



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250846

Location: Sunnyside Valley Drive Gravesend Kent

Description: Alterations to front boundary wall, fence and gates.

Applicant: Dr and Mr C Ahmad

Site Visit Date: 05 November 2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Drawing no. 2055 Bloc 1 Block plan;
Drawing no. 2055 Loc 1 Location plan;
Drawing no. 2055 Ex 1 Existing layout and elevations;
Drawing no. 2055 Pro 1RC Proposed layout and elevations; and
Letter from the agent dated 20 August 2025.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. 2055 Pro 1R Proposed layout and elevations.~~

Procedural Issues

Following the receipt of comments from KCC Highways & Transportation, the applicant amended the proposed layout and elevations. KCC Highways & Transportation were re-consulted regarding the amended details but due to the limited nature of the alterations, no additional publicity was undertaken.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230881	Retention of front boundary wall, with the associated railings and two sliding gates.	Refused	03.10.2024
20030828	Erection of a shed on existing hardstanding in the rear garden.	Refused	11.11.2003
20030159	Retention of front boundary wall with pillars varying in height from 1040mm to 1048mm and south boundary wall measuring 2070mm in height. Retention of the hard standing area in the rear garden.	Permitted Refused Split decision	28.04.2003
20020352	Erection of two storey front and side extensions; part two storey, part single storey rear extension and first floor side extension to form dining room, kitchen, family room, 2 bedrooms, en-suite bathroom/w.c., cloakroom and porch	Permitted	24.06.2002

	at ground floor level with 4 enlarged bedrooms, 2 en-suite shower room/w.c.'s, bedroom and bathroom/w.c. at first floor level.		
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Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- 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 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- 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
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2025)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC Highways & Transportation

Response received 11 November 2025:

Pedestrian visibility splays measuring 2.0m x 2.0m should be provided either side of the access, with no obstructions above a height of 0.6m. The submitted plans show that a brick wall with piers is to be installed, however, this must be kept to below 0.6m within the splays

Subject to the above and provided the following requirements are secured by condition or planning obligation, I can confirm that I would raise no objection on behalf of the local highway authority:-

- Provision and maintenance of 2m x 2m pedestrian visibility splays behind the footway on both sides of the access with no obstructions over 0.6m above footway level, prior to the use of the site commencing.
- Use of a bound surface for the first 5 metres of the access from the edge of the highway.
- Provision of measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway.

Planning permission does not convey any approval for construction of the required vehicular crossing, or any other works within the highway for which a statutory licence must be obtained. Applicants should contact Kent County Council - Highways and Transportation (web:www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport.aspx or telephone: 03000 418181) in order to obtain the necessary Application Pack.

[The rest of the response is the same as that received on 19 September 2025 from 'It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.']

Response received 19 September 2025:

Having reviewed the documents we welcome the removal of the second gate as suggested in the previous pre-planning report which will improve the safety to pedestrians and reduce highway impacts, we have no objections to this aspect of the application.

However reviewing the plan with regards to the remaining gate, the pedestrian visibility splays of 2m x 2m are required on either side of the access. Whilst pedestrian splays have been shown on the proposed plans, these have been drawn incorrectly on the proposed plan and a revised plan should be submitted.

Pedestrian splays should be drawn behind the footway on both sides of the access, with no obstructions over 0.6m above footway level, within the splays. To ensure that the required pedestrian visibility can be achieved, any walls/vegetation either side of the access must be under 0.6m high.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and->

[technical-guidance](#)

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-information>

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and to six neighbouring properties by letter. One representation (objecting) has been received and is summarised as follows;

- The current walls/gates are causing danger to the highway and pedestrians by restricting visibility.
- The walls should be lowered to 0.6 metres in height.
- Planning permission was refused for the gates/walls but they are being used.

Officer's Analysis

Background

The application site is currently under investigation by the Planning Enforcement Team for the erection of a front boundary wall, railings and two sliding gates without planning permission. This application is an attempt to regularise the unauthorised development.

