



Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250247

Location: Land adjacent to 77 New House Lane, Northfleet, Kent

Description: Erection of a single storey dwelling with associated landscaping and crossover

Applicant: Adrian Neculaes

Site Visit Date: 26/08/25

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Ecological Enhancement Plan
BNG Statement
BNG Metric
Design Statement
Planning Statement
001 – Location Plan
002 – Existing Site Plan
002A – Proposed Site Plan
003 – Proposed Floor Plan
004 – Proposed Roof Plan
005 – Proposed Elevations
006 – Proposed Planting Scheme

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
- CS14 – Housing Type and Size
- CS15 – Housing Density
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T5 – Access to the Identified Highway Network

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)
- 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

KCC Highways and Transportation

Received on 09/04/2025

The application proposes a new two bedroom property that will utilise the existing access from New House Lane. Two parking spaces will be provided as well as an EV charging point and storage for cycling parking is proposed in the rear garden.

Provided the following requirements are secured by condition or planning obligation, then I would raise no objection on behalf of the Local Highway Authority.

- Provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing
- Provision and permanent retention of the cycle parking facilities shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing
- Provision and permanent retention of electric vehicle charging facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- Submission of a construction management plan before the commencement of any development on site to include the following:
 - Routing of construction and delivery vehicles to/ from the site
 - Parking and turning areas for construction and delivery vehicles and site personnel, which may

- require supporting vehicle tracking/ swept paths
- Timing of deliveries, avoiding network and school peaks where possible
- Provision of wheel washing facilities
- Measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway
- Temporary traffic management/ signage

All electric vehicle charges provided for homeowners in residential developments must be provided to Mode 3 standard (providing a 7kw output and SMART (enabling wi fi connection). Approved models are shown on the Office for Low Emission Vehicles Homecharge Scheme approved charge point model list.

It is important to note that 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) 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 KCC while 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.

KCC 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.

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

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 works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary limits and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters are available on KCC's website.

KCC Heritage

Received on 10/04/2025

The existing site lies within an area of multi- period archaeological potential. However, based on existing Historic Environment Record data, the previous arable cultivation of this field, and the relatively limited extent of the proposed works, I consider it unlikely that these proposals would have a significant below ground archaeological impact and have no further comment to make in this case.

KCC Biodiversity

Received on 19/06/2025

We have reviewed the information submitted by the applicant and advise that sufficient ecological, Biodiversity Net Gain information has been provided for determination. Recommended condition/informative wording is provided below.

Developer contributions will need to be provided to mitigate for recreational pressure within the zone of influence of designated sites of internal importance.

As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us and the information submitted with the application, we advise that the proposed development has limited potential to result in ecological impacts. We have taken this view as the garden is mown regularly.

As such, we are satisfied that there is no requirement for additional ecological information to be submitted with the planning application.

The photos indicate the garden of the existing site is regularly mown grassland and we advise that this must continue to ensure that suitable habitat for protected/ notable species does not establish within the site.

Nocturnal animals (including bats) may use the site and the surrounding area for foraging and commuting and any lighting associated with the proposal may have a negative impact.

We advise that a condition will be required for the external lighting and will need the following;

- Plan showing the location of the lighting and light spill
- Downward facing
- On a motion sensor (where possible)
- Follow the recommendations with Bat Conservation Trust/ Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Guidance Note 08/23 *Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*'.

North Kent Site

The development includes proposals for a new dwelling within the zone of influence (ZOI) (6km) of the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area, Medway Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area and its associated Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar Site).

Gravesham Borough Council must consider the impact the proposal will have on these designated sites in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024.

Gravesham Borough Council will need to ensure that the proposals fully adhere to the agreed approach within the North Kent Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS). This is to mitigate for additional recreational impacts on the designated sites and to ensure that adequate means are in place to secure the mitigation before first occupation.

A decision from the Court of Justice of the European Union has detailed that mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a full Appropriate Assessment is needed under the Habitats Directive. Therefore, we advise that due to the need for the application to contribute to the North Kent SAMMS, there is still a need for an appropriate assessment to be carried out as part of this application.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulation 63 (3) also indicates that for Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs): "The competent authority must for the purposes of the assessment consult the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to any representations made by that body within such reasonable time as the authority specifies." The local planning authority (the "Competent Authority") must therefore consult with and take into consideration Natural England's advice in determining the application. The local planning authority also needs to be

confident that proposals will not adversely affect these sites in line with the NPPF (2024).

The responsibility for carrying out a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening and Appropriate Assessment lies with the Competent Authority, Gravesham Borough Council.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

The submitted metric states that a net gain in excess of 10% can be achieved onsite, largely through new tree planting (three small trees) and the creation of vegetated garden. However, trees planted within vegetated garden cannot be counted towards BNG. A private garden is a garden within the curtilage of a privately owned or tenanted dwelling house. The post-development private garden has no public access, and biodiversity net gains cannot be legally secured.

Page 56 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide states: You should not:

- count newly planted trees sited within private gardens

When removing the new tree planting, the BNG metric indicated that the proposed development is not achieving 10% BNG but is currently achieving -38.35% and has a total deficit of 0.03 habitat units. We advise that due to the layout of the proposed development, it is likely that off- site habitat creation will be required to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain. 'Offsite' biodiversity gains are any BNG measures proposed outside of the red line boundary. The statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan (BGP) must contain the biodiversity gain site register reference number for any off- site units if these are used. BNG sites must be registered here: Register a biodiversity gain site - GOV.UK.

