



Delegated Report

Application No: 20211314

Location: 25 Coutts Avenue, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3HJ

Description: Reserved Matters Application for the approval of details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission reference number 20210407 for the demolition of existing house, erection of 2.no four bedroom dwellings and creation of vehicle crossovers.

Applicant: Mr G Sohal

Site Visit Date: Desktop assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

The applicant has submitted the following in support of the application:

Application form received 20 October 2021;
Location Plan received 20 October 2021;
Drawing no. 20-1412-01 (Existing Block Plan) received 20 October 2021;
Drawing no. 20-1412-02 (Proposed Block Plan) received 20 October 2021;
Drawing no. 20-14-2-04A (Proposed Elevations) received 20 October 2021;
Drawing no. 20-1412-05A (Proposed Plans) received 20 October 2021; and
Drawing no. 20-1412-03A (Site Plan) received 26 October 2021.

Relevant Planning History

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Decision</u>
20210407	Application for outline planning permission with some matters reserved for the demolition of existing house, erection of 2.no four bedroom dwellings and creation of vehicle crossovers.	Permitted	16.06.2021
20180322	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two semi-detached, 3 bedroom chalet style bungalows and associated parking	Permitted	21.02.2019
20120873	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of one pair of semi-detached three bedroom dwellings	Refused	05.12.2012

both with dormer windows in front and rear roof slopes.

20111048	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two detached, 4 bedroom chalet style dwellings each with a garage in the front garden.	Refused	04.04.2012
19830210	Details pursuant to GR82/759 for the erection of single storey dwelling with garage as amended by drawing no _ subject to the new 1.8m high close boarded fence to the eastern boundary of the site shown in the submitted drawing _ shall be erected before the development hereby permitted is commenced.	Approval of details	23.05.1983
19820759	Outline application for erection of a single storey dwelling and garage	Permitted	20.12.1982

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

CS01 – Sustainable Development
 CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
 CS11 – Transport
 CS12 – Green Infrastructure
 CS14 – Housing Type and Size
 CS15 – Housing Density
 CS18 – Climate Change
 CS19 – Design and Development Principles

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
 T5 – New Accesses onto Highway Network
 P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF 2021 sets out that those 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 the review 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 a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan First Review 1994 generally conform with the NPPF 2021, the Council will also seek to replace these saved policies via the emerging Local Plan.

Given Gravesham's current inability to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, and as the

delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75%) that required by the Housing Delivery Test, the housing delivery element of Core Strategy Policy CS02 must be regarded to be out of date, as required by the Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF 2021. This requires that in regard to housing development, planning permission should be granted unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

In the Gravesham context, the policies referred to in paragraph 11(d)(i) above are those set out in the NPPF 2021 at footnote 7 (rather than those in development plans) relating to any of the following:

- Habitats sites (and those sites listed in NPPF 2021, paragraph 181)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Green Belt;
- Local Green Space;
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Irreplaceable habitats;
- Designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest, see NPPF 2021, footnote 68); and
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

In determining applications for planning permission involving housing, the Council will therefore apply a weighted balance in favour of granting planning permission in accordance with relevant case law and guidance, having regard to the acceptability or otherwise of the proposals when evaluated against development plan policy, the need to make efficient use of land (paragraph 121(c)) in context, the relative contribution the proposal makes towards the alleviation of any shortfall in housing delivery at that time and any other considerations material to the proposed development.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 – Making effective use of land

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)

SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)

Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards (2015)

Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Engineering

No objections to the proposal, the drives will be constructed from permeable block paving and the size of the parking bays whilst not complying with supplementary planning guidance in SPG4, do

comply with different but current guidance also published by Kent County Council.

KCC Heritage

The site lies in an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, it is considered unlikely that these replacement buildings and associated works will have a significant archaeological impact at this location.

National Grid

No comments received.

Health and Safety Executive

No comments received.

Natural England

No comments received.

Shorne Parish Council

The property was granted outline planning permission for two 4-bedroom dwellings under application ref 20210407; however, 4-bedroom dwellings had previously been refused permission for reasons including cramped rooms and overdevelopment of the site. Permission for two three-bedroom dwellings was previously granted under revised application ref 20180322 but this permission was allowed to lapse.

