

PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT 107 VALE ROAD

For:

GRAVESHAM COUNCIL

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PLANNING REPORT

**ON: 107 VALE ROAD,
NORTHFLEET, GRAVESEND, KENT
DA11 8DB**

FOR: GRAVESHAM COUNCIL

**FRANKHAM PROJECT NO.:
70070402**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Frankham Projects to support a detailed planning application submitted to Gravesham Borough Council for the demolition of the existing detached single storey dwelling and the erection of a replacement dwelling.

1.2 Full planning permission is sought for the following proposal:

"The demolition of the existing single storey, detached dwellinghouse and the erection of a replacement two storey dwellinghouse, with vehicle parking, cycle storage, refuse storage, an air source heat pump (ASHP) and all associated works"

1.3 This planning statement appraises the scheme within the context of the planning policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Development Plan. It is set out as follows:

- Section 2 describes the site and surroundings.
- Section 3 provides an overview of the proposed development.
- Section 4 summarises the relevant national and local planning policies.
- Section 5 assesses the scheme against the relevant national and local planning policies with regards to the key planning considerations including the principle of the development, design, residential amenity, highways, and environmental matters; and
- Section 6 draws together the conclusions.

1.4 This planning statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents and drawings which form part of the overall planning application submission:

- Application Form
- Site Location Plan
- Drawing Pack
- Noise Assessment
- Shadow Analysis
- Daylight and Sunlight Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Drainage Statement
- Energy Statement
- BNG Metric

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.2 The application site, 107 Vale Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, DA11 8DB. The site is located on the north-eastern side of Vale Road and relates to a detached, single storey dwellinghouse.
- 2.3 The site is located approximately 1.9 miles from Gravesend Town Centre, which exists to the north-east of the application site. Northfleet train station exists 1.2 miles to the north-west of the application site and Ebbsfleet International exists 1.3 miles to the north-west of the application site.
- 2.4 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character. Northfleet Technology College exists to the south-west of the site and Kent Police Station exists to the north-west of the site.
- 2.5 The surrounding area comprises predominantly two storey, semi-detached dwellings however it is noted that the street scene is varied in character.
- 2.6 The application site is not within a Conservation Area, is not a listed building and the site is not within the vicinity of any designated or non-designated heritage assets.
- 2.7 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low level risk of flooding).

Planning History:

- 2.8 *PRE20240063 – 107 Vale Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent, DA11 8DB – Proposal for single storey extension and loft conversion, to produce a 4-bedroom property and two additional off-street parking spaces to the front of the property.*

A pre-application enquiry was submitted earlier this year, with the advice issued on 3rd June 2024 and a site meeting held on 18th April 2024. A summary of the written response received in relation to this enquiry is included below:

Design, character and appearance:

The creation of a two-storey development would be acceptable and would not have a harmful impact on the character of the street scene. The roof extension proposed was also considered to be acceptable. The use of dormer windows were well positioned and were deemed acceptable.

Amenity of future occupants:

The internal space provided was substandard in some areas, requiring some reconfiguration. It is noted that windows on the side elevation of the neighbouring property would not result in overlooking due to the position of the rear extension, which is welcomed.

Neighbouring Amenity:

The Officer's report states that the shadow analysis submitted demonstrates that the development would not result in any loss of light for the side elevation windows of no. 105 Vale Road. The information submitted in support of this pre-app was deemed to be robust, covering each seasonal equinox and as such clearly shows no adverse impact on loss of light and overshadowing. However, it was highlighted that if the windows in question do serve habitable rooms, there would be an unacceptable impact by way of sense of enclosure and loss of outlook.

Highways and Parking:

It was recommended that to provide the required visibility splays, a single car driveway could be provided. Justification for the under-provision of off-street parking would be required.

Design Revisions:

- 2.9 This planning application was originally submitted in December 2024. Since then, constructive engagement between the applicant and the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has led to a series of design revisions, resulting in an enhanced proposal that better responds to the character and constraints of the local area.
- 2.10 The key design changes include a reduction in the scale of the proposed first-floor projection, aimed at ensuring the development maintains an acceptable relationship with neighbouring residential amenity. Additionally, the building footprint has been shifted southward, providing improved separation and relief for the property to the north. Internal modifications have been made to deliver a more efficient layout, with minor adjustments to the roof form and the provision of front-facing roof lights for enhanced internal daylight and sunlight.
- 2.11 Through collaborative dialogue with the LPA, the scheme has evolved into a high-quality, policy-compliant development.

