



Photographic Survey, Design & Access Statement, And Heritage Statement

For proposed extensions to 124 Darnley Road, Gravesend DA11 0SN



Front view of no. 124 Darnley Road, with shared rear side access to no. 126 to the left.

Introduction

The current property is a three-storey semidetached Edwardian property in an established neighbourhood. The ground-floor footprint covers 94 sq.m. on a generous plot of 466sq.m, laid to hardstanding to the front and a lawned garden with small trees to the rear. A single storey detached garage/store is also present in the rear garden, covering 36sq.m.

Continued



Statement of Need

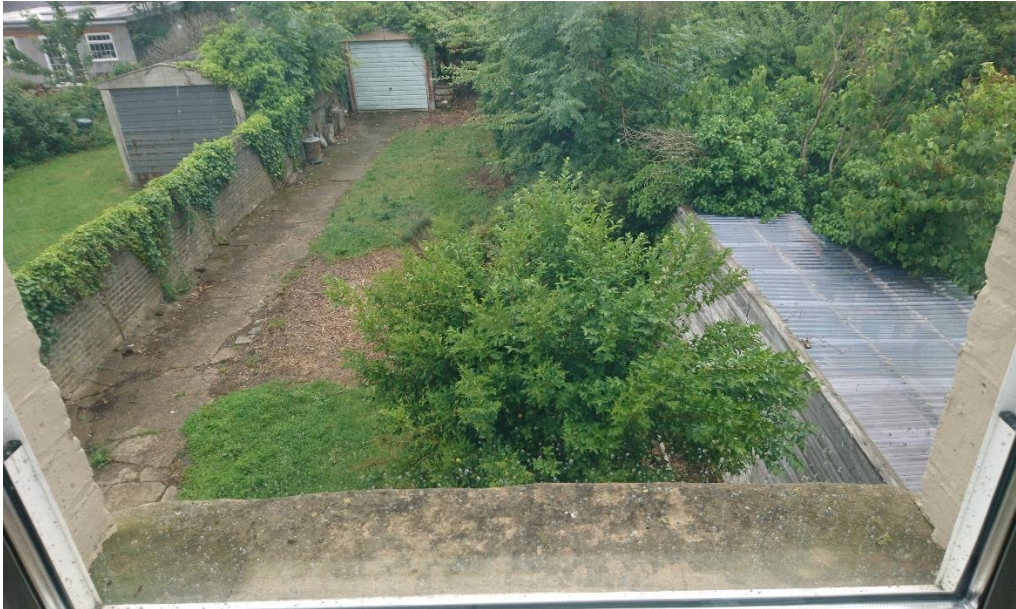
Whilst currently offering six bedrooms, two of these are small or have limited headroom, and the applicant wishes to improve the accommodation to create a ground floor accessible bedroom suite and remove the headroom restriction on one of the upper bedrooms. This is to be achieved by forming a single storey wrap-around rear extension and by adding two dormer extensions on the second-floor roof to the rear. One of the dormers is to ensure that the existing staircase meets Building Regulations requirements. No changes to the front of the building are proposed other than improvements to the layout and appearance of the front garden.

Photographic Survey



- View looking down onto the front garden of the property given over to hardstanding. The access to the highway is shared with no. 126 Darnley Road on the right of this image. The eastern boundary falls along the path line denoted by the broken gate on the left of the image, discernable by the change in paving. It is proposed to widen the crossover.

Continued



- View down the rear garden from first floor level, with garage/store in the background. Foreground shows area of proposed rear extension, alongside the neighbouring outbuilding on the right of the image. Note the disused garage in the background.



- View to the rear from the side showing the site of the wrap-around extension – current ground floor toilet windows on the right. Vehicular access to the garage/store is no longer possible due to increased modern day vehicle dimensions which would need to pass between the two buildings (no. 124 and 126) and lack of adequate turning area/width in the rear garden. Pedestrian access will be maintained to the side and the garage used for secure cycle storage.

Continued



- View to rear (image courtesy of sales particulars). A double pitched dormer to be formed above second floor window on the right, and the conservatory removed (subsequent to this photograph this has now been demolished on safety grounds) and a single storey extension constructed beyond this and to the rear. A 'cat-slide' dormer will be formed close to the second-floor parapet to increase headroom above the staircase.



- Internal view of the rear second-floor bedroom showing the limited headroom currently available, to receive dormer extension

Continued



Design & Access Statement

Introduction

The objective for the project is to improve the accommodation on the ground floor and on the second floor as documented in the accompanying drawings and images and described at the beginning of this document.

Existing Site

The application site is rectangular in shape, generally flat, accessed directly off Darnley Road, of approximately 7.4m x 63m. The current semi-detached dwelling offers a total of 243 sq.m measured over external walls, including the small cellar. The detached garage/store covers circa 36 sq.m. The existing front garden is predominantly block paved for parking with a paved footpath to one side, whilst the rear garden is a mixture of lawn, paving and small trees. A disused garage is also present in the rear garden. The site is within the Darnley Road Conservation Area.

Design concept

As stated above, two extensions are proposed, the main single storey ground floor extension to the side and rear, and two second floor roof dormers. These are designed to be sympathetic to the existing dwelling and the local vernacular architecture.