In the present application the applicant has continued with the reversion to proposing nominal four-bedroom, detached layout dwellings. However, this once again provides minimum sized and cramped accommodation out of keeping with the area.

The Parish Council continues to have significant concerns about this proposal and has the following comments:

- The proposal would have a detrimental effect on the street scene, the design is considered unsatisfactory and would be out of character with the area (cramped layout and alien external design), and in our view would constitute overdevelopment of the site.
- The reversion to detached dwellings places the buildings closer to the neighbouring boundaries although mitigated with hipped roof design on the outer sides.
- The internal layout is cramped for the number of residents proposed, the 4th bedroom being particularly small due to angled ceiling on two walls even if the floor area is minimally compliant with guidance.
- The parking layout proposed could satisfy regulatory requirements but causes reduction in on-street parking availability in an area where on-street parking is problematic and competitive. We note that the previous advice from GBC Engineering about reducing of the number of vehicle crossovers and providing visibility splays has not been implemented.
- The proposal would set an undesirable precedent in the area.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 12 properties, and on site. The consultation periods expired on 11 and 14 January 2021 respectively.

Five letters of representation have been received, with the following comments:

- Unsympathetic and out of keeping with bungalows in the road.
- The proposed dwellings will tower over neighbouring properties and will look odd in the street scene
- The footprint will come closer to neighbouring properties and will affect and block light.
- Previous refusals for similar proposals that were considered too big and out of keeping.
- Overlooking and loss and privacy for neighbouring properties due to proposed height and proximity to neighbours.
- Impact on outlook for neighbouring properties from increased height of building and height difference between neighbouring properties.
- Deeds of land state there should be no more than one house or a pair of semis on the site.
- The existing drainage pipes were not designed to take extra sewage and waste. Where will the mains drainage for the properties go? Will the power supply be sufficient?
- Loss of existing on-street and visitor parking.
- Most people park on the road, and the additional houses will add to congestion and cause problems for emergency access.
- Bin stores to the front could be unsightly.
- The proposal ignores Shorne Parish Council's advice to have a pair of semi-detached bungalows on this plot.

Local Ward Councillors were also consulted and no responses have been received.

Analysis

Background

As set out in the planning history above, there have been various applications for housing on this site.

The most recent application was 20210407, which granted outline planning permission for the erection of 2 four bedroom dwellings. Access and layout were the matters approved under the outline application; matters of appearance, landscaping and scale were reserved.

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the reserved matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following the outline approval of 2 four bedroom dwellings and the creation of vehicle crossovers. There have been some changes to the layout to reduce the dwelling footprints following the outline approval; hence why layout is also included.

As indicated in the outline approval, the proposal involves four bedroom chalet bungalows; the upper floor of each property will contain 3 bedrooms and a bathroom that will be located within the roof space with dormers. On the ground floor, there would be a further bedroom, a bathroom, a living room and an open plan kitchen/dining room, with bi-fold doors onto the garden.

In terms of appearance, the proposed dwellings will have two pitched roof dormers within the front roof slope and three within the rear roof. There would be one rooflight (serving the stairs) within the each flank roof slope facing the neighbouring properties Nos. 23 and 27, and one ground floor flank high level window serving the bathroom.

The eaves height of the properties would be 2.5m, and the ridge height would be 6.7m.

The submitted layout shows the proposed bungalows would be set out roughly in line with the

existing bungalow at the front, but not extending as far to the rear as the proposed layout shown on the outline approval, and not beyond neighbouring rear building lines. The buildings would be set in by 1.2m from the western flank boundary and 1.6m from the eastern flank.

There is an existing crossover to the front (south-western) corner of the site that will be retained. A new central crossover serving parking spaces for both new properties is proposed, together with a further crossover to the south-eastern corner. There would be 6 parking spaces in total (3 for each property). The accesses to the site and the layout of the parking area is unchanged from the outline approval (access has already been granted by this). There will be permeable block paving to the parking bays, footpaths and rear terraces.

