



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250925

Location: 23 Vicarage Lane Gravesend Kent DA12 4TF

Description: Formation of a vehicle crossover and hardstanding.

Applicant: BB Contracts

Site Visit Date: 06.11.2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Drawing No. 001 Rev A – Site Location Plan and Block Plans – Existing and Proposed;
Drawing No. 002 Rev A – Front Layout Plans – Existing and Proposed;
Drawing No. 003 Rev A – Front Boundary Elevations – Existing and Proposed; and
Drawing No. 004 Rev A – Visibility Splays – Proposed.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20221189	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension incorporating a log burner and flue.	Certificate Granted	06.12.2022
20220810	Erection of a two storey rear extension.	Application Refused	06.10.2022
20220480	Creation of a vehicle crossover with associated hardstanding area.	Application Refused	05.09.2022
20220679	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a dormer with Juliet balcony in the rear roof slope, roof alterations, installation of 2 obscured rooflights in the front roof slopes and conversion of the roofspace to form habitable rooms.	Certificate Granted	19.07.2022
20220684	Single storey rear extension with a depth of 3.94 metres, maximum height of 3.37 metres and eaves height of 3.00 metres.	Prior Approval Not Required	18.07.2022

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

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 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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 (2023)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

KCC Highways

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.

Internal Drainage District

Thank you for your consultation on the above-referenced planning application.

The submission has been reviewed, and the Board has no comment.

This response is based on the information provided with the planning application and is reliant on its accuracy.

Neighbouring properties

Four surrounding properties were consulted and two representations were received, one in support of the proposal and one objecting to the proposal. The overall consultation period expired on 27.11.25. The

objection is summarised below:

- The planning history of the site indicates an earlier refusal in 2022 of a vehicular crossover and hardstanding over the valued public highway amenity lane. The planning officer noted;

"Grass verges are considered a positive attribute of the local area. The interruption of the grass verge with a tarmac hard paved area would have a negative impact on the locality as 23 Vicarage Lane is set within a row of properties that have retained the grass verge. While it is noted that some neighbouring properties have undertaken development that paves over the grass verge, these developments are considered to demonstrate the detrimental impact this has on the character of the area".
- In the same street, a planning condition is noted and was issued as part of planning permission Ref. No: 20170400 to preserve the amenity of the area, retain off-street parking and the street scene near to the Vicarage. Any new crossovers in the street will have a negative impact on fulfilling the condition.

The comments in support of the application reference an improvement to the living situation and the upkeep of the grass verge.

The impact on the character of the area, along with any other material planning considerations shall be made in the report below.

Preliminary Matters

As set out above, in the planning history section of this report, the creation of a vehicle crossover with associated hardstanding area was refused under application 20220480. It was refused on the following grounds:

- 1. The proposed vehicular access over grass verge would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the street scene by forming a hard paved/tarmac access which would interrupt the grass verge and cause an adverse impact on the visual appearance of the surrounding area. Additionally, the proposal involves hard paving the entire frontage of the property, resulting in the loss of an attractive garden area with no provision for soft landscaping and a disproportionate hardstanding. As such, the development is contrary to Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021), Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021.)*
- 2. The proposed driveway fails to provide acceptable pedestrian visibility splays and therefore increases the risk to pedestrian safety, contrary to Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policies P3 and T5 of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994), SPG 6: Planning Policy for Vehicular Accesses to Classified Highways (2009), Manual for Streets (2007) and Kent County Council vehicle crossing guidance (2018).*
- 3. The proposed development fails to provide any biodiversity opportunity, with the removal of all soft landscaping from the frontage contrary to Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021.)*

It is noted that the plans provided with this application indicate visibility splays and a revised design for the property frontage. It is also noted that application 20250496 at 25 Vicarage Lane, for a similar proposal has recently been permitted. As such, it stands to be assessed whether the previous grounds of refusal have been overcome.

Officer's Analysis

23 Vicarage Lane is a two storey semi-detached property located west of the highway. The front garden has some hard and soft landscaping along with a low boundary wall and gate.

