

Planning Statement for Erection of a Single 2-Bedroom Dwelling

**Rear Garden of 40 Cross Lane East,
Gravesend,
Kent
DA12 5HB
May 2025**



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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a **revised full planning application** for the construction of a **single 2-bedroom dwelling** on land to the rear of **40 Cross Lane East, Gravesend, Kent**.

The application follows the refusal of a previous scheme (**Ref: 20240680**) for the erection of **two 1-bedroom flats**, which was subsequently **dismissed on appeal** (**Ref: APP/K2230/W/24/3354687**). The revised proposal responds comprehensively to the concerns raised by both the **Local Planning Authority** and the **Planning Inspector**, specifically addressing issues relating to **overdevelopment**, the **impact on local character**, **neighbour amenity**, and the **quality of accommodation for future residents**.

This submission represents a **significantly scaled-back and refined scheme**, carefully designed to sit comfortably within its context and contribute positively to **local housing provision** while fully complying with **local and national planning policy**.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises part of the **rear garden of No. 40 Cross Lane East**, a **two-storey end-of-terrace dwelling** located at the junction of **Cross Lane East and Central Avenue** in Gravesend. The property sits at a prominent corner plot within a well-established **residential neighbourhood**.

The surrounding area is characterised by **predominantly two-storey terraced and semi-detached dwellings**, arranged in a formal **grid pattern**, typical of mid-20th-century suburban development. Most properties feature **modest frontages with deeper rear gardens**, contributing to a cohesive residential layout.

To the rear of properties along Cross Lane East and adjacent Portland Avenue, gardens create an area of relatively **open and green character**, especially evident around Central Avenue. However, there is also a **visible pattern of domestic-scale outbuildings** and ancillary structures located within these rear gardens. These buildings vary in scale, materiality, and function but collectively establish a precedent for small, low-rise built form within this part of the urban fabric.

The application site is located within the **urban boundary of Gravesend**, as defined in the **Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy**, and is well-situated in terms of accessibility. The site is within **walking distance of local amenities**, including **schools, shops, parks**, and **Gravesend town centre**. It is also served by **regular public transport links**, including bus services from Wrotham Road and nearby access to **Gravesend railway station**, providing direct connections to London and other regional destinations.

In this context, the site represents a sustainable location for modest residential development, consistent with the principles of **urban intensification** and **efficient land use** promoted by both local and national planning policy.

3. The Revised Proposal

This revised application seeks planning permission for the erection of a **modest, single 2-bedroom dwelling** within the rear garden of 40 Cross Lane East. The scheme has been significantly **scaled back** from the previously refused proposal for two one-bedroom flats and now reflects a **context-sensitive and neighbourly approach** to development.

Key Elements of the Revised Scheme:

- **Dwelling Type:** One **2-bedroom, 3-person** single-family dwelling;
- **Gross Internal Area (GIA):** **62.5 sqm**, exceeding the **Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS)** requirement of 61 sqm for a 2-bed, 3-person dwelling;
- **Building Height:** **4.7 metres to ridge**, ensuring a **low-profile built form** appropriate to the surrounding rear-garden context;
- **Amenity Space:** **59.5 sqm** of **private and functional outdoor amenity space**, well above the 37.2 sqm minimum requirement set out in the Gravesham Residential Layout Guidelines;
- **Roof Design:** A **hipped roof form**, with **no dormers or rooflights**, selected to minimise massing and avoid visual or privacy impacts on neighbouring properties;
- **External Materials:** High-quality, **traditional materials** including **brickwork and tiled roofing**, matching the character of the host dwelling and surrounding properties;
- **Waste and Cycle Storage:** Provision for **secure and accessible bin and cycle storage** within the site;
- **Parking:** **No on-site parking** proposed, in recognition of the site's **sustainable location** with good access to public transport and local amenities, consistent with **Core Strategy Policy CS11**.

Design Rationale

This revised proposal has been carefully designed to eliminate the **bulk, overdevelopment and privacy concerns** raised in the previous refusal and appeal. The **hipped roof form** softens the profile of the building, ensuring that it remains **visually unobtrusive** and consistent with the domestic character of other outbuildings and extensions in the locality.

