



Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260356

Location: Port Of London Authority London River House Royal Pier Road Gravesend

Description: Provision of a pedestrian access gate.

Applicant: Mr Michael Atkins

Site Visit Date: 01.05.2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 600-PLA-01-LRH-DR-0010 Rev. P04 (General Arrangement Staff/Visitor Car Park Pedestrian Access Gate;
- Planning Statement, Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement;
- Flood Risk Assessment.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220149	Removal of existing mesh from two existing arches, infilling of all (5 no.) existing arches with railings, installation of mechanically operated sliding security gate to under-croft on West elevation, removal of existing hand railing and installation of infill railing panels on South elevation and installation of 2 no. pedestrian security gates to under-croft on South elevation.	Permitted	22.03.2022
20180400	Installation of two mesh panels over two existing arches serving the car park area; one on the south elevation and the other one on the east elevation, of the building.	Permitted	06.08.2018

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas

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.

Other material considerations

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 – Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020
- Gravesend Riverside Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009);
- Management Plan Gravesend Town Centre Conservation Areas (2009).

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Paragraph 48 of the Framework makes it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. An emerging Local Plan, does not form part of the Development. The Framework, at Paragraph 49 allows local planning authorities to give weight to relevant policies in emerging Local Plans, according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the Framework, the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to those policies.

West Oxfordshire District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government & Rosconn Strategic Land Ltd [2018] EWHC 3065 (Admin) is a High Court judgement that deals with the weight to be given to a Regulation 19 Local Plan. In this judgement the Court found that the weight to be given to an emerging Local Plan, was a matter of planning judgement, which had to be reached having fully considered the relevant part (Paragraph 49) of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan, is in the process of being consulted upon (it has reached Regulation 19 stage), the Council is not yet aware of whether third parties will support or object to specific policies within the Plan, or whether they will consider the policies with the emerging Local Plan to be broadly sound and consistent with the NPPF (2024). Taking this into consideration, one can only conclude that at this stage of the process, **limited (i.e. minimal) weight should be afforded to the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan**. This position would only change once the emerging Local Plan has progressed towards submission and examination, with the Council being fully aware of policies that are subject to unresolved objections and with knowledge of policies that have had their soundness and conformity against the Framework challenged.

This approach accords with the approach taken in a separate High Court case, Gladman Developments Ltd v SSHCLG & Corby Borough Council; & Uttlesford DC [2020] EWHC 518 (Admin) and Court of



Appeal [2021] EWCA Civ 104, which was also the subject of a Court of Appeal Ruling [2021] EWCA Civ 104.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Environment Agency

We have **no objection** to the proposed development.

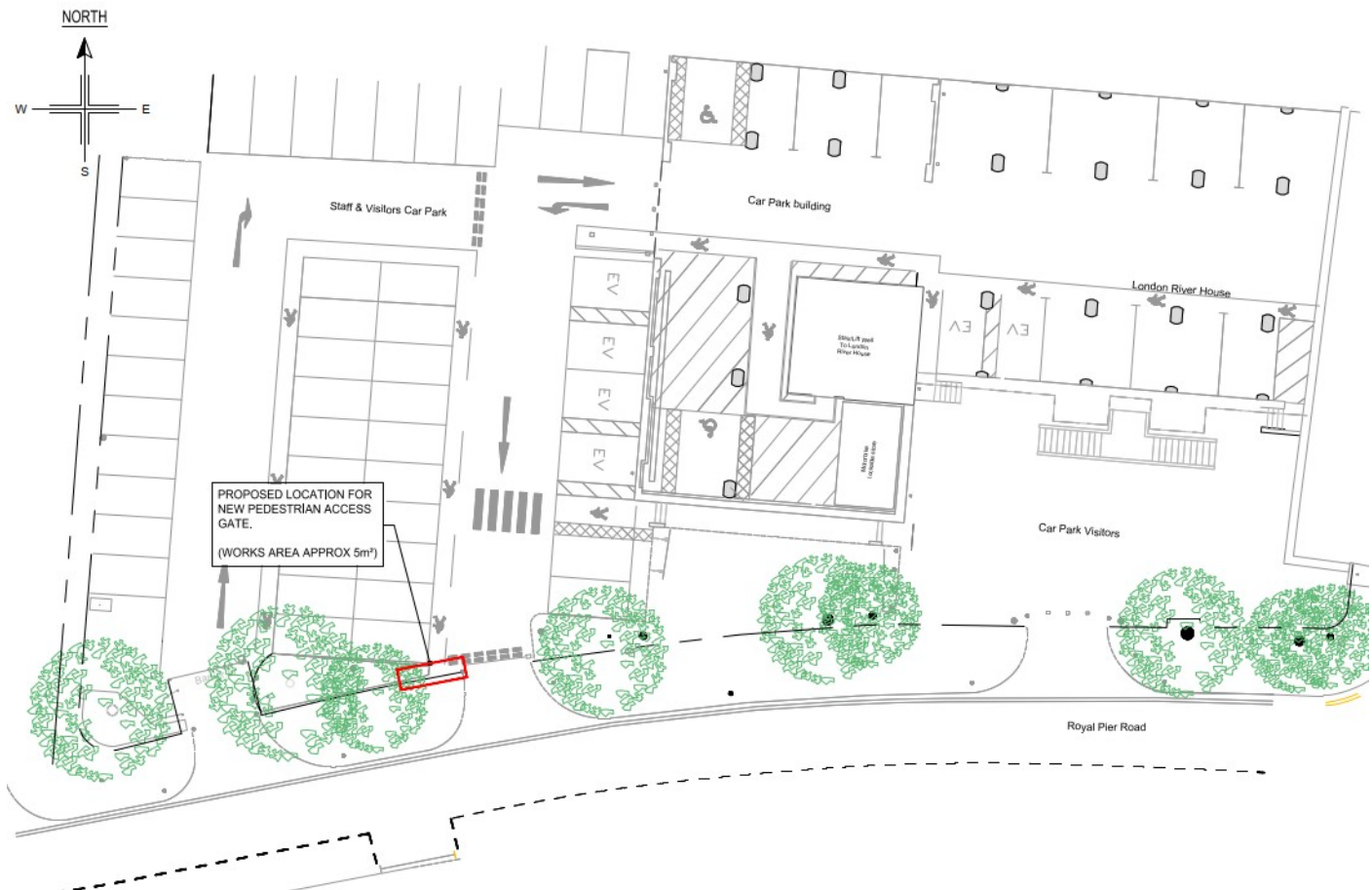
As confirmed in the submission, the proposed installation of a pedestrian access gate does not interfere with the flood wall or access to the wall at this location. The flood wall is located to the south of Royal Pier Road, and forms a privately owned tidal flood defence asset, and as such the proposed new pedestrian access gate would not interfere with this flood defence.