3.0 THE PROPOSALS

3.1 Full planning permission is sought for the following:

"The demolition of the existing single storey, detached dwellinghouse and the erection of a replacement two storey dwellinghouse, with vehicle parking, cycle storage, refuse storage, an air source heat pump (ASHP) and all associated works"

- 3.2 The proposal involves the demolition of the existing single-storey dwelling on the site. The current building is not considered to reflect the prevailing pattern of development in the area, which is predominantly characterised by two-storey properties. Furthermore, the existing structure is not of notable architectural quality. Therefore, its removal would not detract from the character of the area. The introduction of a replacement dwelling presents an opportunity to deliver a development that is more in keeping with the surrounding context.
- 3.3 The proposed development comprises the construction of a two-storey dwelling with level access. The main roof will feature a pitched-roof design, complemented by a single-storey rear projection with a flat roof. Additional accommodation is proposed within the loft space, facilitated by a dormer to the rear.
- 3.4 A single car parking space would be provided to the front of the dwelling, a garden would be retained to the rear and refuse and recycling provision would be provided to the front of the dwelling.
- 3.5 Pre-application advice was sought under reference PRE20240063. Following this, the scheme was revised to propose the erection of a replacement dwelling rather than an extension to the existing building. This revised approach is considered to offer the most effective means of addressing the concerns raised during the pre-application process while also optimising the development potential of the site.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 This section provides a summary of the national and local development plan policies against which the application will be assessed. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

- 4.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF contains national policy on a range of topic areas including decision-taking, viability, affordable housing, design, open space and the economy. The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' remains the central tenet of the NPPF.
- 4.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that decision makers should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay or where plans are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 4.5 The NPPF refers specifically to the need to boost the supply of homes and that land with planning permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

- 4.6 Chapter 8 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles.
- 4.7 Chapter 9 of the NPPF highlights the requirement to consider transport issues from the earliest stages of development proposals and to ensure that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and the use of public transport are identified. The NPPF also notes that maximum parking standards for residential should only be set where there is clear and compelling justification that they are necessary.
- 4.8 Chapter 11 of the NPPF sets out policies for Making Effective Use of Land. Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Paragraph 129 considers achieving appropriate densities by taking into account:
- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it.
 - b) local market conditions and viability.
 - c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use.
 - d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
 - e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
- 4.9 The NPPF also highlights the importance of achieving well designed places, which function well and add to the overall quality of the area or the long term. Developments should also be sympathetic to local character including landscape setting and the built environment. It also states the need to enhance the natural environment including protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and biodiversity. Chapter 14 of the NPPF highlights the need to ensure that development contributes towards the government’s targets for a low carbon future.

Planning Practice Guidance (2024)

- 4.10 The PPG is published by Government to provide further detailed guidance on the application of policies set out in the NPPF.

The Development Plan

- 4.11 The current adopted development plan comprises the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), the Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994). The Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) was replaced by the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy (2014). In September 2007, the Secretary of State issued a direction on policies to be saved and deleted. The saved policies are listed in Appendix 1 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
- T5 – Access to the Identified Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Chapter 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Chapter 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design for Gravesham Design Code SPD (May 2024)
- SPG2 – Residential layout guidelines including housing standards policy statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 (June 2020)
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standards (2015)
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)

5.0 **ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The following section assesses the scheme against the NPPF, the relevant Development Plan policies as well as any material considerations. The key planning considerations are also considered in detail.

Principle of development

- 5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF) supports the delivery of sufficient homes to meet current housing needs.
- 5.3 As set out at paragraph 11 of the NPPF (2024), there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which sets out that planning permission for development proposals involving the provision of new housing should be granted, unless, in line with the requirements of paragraph 11(d):
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.
- 5.4 Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Core Strategy (2014) states that development is prioritised in the urban area as a sustainable location for development.
- 5.5 Furthermore, the Core Strategy notes that new housing should meet and exceed targets and be provided in sustainable locations, close to existing facilities and by reusing brownfield sites (Strategic Objective 1). Policy CS02 states the need for at least 438 dwellings per year between 2024-2028.
- 5.6 The proposal relates to the demolition of a building which is currently a vacant dwellinghouse and the erection of a replacement dwelling which will provide a more appropriate, larger family dwelling on a currently under-developed residential site. Given the established use of the site, the principle of residential development on the site is acceptable.
- 5.7 In this instance, the application site is not subject to any designation, as detailed on the Council's policy map, the site exists within an existing urban area. The location is sustainable, and the existing residential use of the site demonstrates the suitability of the site for residential development.
- 5.8 Considering this, the principle of intensified residential development on this site should be considered acceptable, subject to an appropriate assessment of all other planning considerations.

