 The Hill through appropriate alterations and redevelopment works, providing an opportunity to enhance the appearance, functionality and contribution of the site within The Hill Conservation Area.

The application site is located within The Hill Conservation Area and has therefore been designed having regard to the historic character and appearance of the surrounding area together with the setting of nearby designated heritage assets.

Particular regard has been given to the published The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal, which specifically identifies No. 41 The Hill as a building that would benefit from large-scale improvement or replacement.

The proposed redevelopment responds positively to this identified opportunity by seeking to improve the appearance of the site through a carefully considered design approach that respects the established character, scale and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal represents an opportunity to enhance an existing building within an established urban location whilst retaining the important relationship between the application site and the wider historic environment of The Hill.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed redevelopment represents an appropriate response to the planning and heritage context of the site, preserving the character and appearance of The Hill Conservation Area whilst contributing positively to its continued improvement.

3. Introduction

This Planning & Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the proposed redevelopment of 41 The Hill, Northfleet.

The Statement considers the planning merits of the proposal together with its relationship to the surrounding built environment, designated heritage assets and the character and appearance of The Hill Conservation Area.

The assessment has been undertaken with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant planning policies adopted by Gravesham Borough Council and the published *The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal*.

The objective of this Statement is to demonstrate that the proposed redevelopment has been designed with due regard to the historic environment whilst providing an opportunity to improve an existing building within an established urban location.

The proposal has been developed having regard to the existing character of No. 41 The Hill, its relationship with surrounding buildings and the contribution that the site makes to the wider streetscape.



4. Site Description

The application site is located at 41 The Hill, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 9EX and lies within The Hill Conservation Area.

The site comprises the existing building at No. 41 The Hill, which forms part of an established mixed-use streetscape characterised by a combination of commercial premises, residential properties and community facilities.

The surrounding area has evolved over many years and displays a varied architectural character, with buildings of differing ages, scale, design and materials contributing to the distinctive identity and historic character of The Hill.

No. 41 The Hill forms part of this established streetscape and occupies a previously developed site within the urban area of Northfleet. The site benefits from existing infrastructure, established utility connections and access to local services and public transport facilities.

To the eastern side of The Hill is an established commercial frontage. Beyond this lies the historic churchyard associated with the Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Botolph, which is set back within mature landscaped grounds. The church, churchyard and surrounding landscape make an important contribution to the significance of the listed building and the wider character and appearance of The Hill Conservation Area.

The application site occupies a sustainable location with convenient access to public transport, local services and community facilities. Bus stops are located nearby, whilst Northfleet Railway Station, Ebbsfleet International Station and Gravesend Railway Station are all accessible within reasonable walking distance.

The redevelopment of No. 41 The Hill provides an opportunity to improve an existing building within an established urban area where infrastructure and services are already available.

5. Planning History

The planning history of 41 The Hill has been reviewed as part of this assessment.

The existing building has historically accommodated commercial and/or office-related uses, reflecting the established mixed-use character of The Hill.

Planning permission has previously been granted for alterations and changes of use associated with the existing building, establishing the principle of adapting and improving the use of the site within this sustainable urban location.

The current proposal should therefore be considered on its own planning merits, having regard to the submitted architectural drawings, the existing character of the building, the identified opportunity for improvement within the Conservation Area Appraisal and the current planning policy framework.



6. Proposed Development

The application seeks planning permission for the proposed redevelopment of 41 The Hill, Northfleet.

The proposal comprises alterations, refurbishment and extension works to the existing building to provide an improved development that responds positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The submitted architectural drawings demonstrate a design approach that seeks to improve the appearance and functionality of the building whilst respecting the established streetscape of The Hill.

The proposed works have been developed having regard to the scale, form, materials and architectural character of the surrounding buildings. The design approach seeks to provide a contemporary yet sympathetic response that integrates appropriately within the existing Conservation Area setting.

Particular consideration has been given to the relationship between the application site and the wider historic environment, including the setting of the Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Botolph and its associated churchyard.

The proposal provides an opportunity to enhance an existing building identified within *The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal* as benefiting from large-scale improvement or replacement, whilst maintaining the established character and appearance of the surrounding area.

7. Planning & Heritage Considerations

The application site lies within The Hill Conservation Area, which has been designated by Gravesham Borough Council in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest.