There will be areas of lawn and planting to the front gardens, with a 900mm brick wall along the front boundary, either side of the vehicle entrances. There will be a 0.9m high closeboarded fence to the flank boundaries at the front of the dwellings, and a 2m high closeboarded fence to the flank and rear boundaries of the proposed houses.

Proposed Block Plan:



20210407 Approved Outline Block Plan:



Principle Issues

As the principle of two chalet style dwellings on this site has already been established by the recent outline permission, and as access has already been approved under that permission, the main issues to consider in the determination of this application are as follows:

- Design and impact on character and appearance of surrounding street scene and rural landscape; and
- Residential amenity.

Design and Impact on Character and Appearance of Area

Whilst it is recognised that development which makes effective use of land should be supported, this comes with the proviso that it should safeguard and improve the environment and not conflict with other policies in the NPPF 2021 (paragraph 119). Relevant to this proposal, paragraph 124 of the NPPF 2021 states that developments that make efficient use of land should take into account the identified need for different types of housing, the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting, and the importance of securing well-designed buildings and places. This latter point is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF 2021 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places and helps make development acceptable. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014

reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed, and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

In a similar vein, Policy CS14 of the Core Strategy 2014 sets out that new housing development is expected to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes, taking into account the existing character of the area and evidence of local need to create sustainable and balanced communities. Coutts Avenue primarily consists of semi-detached and detached bungalows; there is also a two storey detached property at the end of the cul-de-sac to the east from the application site. A number of the bungalows in the road have extended into their roofspace to allow for additional living space. Within the context of this rural settlement of mixed housing sizes and types, the proposed chalet bungalows would not be out of character and would be supported by Policy CS14.

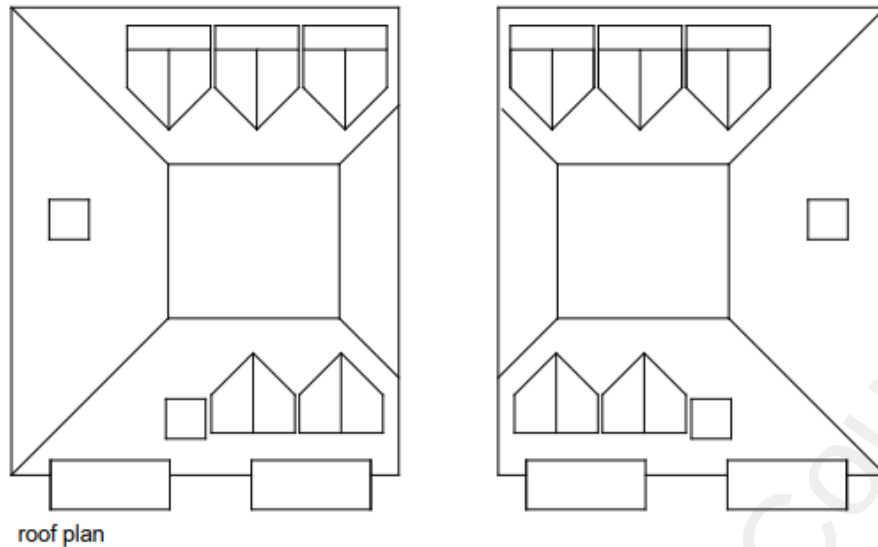
The submitted plans show that the properties would be set back from the road, with off-street parking space, side accesses and good sized garden spaces. Whilst the eastern and western flank walls of the proposed buildings would be closer to the site boundaries than the existing bungalow and previously approved semi-detached dwellings (under application 20180322), the layout and space around the proposed dwellings would be similar to surrounding properties. The depth of the proposed dwellings would be less than that shown in the approved outline layout. On this basis, the proposed layout would be considered acceptable and in keeping with the spatial characteristics of the area.