By reducing the number of units and improving separation from neighbouring plots, the scheme enhances both **visual harmony** and **residential amenity**, making efficient use of brownfield land in a sustainable urban location.

4. Planning History and Reasons for Refusal

A previous planning application for the site (**Ref: 20240680**) was submitted to **Gravesham Borough Council** for the construction of **two 1-bedroom flats** and was **refused on 21 October 2024**. The applicant subsequently appealed the decision under **Appeal Ref: APP/K2230/W/24/3354687**, but the appeal was **dismissed** following a site visit on 31 March 2025 and a decision issued on 23 April 2025.

The **Council's Delegated Report** and the **Appeal Inspector's decision letter** collectively identified the following key planning issues:

4.1 Overdevelopment and Plot Cramping

The proposal was considered to result in a **cramped and contrived layout**, with insufficient spacing around the building footprint. The limited set-backs from plot boundaries and overall site coverage were viewed as indicative of **overdevelopment** in a rear garden context.
(Council Report, pp. 9–10)

4.2 Character and Appearance

The proposed building was criticised for its **discordant roof form, dormer windows**, and standalone position, which failed to reflect the typical scale, form, and architectural coherence of neighbouring development. The Inspector concluded that the scheme would harm the **character and appearance of the area**, particularly when viewed from Central Avenue.
(Appeal Decision, paragraphs 6–10)

4.3 Neighbour Amenity

The scheme was found to negatively affect the **privacy and outlook** of neighbouring properties:

- **Overlooking** into the rear garden of **No. 38 Cross Lane East** from first-floor dormers was deemed unacceptable, despite the offer of obscure glazing.
- The **rear elevation's mass** presented to **No. 40 Cross Lane East** was judged to be **visually overbearing**, creating an **oppressive impact** on garden outlook.
(Appeal Decision, paragraphs 11–14)

4.4 Living Conditions for Future Occupiers

The Inspector found that the proposed amenity space was both **undersized** and **poorly configured**, offering little privacy or practical usability for future residents. The design lacked compliance with amenity space standards and failed to achieve the intended quality of accommodation.
(Appeal Decision, paragraphs 15–18)

4.5 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) Contribution

As the site lies within the **Zone of Influence of the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA**, a **SAMMS payment** was required to mitigate recreational impacts. At the time of determination, the contribution had not been confirmed or secured.
(Council Report, p. 12)

The revised application now submitted has been developed specifically to address each of these concerns in full. The next section of this statement sets out how these issues have been resolved through a carefully revised design and planning strategy.

5. Response to Refusal Reasons

This section outlines how the revised proposal directly addresses each of the key reasons for refusal and the appeal dismissal.

5.1 Overdevelopment and Cramping

The previous proposal for two flats was considered excessive in scale and intensity. The revised scheme significantly reduces the building's footprint and improves site layout:

- The development now comprises a **single dwelling**, effectively **halving the number of residential units** and reducing site coverage.
- The proposed dwelling benefits from **59.5 sqm of private amenity space**, which significantly exceeds the **minimum standard of 37.2 sqm** set out in the **Gravesham Residential Layout Guidelines**.
- The building is now positioned with **generous spacing to all sides**, offering a much **improved relationship with neighbouring properties** and a stronger sense of openness within the plot.

5.2 Character and Appearance

One of the Inspector's key objections was the building's form, which was considered incongruent with the local context. The revised design now reflects the surrounding built form:

- All **dormer windows and rooflights have been removed**, eliminating elements previously described as visually intrusive.
- The dwelling now features a **hipped roof**, a design more in keeping with **domestic-scale outbuildings** and ancillary structures in the area.
- The **maximum height has been reduced to 4.7 metres**, ensuring the building is appropriately **subordinate** within its setting and does not dominate the plot.
- External finishes will include **traditional brickwork and tiled roofing**, matching the existing host dwelling and reinforcing visual continuity with surrounding properties.
- The proposal now complies with **Policy CS19** of the **Gravesham Core Strategy** and the **Design for Gravesham SPD (2024)**, as well as addressing the design concerns identified by the Inspector **(Appeal Decision, paragraph 9)**.



