
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT,
GARAGES LOCATED AT THE RUSSETS,
STRAND CLOSE, MEOPHAM, DA13 0HB**

DECEMBER 2025

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1.1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Frankham Projects in support of an application for planning permission for the erection of five new dwellings, car parking, cycle parking, refuse storage and landscaping, for our client, Gravesham Borough Council.

This statement sets out the factors behind the submitted design proposals, putting them into the context of urban design, planning and other factors influencing the site and the design proposals.

1.2 KEY PROJECT AIMS AND NEED

The aim of the project is to provide five houses on a currently underutilised brownfield site which currently has twenty-nine garages on site, eighteen of the garages are currently let. Of the let garages, five of these are let to a residents with a postcode within the immediate surrounding area. The remaining thirteen garages are let to a postcode outside of the local area. It is likely that all of the garages will be used for general storage. The proposal is to provide much needed affordable housing stock for Gravesham Council, using their own sites which are underused and present an asset maintenance issue for the Council.

The scheme provides a flatted development, providing five two-bed dwellings.

2. SITE ASSESSMENT

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

The site is located along The Russets, which leads to the north of Strand Close. The site forms a rectangular shape with two rows of garages running perpendicular to The Russets. A total of 29 garages are present as existing with a small accessway to the south as well as the main entrance from the east. As mentioned previously, some garages are vacant and a significant number are not let locally, the site is an underutilised brownfield site. It is believed that the garages are used for general storage and not for vehicle parking.

The site is located in Hook Green, approximately 1km north of Meopham. The surrounding area is residential in character with detached two storey dwellings along the Russets to the north of the site, The Strand is characterised by two-storey terraced housing.

The site is accessed via The Russets. There are three bus stops within 200m which provide regular services into Gravesend and Sevenoaks. Meopham Station is approximately 1.3 km from the site which provides frequent rail services into London and the south-east.

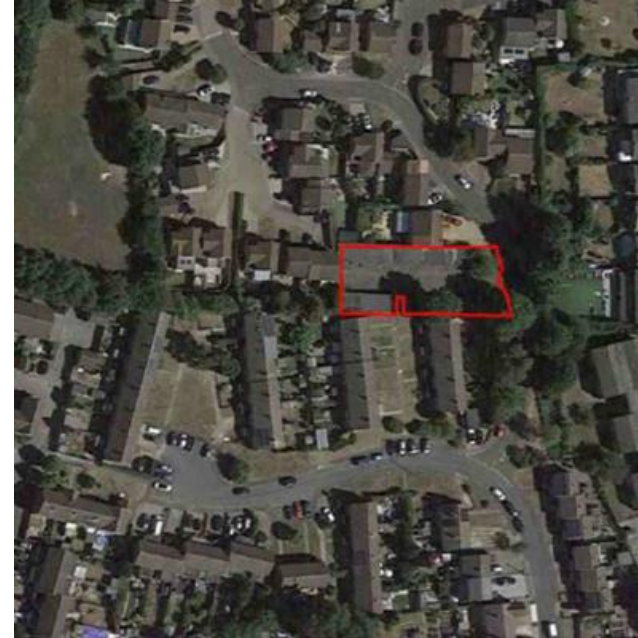


Figure 1: Application site within red line boundary

2.1 SITE CONTEXT



Figure 2: View looking west.



Figure 3: View of garages within the site.



Figure 4: View of garages within the site.



Figure 5: View of garages within the site.



Figure 6: View of access to and from the site, looking south.



Figure 7: View of the site looking west.



Figure 8: View of the site looking east.



Figure 9: View from within the site.



Figure 10: View of the street from outside the site.



Figure 11: View of The Russets looking north.



Figure 12: View of Strand Close to the south of the site.



Figure 13: View of Strand Close to the south of the site.

2.2 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

LEGEND

- 1 PROPOSED SITE
- 2 SAINT PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
- 3 CHINNERY COURT
- 4 SURROUNDING HOUSING

SITE PHOTO



PRECEDENT

The proposed three storey flat development, takes strong influence from the surrounding context of Strand Close. Strand Close is a residential area made up of housing and also several flats, indicated in the provided photos of the area. The proposed will make use of brickwork, in keeping with brickwork used for the buildings surrounding the site. The proposed building which will be in line with the height of the neighboring houses either side. The proposed will also match the surrounding properties pitched gable roofs with use of roof tiles. The proposal is therefore in keeping with the architectural style of the area.