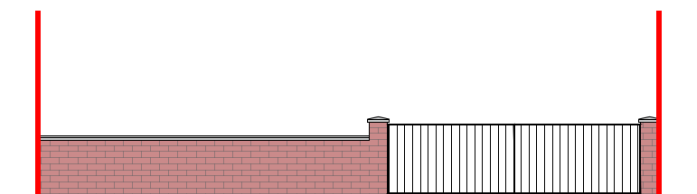
Photo as per 2022 application



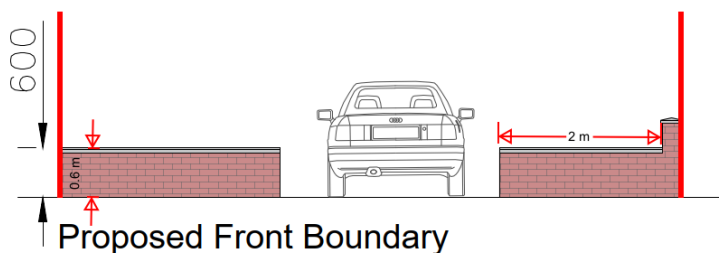
This application proposes the creation of a vehicle crossover with associated hardstanding area. The proposed crossover would go over amenity land indicated to be under Highways ownership and therefore requires planning permission.

Proposed Development

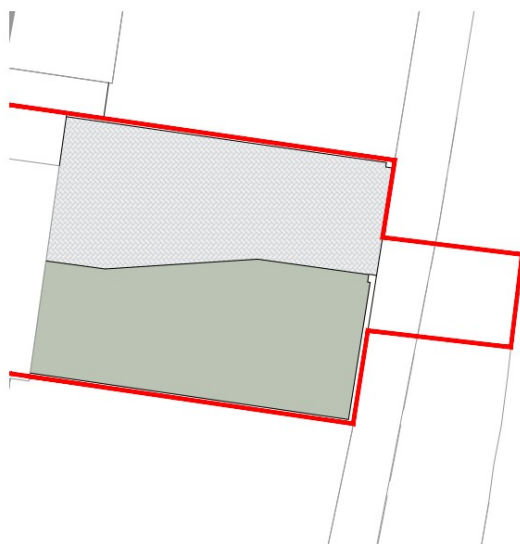
The proposal would include part removal of the front boundary wall, construction of an area of permeable hardstanding, and removal of part of the grass verge between the pavement and road in order to facilitate the crossover.



