

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20241061

Location: 4 Echo Square Gravesend Kent DA12 1NP

Description: Change of use from Class E to Sui Generis for premises to be used as a laundrette.

Applicant: Mr Dursun Karapinar

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form;
Flood Map;
Noise Impact Assessment;
OS Plan;
Block Plan;
Drawing No.0427/4ECHO-01 – Floor Plans (Existing & Proposed); and
Drawing No. 0427/4ECHO-03 – Ground and Basement Floor Plans (Proposed).

Relevant Planning History

No relevant history

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS11 – Transport
- CS19 – Design and Development Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that 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 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 that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the

NPPF (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

GBC Environmental Protection (first comment) - There are flats above the premises and it's not clear if the flat above will be in the same ownership as the launderette. If not, there could be noise/vibration problems depending on the washing and drying machines installed. No information has been provided regarding the equipment to be used. This would be helpful in ascertaining if there is likely to be any noise problems. Can this (and the situation with tef alt above) be clarified with the applicant please.

GBC Environmental Protection (second comment) - Further to the consultation response dated 16 December 2024, a noise assessment has now been submitted – 'Noise Impact Assessment' dated by Sound Licensing Ltd (Report Ref: ECHO SQ, DA12 1NP.NIA Rev 1.0). Noise measurements have been undertaken and a BS4142 assessment carried out based on the equipment to be installed including the dryers being vented externally. An inline silencer is proposed to be fitted and with this in place, noise levels at the flat above will be acceptable and within our usual criteria of being at least 10dB below existing background. In addition, anti-vibrational mountings will be used.

Whilst it is appreciated that this addresses the noise from the ventilation flue serving the dryers, no information regarding noise from the washing machines has been given or assessed with regards to the flat above.

To address this, the following condition is advised:

Noise New Plant Equip Post-Completion Testing

Prior to first operation of the plant and equipment to be installed at the premises when operating at maximum speed and output hereby approved, a post completion noise survey must be undertaken by a competent qualified acoustic consultant. The results of the survey report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The post completion testing shall assess performance of the noise mitigation measures against the noise levels as set in the Report 'Noise Impact Assessment' dated by Sound Licensing Ltd (Report Ref: ECHO SQ, DA12 1NP.NIA Rev 1.0) and also the noise emitted from all other machinery installed at the premises.

If the post completion survey reveals that the local authority's noise criteria of noise from new plant/equipment being 10 dB(A) below the background noise level when expressed as a LA90,15minutes at the boundary of the nearest residential property, has not been met further noise mitigation shall be implemented.

The final noise mitigation scheme shall be operated and maintained thereafter.

KCC Highways – this development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from Highway Authority.

Neighbouring properties

9 surrounding properties were consulted and 4 responses received with the overall consultation date of 27th August 2025. 4 comments were received 2 in support and 2 objecting to the proposal.

Support

- The launderette will be a great addition for everyone-both local residents and nearby businesses. We're really looking forward to its opening, as it will bring convenience and benefit a lot of people in the community.
- It will be very useful for the Residents of the area. As there is not a local laundrette around. Good idea hope it goes through.

Objection

- No need of this in this community as it would create more traffic.
- A more suitable use such as pharmacy would be better located at this site.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for a change of use from a shop to a laundrette.

The application form states there would be one part-time and two full-time employees. The opening hours would be 8am-7pm Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm Saturdays and 10am-4pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Change of use

The application site is situated in a parade of shops with other premises in this terrace being a fish and chip shop, kebab shop, barbers, Chinese Restaurant, Hair dressers, Kitchen, Bathroom and Bedroom shop, cafe, florists and laptop repair shop

The parade is designated as a Local Centre in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 Proposals Map.

The premises are currently unoccupied, and the application form states the last known use was a sewing shop which closed in 2023, as part of a double unit. The unit next is now operating as a hot food takeaway.

Paragraph 90 of the NPPF 2024 supports the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Generally shopping policies seek to protect local centres by safeguarding the retail character and function of existing centres by resisting development that would adversely affect their vitality and viability, and by encouraging the provision of a mix of units where appropriate. Local centres can also be an appropriate location for a range of non-retail services, provided that their shopping basis is not undermined in the process.

The application proposal will bring an empty unit in this Local Centre back into use. The proposed use as a launderette is a commercial use and would not be considered to undermine the vitality of the area and its retail function; rather it would add to its viability. Whilst concern has been raised by objectors that other uses may be more appropriate, it is considered a laundrette is an acceptable use within this location in a Local Centre. The amenity impact will be assessed in the next section of the report.

It is therefore considered that the proposed launderette is an appropriate use in this location and would not harm the character of the area. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy CS08 of the Gravesham

Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 90 of the NPPF.

Design and Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area

No external changes are proposed to the building/shopfront and thus no conflict with the Development Plan on Design issues. Any changes to the shopfront or signage will be subject to their own applications.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2024 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 135f). 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.

There is a potential effect on the living conditions of nearby residents in relation to noise and disturbance from the proposed change of use to a laundrette.

The nearest sensitive residential receptors were noted to be the first-floor windows located on the rear façade of 4 Echo Square at an approximate distance of 3m from the ventilation flue terminus.

The proposed use as a launderette and the associated equipment could lead to additional high levels of noise and vibrations if the premises are not adequately insulated. No noise, vibrations or insulation assessments have been provided in this submission. As such, the Council's Environmental Protection team who advise on noise matters, have requested that no development takes place until such information has been provided to and approved by the local planning authority. No information has been provided on the ventilation systems from driers and therefore a similar pre-commencement condition is required to ensure neighbour amenity.

A Noise Impact Assessment was subsequently undertaken and a BS4142 assessment carried out based on the equipment to be installed including the dryers being vented externally. An inline silencer is proposed to be fitted and with this in place, noise levels at the flat above will be acceptable and within the usual criteria of being at least 10dB below existing background. In addition, anti-vibrational mountings will be used. However, no information regarding noise from the washing machines has been given or assessed with regards to the flat above.

The applicant has suggested the openings hours of 9am to 8pm 365 days a year. However, with there being residential above more appropriate hours are as follows:

8am-7pm Monday to Friday, 9am-7pm Saturdays and 10am-4pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Subject to appropriate conditions, it is considered the proposal would have an acceptable impact on neighbouring properties. As such, the proposal complies with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF 2024.

Parking and Highways

The parade of shops has public parking spaces to the front that remain unaffected as part of this proposal. It must be considered that the site is in a sustainable location and there have been no objections relating to parking in the area from consultees. Concern has been raised on traffic generation from 3rd parties, however, there is sufficient parking to the front and a small public car park to the south to offset any highways impacts.

It is therefore considered that there would be no adverse parking impact from the proposal, and it would therefore comply with Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan 1994 and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

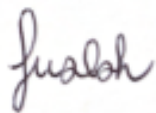
Conclusion

The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the principle of the change of use to a laundrette, and with regards to residential amenity and highway matters. The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of Policies CS08 and CS11 Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan 1994, and NPPF (2024).

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Richard Hart	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	28 th August 2025	Dated:	28 August 2025