KEY MATERIALS



Buff Multi Brick



Tuscan Red Multi



Pagas Grey Black



Natural Red Concrete Tiles



White Powder Coated Aluminum windows & doors

Brick is chosen to match the color and texture of nearby buildings, helping the new development blend into the streetscape. This material is also used in creative ways—like patterns or mixing with other materials—to give a modern feel without disrupting the look of the area.

Use of Three-Tone Brickwork:

The use of Buff Multi Brick, Pagas Grey Black and Tuscan Red Multi helps to visually break up the building's massing and add depth to the facade. The brickwork tones are all used in the immediate surrounding area. The contrast introduces variety and rhythm.

Natural Red Concrete tiles are used to match traditional roofs, with shapes and angles that follow nearby buildings. Roof materials are chosen to blend in and last long, respecting the local character.

White Powder Coated Aluminum windows and doors to match the colour of the surrounding properties window and door frames while providing excellent durability, low maintenance, and high security.

SURROUNDING CONTEXT



The surrounding context is mixed in character with detached dwellings to the north, terraced properties to the south and a flatted development to the east. Dwellings largely have a traditional construction, using brickwork and tiled roof.

The proposed development takes reference from this surrounding existing character, using brickwork for the walls, respecting the building heights of adjacent properties and utilising pitched gable tiled roofs.

3. PLANNING HISTORY & POLICY

3.1 PLANNING HISTORY

Pre-application advice has been sought on this proposal (planning ref: **PRE20250104**). This application was submitted in April 2025, with feedback received on 16th July 2025 following a site meeting.

The pre-application feedback received detailed the acceptability of the principle of development, with the density of development acceptable. The response highlighted the mixed character of the surrounding area, a two-storey development with accommodation at roof level was recommended to respond well to the surroundings. Recommendation was made to provide a design which appeared as dwellings, as opposed to a flatted development, to appear in keeping with the surrounding development. In relation to residential amenity, a daylight sunlight assessment along with a section drawing showing land levels should be submitted to demonstrate the development would have an acceptable impact. The pre-application response set out what additional supporting information should be submitted in support of a future application.

No other relevant planning history is applicable to the proposed development and the application site.

3.2 PLANNING POLICY

The proposals have been developed to comply with the key principles of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** (2024), as well as the **Gravesham Core Strategy** (2014).

Gravesham Local Plan – Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (February 2025):

GBC's five-year housing land supply statement identifies as of February 2025, the Council has a housing land supply (including the 20% buffer for period 2024-2029) of 3 years. This is significantly below the five-supply required by the NPPF and triggers the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF. This requires the Council to consider planning applications for housing against paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF and undertake a balancing exercise to ensure that the correct weight is attached to the shortfall in meeting the five-year housing land supply requirement and the provisions within the NPPF.

Design for Gravesham (2024).

4. DESIGN PROPOSAL

4.1 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Site selection process:

Gravesham Borough Council has a significant number of garage sites under their ownership which have been identified as underperforming assets. There was an initial assessment regarding the condition and frequency of use of the garages at these sites. This provided a number of sites which are underused, poor condition brownfield sites, where there is development potential.

Frankham Projects undertook an assessment to determine the viability and development potential for the sites selected.

The Strand Close site provides a large developable area compared to some similar sites, providing good opportunity for development. The site is within a sustainable location, making it appropriate for residential development. On this basis, the site was considered an appropriate option for residential development.

4.1 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

Initial design consideration looked to establish a developable area on the site, respecting the root protection areas of trees on site, protected by a TPO and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

Following this, a pre-application submission was made in April 2025. No detailed design approach was submitted at this stage, however the pre-application established the footprint and scale of the development proposed.

