

Planning, Design and Access Statement.

23 Walmers Avenue, Higham, ME3 7EH.

23 Walmers Avenue is a detached house on the south side of Walmers Avenue. The house is located on higher ground than the road and the existing garage is at the front of the plot and adjoining the neighbour's garage. Currently, the garage is too narrow to house the applicant's car so it is proposed to increase the width of the garage slightly and to increase the depth by 1 metre.

The changes proposed will enable a car to be parked in the garage at night and to also enable easier access to the garage from the house via new external steps down to the rear of the garage and via a new rear pedestrian access door.

The applicants have a number of fruit trees in the front garden and harvest the fruit which they store in the freezer in the garage along with other frozen food.

The garage is also used to store other items such as garden tools etc.

The current internal garage width is about 2.7 metres and length is 5 metres. The proposed width will be 4.4m wide and 6.2 metres. Brick piers to the side walls affect the usability of the current garage. The applicants have a modern car which is wider than their previous vehicle.

There is a drive that leads up to the garage enabling the car to be parked off the road. Widening the drive will enable visitors to park in the drive as well when the owners car is parked outside the enlarged garage.

The wall to the right side of the garden will be re-built on the line of the extended garage wall. The wall will be re-built in the same style as the existing wall.

The garage height is also to be increased in height to enable the applicants to store items in trays installed between roof joists. The proposed height will be the same as the adjacent garage.

Design

The design is in keeping with the current and adjacent garage. The garden has a front boundary wall and hedges around the front garden screening the garage from view other than from the road.

Planning

Gravesham Borough Council's *Residential Layout Guidelines SPG2* (originally adopted 1996, amended 2020) provide detailed requirements to ensure high-quality residential development. All planning applications for new homes or conversions must comply with these standards.

The alterations have a very limited effect on the size of the garden to the house with the garden being of very good size and in excess of the requirements under the “Residential Layout Guidelines” applying to new build houses.

Policy CS19: Development and Design Principles.

This application seeks consent to minor changes to an existing garage. The changes will not have any determinantal impacts on neighbouring houses. The works will make the garage useable, which complies with design principles which consider adaptations to meet changing life requirements and making buildings secure, reducing opportunities for crime by enabling the applicants to park their car in the garage, rather than being left on the drive.

KCC Parking Standards suggest a garage length of 7 metres and width of 3.6 metres for a single car garage, however we consider the proposed garage is of adequate length and the additional width enables the garage to also be used for cycle storage which isn't a requirement for the applicants, however this does address a future requirement where there may be a need to store cycles in the garage.

Changes proposed to the garage make it far more useable and will enable the applicants to use the garage to park their car securely.

Providing rear access to the garage from the garden will save the applicants needing to go down the sloping path and steps to the front of their garden and round to open the garage on wet and cold dark evenings during the winter which will be safer for the applicants and for other occupants of the house.

Access

The house sits on high ground on the south side of Walmers Avenue so there are steps and a sloping path from the road up to the house. New steps are proposed which will lead to the rear of the garage. Due to the topography of the site, steps are unavoidable. Having access to the garage closer to the house will help the applicants greatly for reasons mentioned above.

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