

PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposed external alterations to existing building façade including new windows, cladding panels and infill glazing to lower ground floor. Relocation of existing entrance and lobby to lower ground floor and minor amendments to internal layout of 2 no. ground floor residential units consented under reference 20210958.

at

Joynes House, New Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0AJ

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared to support a planning application for external alterations to the existing building, together with amendments to part of the approved internal layout at Joynes House, New Road, Gravesend.
- 1.2 The application is accompanied by the following plans and documents:-
 - Site layout plan (including location plan)
 - Existing floor plans
 - Proposed floor plans
 - Existing elevations
 - Proposed elevations
 - Planning Statement (Gemini Planning Services Ltd)
- 1.3 The application follows the prior approval decisions relating to the change of use of the existing building from offices to residential flats. These applications were first approved on 16th September 2021 under planning application references:-
 - 20210974 (26 residential units on part ground, first and second floors),
 - 20210962 (13 units on the third floor),
 - 20210973 (22 units on part-first, second and fourth floors), and
 - 20210958 (4 units on part-ground floor) on 16 September 2021.
- 1.4 Therefore in summary, the building benefits from prior approval consents to convert the building into a total of 65 residential flats.
- 1.5 Non-material amendments for minor amendments to the internal layout plans were later approved for each of the Class O approvals (see ref 20220390, 2022391, 2022392 and 2022393). The number of flats however remains at 65 units.

- 1.6 Class O (which has since been removed from the General Permitted Development Order) however, only permits the residential use of the buildings. It is a well-established principle that any external alterations necessary to implement those approvals must be subject to a separate planning application, and hence this application. It is also well established that any planning application seeking permission for the external alterations can be applied for either before, at the same time as or after any prior approval has been granted. Therefore, in the event that that the Class O changes of use are to be implemented, the necessary external alterations will need to be permitted.
- 1.7 A Prior Approval application (ref 20221111) has also been submitted for an extension to the top of the building under Class AA, Part 20 of the GPDO. This application is awaiting a decision.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site is located in Gravesend Town Centre on the southern side of New Road, at its corner with Darnley Road.



- 2.2 The site is occupied by a purpose-built five storey office building constructed in the early 1970s. The principal elevation fronts onto New Road with pedestrian access via steps from New Road. The existing building is constructed in red brick with a flat roof. There are glazed fire escape staircases on both sides of the building which are painted in a dark grey colour. The building is currently “in-use” as offices.



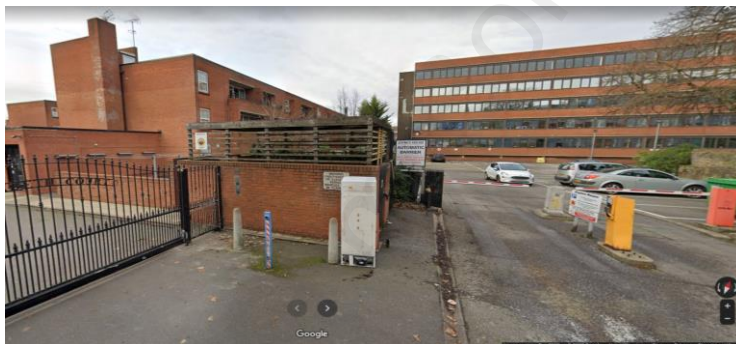
- 2.3 The site has a private car park to the rear, accessed from St James's Road. This also provides access down to the basement/undercroft car park via a ramp.



- 2.4 The site is bounded to the west by a large red brick building known as the Victoria Centre and currently home to the Gravesend Adult Education Centre.



- 2.5 To the west and lying at right angles to Joynes House at the rear is a block of residential properties (part of Elizabeth Court).



- 2.6 To the west and north of the site on the opposite side of New Road and Darnley Road are 2/3 storey buildings in commercial (retail) use at ground floor level with some residential uses above.