Design

- 5.9 The NPPF states that the creation of a high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places

is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve (Chapter 12 – para 131). Paragraph 135 states further that planning decision should ensure that developments are:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) 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 users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

5.10 Paragraph 139 goes on to state that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

5.11 Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy (2014) seeks to establish that new housing development is expected to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes, taking account of the existing character of the area.

5.12 Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well-designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

5.13 Design Principle 5.9 of the Design for Gravesham SPD (May 2024) sets out that new development must respond sensitively to the prevailing pattern and intervals of existing development to reflect the grain and existing character of an area.

5.14 Design Principle 5.10 of the SPD sets out that new infill development must not exceed the existing building height levels of adjacent plots. Design Principle 5.15 of the SPD highlights the importance of responding to a prevailing roof form whilst Principle 5.16 sets out that elevation design must respond to the scale and proportion of the surrounding character.

5.15 Design Principle 5.17 of the SPD states that development must be sympathetic to the materials,

colours, patterns and texture of existing developments.

- 5.16 The existing building on the site is a single storey detached dwelling, which is not characteristic of the street scene of Vale Road and is not of architectural significance. In this regard, the demolition of this building would not be harmful to the established character of the area. The demolition presents an opportunity for a design enhancement which could positively contribute to the character of the surrounding area, providing a more appropriate development for the site. The pre-application response received in June 2023 confirmed support for the provision of a two-storey development at the site, given that this would relate appropriately to the surrounding street character. Subsequently, discussions with the LPA have resulted in agreement on the design approach, with Officer support achieved.
- 5.17 The submitted elevations show that the development would be set down in height from 109 Vale Road to the south-east and would be a similar height to no.105 Vale Road to the north. This would ensure that the development would be of an appropriate scale within the street scene.
- 5.18 Given the mixed character of the street scene in this location, the design approach selected is in keeping with the general character of the area and would appear as an appropriate form of development.
- 5.19 The soft and hard landscaping proposed would ensure an appropriate appearance for the development within the street scene which is welcomed.

Residential Amenity

- 5.20 The NPPF (2024) at paragraph 135 (f) states that planning decisions should aim to secure high standards of amenity for all existing and future users.
- 5.21 Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy (2014) states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard residential amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land.
- 5.22 The residential layout guidelines SPG (2020) states that all planning applications for new dwellings must comply with the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines.

Future Occupiers:

- 5.23 The development complies with the relevant space standards providing a high quality of accommodation for future occupants.
- 5.24 All habitable rooms would receive good levels of daylight and sunlight and would have appropriate outlook. All habitable rooms would not be subject to harmful overlooking. On this basis, it is considered that the development would provide an acceptable quality of accommodation for future occupiers.

Neighbouring Properties:

- 5.25 The development would preserve the residential amenity enjoyed by neighbouring owners/occupiers. During pre-application discussions, it was highlighted that the development

would be sited close to no. 105 Vale Road and would result in loss of outlook and sense of enclosure for the first-floor windows on the side elevation of this property. To address these concerns, a daylight and sunlight assessment has been submitted for this application alongside a shadow analysis. Furthermore, design revisions have been made since the pre-application proposal.

- 5.26 The daylight and sunlight assessment which accompanies this application demonstrates that the development has an acceptable impact on daylight and sunlight for neighbouring properties. The report highlights the overall compliance of the scheme with BRE guidelines and is supportive of the proposal. It is recognised that the existing situation on site does result in some existing fails, as such the report demonstrates that the proposed development would result in some minor fails however this is typical of such schemes. Mitigation measures are also detailed within this report which demonstrates the overall compliance of the scheme. This assessment was made on a previous design revision which proposed a larger development, the development now proposed provides further relief and an improved impact on neighbouring properties. The proposed development has been carefully designed to ensure the property to the north is not subject to loss of daylight and sunlight, nor an unacceptable impact on outlook.
- 5.27 On this basis, the development provides a proposal which relates well to the surrounding development and would not cause any unacceptable harm.

Noise

- 5.28 A noise impact assessment accompanies this application and demonstrates that the impact of the development in terms of noise would have an acceptable impact, provided that an appropriate acoustic enclosure is provided. The noise and vibration generated by the air source heat pump proposed would be appropriately mitigated by the inclusion of an enclosure. The development is acceptable in this regard.