Proposed West Elevation (Front)
(Previously Refused Application)

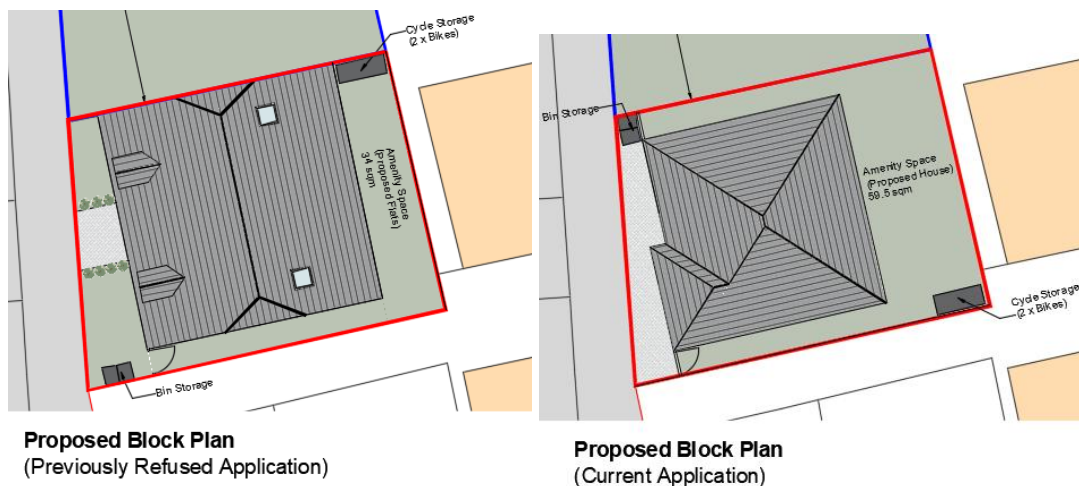


Proposed West Elevation (Front)
(Current Application)

5.3 Neighbour Amenity

The original scheme was considered harmful to the living conditions of neighbouring residents, especially in relation to privacy and outlook. These concerns have now been fully resolved:

- **No windows are proposed at first-floor level**, ensuring that **no overlooking** will occur into the rear gardens of **No. 38 or No. 40 Cross Lane East** (**Appeal Decision, paragraph 12**).
- The dwelling has been **pulled further away from shared boundaries**, and its **lower ridge height** and hipped roof form reduce its perceived bulk and **visual impact on No. 40** (**Appeal Decision, paragraph 13**).
- The resulting development is now **unobtrusive**, and no longer presents an **oppressive elevation or unneighbourly form**.



5.4 Living Conditions for Future Occupants

The revised scheme enhances the quality of internal and external living space to provide a comfortable, policy-compliant residential environment:

- The proposed dwelling offers a **Gross Internal Area of 62.5 sqm**, which **exceeds the minimum NDSS requirement** for a 2-bedroom, 3-person home.
- The **private rear garden is regular in shape, well enclosed, and generously sized**, creating a usable and attractive amenity space that supports a high standard of living (**Appeal Decision, paragraph 17**).
- Unlike the previous scheme, which relied on shared outdoor space, the revised layout ensures that future occupiers benefit from **exclusive, private external space** with full privacy and comfort.

5.5 Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) Contribution

The site lies within the **Zone of Influence of the Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA**, and as such, mitigation of recreational impact is required:

- The applicant confirms that a **SAMMS financial contribution** will be made in line with the adopted tariff, to offset increased recreational pressure from additional residential development.

- This satisfies the mitigation requirements of **Policy CS12**, the **Habitats Regulations 2017**, and guidance from **Natural England** (**Appeal Decision, paragraphs 21–24**).

6. Parking and Sustainability

The proposal reflects a modern, sustainable approach to urban development, in line with local and national transport policy. The site's location and scale support a **car-free scheme**, promoting sustainable travel behaviour.

6.1 Car Parking Provision

- **No on-site car parking** is proposed as part of this application. This approach is considered appropriate given the site's **highly accessible and sustainable location** within the **urban boundary of Gravesend**.
- The proposal aligns with **Core Strategy Policy CS11**, which encourages **reduced car dependency** and supports lower parking provision in locations that are well-served by public transport and local amenities.
- It also complies with **Saved Policy P3** of the Gravesham Local Plan (First Review), which allows for parking flexibility in sustainable urban areas.