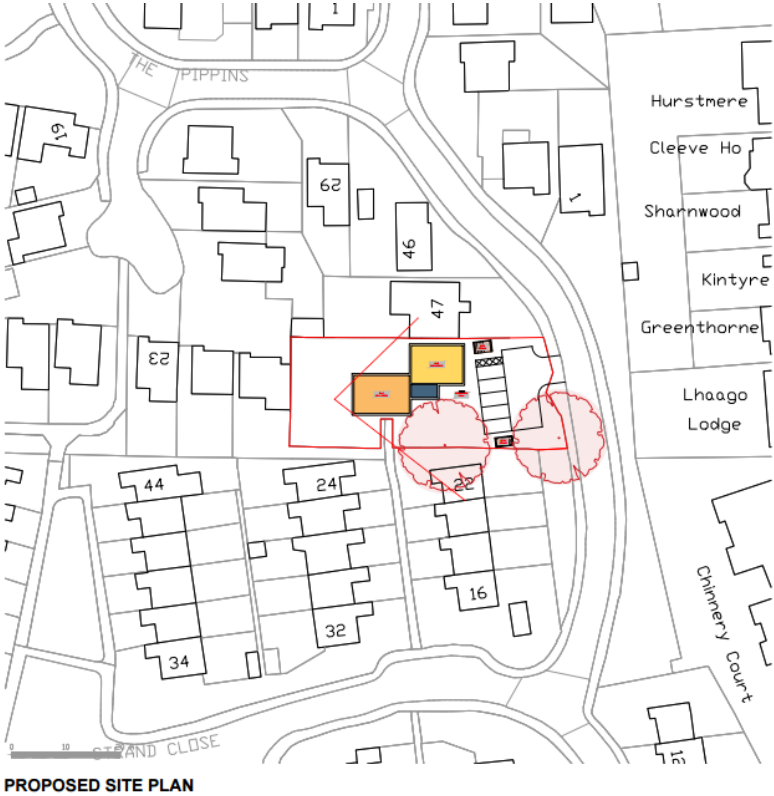
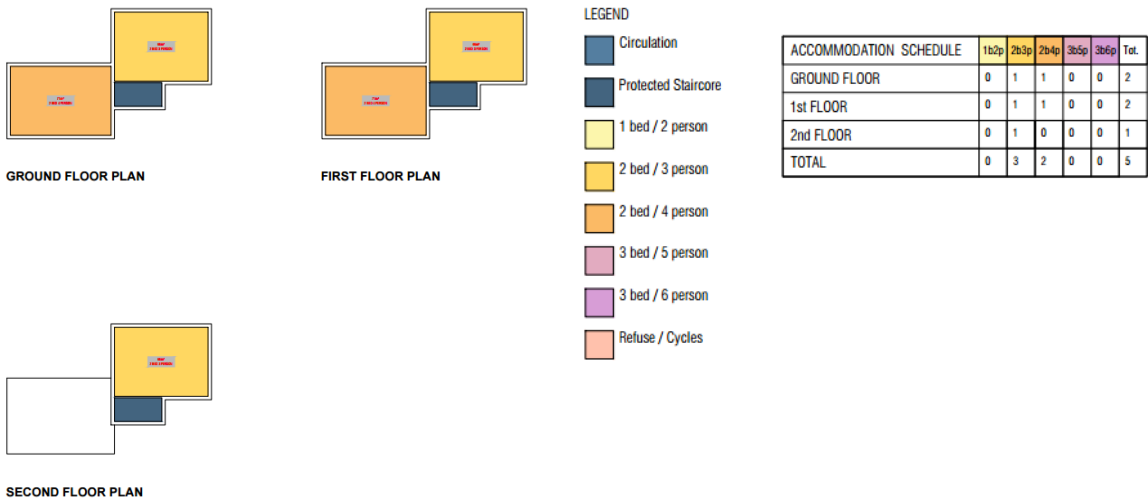


Figure 14: Proposed design – pre-application stage.

