

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230813

Location: 66 St Albans Close Gravesend Kent DA12 5SE

Description: Erection of a two storey side extension.

Applicant: Mr Fan

Site Visit Date: 06 September 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Red line site boundary plan;
Existing block plan;
Proposed block plan;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP1 Existing layout plans;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP2 Proposed ground floor layout and existing roof plan;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP3 Proposed first floor layout and roof plan;
Drawing no. DA12AFPP4 Existing and proposed front and rear elevations; and
Drawing no. DA12AFPP5 Existing and proposed side elevations.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

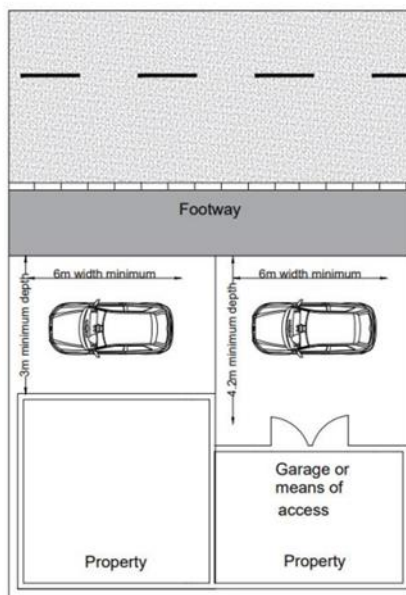
- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3 Residential Parking (2008)
- KCC Residential Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment May (2023)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Highways Officer

This proposal increases the number of bedrooms from three to five and gives no opportunity for off street parking at the property, instead relying on communal parking in laybys on St Albans Close. The layout of the property precludes the parking of a car in the front garden due to its width the high probably access to the front door would be obstructed.

Diagram C & D: Parallel Parking:

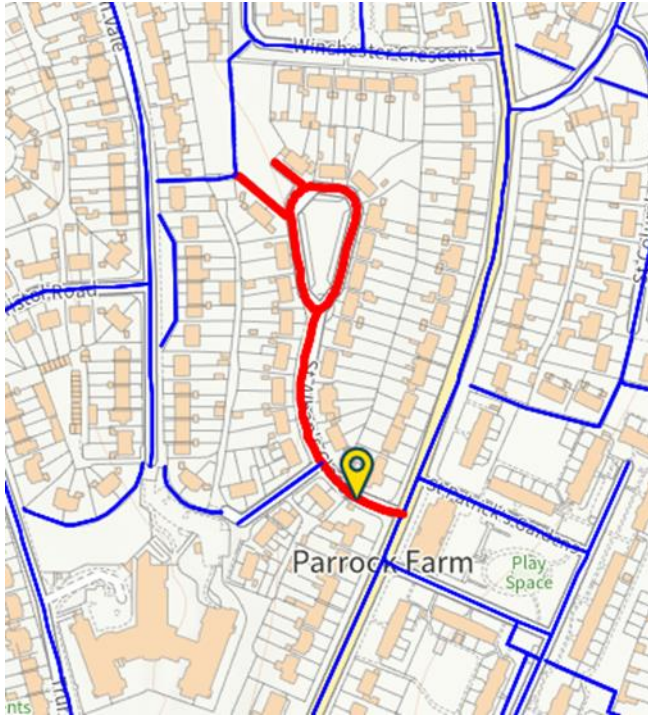


Kent County Council requirements for a dropped kerb when parking is parallel to the carriageway.

The ground floor extension is large enough to serve as a garage and store for a minimum of two cycles (The requirement for the two additional bedrooms). It may even be possible to leave sufficient space for a downstairs WC. The door to the hall would have to be hang so it opened into the hall rather than the garage. This would result in a reversing distance slightly longer than the maximum preferred by the Kent Design Guide, but there is little risk of conflict.

It is noted the narrow service road that serves the property is registered as adopted highway on Find My

Street



<https://www.findmystreet.co.uk/map?usrn=15700702>

There is limited information on the existing parking on St Albans Close as there are only four surveys, 2008, 2012, 2018 and November 2022, none shows the car parking is at capacity, but these are only snap shots with no details on the day or time of the survey. The 2012 and 2018 surveys show a car parked outside the property obstructing the use of the highway.



April 2012



May 2018

Whilst the service road may not be a through route it does appear to be the only vehicular access to the amenity ground and its obstruction could cause maintenance issues and in the worst-case access by the emergency services so should be kept clear.

So, my view is the extension should be refused as it is only likely to increase pressures on, on street parking.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and to six neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF 2023) sets out various design requirements and includes the need for the development to add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 134 of the NPPF 2023 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

In relation to side extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that care is needed when considering the relationship between the proposal and the boundary with the neighbouring property, as the separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of the property and in some locations be part of the character of the area. In addition, side extensions should appear subservient to the original building; be no greater than half the width of the original building; incorporate roof designs to reflect the main roof; and window designs and proportions to reflect those existing and local character.

The application property is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling with three bedrooms located in a residential area. The existing side elevation of the building is a prominent feature of the street scene, as the adjacent land is open and used for recreational purposes.



The proposed development would result in a large, two storey addition to the application building, which would extend the full depth and height of the building. Whilst the proposed extension would be set back from the front building line, the set back would only be 0.3 metres, which would not reduce the size and bulk of the proposal significantly. The proposal would have a width of 3.9 metres and the existing building is 6.8 metres wide. Therefore the extension would be in excess of half the width of the building. These design features mean that the proposed development would not be subservient to the existing building and would undermine its character and appearance.

The proposed side elevation would present a blank façade when viewed from the adjacent open space, which would replace an existing side elevation with four windows, which add interest and break up the extent of the brickwork at the end of the building. This blank facade would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the building.