Neighbouring properties

4 surrounding properties were consulted as well as site and press notices – overall consultation expiry period was 22.05.2026 – no comments received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of a small area of the 1.8m high steel fencing along Royal Pier Road at its west end just to the west of the vehicular access into the staff and visitor car park as follows:



The site is in the Riverside Conservation Area and Flood Zone 3.

It is proposed to replace a 1.8m section of this existing fencing with a pedestrian access gate with two posts either side and then a smaller width of railings and post to the right of this. It will be powder coated in a black finish to match the existing fencing.

This is following a review of the pedestrian access points for staff into and out of the London River House complex, both while construction works are ongoing in relation to the overall Port Control Centre development and once the Port Control Centre development is completed. It has been determined that an additional access point is required for staff, visitor and contractor access to enter/exit the facility, particularly to ensure there is an adequate amount of safe pedestrian access points during a fire evacuation procedure at the LRH facility. This is based on a recent assessment of fire risk procedures for the LRH complex for staff, visitors and contractors exiting the site as part of a fire evacuation.

The principle issues in the consideration of this application are:

Design, Character and Appearance including Heritage

The pedestrian access gate would be extremely minimalist and discreet and would essentially as the same design and appearance as the existing fencing i.e. with the same width between the railings and to the same height. The only difference would be the three posts which are proposed, the hinges of the gate and the access swipe panel on one of the posts. It is considered that the gate would match in very well in respect of the existing railings and it would not harm the appearance of London River House and would preserve the character and appearance of the Riverside Conservation Area.

Neighbouring Amenity

As the gate would be the same height and design as the existing fencing it would cause no harm to the amenity of the neighbouring properties opposite in Royal Pier Road. In respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Flooding

The site is in Flood Zone 3, the application is accompanied by a document stating that whilst London River House is located within an area at risk of flooding, it is protected by a flood defence wall, no structural alterations are proposed to the building and the construction works and the completed development would not interfere with the flood defence wall or access to the wall in any way. It therefore concludes that the applicant the PLA considers that a formal flood risk assessment is not required for this application. The Environment Agency have been consulted on this proposal, and they advise that they have no objections as it is confirmed in the submission that the proposed installation of a pedestrian access gate would not interfere with the flood wall or access to the wall at this location. The EA states that the flood wall is located to the south of Royal Pier Road, and forms a privately owned tidal flood defence asset, and as such the proposed new pedestrian access gate would not interfere with this flood defence. As such, it is considered that in respect of flooding the proposal is compliant with Policy CS18 (LPCS).

Parking and Highways

The proposed gate would not alter any of the existing parking provision in the car park. As such in respect of parking and highways the proposal is considered compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion

The proposed gate is considered acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance and would preserve the character and appearance of the Riverside Conservation Area, would be acceptable in respect

of neighbouring amenity, flooding and parking and highways. It is therefore compliant with local and national planning policy. Given the detail of the drawing which has been submitted and supporting application form and Planning Statement, Heritage Statement and Design and Access Statement it is considered no further details of the fencing are required by condition should permission be forthcoming.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Richard Hat
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	16th June 2026	Dated:	17th June 2026