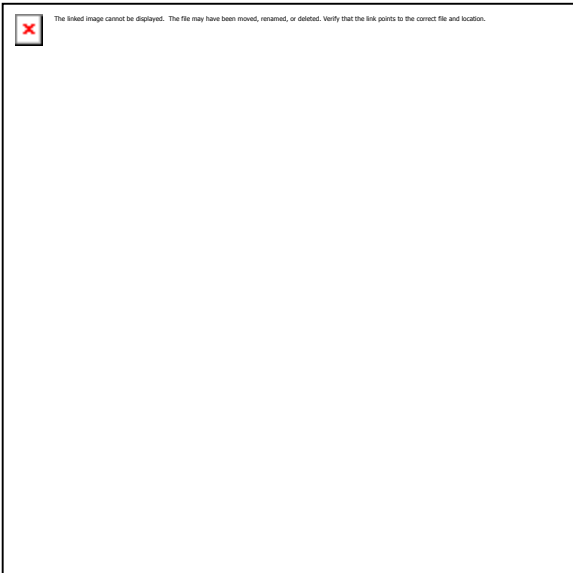




Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20220437

Location: 2 Old Road East Gravesend Kent DA12 1NG

Description: Change of Use from dwellinghouse (C3) to children's care home (C2)

Applicant: Mr Andrew Bellringer, My Life Semi Independent Project Ltd

Site Visit Date: 10th May 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.001 – Wider Location Plan;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.002 – Site Location Plan;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.003 – Ground Floor Plan - Existing;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.004 – First Floor Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.005 – Second Floor Plan - Existing;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.006 – Ground Floor Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.007 – First Floor Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. TI-ML001.008 – Second Floor Plan – Proposed;
Planning Statement; and
Management Statement.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20210964	Application for Lawful Development Certificate for proposed change of use of C3 dwelling house to C2 residential institution for the provision of a children's home for a maximum of 4 resident children aged 8-17 years, with non-resident care staff for support	Certificate Refused	08.10.2021

19800042	Retention of garden shed	Refused Appeal Dismissed	24.04.1980 03.04.1981
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Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 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
- H5 – Increasing Housing Stock by Conversion of existing Buildings
- H6 – Provision to Meet Special Housing Needs

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

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Kent Police Designing Out Crime

We have reviewed this application in regard to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

We currently have no concerns regarding crime prevention of this proposed application. However, If the agent would like to discuss security measures with us, please contact us for more information.

Due to the proposed use of the site, we would recommend the applicant review current site security and boundary treatments. We advise boundary treatments to be 1.8m in height with support beams facing inwards, any gates to a rear/ side access must also be securely lockable from both sides. In addition, we recommend CCTV be installed at the main entrance doors to monitor the movements of the occupiers.

This information is provided by Kent Police DOCO's and refers to situational crime prevention. This advice focuses on CPTED and Community Safety with regard to this specific planning application.

KCC – Heritage & Conservation (E & W)

No comments received.

GBC – Highways Officer

Proposals such as this require very careful consideration. SPG4 gives the following guidance for a residential care home, on car parking space per resident staff plus one space for every two other staff with one space for 6 residents. The car parking for a residential house in single family occupancy would be 2 parking spaces.

I therefore consider the car parking requirements to be similar between the two uses, providing the number and type of resident (child care) is limited by condition. The applicant should also provide a minimum of one secure cycle parking space, although there may be merit in providing additional spaces.

The car parking agreement with the publican opposite is to be welcomed, but given it can be terminated at a months' notice it can be considered as part of this application.

Neighbouring properties

Consultation was by way of the displaying of a site notice and 7 letters sent to surrounding properties with an overall expiry date of 3rd June 2022. 10 letters of objection were received making the following summarised comments;

- Anti-social behaviour
- Noise
- Rubbish
- Drug use
- Proximity to home to public house and shops
- Previous use was unsuitable with adequate supervision
- Property unsafe with balconies for children to climb onto
- Inadequate garden space for children
- Close proximity to busy road
- Unsuitable property and location for children's home
- House in need of maintenance and decoration
- Loss of privacy
- Parking
- The Prince of Orange Pub has not agreed to parking arrangement
- Lack of signage notifying of proposal

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

The proposal is for the change of use of the existing 6-bedroom single residential (C3 - Dwelling house) to small residential care home (C2 Use) for children between the ages of 8-17. The maximum number of children housed at any one time would be 4, on a long-term placement. In terms of the care arrangements, this would be in the form of 2no. non-resident care staff and a home manager working on a shift basis starting at 09:00 and finishing at 09.30 the following day. The home manager would work 09.00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday. No internal or external alterations are proposed, with the exception of minor garden works.