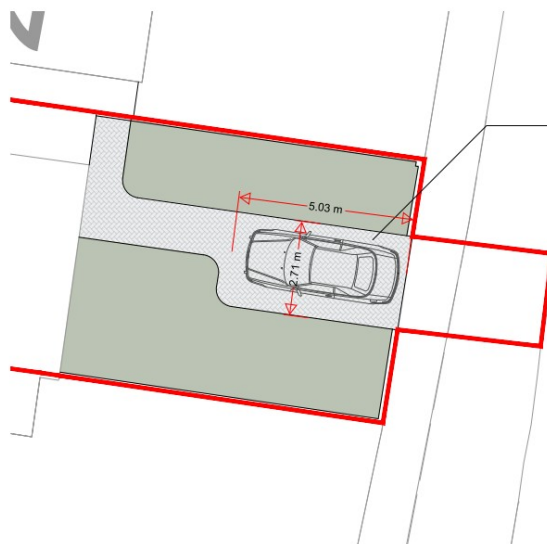
Existing Front Boundary



Proposed Front Boundary

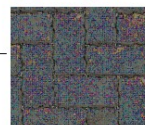


Existing Floor Plan

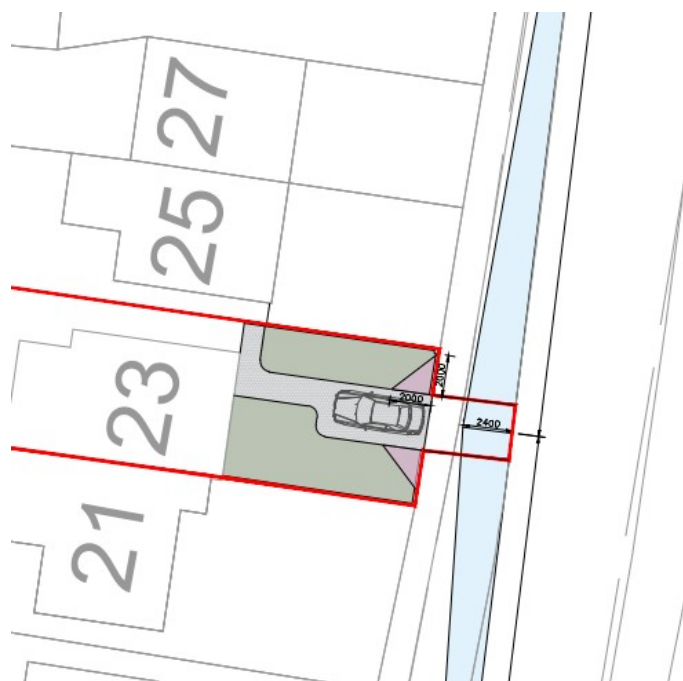


Proposed Floor Plan

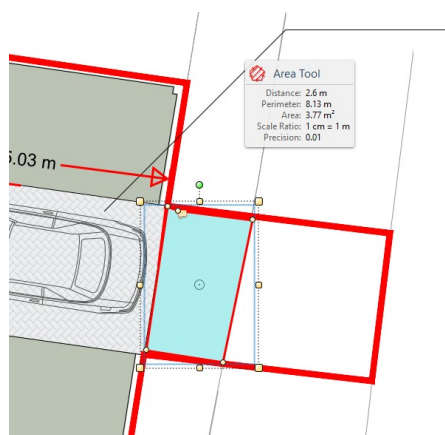
Driveline Piora by
Marshall's (L)200mm
(W)100mm (T)60mm



Permeable Paving



The area of grass verge proposed to be removed is approximately 3.77sqm:





Design, Character and Appearance

The previous delegated officers report for application 20220480 set out the importance of the retention of grass verges:

“Grass verges are considered a positive attribute of the local area. The interruption of the grass verge with a tarmac/hard paved area would have a negative impact on the immediate locality as 23 Vicarage Lane is set within a row of properties that have retained the grass verge. While it is noted that some neighbouring properties have undertaken development that paves over the grass verge, these developments are considered to demonstrate the detrimental impact this has on the character of the area.

The driveway at 19 Vicarage Lane (ref 20170655), Application for the provision of a vehicle crossover over a highway verge, was permitted, however, the delegated report makes it clear that there is no record of planning permission being granted for many of the surrounding crossovers and makes reference to the fact that it is unfortunate that these grass verges have been lost. Furthermore, 20170655 was permitted prior to the adoption of Supplementary Planning Guidance including Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) (Design SPG 2021) and the revised NPPF (2021) which indicates the development proposed in this current application would not be acceptable.”

The 20220480 report also set out various appeal decisions for similar developments, whereby the appeals were dismissed due to the harm caused by the loss of the grass verge. Notwithstanding this, it is noted that the plans have been revised since refused application 20220480. These revisions include a reduction to the amount of hardstanding proposed, the retention of most of the characteristic front boundary wall, and a reduction to the area of grass verge that would be hard paved. In addition to this, it is noted that a recent permission has been granted for a similar development at 25 Vicarage Lane (20250496). The proposal at No. 25 does have some planting shown on the plans, that is to be retained:

20250496 Plans from the Delegated Officers report



This planting is important in terms of design, character and appearance and biodiversity. As such, if planning permission were to be forthcoming, it is considered necessary to include a soft landscaping condition to incorporate some planting into the property frontage. The plans indicate there would be sufficient space in order to carry out planting. Although this is not considered to mitigate the loss of the grass verge, the planting would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the site, and wider street scene.

Overall, given the aforementioned recent approval, revisions to the plans, and subject to a soft landscaping condition, the proposal is considered to overcome the previous ground of refusal 1, with a reduction in hard landscaping, and a comparatively modest reduction in the grass verge, ensuring the character of the street is maintained.

On balance, in design terms, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014), along with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Amenity Of Future Occupiers and Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal would result in the provision of one off-street parking space for the benefit of future occupiers and there are no concerns in terms of neighbouring amenity. As such the application is considered to safeguard amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

Visibility splays have been provided on the plans to indicate there would be no concerns in terms of pedestrian safety. In addition, the hardstanding is considered sufficient and compliant with Kent County Council's parking standards (SPG4) which state a space should have a minimum depth of 5m and a minimum width of 2.5m. The proposal is therefore acceptable and compliant with CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards 2006. As such the previous grounds of refusal 2 are overcome.

Biodiversity

A section of the the grass verge would be lost as a result of the proposal, however the plans submitted with this proposal demonstrate areas of lawn are incorporated into the plans. As aforementioned above, a soft landscaping condition can be added to the decision notice in the event that planning permission is granted. Therefore grounds of refusal 3 are considered to be overcome.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of archaeological potential. However, the development will be unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

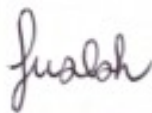
Conclusion

On balance, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of biodiversity, design, character and appearance, subject to conditions. It would not harm the amenity of future occupiers of neighbouring properties and is acceptable in terms of highways and parking.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	
Dated:	2 nd December 2025	Dated:	02 December 2025