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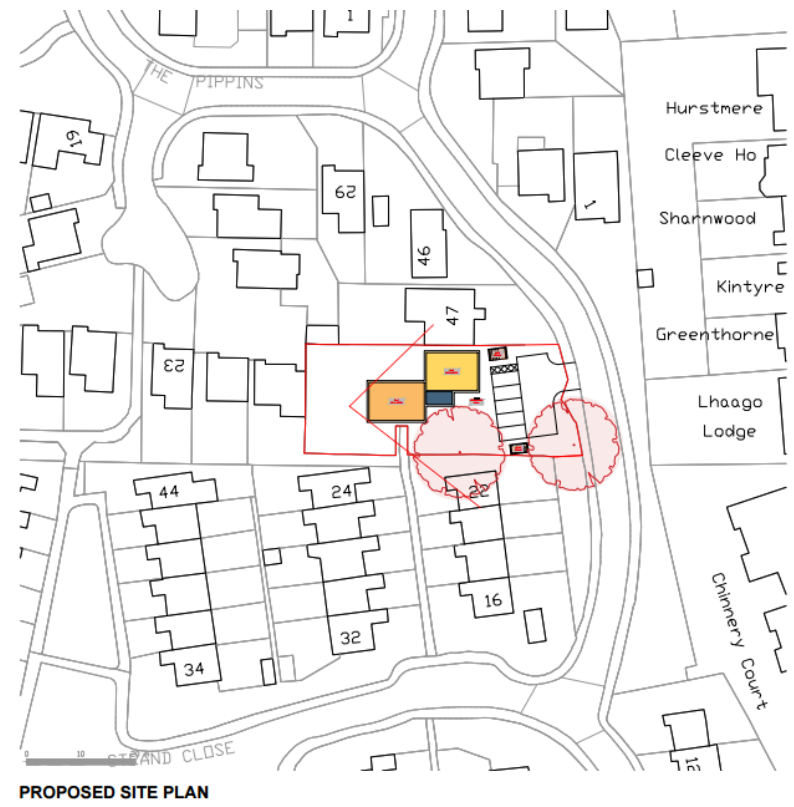
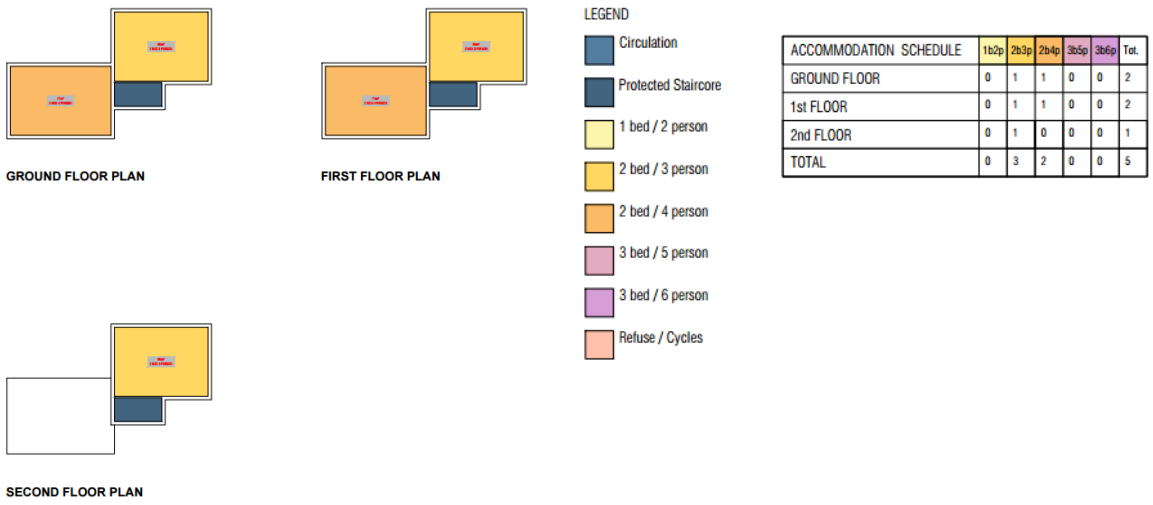


Figure 14: Proposed design – pre-application stage.

4.2 PROPOSED LAYOUT



The proposed development will be sited within the centre of the plot, the siting has been dictated by the front building line of No.47 The Russets, with the front building line of the proposed and adjacent buildings lining up. Parking is proposed to the front of the site, with the existing access retained. The building steps up to provide accommodation in the loft space to the west of the site, due to land level changes this allows for the development to have the same ridge height as neighbouring properties to the south.

A communal landscaped area would be provided surrounding the site, with refuse storage and cycle parking to the front of the site.

Figure 15: Proposed Layout

4.2 PROPOSED LAYOUT

LEGEND			
	Circulation		
	Protected Staircase		
	2 bed / 3 person		
	2 bed / 4 person		
	Refuse / Cycles		

ACCOMMODATION SCHEDULE			
UNITS	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
AREA SCHEDULE	114	225	141

The proposed development provides five, two-bedroom dwellings, across three floors, with the third floor providing accommodation within the loft space.

