

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250610

Location: 1 Greenhill Road Northfleet Gravesend Kent

Description: Demolition of existing garage; erection of two storey side extension; and formation of car parking area in front garden.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Collins

Site Visit Date: 13 August 2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Drawing no. 01 Existing layouts and elevations;
Drawing no. 02 Proposed layouts and elevations;
Drawing no. 03 Site location plan; and
Drawing no. 04 Existing and proposed block plans.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- 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 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 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 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)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2025)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC Highways & Transportation

Referring to the above description, it would appear that this development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority in accordance with the current consultation protocol arrangements. If there are any material highway safety concerns that you consider should be brought to the attention of the HA, then please contact us again with your specific concerns for our consideration.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-information>

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>. Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

Southern Water

Proposed works involve demolition:

In order to protect and safeguard the existing water supply apparatus, Southern Water requests formal notification of any proposed demolition works prior to such works being undertaken.

Existing Southern Water Assets:

Please see the attached extract from Southern Water records showing the approximate position of our existing sewer and water main assets crossing/in the vicinity of the development site. The exact position of the public assets must be determined on site by the applicant in consultation with Southern Water before the layout of the proposed development is finalised. To get in contact to confirm the exact position of the asset please visit: https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/ph4fk3pe/ds-location-of-rising-mains_pb.pdf.

For information on required stand off distances from public sewers please refer to:

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/st5orjvm/stand-off-distances.pdf>



Insufficient Information provided:

Construction of the development shall not commence until details of the proposed means of surface/foul drainage disposal have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Southern Water.

For further advice, please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX (Tel: 0330 303 0119). Website: [southernwater.co.uk](https://www.southernwater.co.uk) or by email at: SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised to nine neighbouring properties by letter. Four representations (all in support) have been received and are summarised as follows;

- The proposal would not impact on any neighbour.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF 2024) 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 139 of the NPPF 2024 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 document illustrates subservience in terms of design;



Matching roof style and pitch subordinate to the original dwelling with roof extension stepped down and extension stepped back at the front.



Incorrect extensions in terms of position, scale and roofline.

The application property is a two storey, end of terrace dwelling, with a detached single garage and a concrete frontage parking area. The existing building has a width of 5.4 metres (half width 2.7 metres).

The application site has a large front/side garden area that is grassed, vegetated and has a mature silver birch tree. As the following images illustrate, the site is located in a prominent corner location and is highly visible in the surrounding street scene.



Views from Struttons Road taken 13 August 2025

The proposed development would involve a two storey side extension, with a width of 4.5 metres that projects backwards to the existing rear building line. At ground floor level, the extension would be set back by one metre from the front building line and at first floor level, the set back would be 0.5 metres.

The proposed external facing materials and fenestration styles would match with the existing building and those in the surrounding area and the proposed front set back would slightly reduce the bulk of the extension. However, whilst the extension would be set back at the front, the proposed roof would align with the existing ridge and there would be no set back at the rear. In addition, the extension would have a width significantly greater than half that of the existing building, for the full depth of the property, which would result in a large and bulky addition at the side. In light of these design features, the proposal would not appear subservient to the existing building.

The proposed side elevation would present a blank façade at the entrance to Greenhill Road, which would lack architectural interest and which would be widely visible in the street scene. Due to a lack of fenestration, the proposed rear elevation would also lack architectural interest.

The proposed design would include an unusually shaped garage, which would not meet minimum size requirements, and a very wide garage door. This would lead to an unsightly external appearance, whilst being incapable of use as a normal garage. It is noted that the garage is shown as being used to accommodate motorcycles. However, it is considered that this use would not justify such a wide door.

Greenhill Road is a residential street where dwellings have the same general design and external facing materials, although some properties have been subject to extensions and alterations. Most notably, no. 2 Greenhill Road has a large, single storey side extension, providing two single garages (planning permission references 20110552 and 20110355) and no. 48 Greenhill Road has a two storey side extension, with a width of 3.2 metres, that is set back 0.8 metres from the front building line, with a roof that is set down (planning permission reference 20190084). It is noted that neither of these properties are located in such a prominent position as the application site, their planning permissions pre-date the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) and for various reasons they appear subservient to their existing buildings. Therefore, these extensions are not directly comparable to the development, which is the subject of this application.

Nos. 35 and 57 Greenhill Road have two storey side extensions (planning permissions 20130707 and 20000020 respectively) that are set back but not set down and both have sizeable widths. They do not appear subservient to their original dwellings. Again, it is noted that neither of these properties are located in such a prominent position as the application site and their planning permissions pre-date the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021). Therefore, these extensions are not directly comparable to the development, which is the subject of this application.

The proposed development would also involve the provision of a widened and resurfaced frontage parking area. At present the side/front garden area is grassed with vegetation at the edges and a mature silver birch tree. The front garden is paved with some planting on frontage (behind low wall), adjacent to the side boundary and adjacent to the porch.



Front garden area



Front/side garden area

Taken 13 August 2025

The proposed development would result in the loss of an area of grass in the side/front garden area and the existing vegetation in the front garden but the silver birch tree would be retained and a new grassed area would be provided in the front garden.

The proposed replacement of the existing impermeable hardstanding with a porous surface would be an improvement in terms of surface water drainage and visual amenity and the provision of grass instead of the paved front garden would soften the frontage. However, the loss of mature planting in the front garden would undermine the garden visually. It is considered that the planting of species other than grass would improve the visual amenities of the proposed site frontage generally and could be the subject of a landscaping condition. As no details of the proposed surfacing for the parking area have been provided, this could also be included as part of a landscaping condition should planning permission be granted.