The proposed front and rear elevations would include new first floor windows in the existing building, which although matching in design with the existing, would unbalance the pair of semi-detached buildings, of

which the application property is a part. It is noted that no other dwelling of the same design, in the area surrounding the application site, has introduced any additional windows in the existing front elevation, at first floor level.

The positive features of the proposal are that the roof and general window design and the proposed facing materials would match with the existing building.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development, by virtue of its size, bulk and design, would not be subservient to the existing building, would add significant bulk to a very publicly visible side elevation, would introduce inappropriate fenestration on the front and rear elevations and a blank façade on the side elevation. As such, the proposal would be out of character with the existing building, would have an unbalancing impact, would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene and would be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), to paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide 2023.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants. In this regard, the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The proposed bedrooms would exceed the minimum floor area requirements for a single and double bedroom in the NDSS and there would be no alteration to the existing garden, which exceeds the requirements for a dwelling with four or more bedrooms in the RLG.

It is noted that the proposal would result in the loss of four windows from the existing side elevation (a bedroom, bathroom and two hallway windows) but due to the provision of replacement windows for the bedroom and bathroom and the fact that the hallway is a non-habitable area, then there would be no significant detriment to the living conditions of future occupiers.

In order to prevent a loss of privacy for future occupiers, any proposed bathroom/w.c./en-suite windows should be conditioned to be permanently obscure glazed.

The proposed development would improve the living conditions for future occupiers and as such, the proposal would not be detrimental to residential amenity and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of neighbouring occupiers. In this regard, the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The closest residential properties to the application site are nos. 64 St Albans Close (located to the south east), nos. 72, 74 and 76 Winchester Crescent (located to the north) and nos. 55 and 57 St Albans Close (located to the south west) across open, recreational land.

The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows to the application property. The RLG set out that privacy distances between facing windows should be met, in order to prevent overlooking. A privacy distance of 21 metres is required for facing windows where there is no private garden area in between and a privacy distance of 26 metres is required where a private garden is within the field of view.

The proposed rear windows would be to a shower room (ground floor) and to a bedroom and bathroom (first floor). The existing boundary treatment would provide screening at ground floor and the shower and bathroom windows would be obscure glazed, therefore these windows would cause no adverse overlooking

impacts. For the rear bedroom window, a privacy distance of 35 metres would be available to the rear elevation of no. 76 Winchester Crescent (the closest neighbour at the rear). Therefore, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the rear windows or the private garden area of that property.

The proposed front windows would be to a dining room (ground floor) and to two bedrooms (first floor). A privacy distance of 27 metres would be available to the front elevation of no. 57 St Albans Close (the closest neighbour at the front). Therefore, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the front windows of that property.

Due to the design of the proposed development and to the layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surrounding dwellings.

Overall, the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Parking and Highways

Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 require new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

The application property has three bedrooms and no on-site parking. The proposed development would result in the building increasing from three to five bedrooms with no on-site car parking provision. The GBC Highways Officer has raised an objection to the proposed development.

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a five bedroom dwelling should have three vehicle parking spaces and a three bedroom dwelling should have two parking spaces. However, it is noted that the Highway Authority have more recent guidance that requires a minimum of two spaces to be provided for a four or more bedroom property and 1.5 spaces for a three bedroom property in a suburban area (Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3 Residential Parking).

According to the KCC Residential Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment document, parking spaces located perpendicular to the roadway should be a minimum of 2.4 metres (width) by 4.8 or 6 metres (depth). Six metres depth would be required if the space is in front of an access door or garage. For a parking space located parallel to the roadway, there should be a minimum of 6 metres width by 3 metres depth (4.2 metres depth if the space is in front of an access door or garage).

The application property does not appear to have sufficient space on the site frontage to provide car parking for two vehicles and in any event, no on-site parking is proposed to be provided.

Whilst it is noted that the application site is located in a sustainable location, close to local shops and services and various bus routes, it is likely that future occupiers would own a private car. Indeed, the proposed five bedroom dwelling, would be likely to result in the occupiers owning multiple cars.

On-street parking in St Albans Close is available but would appear to be under significant demand. There are 24, three bedroom properties surrounding the existing on-street parking areas in St Albans Close (not including other dwellings located further south along the Close). Therefore, between 36 and 48 parking spaces (based on the adopted Vehicle Parking Standards or the Interim Guidance Note 3), would be required to accommodate the vehicles associated with these existing properties. It is noted that very few properties have on-site car parking. The existing parking areas can accommodate around 33 vehicles. Therefore, there is already a shortfall of available on-street parking in the area surrounding the application site.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make insufficient provision for the parking of cars within the

site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and would be likely to lead to cars parking on the public highway, inconvenient to other road users and detrimental to highway safety. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential, Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2 and is in close proximity to a gas pipeline (along the site frontage). However, as the proposed development would be within the confines of an existing residential garden and only a relatively small amount of groundworks would occur, then it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to groundwater, gas infrastructure or archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994. The applicant should be made aware of the gas pipeline via an informative on any planning permission granted.

The application site is located in a smoke control area. As such, advice regarding smokeless fuels/appliances can be given to the applicant in an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development would match with the roof design and external facing materials of the existing building and would have no adverse overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts to surrounding residential occupiers. Furthermore, it would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of future occupiers. All of which weigh in support of the proposal. However, the design of the proposed development would lead to a bulky extension, with excessive width, that would not be subservient to the existing building, would have an unbalancing impact and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene. In addition, the proposal would provide insufficient on-site car parking, which would be detrimental to highway safety.

Overall, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and therefore planning permission should be refused on design and highway safety grounds.

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	19th September 2023	Dated:	22 September 2023