The proposed redevelopment has therefore been assessed against the principles contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant planning policies adopted by Gravesham Borough Council and the published *The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal*.

The National Planning Policy Framework seeks to achieve high-quality design that responds positively to local character whilst conserving the significance of designated heritage assets. The proposal has been developed in accordance with these principles by seeking to improve an existing building whilst respecting the established character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The character of The Hill Conservation Area is derived from its historic street pattern, varied architectural styles, traditional building forms, established commercial and residential uses and the contribution made by important heritage assets within the locality.

The Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Botolph represents an important heritage asset within the wider setting of The Hill. The church is located beyond the established commercial frontage and is set within its historic churchyard and mature landscaped grounds. These features make an important contribution to the significance of the listed building and the wider character of the Conservation Area.



The proposed redevelopment of No.41 The Hill has been designed having regard to this wider heritage context. The proposal seeks to improve the appearance and contribution of the existing building whilst ensuring that the development does not adversely affect the significance of nearby heritage assets.

The submitted architectural drawings demonstrate a design approach that seeks to complement the surrounding streetscape through appropriate scale, proportions, materials and architectural detailing.

8. Response to The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal

The published The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal provides an important consideration in assessing the proposed redevelopment of No.41 The Hill.

The Appraisal specifically identifies No.41 The Hill as a building that would benefit from large-scale improvement or replacement, recognising that the existing building provides an opportunity for enhancement within the Conservation Area.

The proposed redevelopment responds positively to this identified opportunity by seeking to improve the appearance and quality of the site through a considered design approach that respects the established character of The Hill.

Whilst the Conservation Area Appraisal identifies an opportunity for improvement, it does not prescribe the form or architectural style that any redevelopment should take. The current proposal has therefore been developed to provide an appropriate response to the site's context, balancing the need for improvement with the requirement to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal represents an opportunity to enhance the contribution made by No.41 The Hill through improved architectural quality, whilst maintaining the established relationship between the site and the wider historic environment.

Having regard to the Conservation Area Appraisal, the submitted architectural proposals and the surrounding townscape, the redevelopment is considered to represent a positive response to the enhancement opportunity identified by Gravesham Borough Council.

9. Conclusion

The proposed redevelopment of 41 The Hill represents an opportunity to improve an existing building within the established urban area of Northfleet.

The proposal has been designed having regard to the site's location within The Hill Conservation Area, the character of the surrounding streetscape and the significance of nearby heritage assets, including the Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Botolph.

Particular consideration has been given to the findings of the *The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal*, which identifies No.41 The Hill as a building that would benefit from large-scale improvement or replacement.



The proposed development responds positively to this identified opportunity by seeking to enhance the appearance and contribution of the site whilst respecting the established character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Having regard to the submitted proposals, relevant planning policy, the Conservation Area Appraisal and the wider heritage context of the site, the proposed redevelopment is considered to represent an appropriate and proportionate response to the planning and heritage considerations associated with No.41 The Hill.

10. Professional Opinion

Echoz CIC has undertaken a review of the submitted architectural drawings, available planning information, relevant planning policy, Historic England information relating to the Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Botolph, the published *The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal* and observations recorded during a site inspection.

Having considered this information, it is the professional opinion of Echoz CIC that the proposed redevelopment has been designed with appropriate regard to the planning and heritage context of 41 The Hill.

The proposal provides an opportunity to improve a building specifically identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal as benefiting from large-scale improvement or replacement, whilst respecting the established character and appearance of The Hill Conservation Area.

The proposed design approach seeks to provide a high-quality redevelopment that responds positively to its surroundings, makes effective use of an existing urban site and preserves the significance of nearby heritage assets.

Based upon the information reviewed and the assessment contained within this Statement, Echoz CIC considers that the proposed redevelopment represents an appropriate and proportionate response to the site's planning and heritage context and respectfully recommends that the application be supported.

11. References

- National Planning Policy Framework (current edition)
- Gravesham Borough Council Local Plan documents
- The Hill Conservation Area Appraisal
- Historic England – Parish Church of St Botolph (Grade I Listed Building)
- Submitted Architectural Drawings
- Site Inspection undertaken by Echoz CIC