



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240145

Location: 23 St Johns Road Gravesend Kent DA12 2SB

Description: Retrospective application for a loft conversion with rear and side dormer and roof lights to the front. Outbuilding in the rear garden.

Applicant: Mr Avtar Kaushal

Site Visit Date: 30th January 2024 (Enforcement Case 24/00115/NOPP)

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application For Dated 12/02/2024;

Drawing Number D01A (Outbuilding Floor Plans – Pre Existing and Existing);

Drawing Number D05 (Elevations – Pre Existing);

Drawing Number D06 (Side Elevations – Pre Existing);

Drawing Number D07 (Elevations – Existing);

Drawing Number D08 (Side Elevations – Existing);

Drawing Number D09 (Outbuilding Elevations – Existing);

Drawing Number D10 (Block Plan – Existing);

Drawing Number D11 (Site Location Plan);

Drawing Number D01 (Floor Plans – Pre Existing);

Drawing Number D02 (Floor Plans – Existing);

Drawing Number D03 (Loft Plan – Existing); and

Drawing Number D04 (Roof Plans – Pre Existing and Existing)

Drawing Number D03A (Loft Plan – Proposed);

Drawing Number D04 A (Roof Plan – Proposed);

Drawing Number D09A (Elevations – Proposed); and

Drawing Number D09B (Elevations Side A and Side B – Proposed).

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20231277	Erection of a first floor rear extension	Permitted	05.02.2024
20231093	Erection of a first floor rear extension to include a new flank window to existing bedroom.	Refused	06.12.2023

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

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 and beautiful places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

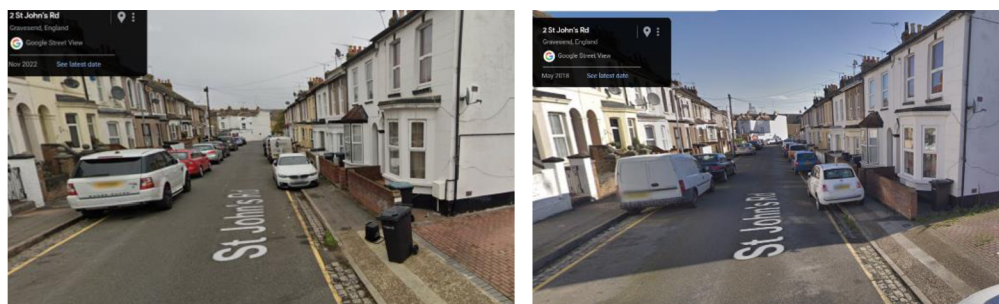
- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015);
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

GBC Highways Officer

This proposal raises serious concerns, as St Johns Road is already showing signs of car parking distress with parking on the pavement common on one side of the road to the detriment of pedestrians, particularly those with a mobility handicap and young children.



Google Street View images November 2022 and May 2018.

Gravesham's vehicle park standards are dated and no longer considered appropriate by the National Planning Policy Framework as they set a maximum requirement.

The only other guidance in the area is that published by the Kent County Council as Highway Authority and

consists of Interim Guidance Note 3 Residential Parking of the Kent Design Guide, the parent document being adopted by Gravesham, but not this guidance note.

The car parking requirement for a three bedroom house given the above guidance in a suburban area is an average of 1.5 car parking spaces per unit increasing to 2 for four or more bedrooms. Here the property increases from three to five bedrooms, but a refusal based on half a car parking space is unlikely to be sustainable at appeal. However, the outbuilding and its use as a gym is another matter and this should be restricted to ancillary to the occupation of the main dwelling and must not be used for commercial purposes as a business creates its own vehicle parking requirements. In addition to comply with the requirements of KCC SPG4 (adopted by Gravesham) two cycle parking spaces should be provided to comply with the requirement of one cycle parking space per bedroom.

Neighbouring properties

Five surrounding properties were consulted and a site notice was displayed on 26th February 2024. No responses were received and the consultation period ended on 12/03/2024.

Plan Note

The existing dormers are considered to be contrary to current policies and as such the agent was contacted to reduce the size of the existing dormers. Proposed plans for the dormers were provided on 15th March 2024.

