



Planning Statement

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Gravesham Borough Council

In support of an application for planning permission for

Construction of a two bedroom dwelling

in connection with

Land adjacent to 1 Elmfield Close, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0LP

On behalf of

Syon Asset Management, C/o Sevenscroft Ltd.



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Supporting Statement	RJB	06/04/2022

CONTENTS

1. Introduction	5
2. Site Context.....	5
3. Relevant Planning History	5
4. Planning Policy.....	8
5. Proposal.....	9
6. Conclusion	10

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement should be read in conjunction with the drawing numbers 2022/10/01-10 being the as existing and as proposed drawings. These set out the proposed development which is for the demolition of the existing two storey annexe serving No.1 Elmfield Close and the erection of a two bedroom, three storey dwelling to match the existing within the local vicinity along with the retention of the existing parking.
- 1.2 This application follows from a previous refusal of planning permission as set out in the relevant planning history section of this planning statement.

2. Site Context

- 2.1 The land subject to the application is currently a two storey annexe which serves the main house, No.1 Elmfield Close. The road fronts the site and wraps round the side elevation with an access path to the rear.
- 2.2 The existing dwelling has a rendered front at ground floor level, with pale blue cladding below the window and pale blue cement boarding at first and second floor under a flat roof. The annexe has pale blue cement board cladding and white uPVC windows. The side elevation is brickwork with the rear element being rendered at ground floor level with tile hanging to first floor level and white plastic weatherboarding to second floor under a flat roof. The windows and doors are a mix of white uPVC and grey aluminium powder coating.
- 2.3 The street scene is characterised by dwellings of a similar scale, form and appearance as the proposed dwelling. The existing extension, which provides annexe accommodation to the No.1 Elmfield Close is two storey in height, which is somewhat uncharacteristic given the three storey and stepped principal elevations along the southern side of Elmfield Close with parking to the front of the dwelling and the annexe.
- 2.4 The site is not within any designated areas as defined locally or nationally. Although it is acknowledged that it is within the buffer zone (6km) of the designated site at the Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar site.

3. Relevant Planning History

- 3.1 The site has been subject to several planning applications as set out in Table 1 below. These include a similar proposal for the site which was previously not supported by a Planning Statement and also seeks to address the previous grounds for refusal with amendments to submitted scheme.

Planning Reference	Planning Description	Decision	Decision Date
20210901	Demolition of existing one bedroom annexe and erection of a two bedroomed dwelling, with associated works	REFUSED	14/09/2021
20190455	Erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension	REFUSED	05/08/2019
20181216	Demolition of existing annexe and construction of a four bedroom dwelling and association works	REFUSED	16/01/2019

Table 1: Relevant planning history

3.2 Reasons for refusal for the most recent application were as follows:

- The proposed dwelling will result in a cramped form of development that is harmful to the openness within the street scene and create a bulky appearance due to lack of subservience with the main dwelling contrary to the objectives of Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*
- The proposed dwelling falls short of the Nationally Described Space Standards (2015) and Gravesham Residential Layout Guidelines (SPG2) (2020) in terms of substandard bedrooms and therefore will not offer sufficient space for future occupiers, contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*
- The proposal fails to secure a contribution towards strategic mitigation measures within Special Protection Areas, and in the absence of this contribution or adequate information to inform an Appropriate Assessment, the development fails to comply with the requirements of the Habitat Regulations and Section 15 (specifically paragraphs 174, 179, 180 and 181) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and Policy CS12 (Green Infrastructure) of the Gravesham Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014).*

Reason 1

- 3.3 As noted in the original officer report, the immediate street scene is characterised by three storey development. The approval of a two storey side extension is material in the weighing up of the impact of three storey development in this location. The two storey element, has already eroded any apparent openness within the street scene which is attributed in the original Officer report. When viewed in context with the development to the north of the site, where a similar three storey development has been approved on land adjacent to No. 34 Elmfield Close, opposite the application site (Table 2), this would not significantly alter the existing street scene.