Overall, by virtue of its size, bulk and design, the proposed development would not be subservient to the existing dwelling and would introduce features (such as a blank façade, lack of fenestration at the rear and an unusual garage layout and door) that would be detrimental to visual amenity. The application site is visually prominent in the surrounding area and the proposal would be out of character with the existing building and the surrounding street scene and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), to paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would provide sufficient floor area for the proposed bedroom and sufficient rear garden area and depth would be retained, for a three bedroom dwelling.

It is noted that the proposal would result in the loss of various windows and a door in the side elevation of the application property (to a kitchen, hallway and bathroom) thereby reducing the levels of natural light available in these rooms. However, due to these room uses being non-habitable and to the fact that a replacement door would be provided for the kitchen, there would be no significant detriment to the living conditions of future occupiers.

As such, the proposal would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of future occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG).

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. 3 Greenhill Road and no. 7 Struttons Avenue (located to the south west and east respectively). No. 2 Greenhill Road and nos. 14 to 18 Struttons Close are located to the north west and north respectively, across roadways.

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.

For the existing front windows at no. 2 Greenhill Road, there would be a privacy distance of at least 21 metres to the proposed front elevation of the extension (where a bedroom window would be located). No windows would be located in the proposed side elevation and in any event, the privacy distance to nos. 14 and 16 Struttons Avenue would be over 30 metres. As such, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to these properties.

The rear window in the proposed extension would directly face the private garden area of no. 7 Struttons Avenue, with a privacy distance of only 8 metres. However, any adverse overlooking impacts would be mitigated by the proposed en-suite window being conditioned to be obscure glazed and by using a planning condition precluding the insertion of any additional windows in rear elevation.

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

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a three bedroom dwelling should have two vehicle parking spaces. According to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021), vehicle parking spaces should be a minimum of 2.5 metres in width (2.7 metres where they adjoin an enclosed boundary) and 5 metres depth.

The proposed development would result in the dwelling increasing from two bedrooms to three and an existing garage (capable of accommodating one vehicle) would be demolished. An existing concrete parking area (capable of accommodating one vehicle) would be resurfaced with a permeable finish and widened.

The proposed garage would not meet the minimum size standard for parking a vehicle (although it is noted that it is shown as being for accommodating motorcycles). The proposed parking area would have an irregular shape and although there would be six metres width at the frontage, the side wall of the proposed extension would reduce the available depth in the middle of the hardstanding to 4.7 metres. However, despite this depth infringement, two appropriately sized parking spaces would be available. One located beyond the side of the proposed extension (2.7 metres width by 5.3 metres depth) and one located in front of the proposed extension (2.8 metres width by 5.2 metres depth).

Appropriate pedestrian visibility would be available on the south western side of the proposed parking area but due to the location of an existing tree, pedestrian visibility on the north eastern side, would be obstructed, leading to adverse highway safety impacts.

It should be noted that a telegraph pole and a highway drain located immediately in front of the application site would restrict the potential for extending the existing vehicle crossover in line with the widened access, which may preclude direct access to the proposed parking space at the side of the extension.



Photograph taken 13 August 2025

Although it is acknowledged that two cars were parked on site at the time of the case officer's site visit, the application details have not demonstrated that both the proposed parking spaces would be appropriately accessible and would not be detrimental to highway safety.

KCC Highways & Transportation have not commented on the proposed development because the application does not meet their current consultation protocol arrangements. However, they have identified some issues that can be brought to the attention of the applicants by an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

In light of the in principle design issues raised above, the applicant has not been asked to clarify the visibility and accessibility issues for the proposed parking spaces. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would make safe and sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the application site, in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and in line with 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.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The comments in support of the proposed development from local residents are noted.

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2. However, as the proposed development is 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 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 application site is located in close proximity to two gas pipelines (along the site frontage and the north eastern side boundary). However, as the proposed works would be relatively minor and would be located within the confines of an existing residential garden, it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to gas infrastructure. The applicants should be made aware of the gas infrastructure via an informative attached to any planning permission granted

The application site contains Southern Water apparatus in close proximity to the location of the proposed side extension. Southern Water seek the imposition of a pre-commencement condition relating to the

submission of details of the proposed means of foul/surface water drainage disposal; to be notified prior to any demolition works; and to be consulted regarding the location of public assets prior to the layout of the proposal being finalised.

Foul/surface water drainage issues would be considered as part of the Building Regulations process and as such, it would not be appropriate to condition these details to be provided as part of this planning application. This issue and the others raised by Southern Water can be brought to the attention of the applicants in an informative attached to 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 applicants in an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Conclusion

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 and inappropriate features and that would not be subservient to the existing building and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding street scene. Furthermore, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would make safe and sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the application site.

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 highways grounds.

Recommendation

That planning permission should be refused on the following grounds;

1. By virtue of its size, bulk and design, the proposed development would not be subservient to the existing dwelling and would introduce features (such as a blank façade, lack of fenestration at the rear and a wide garage door) that would be detrimental to visual amenity. The application site is visually prominent in the surrounding area and the proposal would be out of character with the existing building and the surrounding street scene and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), to paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).
2. It has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would make safe and sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the application site, in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and in line with 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.

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	13th August 2025	Dated:	14 August 2025

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