Officer's Analysis

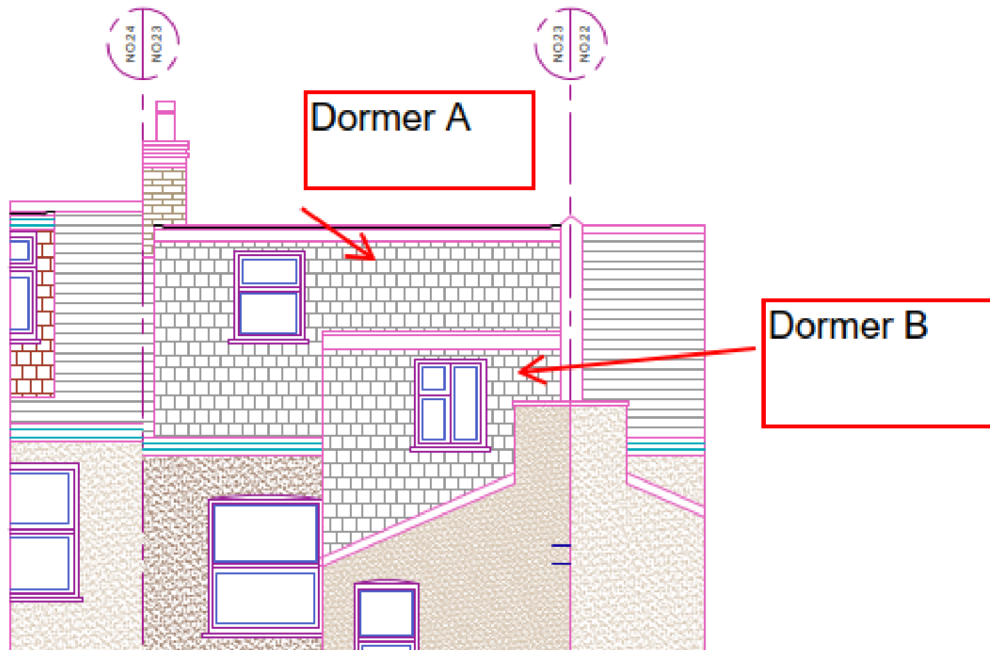
Design, Character and Appearance

The application proposes the retention of a loft conversion with rear and side dormer and roof lights to the front and an outbuilding in the rear garden.

Loft Conversion with Rear and Side Dormers

The application proposes the retention of the conversion of loft space into habitable rooms with the erection of a flat roof dormer extension to the rear and side roof slopes. The conversion creates space for a fourth and fifth bedroom with a shower room/WC.

For the purposes of this report, the dormer to the rear roof slope will be referred to as 'Dormer A' and the dormer to the side roof slope will be referred to as 'Dormer B'.



Dormer A will be constructed at a height of 2.12m, a depth of 3.47m and a width of 4.57m. The dormer is finished with wall hung tiles and a flat roof.

Dormer B is constructed at a height of 2.42m, a depth of 3.5m and a width of 2.41m. The dormer is finished with wall hung tiles and a flat roof.

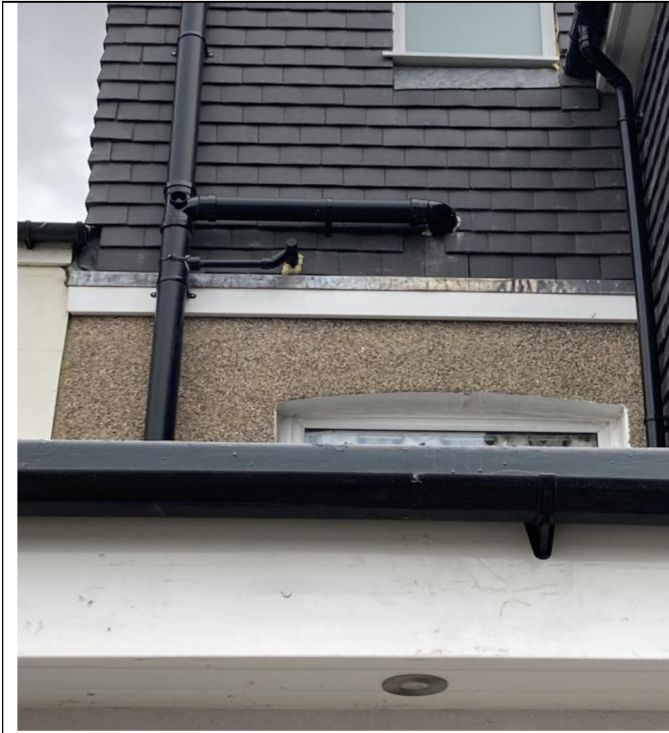
Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area.

Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (Design SPG) (2021) sets out the design expectations of rear roof extensions in section 10.9. It states "dormers should not overwhelm the roof slope within which they are to be placed" and also provides some visual examples of acceptable and unacceptable dormers:

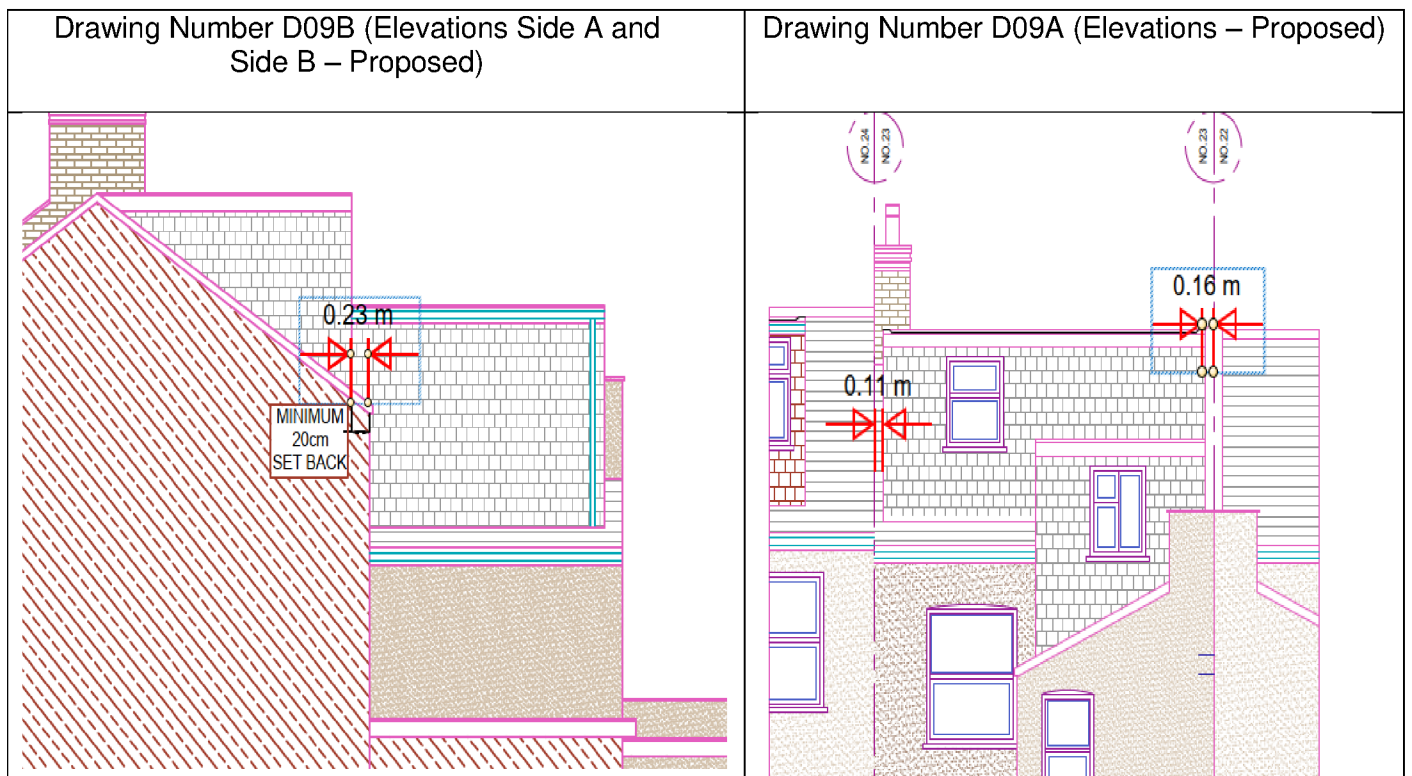


As shown below in officer site visit photographs, the dormers has been constructed in line with the existing front and side elevation and have not been set in from the neighbouring boundary known as 24 St John's Road:

