



Gravesham Borough Council

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Kent
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Highways and Transportation

Kroner House
Eurogate Business Park
Ashford
TN24 8XU

Tel: 03000 418181

Date: 4 March 2024

Our Ref:

Application - GB/20231097

Location - 25A Hunt Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 8JT

Proposal - Change of Use from Class C3(a) Dwellinghouses) to Class E(e) (Health Services).

Thank you for your consultation in relation to the above planning application. I have the following comments to make with respect to highway matters :-

I refer to my previous response dated 27th November 2023 in which I raised concerns regarding the parking provision for this proposal and the fact that no off-street parking was being provided. I suggested that a parking survey be undertaken for the roads within a 300m radius of the site. I requested a holding objection whilst further data was collected.

The applicant has now submitted a Highways Technical Note produced by Motion dated 13th February 2024. It provides a parking survey as requested carried out on Wednesday 31st January 2024 as well as the results of a staff and patient travel survey. The latter would indicate that 67% of staff and 84% of patients attended the existing dental surgery by car (either driving or as a car passenger) and that no staff or patients travelled by sustainable means, either cycle or bus. This is of concern since the level of parking in the local streets could be reduced significantly if greater use could be made of local bus services.

However, the parking survey indicates that a maximum parking stress level on the local roads (within 300 metres) is a maximum of 55% during the surgery opening hours whereas an area is considered to be over-parked when the stress level reaches 85% or more. It is also noted that there are sufficient parking restrictions in the nearby road to prevent any unacceptable parking which may result in a safety hazard to other road users.

It is therefore considered that my previous holding response should be rescinded and that it would be difficult to raise an objection to this application on highway grounds given the evidence of parking availability in the area and the fact that the dental surgery already exists and this application is for its expansion to the first floor. However, there are concerns regarding the demonstrated lack of use of sustainable transport (bus, cycle and walking) by both staff and patients alike against the recommendations of the NPPF. It is therefore recommended that a Travel Plan, which should be monitored by the applicant, be submitted as a Condition of any consent granted. This would help to reduce parking demand.

It is therefore concluded that no objection to this application is made to this application on highway grounds provided the following Condition is applied to any consent granted:

1 The development shall not be brought into use until a Travel Plan, to reduce dependency on the private car, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Travel Plan shall include objectives and modal-split targets, a programme of implementation and provision for monitoring, review and improvement. Thereafter, the Travel Plan shall be put into action and adhered to throughout the life of the development, or that of the Travel Plan itself, whichever is the shorter.

2 Provision and permanent retention of secure cycle parking facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Informative: It is important to note that planning 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 planning permission has been granted. For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture, 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 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 formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. 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.

Should the development be approved by the Planning Authority, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, before the development is commenced, that 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.

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

Yours Faithfully

Director of Highways & Transportation

*This is a statutory technical response on behalf of KCC as Highway Authority. If you wish to make representations in relation to highways matters associated with the planning application under consideration, please make these directly to the Planning Authority.