

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240981

Location: 133 St Marks Avenue Northfleet Gravesend Kent

Description: Creation of a vehicle crossover and a driveway.

Applicant: Elena Boca

Site Visit Date: N/A – Photos Provided

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Supplementary Information – Supporting Statement;
OS Plan (received on 30/10/2024);
Drawing No. 002-133 Elevations and Block Plans – Existing and Proposed; and
Drawing No. 002-133 Front Layout Plan – Existing and Proposed.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T5 - (Access to the Identified Highway Network)

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.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

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)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2023)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

Five surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 20.12.25 and no representations were received.

Site Description

133 St Marks Avenue is a ground floor flat, fronting the southern side of the highway.

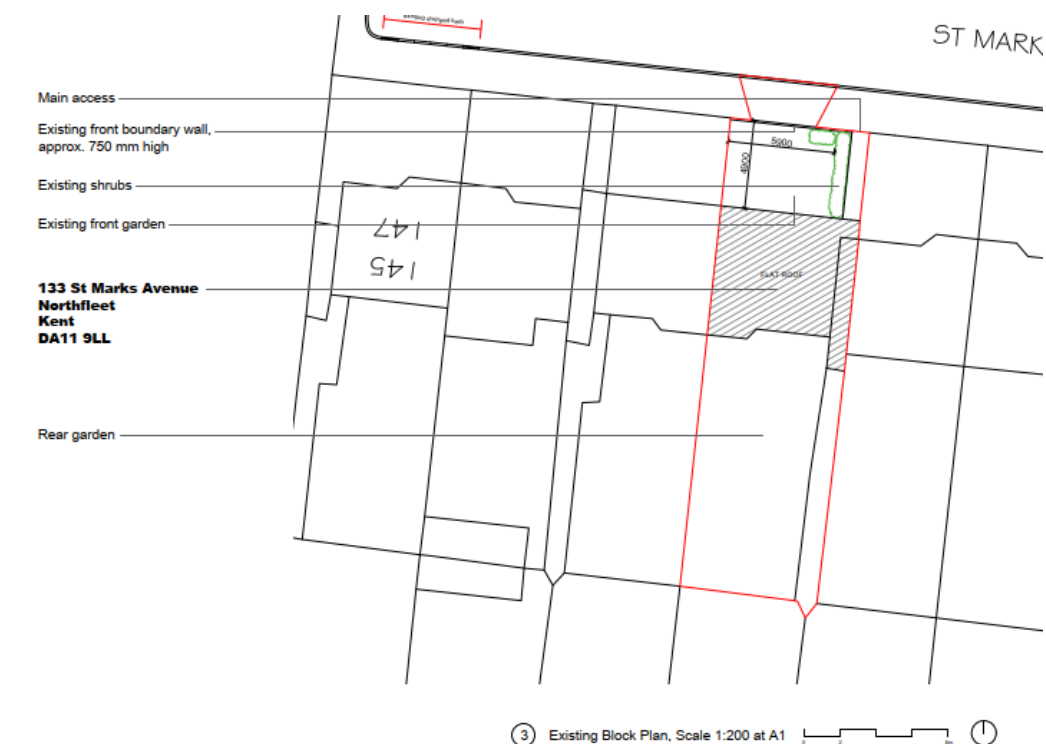
Photos showing the frontage of the flats (included in the supporting statement):



This application proposes the creation of a vehicle crossover and driveway to provide two off-street car parking spaces.

Proposed Development

The plans show the existing dwarf wall would be removed and the existing soft landscaping would be reduced, in order to create space for the development.





The information included with the application states: *'The proposed driveway will feature a tarmac surface, designed to accommodate two vehicles in compliance with Kent County Council's Dropped Kerb Application Guidance. The driveway surface will connect to an integrated drainage system that directs surface water to a soakaway located beneath the driveway, thus ensuring effective and environmentally responsible water management in line with local policies and guidelines.'*

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed places) of the NPPF (2024) sets out that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It states developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

The Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. Generally, the SPD (2021) highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context.

It is evident that in general, vehicular crossovers and hardstanding areas do form part of the character of the immediate locality, along St Marks Avenue and Beresford Road. As such, the principle of the development in this location could be acceptable, providing the design accords with policy and guidance.

Gravesham's Design SPD (2021) sets out the Design expectations for front gardens and parking within the Borough.

Front Gardens & Parking

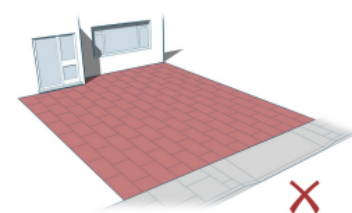
10.21 The laying of hard surfaces to the front gardens of houses often do not require planning permission. More advice is available on our website here: <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/parking-and-roads/dropped-kerbs/overview>

Where planning permission is required, account will be taken of the need for additional off road parking provision and the following considerations will apply:

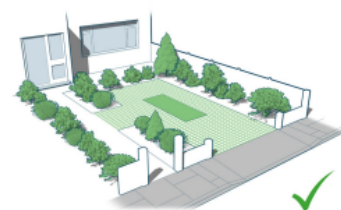
- Hardstanding should be proportionate to the size of the dwelling and the relevant car parking standards and avoid paving over a significant amount of the forecourt. Soft landscaped planted border along all boundaries should be provided in all spaces not specifically defined as parking or turning spaces.
- Allow sufficient space between the car and the dwelling to allow access to the front door and side of the property. 1 metre should be the minimum space between or around car parking spaces.

