

19 Thong Lane, Gravesend – proposed first floor adaptation.

Design Statement

Introduction

Following the submission of a planning application for the enlargement of the existing dwelling at 19, Thong Lane, Gravesend, (Application Ref. **20220140**) a planning refusal was received. As a result a careful design review of the grounds of refusal has taken place resulting in revised design proposals which have been presented to Gravesham Council in the form of a Pre-app prior to this planning application.

Review of reasons for refusal of application 20220140.

The refusal notice cited the following two reasons for refusal -

Reason 1.

The design, layout and form of the development has not been derived from a robust analysis of local context and character. The design of the scheme in this case is unacceptable, wherein the roof of the dwelling appears to be 'squashed down' and with two dominant elements at front and rear that are tantamount to a conventional two storey development, resulting in what is an unnecessarily bulky development and an awkward design that is out of character with the immediate street scene, which is comprised of bungalows or chalet style bungalows. Moreover, the size and bulk of the development results in a dwelling that would be of an expansive scale from front to back and in that respect the scheme is not subservient to or subordinate to the host dwelling.

The development is therefore contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and fails to comply with the key principles of the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (October 2021), and section 12 (achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), and the development will not make a positive contribution to the street scene or the character of the area.

Reason 2.

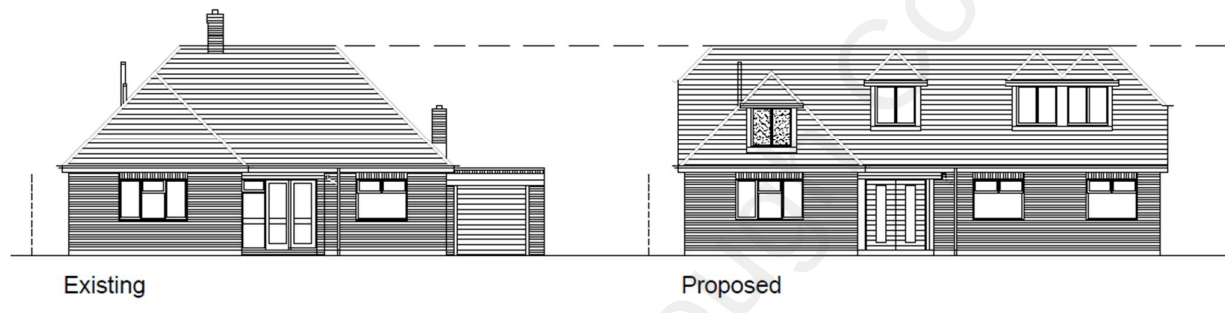
The proposed development by reason of its proximity, depth, scale and height are such that the development would be a particularly unneighbourly form of development and would be overbearing and harm the outlook from the neighbouring dwelling at 21 Thong Lane, and would therefore fail to safeguard the amenity of adjoining occupiers, which would conflict with the requirements of the Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), section 12 (achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), and the adopted Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (October 2021).

In reviewing the reasons given, in addition to the explanations given in the Planning Officer's Report, we have concluded that the following key design issues are to be addressed:-

1. Contain any first floor development within the existing ridge height
2. Reduce the bulk of the first floor adaptation
3. Give consideration to the relationship of the proposals to No 21 Thong Lane.
4. Retain the existing chalet bungalow style and character of the existing building particularly in the context of its relationship to adjacent chalet bungalows.
5. Create dormer windows that are proportionate and appropriate in scale and outlook.