There are no on-site parking facilities, however the supporting planning statement states that the applicant has secured a parking agreement with the Prince of Orange Pub (located directly opposite the property) for use of 10 parking spaces. However, there is no evidence supporting this.

Site Description and Surroundings

The application site is defined on the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy Policies Map as lying in the urban area of Gravesend, located on the outskirts of the town centre.

The site is a 6-bed single residential dwelling which is currently vacant but was previously used as a semi-independent supported living for up to 5 young people under Use Class C3(b).

The property does not benefit from on-site parking.

The building is not listed and is not located within a conservation area.

The principal issues in the consideration of this application are:

- Housing Need and principle of development;
- Design and impact on the surrounding area and adjacent conservation area;
- Amenity of future occupiers;
- Amenity of neighbouring properties;
- Parking and highway safety; and
- Ecology and biodiversity.

Principle of Development

The application site lies within a predominantly residential area. Policy CS14 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) requires that the Council protects the mix of housing in the existing housing stock while also expecting new housing development to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes, taking into account the existing character of the area and evidence of local need to create sustainable and balanced communities.

The application site is a residential dwelling, however it has previously been operating as a semi-independent supported living for young people within the C3(b) use class.

The proposal would provide residential care home (C2 Use) for children between the ages of 8-17. The proximity of the site to the town centre, local amenities and public transport links is such that its sustainable location is acceptable in principle as per Policy CS01 (LPCS).

Whilst the proposal would not be a conversion of the building and just a change of use from C3 dwelling house to C2 residential supported living, it is important that the change of use of the building to provide more intensive occupation does not cause harm to the character and amenity of existing areas. Therefore Saved Policy H5 (LPFR) is still relevant.

Saved Policy H5 (LPFR) with regard to proposals for conversion of existing properties to provide flats states that the Borough Council will have regard for the following criteria;

- The building shall be in an appropriate area for conversion to flats maisonettes, bedsitters and multiple occupancy. Unless there are special or overriding circumstances, conversions will not normally be permitted in an area comprised for the most part of single family dwellings. Conversely conversions will not normally be permitted in areas which are environmentally unsuitable for young families and which already demonstrate a predominance of multiple occupation.*
- The building shall be of such a size and arrangement as to be generally unsuitable for single family occupation.*
- The proposal shall have regard to the Borough Council's Residential Layout Guidelines, as set out in supplementary planning guidance.*

(iv) The adopted Vehicle Parking Standards must be achieved wherever feasible.

Saved Policy H6 (LPFR) with regard to the provision to meet special housing needs states that the Borough Council will in principle support proposals in appropriate locations by Housing Associations, the private sector and other organisation which incorporate:-

(iii) With regard to proposals for residential hostels and homes, whether by new build or by conversion, the Borough Council will take particular care to ensure that these do not cluster together and harm the overall character of the area.

The property is currently vacant but its most previous use was a semi-independent supported living (Use C3(b)), within the C3 dwelling house use, within an area that is predominantly single family dwellings. Furthermore, being a 6-bedroom property, it is considered unsuitable for single family occupation. In addition, whilst the proposal is for the change of use from a C3 dwelling house to C2 residential supported living, the property is not being converted into self-contained units and as such would still operate as a single residential dwelling. Also, taking into consideration the predominantly single residential character of within the area, a wholly new type of use is not being introduced into the area. There is no clustering effect which may harm the overall character of the area. The property is located in a street predominantly consisting of single family dwellings. As such the character of the area is domestic, and the proposed change of use will not erode the domestic character of the area.

It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with saved Policies H5 and H6 of (LPFR), but also Policy CS14 (LPCS) which states sheltered housing and extra care housing for people with special needs will be supported on suitable sites in areas with access to a range of services that provide for the needs of future occupants.

The preamble to this policy in paragraph 5.10.7 states that while the Council will look to support the provision of housing to meet the requirements of people in special need of help or supervision, the use should not change the character of the area nor involve a loss of amenity to residents because of potential noise and disturbance it could create outside normal working hours.

Having regard to the above, it is concluded that the principle of the change of use of the property is acceptable.