It is recognised that there have been previous concerns over the scale, bulk and mass of previously proposed chalet bungalows on this site, which included gable end designs. Indeed, it was this concern that led to the imposition of condition 3 under outline permission 20210407, which sought to restrict the eaves and ridge height of the proposed dwellings under a reserved matters application (to 2.5m and 7.4m respectively). This was in line with the heights of the approved 20180322 semi-detached houses.

However, the proposed dwellings have been designed in a manner that did not require a taller roofline. They would be 6.7m high to the top of their ridge, which is lower than the maximum 7.4m height prescribed in condition 3 of the outline permission. The ridge heights would match No. 23 to the west. The ridge of the proposed dwelling nearest No. 29 to the east would be approximately 2.5m higher due to the difference in land levels between the properties; however, the impact on No. 29 is reduced by the proposed pitched, chalet roof that would slope away from No. 29, and retain a sense of space between the buildings. The roof style is not considered to be bulky or dominant within the street scene.

It must also be considered that there has been a previous approval for chalet bungalows on the site, and as significant number of properties along the road have also had roof additions, the proposed roof accommodation is not considered to be out of keeping with the mixed character of the area.

The design of the roofs does mean that part of them would be flat, which is not ideal from a design point of view. However, the area of flat roof is small and would not be readily readable from street level, most likely appearing as a ridge:



There are also comparable cases where flat roofs have been allowed at appeal, including 20180478, for the demolition of the existing bungalow and the erection of 2 three bedroom chalet bungalows at Daymer, Green Farm Lane in Shorne (see Appendix 1), where the Inspector did not even raise the area of flat roof as an issue. The agent has also drawn attention to a flat roof allowed at appeal under 20210480 at The Orchards, 23 Watling Street, Gravesend, though this was a householder extension rather than a new dwelling. However, the Inspector stated that the relatively well set back dwelling in a mixed character area would not be highly visible or materially harmful to the design and appearance of the dwelling or the surrounding area in terms of its scale and bulk (Appendix 2).

It is therefore considered that the appearance and scale of the two chalet bungalows would complement the site and street scene in general. No details have been submitted with regards to proposed materials to be used for the dwellings, and therefore this should be conditioned to ensure the buildings will integrate into the street scene.

With regard to the impact on the landscape, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014 is also relevant to this application, relating to green infrastructure. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) 2009 will be taken into account in determining applications. The site is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. One of the key characteristics of the area is the open, gently undulating farmland, which provides high visibility across the area. The overall condition of the landscape is poor and has moderate sensitivity. It is recommended that key landscape elements should be restored and created. Proposals that introduce extensive or obtrusive elements within visually sensitive areas of the open landscape should be resisted. As this site is within the rural settlement of Shorne and comprises an existing residential site, the development would have no adverse impact on the wider landscape character of the area.

In terms of the landscaping and boundary treatments proposed, these would appear to be acceptable and in keeping with the appearance of front gardens along the road.

Overall, the proposal seeks to make a more efficient use of the site for housing, and the layout, scale and appearance of the proposed chalet bungalows would be in keeping with the character and appearance of properties in the immediate area. On this basis, the submitted reserved matter details are considered to comply with the requirements of Policies CS12, CS14 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, and paragraphs 119, 124, 126, 130 and 174 of the NPPF 2021.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2021 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 130f). The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria within Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, 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.

Future Occupiers

It is considered that the proposal complies with the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards 2015 in terms of the size of the proposed accommodation, which with a gross internal floor area (GIFA) of 150m² for each house, exceeds the highest minimum standard of 115m² for a 2 storey, 4 bedroom, 7 person dwelling.

The proposal also complies with the Council's residential layout guidelines for the proposed gardens. For a 4 bedroom house a minimum garden area of 100m² is required, with a minimum depth of 10m. The proposed rear garden areas for the new dwellings exceed 260m².

The depth will be approximately 23m. The gardens will therefore meet the standards acceptable for such houses.

Due to the general pattern of development on the road, there is unlikely to be any adverse impact on the proposed properties from overlooking or loss of light.

There is therefore no conflict with the requirements of the SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines (2020), Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 in respect of the standard of amenity and living conditions for future occupants of the proposed dwellings on the site.