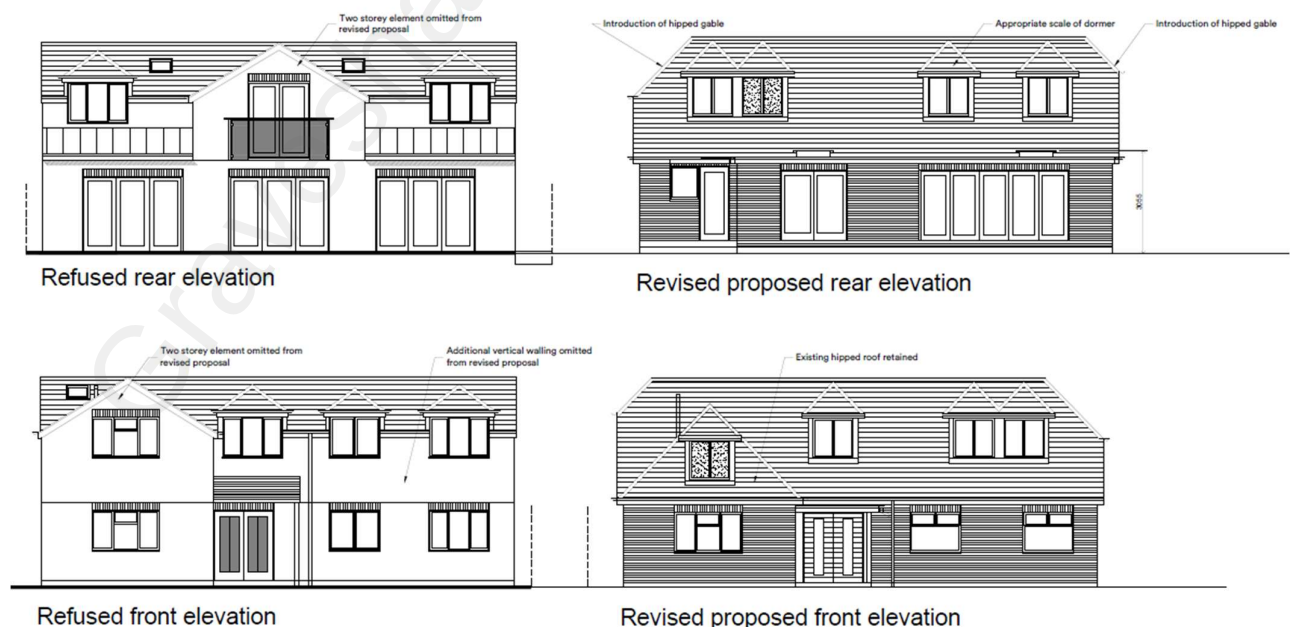
Item 1 - Contain any first floor development within the existing ridge height.

The amended proposal has been restricted to the height of the existing ridge as illustrated below.



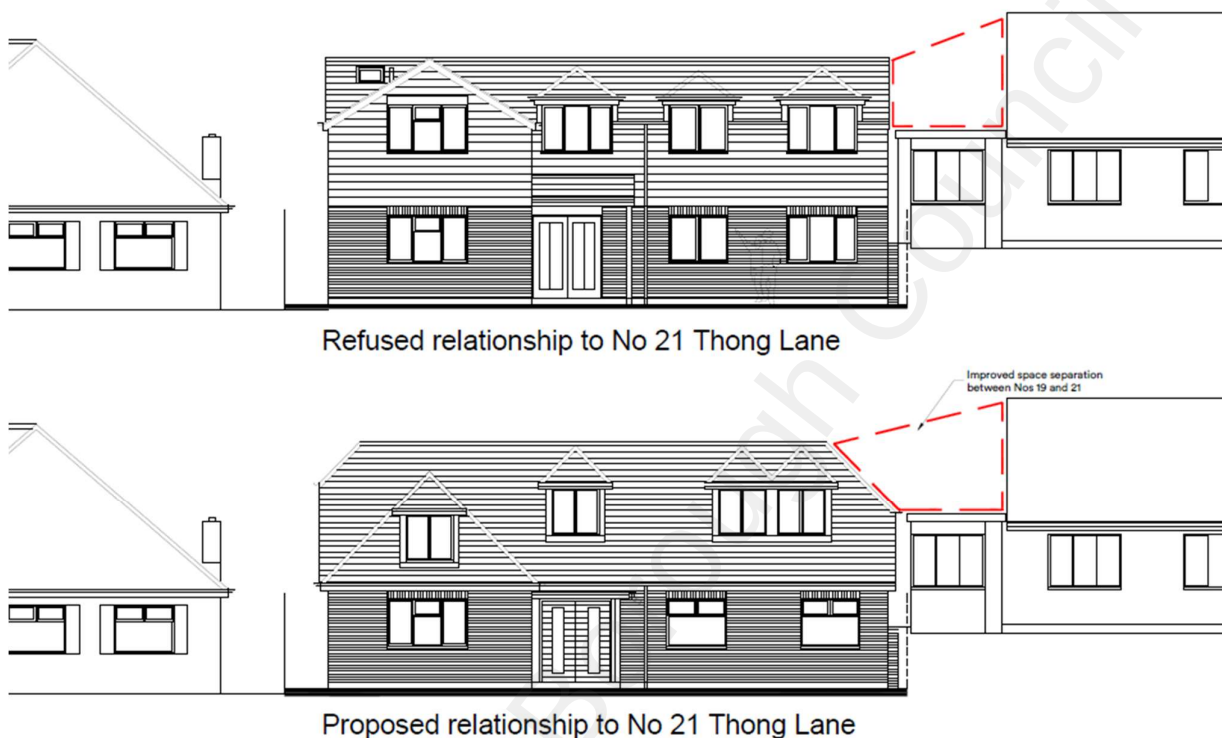
Item 2 - Reduce the bulk of the first floor adaptation