Design and impact on the surrounding area

CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) sets out the design principles which will be taken into account when considering proposed redevelopment proposals. The policy requires new development to be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. In particular, the design of new development should be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character, make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area and integrate well into the surrounding area. At a national level the revised National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) in section 12 provides guidance on achieving well designed places.

There are no proposed alterations to either the front or rear elevations and as such there are no objections in terms of the impact of the proposal on the streetscene.

Existing Streetscene



In terms of design, the proposed development accords with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021).

Impact on Residential Amenity

Paragraph 130 of the revised NPPF (2021) seeks to ensure decisions “*create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future user*”.

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) seeks to ensure new development is located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land, new development should meet the requirements of the Nationally Prescribed Space Standards in terms of the size of the accommodation being provided based on the level of occupancy, bedroom size and building height and the adopted Residential Layout Guidelines in terms of the appropriate levels of private amenity space for future residents.

Future occupiers:

Internal living space

The current proposal seeks to provide supported accommodation for up to 4 children between the ages of 8-17 and three members of staff. The proposal does not include any conversion of the property. The existing bedrooms, ‘2’, ‘3’, ‘4’ and ‘5’, as shown on the proposed floor plans, exceed the minimum prescribed space standards for double rooms. The two remaining bedrooms will be used as a staff bedroom and store.

Therefore the proposal would provide a good standard of internal living space for future occupants and as such complies with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021).

In terms of private amenity space, the existing external areas in total measures 94.07m² which falls short of the 100m² minimum for a 4+ bedroom property. There are no extensions proposed that would alter the size of the garden and the amount of bedrooms would remain. Whilst it is acknowledged that the garden area is deficient, this would be the case if the property would remain within the C3 Use Class, and it is not considered that the proposed use of residential accommodation for children would significantly alter this position. In addition, the property is located within a short walk from Windmill Hill Park and Gardens, as

well as other open spaces being within close proximity.

Neighbours amenities:

The existing property is a 6-bedroom residential property which has the potential to house up to 10 persons due to four of the bedrooms being of double room size. The proposed use would provide accommodation for up to 7 people (4 residents and 3 staff members). There are no elevational changes proposed that would have an impact on the surrounding properties.

In terms of occupancy and a potential intensification of use, the existing dwelling is a 6-bedroom property and as a result of the proposal would remain as a 6 bedroom property, but with only 4 bedrooms being used for children and one bedroom for staff occupation. Overall, and taking into account the existing built form of both the application site and the surrounding buildings, it is considered that there will be no loss of outlook, daylight or sunlight to any neighbouring property and therefore complies with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021) in this regard.

Waste Collection

The existing waste provision and collection would remain unaltered, with the property being able to use kerbside collection. There is no objection to this arrangement and therefore the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and Highways

In terms of highways, the existing property does not benefit from off road parking. The KCC Parking Standards requires 3 parking spaces for a 4+ bedroom residential property, therefore the existing property does not accord with these standards. The proposal would not result in a change in the number of bedrooms at the property. The ages of the residents would be between the ages of 8-17 and therefore unlikely that parking provision would be required. The number of staff proposed is three members of staff working on a shift basis and therefore the maximum number of parking required would be 3. Due to the proximity of the property to the town, local services and public transport, it is possible that staff may not rely on a personal vehicle to travel. It is therefore considered that the parking provision for the existing and the proposed use would be the same and therefore there is no objection to the proposed change of use in this regard.

The GBC Highways Officer raised no objections to the proposal subject to a condition of maximum occupation and for secure and weatherproof cycle storage be provided for a minimum of one space in the interests of sustainable transport. It is considered a condition would be included relating to cycle storage.

Subject to conditions, in respect of parking and highways the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS11 (LPCS) and saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Other Material Considerations

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

Comments have been received referring to the level of crime and anti-social behaviour associated with the property's previous use and concerns have been raised over the potential anti-social behaviour from the proposed use.

The Kent Police Designing Out Crime Officer was consulted on this application and no objections were raised, however it was suggested that the boundary treatments be 1.8m in height with the gates lockable from both sides and security cameras installed at the main entrance. An informative will be added to the application to encourage engagement with Kent Police in this regard.

Taking into account the number and age of the proposed residents, together with the number of staff permanently on site, there are no objections in terms of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal would accord to local and national planning policy and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation:

Permission

See draft Decision

Case Officer:	Mrs Amanda Grout	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>A Grout</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	16 th June 2022	Dated:	16th June 2022