- 2.7 With regard to accessibility, the site lies less than 180m from Gravesend Train Station, with its high speed link to London St Pancras (journey time 24 minutes). The A2/M2 lies 2.6 miles to the west.
- 2.8 Gravesend town centre is located to the north and west of the site with its extensive facilities and amenities. As well as the railway station, there are bus stops along New Road and Darnley Road with bus services to Sevenoaks, Chatham, Rochester, Dartford, Ebbsfleet and Blue Water (Shopping Centre). The site also has good accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

3.0 Planning History

- 3.1 1971082 – Joynes House – Permission 1972.
- 3.2 20010103 - Installation of new pedestrian entrance and access ramp on front (New Road) elevation; alterations to existing entrance; installation of new shopfront at rear; installation of plastic coated cladding on existing glazed fire escape stairs and new upvc windows. Permission 2001.
- 3.3 20020749 - Construction of new pedestrian access ramp at the side/rear to first floor level and installation of air conditioning condensing units at lower ground floor level. Permission 2002.
- 3.4 20050780 - Joint application under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 for the construction of a rain screen canopy above the main entrance door. KCC GRANTED PERMISSION 6.10.2005
- 3.5 20210974 - Application for a determination pursuant to Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the proposed change of use of Part Ground, First and Second Floors from Class E (previously Class B1(a)) (offices) to 26 residential units (Class C3 (dwellinghouses)). Prior Approval required and granted 16 September 2021.
- 3.6 20210962 - Application for a determination pursuant to Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the proposed change of use third floor from Class E (previously Class B1(a)) (offices) to 13 residential units (Class C3 (dwellinghouses)). Prior Approval required and granted 16 September 2021.
- 3.7 20210973 - Application for a determination pursuant to Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the proposed change of use of Part First, Second and Fourth Floors from Class E (previously Class B1(a)) (offices) to 22 residential units (Class C3 (dwellinghouses)). Prior Approval required and granted 16 September 2021.
- 3.8 20210958 - Application for a determination pursuant to Article 3, Schedule 2, Part 3, Class O of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)

(England) Order 2015 (as amended) as to whether Prior Approval is required in respect of the proposed change of use of Part Ground Floor from Class E (previously Class B1(a)) (offices) to 4 residential units (Class C3 (dwellinghouses)). Prior Approval required and granted 16 September 2021.

- 3.9 20220390 – Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference 20210974 to allows minor amendments to internal layout. Granted 20 April 2022.
- 3.10 20220391 - Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20210958 to allow minor amendments to the internal layout. Granted 20 April 2022.
- 3.10 20220392 - Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20210962 to allow minor amendments to the internal layout. Granted 20 April 2022.
- 3.11 20220393 - Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20210973 to allow minor amendments to the internal layout. Granted 20 April 2022.
- 3.12 20220799 - Construction of two additional storeys above the existing commercial building to provide 24 flats, with associated works (under Class AA, Part 20, GPDO). Prior Approval required and refused.
- 3.13 20221111– Construction of two additional storeys above the existing commercial building to provide 24 flats, with associated works (under Class AA, Part 20, GPDO). (Re-submission of 20220799). Application pending decision.