Maintaining the ridge height as existing as helped to reduce the bulk of the building. However the bulk has also been further addressed by the introduction of hipped gables to both north and south elevations, and the retention of the existing main roof slope rather than an increase in vertical walling. Furthermore the proposed two storey extension to the rear (east) elevation has been omitted completely. All as illustrated below.



Item 3 - Give consideration to the relationship of the extension to No 21 Thong Lane.

As illustrated below the introduction of a part hipped gable serves to reduce the impact on No 21 and introduces an improved space separation between the two dwellings.



Item 4 - Retain the existing chalet bungalow style and character of the existing building particularly in the context of its relationship to adjacent chalet bungalows.

As illustrated in the items above, the omission of full gables in favour of the introduction of hipped gables; the omission of two storey elements (to front and rear elevations); and the use of proportionate and appropriately scaled dormer windows, have all allowed the chalet style of the original bungalow to be maintained.

Item 5 - Create dormer windows that are proportionate and appropriate in scale and outlook

The proposed dormer windows have been reduced in width from 1800mm width to 1200mm width. This has allowed the overall bulk of the dormer to be reduced to create more proportionate and balanced dormer features.

Other Design considerations

Relationship to No 17 – A part hip has been introduced to the gable facing No 17 to reduce the bulk of the first floor extension. The existing obscured bathroom windows facing No 17 are to remain, and the existing glazed door providing side access is to be partially

blocked up and a new window serving the bedroom fitted. The new window is positioned opposite a single storey brick structure on the adjoining property, and the existing steps serving the redundant doorway are to be removed as part of the proposal. An existing slit window is also to be bricked up.

Cycle storage – A permanent cycle storage shed is to be provided and is indicated on the proposed Block Plan.

Car parking – 2No 2.5 x 5m car parking spaces are indicated on the proposed block plan. These are positioned to take advantage of the in/out driveway which will allow cars to leave the site in a forward gear.

Permitted development

Part of the proposal which was refused was the creation of a ground floor extension to the rear of the building. This element was not contentious, nor referenced in the refusal notice. A consent for the ground floor rear extension has subsequently been approved as permitted development and is indicated on the application drawings to give a context for the intended development. (Application Ref 20220451).

Pre-App review

A review of the Pre-application drawings by the Local Authority (ref. PRE20220140) has found that the revised proposals submitted as part of this planning application retain the chalet style character of the bungalow rather than creating the essentially two storey proposal which was refused.

The introduction of the part hip at the southern end in particular improves and reduces the impact on No 21, and the omission of the front and back two storey elements addresses the bulk of the refused design proposal.

Summary

The revised proposals to which this Design Statement relates have been prepared in response to the grounds for the refusal of the previous planning application. The bulk of the proposal has been reduced and attention paid to the form and scale of the proposals with regard to the immediate context and setting. We consider that these proposals now broadly meet the objectives of Local and Nation Planning Policy Guidance for this scale of development.

22.06.2022

P Cross