Site Visit Photograph – Rear Elevation

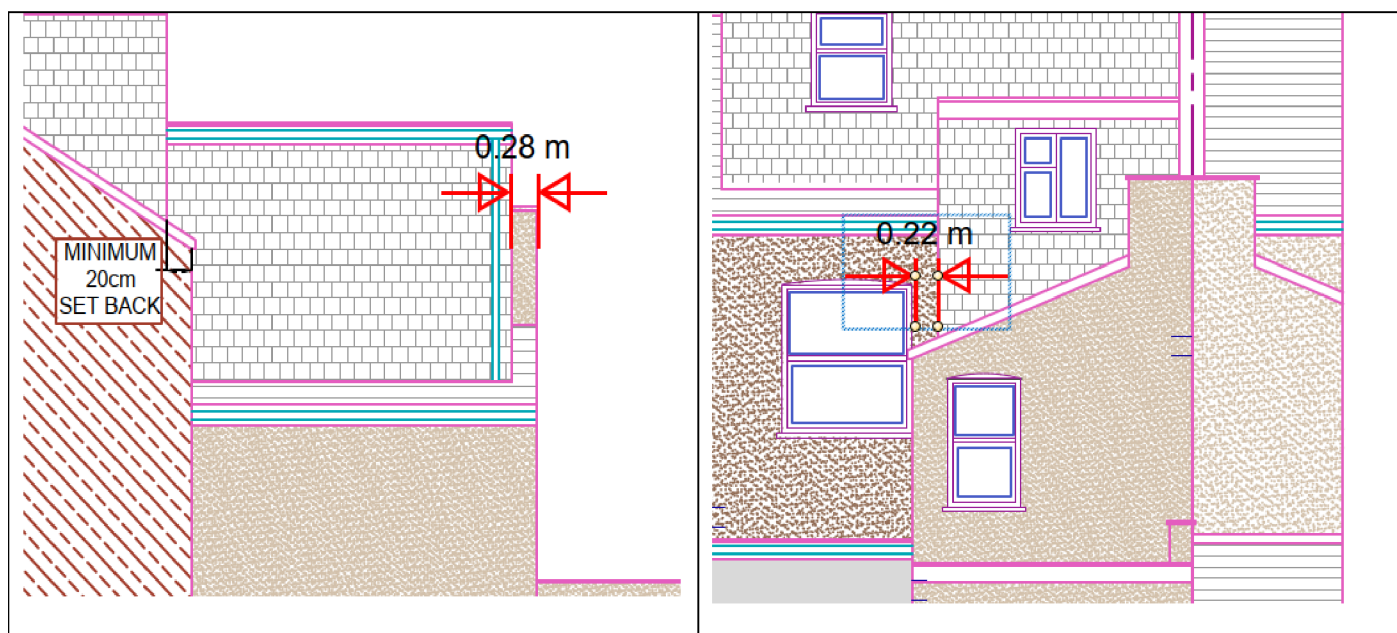


The proposed plans show dormer A to have a set back from the front elevation of 0.23m and from the neighbouring boundary known as 24 St John's Road by 0.11m. The is a similar set back from the boundary of neighbouring property known as 22 St John's Road of 0.16m The proposed plans do not show the dormer to be set down from the roof ridge.



Whilst the proposed changes are an improvement to the existing dormers, it is still considered that dormer A has also not been sufficiently set back from either of the neighbouring boundaries and resultantly the dormer has been constructed to span almost the entire width of the rear roof slope. There is a minimal set back from the front elevation and roof ridge and as such, Dormer A is considered to overwhelm the original roof slope and is detrimental to the existing dwellinghouse.

The proposed plans show Dormer B to be set back from the flank elevation by 0.22m and the rear elevation by 0.28m. The proposal for Dormer B is now considered to be acceptable in terms of size and set back and does not overwhelm the original roof slope.



The dormers have been constructed with slate tiles to the elevations whilst the host dwelling has a rendered pebble dash finish. As such the materials used for the existing dormers do not match those of the original dwelling and therefore the development would not be in accordance with permitted development.

