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PJS/Is/2055

20th August 2025

Head of Planning
Planning Services
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
Kent DA12 1AU

Dear Colleagues,

House Holder Planning Application - Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

Proposed alterations to front boundary wall, fence and gates

To Sunnyside, Valley Drive, Gravesend, Kent DA12 5UE

For Dr and Mr C Ahmed

We have pleasure in submitting this Householder planning application for the proposed alterations to the front boundary wall, fence and gates at Sunnyside, Valley Drive, Gravesend and look forward to receiving your helpful response in due course.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Earlier boundary walls, fences and gates were redeveloped as part of the extensive reconstruction works at Sunnyside. It was drawn to the applicants attention that Planning Permission was required for the redevelopment as built.
- 1.2. A Planning Application was duly made seeking approval for the development
- 1.3. Planning Permission was refused on the 3rd October 2024 for the “retention of the front boundary wall with associated railings and two sliding gates”. (LPA reference 20230881).

Stanway Little Associates

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Town Planning Advisor to the RIBA

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2. FRESH PROPOSALS

2.1. Fresh proposals were prepared that sought to overcome the reason for refusal and were subject to a Pre-Application Application to the Council. The significant features of this fresh proposals were:

2.1.1. Retention of the first gate in a locked shut position.

2.1.2. Relocation of the second gate and alterations to the supporting pillars, walls and fences to a position 5.5 metres back from the front edge of the pavement to Valley Drive.

2.2. These fresh proposals were rejected by the Council in their Pre-Application Report.

They said: The KCC Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2023) document states that gates should not open outwards onto the public highway and that there should be a minimum distance of 5.5m from the highway edge in order to ensure that vehicles do not obstruct the public highway when accessing a property. Furthermore, the document sets out that there should be a pedestrian visibility splay of at least 2 metres by 2 metres from the back edge of the footway, with a maximum height of 0.6 metres above footway level.

The GBC Front Driveway Design Guidance 2023 states that front driveways should not include gates but where they already exist, they must not open outwards and allow enough space for them to be opened inwardly whilst a car is parked. It specifically states that gates will not receive planning permission unless they are set well back from the edge of the carriageway/footway as they can result in vehicles obstructing the highway to the detriment of road safety and the free flow of traffic including pedestrians and cyclists. It specifies a minimum set back of 6 metres. It also states that gates should enable a pedestrian on the footway to have clear visibility of any vehicle exiting (i.e. be railings or have transparency), should not be of a height that blocks visibility of passing pedestrians and should enable visibility from the roadway. Lastly it states that pedestrian and vehicle visibility splays should be provided.

The proposed alterations would result in one gate being fixed shut and the other being set back 5.5 metres from the front edge of the pavement. The existing brick piers at the gate entrance would be retained.

It should be noted that the required setback for gates is measured from the back edge of the highway, i.e. from the back edge of the pavement. The proposed alterations would include a setback of 3.8 metres from the back edge of the pavement (the depth of the pavement has been excluded from this figure) and as such, it would not be sufficient to allow a vehicle to park entirely off the highway, whilst the gates are opened. As such, the proposal would obstruct the free flow of traffic on the roadway and pedestrians on the pavement and be detrimental to highway safety.

The lack of pedestrian visibility splays at the gate entrance (due to the location of the existing brick piers) would result in drivers exiting the application site with limited visibility, resulting in dangers to passing pedestrians.

Although on the face of it, the fixing shut of one gate could overcome some of the adverse highways impacts arising from the existing situation, this permanent closure would not be possible to enforce. Especially if the application site changes ownership in future. As such, to ensure that there is no adverse highway impact, this existing gate should be removed completely.

In order for the proposed boundary treatment to be acceptable, the proposed alterations will require the removal of both gates and the lowering of the wall/piers located within 2 metres of the entrances to a maximum height of 0.6 metres. Alternatively, the frontage treatment could be completely re-designed, with lower walls and if gates are included, they should incorporate appropriate setbacks.

3. REVISED PROPOSALS

3.1. These further revised proposals are shown on drawing no.2055 Pro 1R attached to this planning application that are now subject to this fresh planning application include.

3.1.1. Removal of the central gate and its replacement with a new wall and railings on top filling in between the existing brick piers.

3.1.2. Removal of the existing right hand side gate and its reinstatement in position 6 metres back from the back edge of pavement. New brick walls with railings will be constructed with 150-millimetre diameter steel columns to support the gate structure.

3.1.3. The existing brick piers on both sides of the driveway will be retained as the dimension between them is 4 metres with a visibility splay of 2 metres shown on the drawing. The piers are built 4 metres apart with oversailing copings that do not impinge on the eyeline.

3.1.4. The eyeline is therefore clear and unobstructed, the requirement to reconstruct the walls to a height of 0.6 metres is not therefore required.

4. CONCLUSION

We believe that these proposals now comply with the advice given in the Pre-Application Report and the Development Plan and that they should be supported by Gravesham Borough Council.

We therefore look forward to receiving Planning Permission in due course.

Please contact the writer if any further information or clarification is required.

Yours faithfully

Peter Stanway

Stanway Little Associates

Drawings attached to the Application.

Plans as Existing Drawing No 2055 EX 1

Plans as Proposed 2 No 2055 Pro 1R

Location Plan