4.0 The Proposals

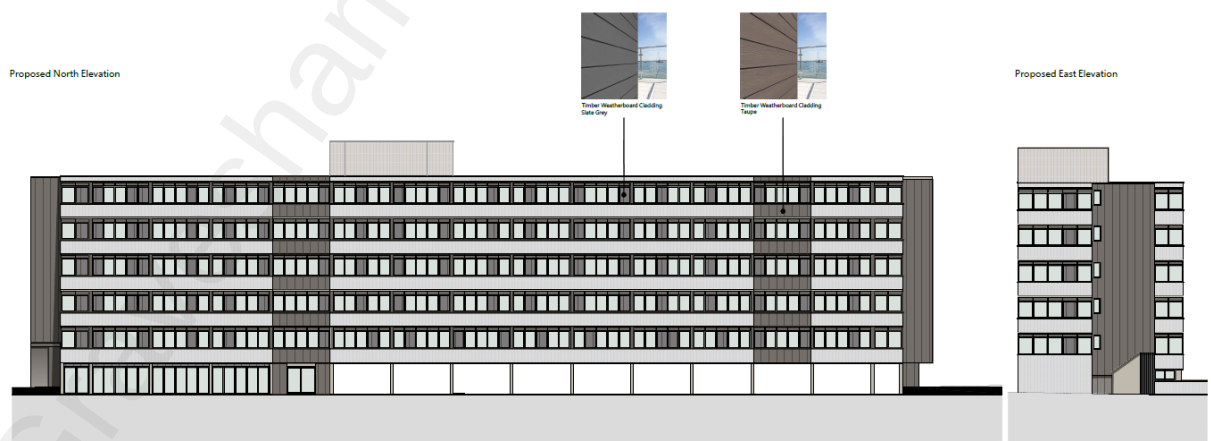
- 4.1 In summary, the proposals are for external alterations to the existing building façade to facilitate the implementation of the consented Class O applications as well as to update and refresh the building and to allow the existing building to successfully tie-into the proposed extension to the top of the building (which is the subject of a separate Prior Approval application under Class AA of the GPDO).
- 4.2 The proposed alterations to the facade include the replacement of the existing windows with new frames (dark coloured) and glazing, to meet current standards, and the insertion of cladding panels (in a regular vertical pattern) where windows are not required to match the approved Class O layout plans. On the northern elevation above the entrances, cladding panels will extend vertically from ground to top floor, thereby introducing a strong vertical emphasis to the building. This will then be extruded through to the proposed Class AA extension scheme to tie the existing and proposed together.
- 4.3 In addition the proposals include the enclosure of part of the lower ground floor with infill glazing panels which will facilitate changes to the interior of the building. The existing entrance lobby for the existing offices is currently on the ground floor which lies above pavement level at the front of the building and is accessed via a set of steps and ramps. The relocation of the reception lobby/lounge to the lower ground

floor will provide an accessible entrance into the building, and a more spacious and inviting lobby space. These internal changes will in-turn free-up space at ground level, allowing each of the 4 residential flats consented by the Class O Prior Approval 20210958 to be improved and increased slightly in size, thus making efficient use of the building floorspace. (The internal layout amendments to units B01 and B03 would replace the non-material amendment changes approved under ref 20220391). The lower ground floor plan also shows cycle storage space (as shown on the consented Class O plans) and some office floorspace.

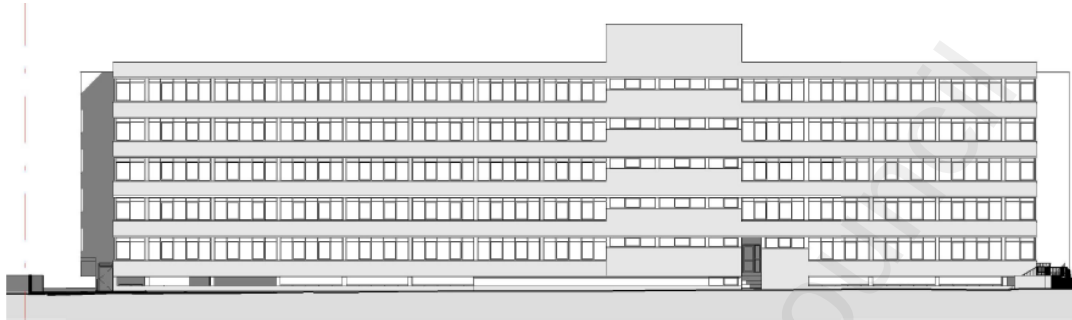
North elevation (existing)



North and East elevations (proposed)



South Elevation (existing)



South & West Elevations (proposed)