Planning Reference	Planning Description	Decision	Decision Date
20130630	Erection of an attached three storey, four bedroom dwelling with associated parking	PERMIT	02/09/2013

Table 2: Associated relevant planning history

- 3.4 It is acknowledged, as outlined in the Officer report for this development that the garden to the side provides some degree of relief. It is, however, more shallow and therefore the proposed development on the application site would be no more cramped or overdeveloped as it would be marginally increased from 3.95m to 4.5m and brought forward in line with the established building line within the street with the addition of additional storey over the existing two storey form. Given the density of the development in this location, the addition of an additional storey over the existing annexe height of two storeys would not appear out of character or harmful to the locality.
- 3.5 One of the key concerns of Officers under the previous application was that an additional storey would result in a loss of openness within the street scene which the current two storey annexe extension affords the street scene. It should be noted that on approach into Elmfield Close, the land rises from Old Road West with No. 30 on the corner of the junction, having a dominant position and extending back into its plot immediately adjacent to the rear garden of No.1 and the application site.
- 3.6 No. 30 to the south of the site, is three storeys in height, with a pitched roof rather than a flat roof, which is proposed under this application. Moreover, it extends to the edge of the footpath which then kinks around the edge of the application site. The corner of Elmfield Close cannot be said to have a high degree of openness which makes such any significant positive contribution to the street scene. Especially when viewed in context with the surrounding built development and its scale, form, bulk and massing.

- 3.7 Given the sustainable location of the site in all other respects, as noted by the Officer in the original report, the harm arising, as previously considered by the Council in their previous decision when the development can now be demonstrated to comply with all other development plan policies and national guidance within the NPPF, the addition of another dwelling to the Council's 5 Year Housing Land Supply and on a site which is not a greenfield site, which is preferable to development, weighs in favour of approval.
- 3.8 The development would closely match the existing vernacular of the buildings within the vicinity and be in keeping with the existing built form within the street scene, similar in width to that approved on land adjacent to No. 34. Additional planting proposed along the frontage of the site has also been proposed and can be conditioned to help soften and provide relief.

Reason 2

- 3.9 The proposed internal layout of the dwelling has been amended through changes to the second floor accommodation to that previously proposed which fell marginally short as set out in the original Officer report. The two bedrooms now meet the National Space Standards.

The dwelling would provide 2 bed (3person) accommodation:

Bedroom 1: Double bedroom 11.6m²

Bedroom 2: Single bedroom 9.6m²

- 3.10 Storage is also provided at ground floor under the stairs, within the built in storage cupboard within the hallway to ensure compliance with the standards set out in the central government guidance.

Reason 3

- 3.11 Therefore suitable mitigation should be secured in line with the Council's established SAMMs mitigation payment, which the applicant would be willing to pay to secure planning approval and address the previous grounds for refusal.

4. Planning Policy

- 4.1 In accordance with section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development hereby sought should be made in accordance with the development plan policies unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.

4.2 The relevant policies in the Development Plan are as follows:

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

CS01 - Sustainable Development

CS02 - Scale & Distribution of Development

CS12 - Green Infrastructure

CS14 - Housing Types and Sizes

CS15 - Housing Density

CS18 Climate Change

CS19 - Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards

5. Proposal

- 5.1 The proposed development is a resubmission of the previously refused scheme for a two bedroom dwelling across three floors with associated parking to the front on the area currently in use for parking for the existing dwelling and annexe.
- 5.2 The accommodation would be split across three floors, similar to the existing dwellings within the street scene. The bedrooms have been amended since the previous submission with the provision of one double bedroom and one single bedroom.
- 5.3 The existing closeboard fencing, brick wall and pedestrian access gates would be retained.
- 5.4 The proposed dwelling would be largely on the same footprint of the existing annexe with a marginal increase in its width from 3.95m to 4.5m which would be in a set-back position from the main elevation at ground floor level. The external appearance of the dwelling would be similar to the existing dwelling, No.1 and those found elsewhere within the street scene which would help it to assimilate with its surroundings. No objection was raised previously to the external appearance of the previously refused development by Officers.

- 5.5 A good sized rear garden would be afforded to the dwelling and whilst there would be a loss of part of the garden serving No.1, the occupants would retain a sizeable garden and as with the external appearance, Officers did not raise issue with this aspect of the proposal under the previous application.
- 5.6 The proposed dwelling would benefit from sufficient off road parking in accordance with the previous scheme and comments from Highways, who suggested a reduction to one vehicle parking space to serve the application site. This has been taken on board and reflected in the plans submitted under this application.
- 5.7 As set out in this planning statement, the development can address all three reasons for refusal for the original scheme, none of which are in principle issues.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposed development has address the previous grounds for refusal but should Officers still not be content on the point of ground 1, the applicant would respectfully request negotiation on this point and further discussion in view of the case which has been made under this application on the basis of the worsening situation the Council finds itself with respect to 5YHLS, which would warrant a rebalancing of the merits of the application in lieu of such a supply, in accordance with the guidance in the NPPF (2021).