Overall, it is considered that the rear dormer is disproportionate to and overwhelms the original roof slope and is detrimental to the original host dwelling and therefore contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Outbuilding

The application proposes the retention of a retrospective outbuilding at the base of the rear garden to be used as a gymnasium. The dimensions of the outbuilding are listed below:

Depth: 3.65m
Width: 4.55m
Height: 2.75m

The outbuilding has been finished with a flat roof, painted render walls and a UPVC window and a doors to the front elevation.

As such, the outbuilding is not excessive in size or bulk, is constructed using appropriate materials and is not visible from any public vantage point. Therefore, the outbuilding is considered acceptable in terms of design and accords with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

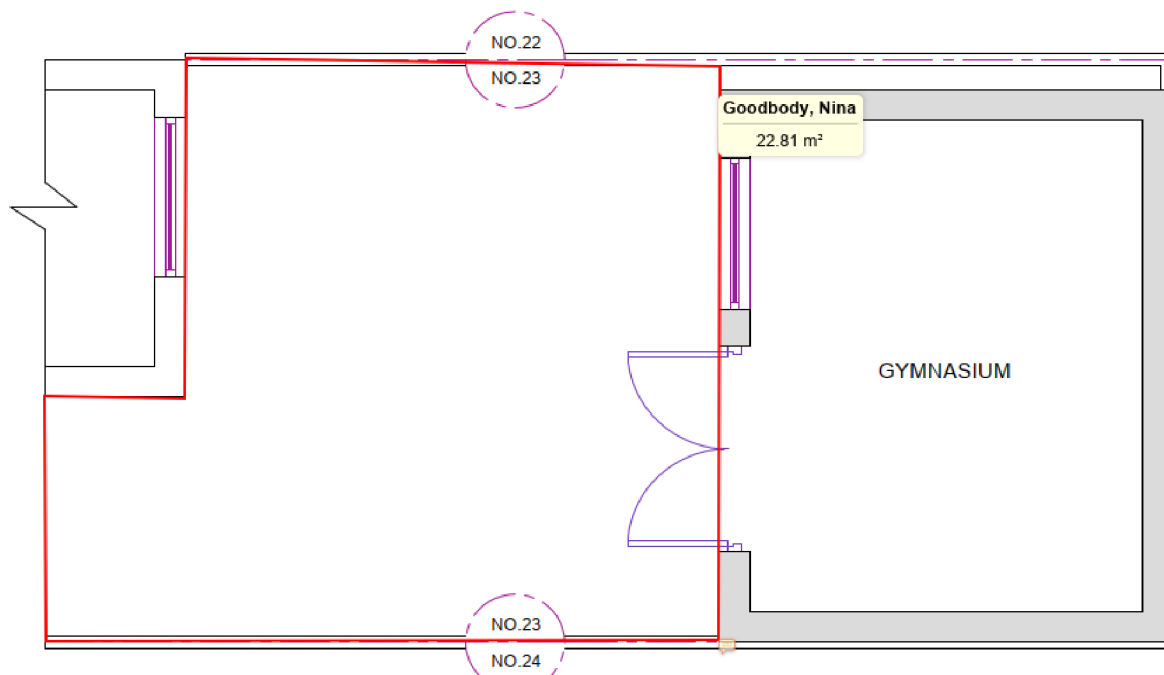
Overall, by virtue of the disproportionate size of the side and rear dormers which overwhelm the original roof slopes and are detrimental to the host dwelling, the application is considered to be contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The NPPF (2023) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