All units would be provided with a balcony either to the front or rear elevation of the building.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



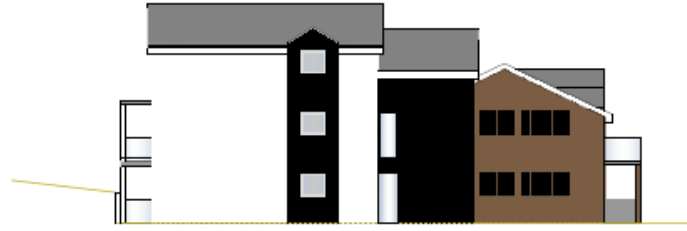
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Figure 16: Proposed floor plans

4.3 PROPOSED ELEVATIONS



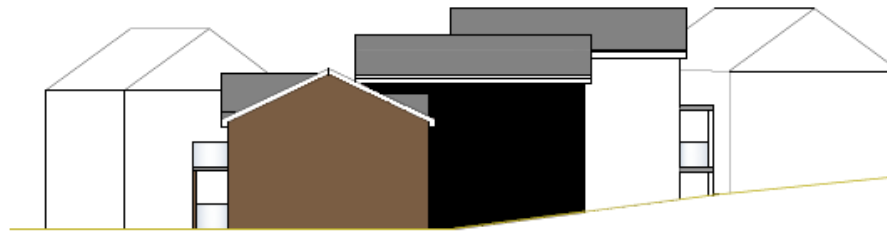
PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION (south)



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION (north)

The proposal comprises a part two-storey, part three-storey development. Where the scheme rises to three storeys, the upper level is contained within the roof space. To the front of the site, the development would appear as two storeys and be visible within the street scene. The proposed ridge heights match those of neighbouring properties, with the roofline aligned to the developments to the north and south. This approach appropriately responds to the changes in land levels across the site.

The design takes inspiration from the character of individual dwellinghouses, ensuring it integrates with the predominant form of development in the area. It incorporates pitched roofs and materials that are consistent with the surrounding context. As such, the scheme clearly reflects and respects the established character of the locality.

The surrounding area features traditionally constructed buildings, the proposed design reflects this approach whilst providing modern design elements.

Figure 17: Proposed Elevations

4.4 SCALE & MASSING



The development has been designed with consideration of the ridge heights of neighbouring properties along with the building lines and pattern of development. The site has a considerable level change which has been taken into consideration when establishing the relationship between the development and the street scene.

The development integrates well with the scale and character of the area and provides an appropriate form of development.

Figure 6: Block Massing

5. ACCESS, PARKING AND REFUSE

5.1 ACCESS, PARKING, AND REFUSE

Accessibility:

The site would be accessed from the existing vehicle access from the east of the site. The existing vehicle crossover will be retained providing access to the site.

Parking:

Five car parking spaces are sited to the east of the site adjacent to the site entrance, this ensures compliance with KCC Parking Standards.

The development would result in the loss of the existing garages, as detailed in the Transport Statement, these are largely used by users who are not local and for general storage. The loss of the garages therefore will not result in unacceptable on street parking pressure.

Refuse Storage:

Refuse storage would be located to the front of the site and would be collected from this position through the vehicle access point.

Cycle Parking:

Cycle parking would be sited to the front of the site.



Figure 18: Proposed site layout

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 SUMMARY

The proposed scheme makes effective use of an underutilised brownfield garage site, contributing positively to Gravesham's housing stock. The development delivers five much-needed, affordable two-bedroom homes, directly supporting local housing objectives.

The design represents a high-quality and contextually sensitive response to the site, comprising a part two-storey, part three-storey building which respects surrounding scale and character. The upper level is accommodated within the roof space, helping the development to integrate sensitively with its setting.

The scheme also provides well-considered ancillary features, including on-site parking, secure cycle storage, and refuse facilities, ensuring functionality and convenience for future residents. In addition, new landscaping will enhance the appearance of the site, soften its relationship with neighbouring properties, and create a pleasant environment that supports residents' wellbeing.

Overall, the development represents a sustainable and thoughtful regeneration of the site, delivering five well-designed, affordable homes that integrate successfully with the local character while improving the quality of housing provision in the Higham area.