Transport

- 5.29 Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy (2014) states that new developments should mitigate their impact on the highway and public transport networks as required. Sufficient parking should be required for new development, in accordance with parking standards, which will reflect the availability of alternative means of transport and accessibility to services and facilities.
- 5.30 Policy T1 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review Saved and Deleted Policies Version (September 2014) states that the Local Planning Authority will consider the impact of the development on the transport system and on traffic generation to ensure that developments are adequately served by the highway network.
- 5.31 Policy T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review Saved and Deleted Policies Version (September 2014) states that the formation of new access or the intensification of existing accesses will not be permitted if they increase road danger.
- 5.32 Policy P5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review Saved and Deleted Policies Version (September 2014) states that in considering applications for the change of use of a building, the sub-division of existing dwellings or minor extensions, the Borough Council will seek to ensure that vehicle parking standards are met. However, if harmful to the townscape or resulting in a building being

unused, the Council may consider a relaxation of these standards, provided this does not exacerbate on street parking.

- 5.33 The existing site does not benefit from any off-street parking provision currently. The proposed development would provide a single parking space. It was highlighted in the pre-application enquiry that the provision of two parking spaces would not include visibility splays as such the driveway proposed under the pre-application enquiry would not have complied with relevant Kent County Council Highways dropped kerb guidance. In this context the provision of two parking spaces would not be acceptable and give rise to highway concerns. The pre-application response highlighted that it could be possible to provide amendments to the proposal, showing a single car driveway, to achieve required visibility splays. The Officer highlighted that sufficient justification should be provided for this approach.
- 5.34 The development proposed includes a single parking space with appropriate visibility splays. The parking provision proposed would comply with the dropped kerb guidance produced by Kent County Council and would not result in any highway safety concerns. In this regard, the proposed driveway accommodates the maximum number of cars possible whilst not raising highway safety concerns. It should be noted that the development will be for social housing, this benefit of the scheme should be considered when weighing up the benefit of the development. It is noted that this approach had been supported by KCC Highways in previous consultations.
- 5.35 A Highway Note has been submitted in support of this application which justifies the impact of the development on the highway network and demonstrates that the impact would be acceptable.
- 5.36 The application site is located 1.2 miles from Northfleet train station which exists to the north-west of the application site and Ebbsfleet International exists 1.3 miles to the north-west of the application site. The site exists a 3-minute walk from the closest bus stop which has services towards Gravesend. Overall, it is recognised that the site is within a sustainable location with access to public transport.
- 5.37 The proposed development will provide a cycle store to the rear of the building, providing cycle parking for the proposed occupants of the dwelling.

Refuse and Recycling

- 5.38 Gravesham Core Strategy Policy CS19 states that new development will incorporate appropriate facilities for the storage and recycling of waste.
- 5.39 The proposed development will provide a bin store by the front of the dwelling allowing easy access on collection days.

Drainage & Flood Risk

- 5.40 Policy CS18 of the Gravesham Core Strategy states that proposals in areas at risk of flooding must be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (in accordance with national policy and Environment Agency stating guidance as appropriate).
- 5.41 Policy CS18 also states that the Council will also seek to minimise the impact of drainage from new development on waste water systems. Surface water run-off from all new development should have a minimum no greater adverse impact than the existing use, additionally sustainable

drainage systems on all developments should be technically and financially viable.

- 5.42 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1, as such the site is not at risk of flooding. On this basis, a flood risk assessment is not required.
- 5.43 A drainage impact assessment has been submitted in support of this application. This demonstrates that the site can be adequately drained and is sustainable in terms of flood risk and that the proposal will not increase flood risk to other properties.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The proposed development provides an opportunity for the provision of an enhanced residential development, which will provide more appropriate residential accommodation and bring a vacant building back into use. Additionally, given the existing design of the development, the proposal would provide an enhanced design which would allow for a development which is more in keeping with the character of the street scene. The design of the development is therefore considered to be appropriate.
- 6.2 The proposed development has been designed carefully to provide an acceptable impact for neighbouring residential properties and future occupiers. The impact on the local highway network, bin provision and biodiversity values is considered to be acceptable.
- 6.3 Since the pre-app discussions, the development has evolved to propose a new build development, as opposed to extensions to an existing building. The pre-application enquiry established the acceptability of a two-storey development in this location. The development has been amended to overcome concerns raised and is the most appropriate approach to development in this location. Following the initial planning submission, the applicant has engaged proactively with the LPA to provide a development which will be wholly acceptable and policy compliant, providing the best possible development for the site.
- 6.4 It is considered that the development proposed is acceptable in principle and complies with all relevant planning considerations, planning permission should therefore be granted in accordance with any planning conditions deemed necessary.