The proposed single storey ground floor wrap-around side/rear extension will allow an accessible bedroom with ensuite shower room to be formed, utilising the existing dining room and conservatory, along with relocating the kitchen and the dining room into the extension. The ground floor will then be suitable for an intended disabled occupant to have all their requirements met without excluding them from others in the house. Facing London stock buff brickwork will be used to match the existing rear and side walls and a simple flat roof to minimise the built mass. A recess in the south elevation visually breaks up the façade to further reduce scale whilst offering a space to store wheeled bins.

No changes are proposed to the first floor other than to remove an internal wall so as to absorb a currently sub-standard sized small bedroom into the main bedroom by forming a dressing area. With this change, and the new ground floor accessible bedroom, the property's current total of six bedrooms is maintained.

On the second floor a double pitched roofed dormer is proposed to remove some of the headroom restriction to the rear bedroom (shown in the photographs above), allowing this to be a much more useable space. Adjacent to this will be a cat-slide roofed dormer over the staircase in order for the stair to comply with current Building Regulations clear-headroom requirements. Lead-effect GRP dormer cheeks are proposed with the pitched roof finished to match existing.

Amount

The proposed single storey extension would add 43sq.m on the ground floor, excluding 7sq.m replaced by removing the old conservatory (i.e. approximately 50sq.m in total measured over external walls), with a height of 3m AFFL. No further floor space is proposed although the second-floor dormer extensions will increase the volume by improving headroom.

Continued



The ground floor extension has, as a result of pre-application discussions following refusal of similar proposals, been reduced in scale and also moved away from the boundary with no.122 Darnley Road. The second-floor dormer has also been reduced in scope and redesigned to comply with the Design Guide recommendations for street-facing dormers, as preferred by the Pre-Application Planning Officer. Refer to application drawings.

Access

Whilst site access remains principally unaltered, a widening of the cross-over is proposed to ensure that two cars may be parked on site, with sufficient space for a disabled parking space and a normal car space. Please refer below.

For pedestrian access and an intended disabled occupant, a removable wheelchair access ramp will be used over the existing front step and porch. The rear extension will feature a flush threshold to the proposed patio doors to ensure permanent wheelchair access without impacting on the Conservation Area. The proposed internal alterations and extension ensure that wheelchair access throughout the ground floor is achieved.

Parking

During Pre-Application discussions the amount of car parking available on site was discussed. The Planning Officer accepted that whilst a garage exists to the rear of the current property (approved in 1974 with a similar one for neighbouring 126 Darnley Road), the access to this is insufficient to cater for use by modern vehicles as these are generally bigger than those of nearly fifty years ago. No. 124 and 126 share access rights to the rear as a result of the 1974 approval but it is understood that neither owner (former in the case of 124) have or are able to gain vehicular access to the rear garden(s). Rear garden widths are circa 7m and the gap between no. 124 and 126 is predominantly under 2.4m. The garages are therefore used for storage only or left unused. The Planning Officer (refer to Application Form, Pre-Application advice section) therefore agreed that the current site is only able to accommodate one parked car when avoiding obstructing the shared access – refer to site and ground floor plans.

Research into similar dwellings along Darnley Road has indicated that most properties offer four bedrooms or more with either only one or two car park spaces. The width between most boundaries is no greater than 7m and this is insufficient for more than two current standard spaces to be accommodated, especially allowing for pedestrian access too. Briefly, research provides the following neighbouring examples:

House number	Bed spaces	Apparent car park spaces
120	Est 5 min	2
122	5/6	1 (space for a 2 nd)
124	6	Capacity for 2
128	6	Sold with 1 space, with recent Planning Approval for an extension and separate annex in garden with 2 spaces to front of property.
135	5	1

Continued



With reference to the Highway Officer's comments relating to the previously refused application, ref. no. 20220860, and the 'Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3 20 November 2008 Residential Parking', we have sought to provide for two on-site parking spaces as part of this application. Pre-Application advice also indicated a desire to improve the appearance of the front gardens along Darnley Road as many have been paved over with little or no soft landscaping inclusion.

Through the remodelling of the hardstanding to the front of the property, two plant bed areas can be offered alongside two Grasscrete strips which help to define two car park spaces. A new ornamental tree and a low-level timber picket fence will improve the aesthetic value further and that of the conservation area. The Grasscrete sections also aid surface water retention to act as soakaways along with a linear drainage channel to the rear of the highway/footpath to prevent surface water run-off onto the highway.

Whilst access to the side between no.124 and 126 will be unaltered, the garage will be used for secure cycle storage.

Heritage Statement

The proposed site is a semi-detached property located on the varied residential street scene of Darnley Road. It is Edwardian in style, and is believed to date from the early 1900s (Ref <https://ourfallen.gravesendgrammar.com/boy/alan-catchpool-young/>). The site is within the Darnley Road Conservation Area and as such any development of the site needs to be sympathetic to the heritage aspects.

In the consultee response to the previously refused application (no. 20220860) the Conservation Officer voiced no objections due to the proposals not impacting upon the front elevation in any way. The polychromatic brickwork, projecting bay window, painted stone mouldings around window openings to the front façade, along with a half-timbered dormer are thus unaltered. Notwithstanding this, the rear extension and second floor rear facing dormers have been designed sympathetically to the existing building with matching materials and placement of openings respectful of the existing fenestration arrangements to the rear. The new roof additions do not project above the existing ridge line.

Whilst the front of the building itself is not to be touched, the hardstanding area to the front is, as described above and detailed on the accompanying drawings and visuals.

1237RS/Statements, EnSen Design, November 2022.