6.2 Accessibility and Public Transport

- The site is within **easy walking distance** of multiple **bus stops, shops, schools**, and **Gravesend town centre**, all of which provide access to key services and employment areas.
- **Gravesend railway station** is also nearby, offering **frequent services to London**, making the site highly suitable for **non-car-based commuting**.

6.3 Cycle Storage Provision

- In accordance with sustainable transport principles and **Policy CS11**, the scheme includes **dedicated, secure cycle storage** for future residents. This encourages active travel and helps reduce the need for car ownership.

6.4 Highways Safety and Impact

- It is important to note that **Kent County Council Highways** did **not object** to the previous application, even when two units were proposed, confirming that **no highway safety or congestion issues** were anticipated as a result of development at this site (**Council Report, p. 4**).

7. Policy Compliance Summary

The proposed development has been carefully designed to comply with the relevant provisions of the **National Planning Policy Framework (2023)**, the **Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)**, and supporting **local guidance**. It represents a sustainable and contextually sensitive form of development, making efficient use of urban land.

7.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The proposal aligns with several key objectives of the **NPPF**, including:

- **Paragraphs 60–70:** Supports the delivery of new homes through **well-designed infill development**, particularly on smaller sites within existing settlements.
- **Paragraphs 119 and 130:** Encourages **effective use of land** and the creation of **high-quality, locally appropriate places** that reflect the character and layout of their surroundings.
- **Paragraphs 134 and 11(d):** Planning permission should be granted unless the adverse impacts would **significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits**, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.

7.2 Gravesham Core Strategy (2014)

The revised proposal is consistent with the following key policies of the **adopted Core Strategy**:

- **Policy CS01 – Sustainable Development:** Promotes development in existing built-up areas where infrastructure and services are readily accessible.
- **Policy CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development:** Encourages housing growth within urban areas such as Gravesend, where development can be sustainably accommodated.
- **Policy CS11 – Transport and Access:** Supports development that is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and reduces reliance on the private car.
- **Policy CS12 – Green Infrastructure:** Seeks to protect biodiversity through appropriate mitigation; this proposal includes a **SAMMS contribution** to manage ecological impact on designated sites.
- **Policies CS14 and CS15 – Housing Mix and Density:** Delivers a modest **2-bedroom family dwelling**, helping to diversify housing supply while maintaining a scale and density that fits the local context.
- **Policy CS19 – Development and Design Principles:** Requires high-quality, **locally distinctive design**; this scheme uses traditional materials and a low-profile hipped roof to integrate effectively with the established character of the area.

7.3 Local Supplementary Planning Guidance

The proposal also complies with relevant local guidance, including:

- **Gravesham Residential Layout Guidelines (2020 amendment):** The development provides both internal space and private amenity space that comfortably exceed the minimum requirements.
- **Design for Gravesham SPD (2024):** The revised design takes clear cues from the local vernacular, addressing previous concerns regarding massing, roof form, and character.
- **Technical Housing Standards – NDSS (2015):** The internal floor area of **62.5 sqm** meets and exceeds the national standard for a 2-bedroom, 3-person dwelling.

8. Conclusion

This revised proposal has been carefully prepared to respond constructively to the previous **reasons for refusal** and the findings of the **Planning Inspector's appeal decision**. It demonstrates a clear and thoughtful evolution of the original scheme, addressing all identified concerns in a comprehensive and policy-compliant manner.

Specifically, the revised development:

- **Reduces the intensity of development** by proposing a single, modestly scaled 2-bedroom dwelling;
- **Removes incongruous design features**, such as dormers and overly prominent massing, to deliver a form that complements the surrounding character;
- **Provides a high standard of accommodation**, with generous internal space and over 59 sqm of private, usable amenity space;
- **Safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties**, avoiding any overlooking or overbearing impact;
- **Delivers ecological and environmental compliance**, including appropriate **SPA mitigation** and the commitment to **Biodiversity Net Gain** in accordance with current legislation.

The proposal represents a **sustainable, high-quality infill development** within an established residential area. It makes efficient use of land, contributes positively to local housing delivery, and aligns with both national and local planning policy objectives.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that **full planning permission should be granted**.