

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230846

Location: 62 Windmill Street Gravesend Kent

Description: Alteration of a window to a door on north elevation in connection with repositioning of the entrance to flat 3.

Applicant: Quota Ltd

Site Visit Date: 30 August 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- OS Plan;
- Drawing no. 23-1433-01B – Existing and Proposed; and
- Drawing no. 23-1433-02 – Existing and Proposed Block Plan.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

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

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

No response from:

- GBC Conservation Officer

Neighbouring properties

64 surrounding properties were consulted plus site and press notices with an overall expiry date of 22.09.2023 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of former Milton Hall a detached building situated on the eastern side of Windmill Street. It is located in the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area.

The principle issue in the consideration of this application is the impact on the character and appearance of the building and whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area.

Design, Character and Appearance including Heritage

Milton Hall consists of a mid-19th century former music hall (1859 is painted in the front arch of the building). It is situated in the upper part of Windmill Street where there are a number of fine buildings in the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area of varying ages and styles. In the immediate area there are buildings dating from the Georgian period and the first half of the 19th century as well as some mid 20th century buildings opposite. This upper part of Windmill Street particularly developed to meet the demands for accommodation and leisure pursuits of tourists when Gravesend became popular as a resort in the first half of the 19th century; Milton Hall being one such leisure pursuit. Despite a modern shopfront and white render applied to the building, it still retains many original features externally such as the corinthian pilasters and round headed treatment of the frontage together with doric pilasters, decorative frieze and deeply recessed round headed window architraves. On the north elevation there is a row of four windows set within such recesses and it the western-most one (the one nearest to the front elevation that it is proposed to alter the existing window to a door.

From looking at the ratio of window to solid which is contained within the recessed architraves the existing windows do appear to be something of an anomaly. The windows themselves also do not appear to be commensurate with the age and style of the mid-19th century. It is clear also that there has been some modifications to the building in this north elevation. There are original openings at the western and eastern ends of this north elevation which have been completely infilled, there is window which appears to have been inserted into an adapted opening and a door which has been inserted into an infilled opening.

There has therefore already been much adaption and alteration of the fenestration in this northern elevation of the building and it appears that the four windows in a row are not the originals but have been inserted in altered and partly infilled original openings. In this context the principle of altering one of these windows into a door is considered acceptable in principle. The proposed plans show the height of the door would in

line with the height of the windows due to a fanlight being proposed and so it would not be at an incongruous height to the windows.

Had the existing north elevation been more intact and less altered it is likely the proposed alteration of one of the remaining windows to a door would have been objectionable but given the extent of modification of the existing openings it is considered there is more flexibility. The height of the fanlight above the door would be in line with the top of the windows. The north elevation of the building faces onto the narrow South Street and so it is not widely visible from the main thoroughfare of Windmill Street. Taking all factors into account it is considered that subject to conditioning the details of the door in terms of material, design etc. (which would need to be a good quality timber door to a suitable design and appearance which is in keeping with the character of the building), the alteration of the window to a door would not detract from the overall character and appearance of the building and would preserve and not cause harm to the character and appearance of the Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area. In this regard the proposal is considered compliant with Policies CS19 and CS20 (LPCS) and saved Policy TC3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The change of the window to a door is to facilitate the repositioning of the entrance door of flat no. 3 in order to increase the size of the existing commercial unit. The site is located just outside of the Gravesend town centre boundary but an enlargement would have the benefit of helping to support the economic viability of the existing unit which is in keeping with Policy CS08 (LPCS). There would be no reduction in the size of the existing flat.

Conclusion & Recommendation

In summary for the above reasons the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance and would preserve the character and appearance of Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	9th October 2023	Dated:	9 th October 2023