- Front garden parking must be designed to avoid cars overhanging the pavement. Car parking spaces a minimum of 2.5m wide (2.7m where spaces adjoin an enclosed boundary) and 5m deep should be provided.
- Should not include gates. Where gates already exist, they must not open outwards and should allow enough space for them to be opened inwardly (if relevant) whilst a car is parked.
- Gates should enable a pedestrian on the footway to have clear visibility of any vehicle exiting (i.e. they should be railings or have some form of transparency) and should not be of a height that blocks visibility of passing pedestrians and should enable visibility from the footway.
- Avoid removing any existing trees or established hedges and introduce new planting wherever possible.
- Introduce permeable paving to new areas of hardstanding to minimise rainwater run-off issues, as per the requirements of Permitted Development.
- There should be no water run-off from the forecourt onto the public highway.
- Where loose surfacing is proposed, a minimum of 1m depth of non-loose hardstanding should be provided at the front edge of the driveway with the public highway
- Repair or restore any original decorative tiled paths that are a characteristic or historic feature of the existing dwelling.
- Pedestrian and vehicle visibility splays should be provided. (See Appendix 1)

10.22 Aside from the potential need to gain planning permission if a new dropped kerb and crossover is required, applicants must apply for and obtain consent via the relevant landowner (if crossing private / third party land, such as amenity strips) as well as the highway authority.



Hardstanding should be proportionate to the size of the dwelling and the relevant car parking standards and avoid paving over a significant amount of the forecourt.



Soft landscaped planted border along all boundaries should be provided in all spaces not specifically defined as parking or turning spaces. Introduce permeable paving to new areas of hardstanding to minimise rainwater run-off issues, as per the requirements of Permitted Development.

Although it is regrettable that some soft landscaping would be lost as a result of the development, the proposed plans do show an existing shrub/hedge is to be retained, which is desirable. According to the details included with the application, the driveway would be constructed using a tarmac surface, connected to a drainage system that directs surface water to a soakaway located beneath the driveway. Although outside of the planning remit, it should be noted that building regulations do not permit soakaways within 5 metres of a building and/or highway. Therefore, the driveway shall need to be permeable to ensure adequate drainage is provided, which can be secured by condition if permission were to be forthcoming. Overall, the proposal is not considered to detrimentally impact the character and appearance of the main building, or surrounding area.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to accord with to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023.)

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal would result in off-road parking provision for future occupiers. The existing walkway 'main access', would be retained post development, ensuring pedestrian access for all users. Overall, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19

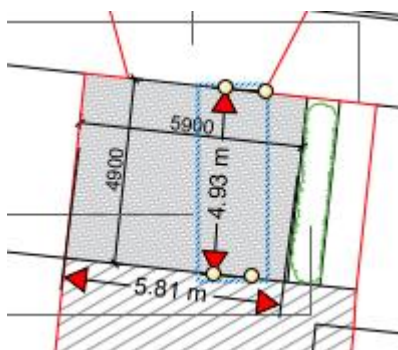
of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

No neighbour responses were received as a result of the consultation carried out for the proposal. In situ, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006) and Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) state that car parking spaces need to be a minimum of 2.50m wide (2.7m where spaces adjoin an enclosed boundary) and 5.00m deep. The plans show that the hardstanding area would fall slightly below the depth requirement:



However, on balance, this shortfall is considered minimum. If permission were to be forthcoming, an informative could be added to the decision notice to highlight that cars should not overhang the highway (pavement). The plans show the development would provide sufficient parking area for two cars. Although visibility splays have not been shown on the plans, the soft landscaping would be limited to 600mm in height, so it is considered that there would be an acceptable level of visibility in the interests of highway safety.

On balance, the proposal would accord with SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006), Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

Biodiversity

The proposed development would result in the loss of some soft landscaping. Whilst this is unfortunate, it is noted that a hedge/shrub is to be retained, post development. Given the context of the area, the retention of the hedge/shrub is considered to be positive and therefore the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Groundwater Protection Zone

The site is located within a Groundwater Protection Zone 2 area, however, the proposal would be unlikely to be impacted by this constraint.

Contamination

The site is located within the Northfleet Power Station Historic Landfill Site Buffer Zone. As such, if permission were to be forthcoming, a watching brief condition would be added to the decision notice.

Conclusion

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

The proposal would retain some soft landscaping which would be limited to 600mm in height, so there would be an acceptable level of visibility in the interests of highway safety. The development is not considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host building or the surrounding area.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	6th February 2025	Dated:	6th February 2025