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF 2023) sets out various design requirements and includes the need for the development to add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF 2023 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

In relation to front garden boundary treatments, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) and the GBC Front Driveway Design Guidance 2023 set out that they should;

- Respond to the design of the dwelling;
- Be consistent with the height of other enclosures on the road;
- Avoid the introduction of different styles along the street. Treatments should reinforce the dominant boundary type along the street, ensuring consistency with the style and age of the property;
- Consider well-maintained planting as an alternative solution and retain any hedgerow;
- Encourage natural surveillance of the street and help design out crime;
- Incorporate visibility splays and sight lines for pedestrian and vehicular safety;
- Hedges are also encouraged given their air quality benefits

The proposed development would result in the retention of part of the existing front boundary treatment, comprised of brick walls and metal railings. The existing wall/railings have a height of between 1.7 and 2.4 metres, include four piers topped with concrete coping stones and the railings are painted black. The existing gates would be amended with the northern gate being removed and replaced with a wall and railings to match existing. The gate located on the southern side would be set back 6 metres into the application site. Parts of the existing wall/railings/piers would be demolished (leaving two piers) and new brick walls/railings would be built on the northern side of the retained access opening and adjacent to the new gate on the southern side.

The front boundary treatments in the area surrounding the application site are mainly characterised by low walls and vegetation. Although Woodside, Valley Drive (the adjacent property to the south) and Glendale (the adjacent property to the north) have a metal railings/gates/walls. In addition, Woodlands, Valley Lane (located further to the south) also has a metal gate/wall arrangement.

The wall and railings are, and will be, constructed from good quality materials and although harsh and urban in appearance, do not appear significantly out of character with the surrounding area.

The application site is located in the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 is relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications. In relation to the Higham Arable Farmlands LCA, this document states that the overall condition of the landscape is poor and that it has moderate sensitivity. It recommends that the key landscape elements in poor condition should be restored and that the whole area should be safeguarded as a prominent landscape feature in the wider landscape.

The application site is located in an existing urban area and the proposed development would be within a residential curtilage. The proposal would result in a small increase in the amount of built development in the locality but would not adversely affect the landscape character of the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design and would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of existing building or the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and broadly in line with the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would not adversely impact upon the private amenity space or internal layout of the application property or the privacy, daylight or sunlight of its occupants. As such, the proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of future occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the design of the proposed development and to the layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surrounding dwellings. As such, the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Parking and Highways

Paragraph 114(b) of the NPPF 2023 requires new development to ensure that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users and paragraph 115 sets out that development should only be refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) requires new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

Saved Policy T1 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) sets out that the impact on the transport system and environment of traffic generated by new development will be considered and Saved Policy T5 requires new accesses to be in an acceptable location and to an acceptable standard and to not give rise to danger.

The KCC Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2025) 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) and 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.

Valley Drive is an unnumbered classified road (sometimes known as a C Class road) with a speed limit of 30 miles per hour. There are no parking or waiting restrictions in the section where the application site is located. The road is well trafficked and forms part of a major link between Gravesend Town Centre and the A2. According to Crashmap data, there have been two slight vehicle incidents in the vicinity of the application site since 2020.

The proposed boundary wall/railings at the application site abut the back edge of the footway with a maximum height of some 2.4 metres and the proposed gate would be set back 6 metres with visibility splays provided on either side.

The comments of a local resident are noted.

KCC Highways & Transportation initially raised concerns regarding pedestrian visibility but following the receipt of amended plans, they do not raise an objection to the proposal. Conditions can be attached to any planning permission granted to ensure the provision and retention of the proposed visibility splays and the completion of the works within four months (because the existing unauthorised development is detrimental to highway safety).

Although KCC Highways & Transportation have also requested conditions requiring the use of a bound surface and the provision of measures to prevent surface water discharge, it is considered that these conditions would be unreasonable because this application relates to the alteration of the front boundary treatment only.

The proposed gate would encroach on part of an existing frontage parking area but it would appear that sufficient space would be retained to enable vehicles to manoeuvre and park.

Overall, the proposed development would not be detrimental to highway safety and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, Saved Policies T1 and T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), the KCC Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2025) and the GBC Front Driveway Design Guidance 2023.

Suggested Conditions

Completion of works within 4 months

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Materials to match existing

Provision and retention of visibility splays

No additional walls or gates

Conclusion

The proposal would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

Recommendation

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	19 November 2025	Dated:	20 th November 2025