



Highway Planning Ltd

Highways & Transportation Consultants

Mr E Bonthron
Gravesend Borough Council
Planning Services
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
DA12 1DD

12th September 2023

Ref: 23.84.01

Dear Mr Bonthron,

APPLICATION 20230945 – 23 WATLING STREET, GRAVESEND, DA11 7NU

I have been instructed by the applicant [REDACTED] to provide technical support to the proposed minor amendment application to allow an alternative design of the gates approved under planning application 20230729.

In considering the proposed gates under application 20230729 the Council's highway officer raised a concern over the erection of gates at this property on the grounds that *"...delays can arise whilst a vehicle waits on street while they open and close (if manually operated) to the detriment of the free flow of traffic."* The accepted solution was that the gate *"...should have widely spaced railings (150mm plus with 10mm to 15mm rods) to ensure it can be readily seen through and be electrically driven with a remote control to minimise the time a vehicle is parked on the highway waiting for the gates to open."*

The current application seeks a minor amendment to the design of the gates to provide a solid gate. The assessment of this application revolves around whether the highway officer's concerns, and hence condition 6 on the Decision Notice, were justified.

On page 4 of the Officer's delegated report for application 20230729, under the sub-heading *"Parking and Highways"* the statement is made that *"Moreover, the gates are not considered to be an issue on Old Watling St as it is a lightly trafficked road."* The access is existing and serves an existing dwelling that enjoys consent for various extensions and alterations. The level of traffic generation from a single dwelling in this location will be in the order of 6 to 8 vehicle movements per day (i.e. say 4 in and 4 out across a 24 hour period). As a single dwelling the occupants will have a reasonable idea of who is coming and going and when. As such, the risk of a car wanting to enter the access as another car is moving to exit is extremely remote. The Council has accepted **principle** of gates across the access and this replicates many other properties along the road. If a car wants to enter the access when the gates are closed then it has to wait on the carriageway – this is a common occurrence along this section of Watling Street and does not result in a hazardous situation. In the very rare occurrence when a car arrives at the property at the same instance that a car is moving to exit the property, either the entering car will wait on the carriageway, or the exiting car will wait within the property. Again, this is how gated accesses operate along this section of Watling Street. The ability to see through the gate will not alter how the drivers respond to this very infrequent situation. The same situation arises if there are no gates across the access – the access will only allow one car to enter or leave at any time.

The gates and railings approved under 20230729 assist in improving intervisibility with pedestrians. This point is acknowledged in the Officer's Delegated report which states *"...Gravesham's Highway Officer has provided comment on the development, stating that it would ideally provide pedestrian visibility splays but that the open*

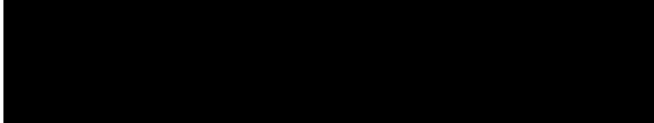
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*railings are **an improvement on the existing arrangement**,..*" The proposed minor amendment applies only to the design of the sliding gate and, as such, the improvement to pedestrian visibility will remain.

In conclusion, the Council has accepted the principle of the erection of gates across the access. The requirement for drivers to see through the gates is not justified and does not alter how drivers will approach the gates. The proposed minor amendment to allow solid gates will not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety and should be allowed.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Dermot McCaffery.

Dermot McCaffery FIHE

Director