Neighbouring Properties

The main neighbouring properties likely to be affected by the proposal are the bungalows to the west (No. 23) and east (No. 29) of the application site.

Under the previously approved application for the semi-detached bungalows (20180322), the roof shape and height was designed in such a way that the proposed dwellings were not considered to have any overbearing impact on neighbouring properties. This was particularly important on the eastern side, where No. 29 is located at a lower level than the proposed dwellings.

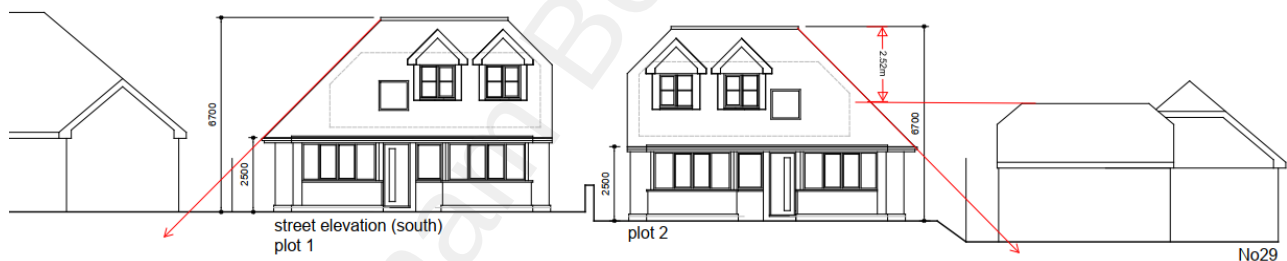
20180322 Street Elevation:



The detailed design of the proposed chalet bungalows shows that the proposed footprints of the dwellings would be roughly in line with the existing bungalow on the site at the front, and would only extend a maximum of 2.3m beyond it at the rear. The proposed building lines would not extend beyond the neighbouring building lines at the rear.

Furthermore, whilst at the sides of the plot the proposed dwellings will come closer to the neighbouring properties than the existing bungalow and the previously approved 20180322 dwellings, the design of the proposed dwellings with low eaves (2.5m high) and pitched roofs sloping away from the neighbours to either side, will lessen the impact, and retain space and light at the sides of the plot.

Proposed street elevation:



Outline permission 20210407 condition 4 states that there should be no windows or doors facing the existing dwellings to the eastern and western site boundaries. There is one rooflight and one (obscured) ground floor window proposed in the east and west flank elevations of the proposed dwellings. However, these windows would serve the stairs and a bathroom, which are non-habitable spaces and would protect the privacy of the neighbouring properties. These windows are therefore considered acceptable, however a further condition should be included to restrict any further windows.

The proposed residential use of the site will be in keeping with the existing and surrounding uses, and there will be little change to the present situation with regard to noise, disturbance, increased traffic and activity levels with the additional dwelling on the site.

Overall, it is considered that the design of two dwellings protects the amenities of existing and future occupiers, and the proposal is therefore acceptable and in accordance with the requirements of the SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines (2020), Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021.

Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar / Special Protection Area (SPA) – SAMMS Tariff

As the application site is within 6km of the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA/Ramsar Sites and would provide additional residential accommodation, the proposed development is likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in-combination, on the coastal North Kent Special Protection Areas (SPAs)/Ramsar sites from recreational disturbance on the over-wintering bird interest. On this basis, a tariff of £253.83 per new dwelling is required.

Under the outline application, the applicant signed a SAMMS Contribution Agreement and paid the appropriate tariff for the development to meet the requirements of paragraphs 174 and 180 of the NPPF 2021 and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposed appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the development is acceptable and with regards to design and impact on amenities. The proposal would therefore be in line with the provisions of Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, saved Policies T1, T5 and P3 of the Local Plan 1994, and paragraphs 109 and 127(f) of the NPPF 2021.

Recommendation:

Approve with conditions.

See draft Decision.

Case Officer: Katherine Parkin	Team Leader: Faye Hobbs
Signed: <i>K. Parkin</i>	Signed: 
Dated: 09.02.2022	Dated: 10 February 2022