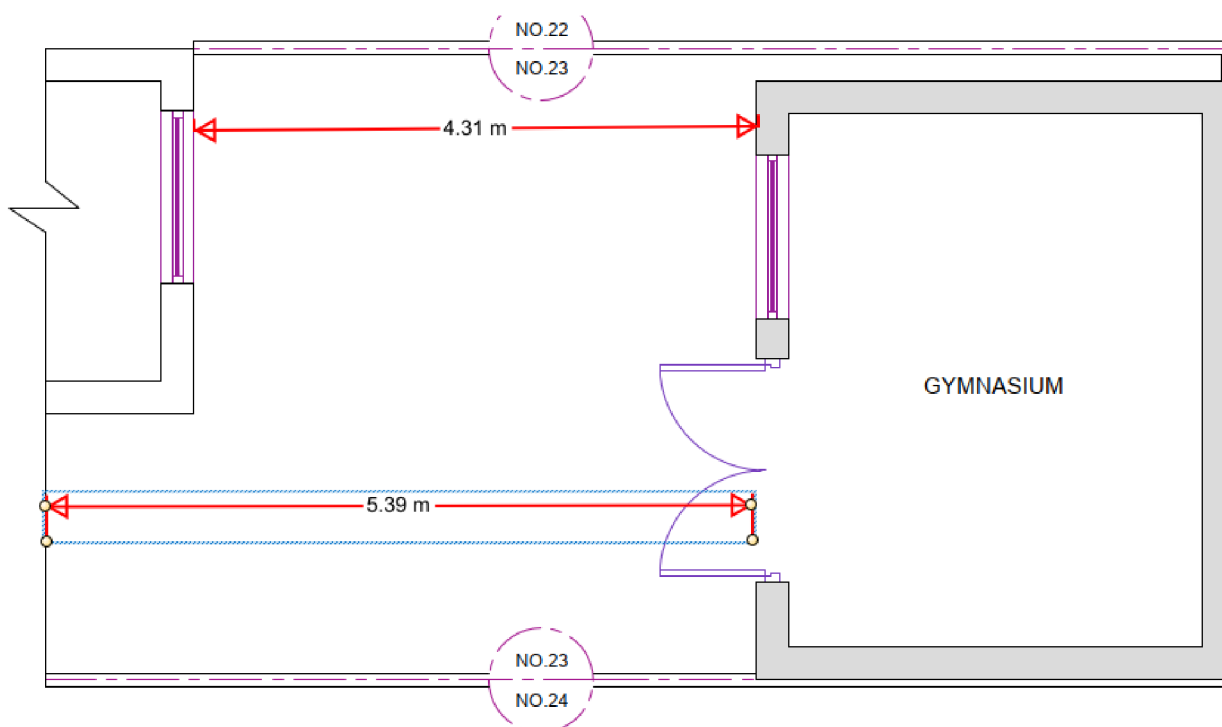
The application increases the number of bedrooms at the property from three to five. Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines state that the garden space for a property with four or more bedrooms should have a minimum depth of 10m from the rear elevation and a minimum useable area of 100m².

Post development, the garden has an approx. area of 22.81 m² as shown below:



Therefore, the area of the garden, post development is substantially below the recommended guidelines.

The depth of the garden, post-development, varies from 4.31m to a maximum of 5.39m, which is also substantially below the 10m recommendations of the RLG.



Therefore, the proposal results in an undersized garden area remaining which detrimentally limits the available usable area, subsequently providing unacceptable living conditions for existing and future occupiers. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, no objection to the application was received.

Loft Conversion with Rear and Side Dormers

Due to the distance between the neighbouring properties, the development will not have any detrimental impact in terms of loss of light, overlooking, outlook or sense of enclosure.

Outbuilding

The outbuilding is proposed to be used as a home gymnasium and is therefore not considered to be a habitable room. As such the outbuilding will not have a detrimental impact in terms of neighbouring privacy.

Permitted development allows a maximum of 2.5m for an outbuilding. The maximum height of the proposal measures at 2.75m, only marginally higher than permitted development. Therefore, the height of the outbuilding is not deemed as excessive and would not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

Overall, the development is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and is in accordance with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Parking and Highways

As per the highway officer comments above, the application increases the number of bedrooms at the property from three to five. As such, the parking requirements at the property would increase from 1.5 spaces to 2 spaces. Whilst there is no parking provision at the site for a 5 bedroom property, due to the sustainable location of the application site, with close proximity to shops and public transport, it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on these grounds.

Therefore, there are no highways issues related to this application.

Conclusion

Overall, by virtue of the disproportionate size of the rear dormer which overwhelms the original roof slope and is detrimental to the host dwelling, the application is considered to be contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

The application for retention of an outbuilding results in an undersized garden area remaining which detrimentally limits the available usable area, subsequently providing unacceptable living conditions for existing and future occupiers. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Recommendation

Refusal

(For detailed conditions / reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Nina Goodbody	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	29th April 2024	Dated:	29th April 2024