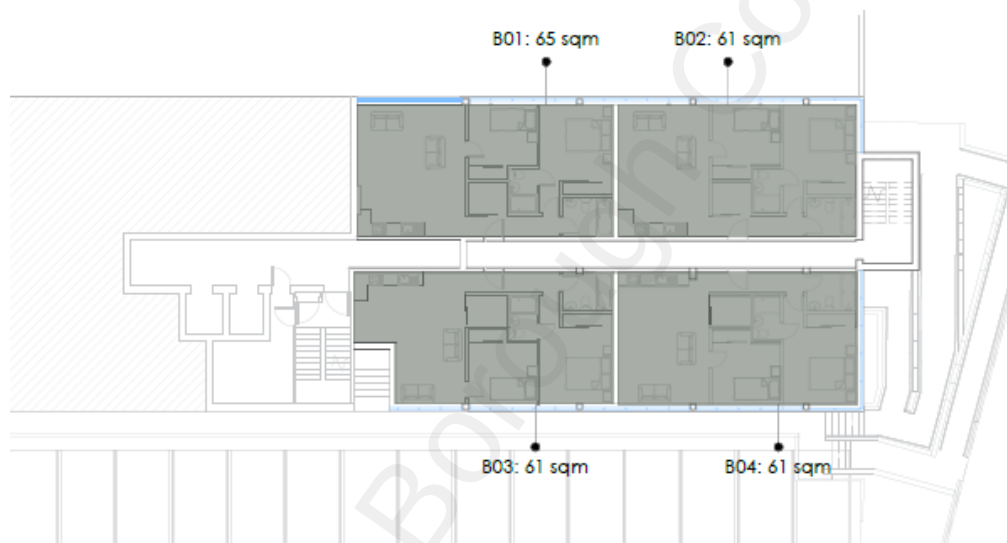
Part-elevation extract showing external alteration with proposed Class AA extension above (illustrative only)



4.4 Therefore, in summary, the internal layout changes, at ground floor level, the proposals include:-

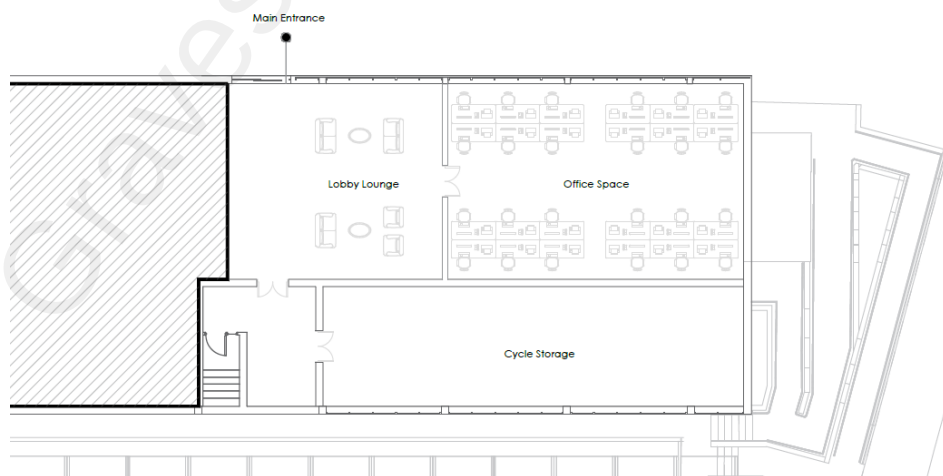
- the removal of the existing lobby
- Unit B01 revised from a 1-bed to a 2-bed unit, utilising the area previously occupied by the lobby.
- Unit B03 revised from a 1-bed to a 2-bed, utilising the area previously occupied as a rear entrance and part of the corridor space.

Ground floor proposed



4.5 At lower ground floor level, the proposed changes are:-

- New main entrance and lobby/lounge (relocated from the ground floor)
- Office space
- Proposed cycle storage, (as shown/agreed for Class O & Class AA schemes)



5.0 Planning Policy and Constraints

5.1 The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Gravesham Core Strategy (2014) and the saved policies of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review.

5.2 Policy/planning designations include the following:-

- Within Town Centre boundary (CS08)
- Within Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area (CS05)
- Outside (but adjacent to) Conservation Areas (including Overcliffe and Darnley Road CAs)
- Outside (but opposite) Primary Shopping Area

Gravesham Core Strategy (2014)

5.3 Given the fact that a residential use for the building has already been consented through the previous Class O applications and given the clearly defined scope of the application (as explained above), the relevant policies in the Core Strategy are considered to be restricted to the following:-

- Core Strategy Policy CS01: Sustainable Development
- Core Strategy Policy CS19: Development and Design Principles
- Core Strategy Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) - Saved policies

5.4 TC3 - Development Affecting Conservation Areas

6.0 Planning Considerations and Assessment

Visual amenity

6.1 Policy CS19 'Development and Design Principles' sets out the Council's aspirations regarding the need to achieve good design and attractive built form. It states "*new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It will conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment, integrate well with the surrounding local area ...[and] ... the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. Account will be taken of the scale, height, building lines, layout, materials and other architectural features of adjoining buildings. Account will also be taken of the wider site context, including 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..”

- 6.2 The Gravesham Townscape Appraisal (June 2008) recognises that the built environment is varied and complex with the built form.
- 6.3 The use of a dark recessive colour for the cladding panels will complement the existing red brickwork, will add some visual interest but without drawing excessive attention to it. The lower ground floor infill glazing will only be noticeable in short distance views and will have little if any impact on the external appearance of the building as a whole. In addition, the proposed alterations aim to integrate the existing building with the proposed new extension (subject to the Class AA prior approval application). The proposed cladding panels will match those to be used on the proposed new upper floors thereby creating a visual connection between the existing and new and helping to tie the building together. It is considered that there is no reason on visual impact grounds to object to the proposals. In the event that the extension is not consented or implemented, the proposed external changes will simply update and refresh the existing building. For these reasons the proposals align and comply with the design policy set out in CS19.

Impact on heritage assets

- 6.4 The application sites lies close to a number of Conservation Areas, the nearest being The Overcliffe and the Darnley Road Conservation Areas. In essence, for the reasons noted in paragraphs 6.3 above, and in particular the use of subdued and recessive colour palette for the proposed cladding panels to complement the existing red brick facade, the proposed external alterations will ensure that any impacts on the conservation area will be inconsequential and negligible, if not marginally beneficial. For this reason the heritage impact tests set out in the NPPF will not be engaged and the proposals will meet the policy tests set out in policy CS20.

Residential amenity

- 6.5 The proposed amendments to units BO1 and BO3 will optimise the use of the existing space and provide more spacious flats. The revised units will comply with nationally described internal space standards and will provide adequate levels of amenity, light, outlook and privacy.
- 6.6 In addition, the provision of an inviting lobby lounge will improve communal facilities for prospective residents and encourage social interaction as well as improving accessibility (see below).
- 6.7 There will be no additional impacts on adjoining residents in Elizabeth Court. The relationship between the two buildings is well-established and the proposed fenestration and façade alterations will not introduce new or additional privacy or outlook issues.
- 6.8 For the above reasons, the proposals are aligned with residential amenity policies in the Core Strategy and NPPF.

Accessibility

- 6.9 The current arrangements for accessing the building are not ideal due to the entrance being above street level and requiring users to navigate steps/ramps. By moving the entrance to the lower ground floor and providing a spacious lobby area, the proposals will ensure better access for those mobility/sight issues. This accords with policy objectives in CS19.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The application seeks external alterations to the existing building that will allow the consented residential use to be implemented as well as providing improved flat layouts and access/lobby arrangements for the building, for the benefit of residents. Furthermore the proposed changes will improve, refresh and update the external appearance and character of the building itself and its street scene presence. In planning terms there are no reasons to object to the proposals as they will have beneficial impacts on the character and appearance of the area (i.e. by improving the design), will improve the residential environment for prospective residents, improve accessibility for all as well as optimising the use of the building.

Report prepared by:-

Ruth Harding (Gemini Planning Services Ltd)

Date: September 2022.

Gravesham Borough Council