If any offsite habitat creation/ enhancement is proposed outside of the LPA boundary/ National Character Area of the impact site these will be subject to spatial risk penalties. Where offsite gains are secured on land owned by the developer (but outside the redline boundary), or on third-party land (but not through a 'habitat bank operator'), the biodiversity net gain needs to be subject to a deed of conservation covenant or Section 106 (as appropriate). Section 106 templates are available on the Planning Advisory Service website. It is generally inappropriate to rely solely on conditions to secure off- site biodiversity net gain. The following needs to be secured as part of the off- site biodiversity net gain:

- The submission of a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP);
- Notice of HMMP implementation and completion of the habitat creation and enhancement works;
- Timescales for completion of habitat creation, and the submission of a completion report;
- Submission of a monitoring report;
- A habitat monitoring fee to be paid to the local planning authority on every habitat management monitoring event.

The HMMP shall be submitted when the general BNG condition is discharged and shall contain the following information:

- (a) a non-technical summary;
- (b) the roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;
- (c) the planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan;
- (d) the management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of development; and
- (e) the monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the local planning authority.

Monitoring reports shall be submitted to local planning authority in writing in accordance with the methodology and frequency specified in the approved HMMP. Where off- site gains are to be secured through a 'habitat bank operator' (which has its own legal agreement and HMMP), no additional conditions or section 106 obligations are required, above a condition requiring biodiversity net gain to be delivered as set out in the planning application.

We recommend using this informative for the biodiversity gain: "The development hereby permitted is

subject to the general condition of planning permission relating to biodiversity gain as per Schedule 7A 13(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The condition is that the development may not be begun unless—

- (a) a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan”.

The condition cannot be varied or removed. An application must be made to discharge it as any other condition.

Ecological enhancements

Other biodiversity enhancement measures, which are unrelated to BNG, are detailed in the submitted Ecological Enhancement Plan within the Ecological Enhancement & Management Plan, Matthew Game, 17th February 2025. We advise the following amendments:

- New planting: we advise the new planting to be of native species only
- One bat box to be erected on the existing building: we advise to put a bat brick integrated in the new building (long lasting)
- Hedgehog highways
- Bird box

We support the inclusion of these enhancements in the proposed development as they accord with paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF 2024, which states: “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.” Suggested biodiversity enhancements should be clearly visible on the final elevation plans.

We advise the following condition wording: “Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, an updated site plan/ elevation plans detailing the submitted ecological enhancement included within the Ecological Enhancement & Management Plan, Matthew Game, 17th February 2025, will be incorporated in to the site, and will be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details”.

No comments received from:

- Kent Fire and Rescue - Dartford Group Fire Safety Office
- Kent Police

Neighbouring properties

5 surrounding properties were consulted and a site notice displayed on site. One letter has been received, objecting on the grounds that the application is illegal as works have commenced without permission. The overall consultation period expired on 23.04.2025.

Officer's Analysis



75- 77 New House Lane is the detached dwelling to the left of centre in the above photograph. Although it may have been built as two dwellings, it is used as one.



75-77 New House Lane is the dwelling on the left in the above photograph



The considerations relevant to this application are as follows;
Housing Need

Principle of Development
Design, Character and Appearance
Amenity of Future Occupiers
Neighbouring Amenity
Highways and Parking
Ecology and BNG
Landscaping

Housing Need

In *Hopkins Homes Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2017] 1 W.L.R. 1865, Lord Carnwath re- emphasised that the National Planning Policy Framework is only a material consideration in planning decisions and that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF expressly states the starting point for decision- making is the development plan. Lord Carnwath, as part of the Supreme Court decision, stated,

“It is important, however, in assessing the effect of the Framework, not to overstate the scope of this policy-making role. The Framework itself makes clear that as respects the determination of planning applications (by contrast with plan- making in which it has a statutory recognition), it is no more than “guidance” and as such, a “material consideration” for the purposes of section 70(2) of the 1990 Act. It cannot, and does not purport to, displace the primacy given by the statute and policy to the statutory development plan. It must be exercised consistently with, and not so as to displace or distort, the statutory scheme”.

It is a matter of law that all planning applications need to be considered in accordance with the legislation and relevant policy that applies at the point a decision is taken. The Council published a revised 5 year housing land supply statement in March 2023 which demonstrates that based on data up to the period 2022- 2027, the Council can only demonstrate a land supply of 2.9 years.

Given the Council’s current inability to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply, and as the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75%) that required by the Housing Delivery Test, the housing delivery element of Gravesham’s Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014), Policy CS02 must be regarded as being out of date, as required by paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024). This requires that in regard to housing development, planning permission should be granted unless:

- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well- designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

In the context of Gravesham, the policies referred to in paragraph 11(d)(i) above are those set out in the NPPF at footnote 7 (rather than those in the development plan), relating to any of the following;

- Habitats sites (and those listed in NPPF paragraph 189)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Green Belt
- Local Green Space
- National Landscape
- Irreplaceable habitats
- Designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest, see NPPF footnote 75)
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change

In determining applications for planning permission involving housing, the Council will therefore apply a weighted balance in favour of granting planning permission in accordance with relevant case law and

guidance, having regard to the acceptability or otherwise of the proposals when evaluated against development plan policy, the need to make efficient use of land (paragraph 130(c)) in context, the relative contribution the proposal makes towards the alleviation of any shortfall in housing delivery at that time and any other considerations material to the proposed development.

The proposed development for one residential unit would offer a small contribution towards meeting this local need and, accordingly, officers consider this should be accorded appropriate weight in support of the application. However, this has to be balanced against other requirements of the development plan and the NPPF (2024) which require new development to contribute positively to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and to create a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers.

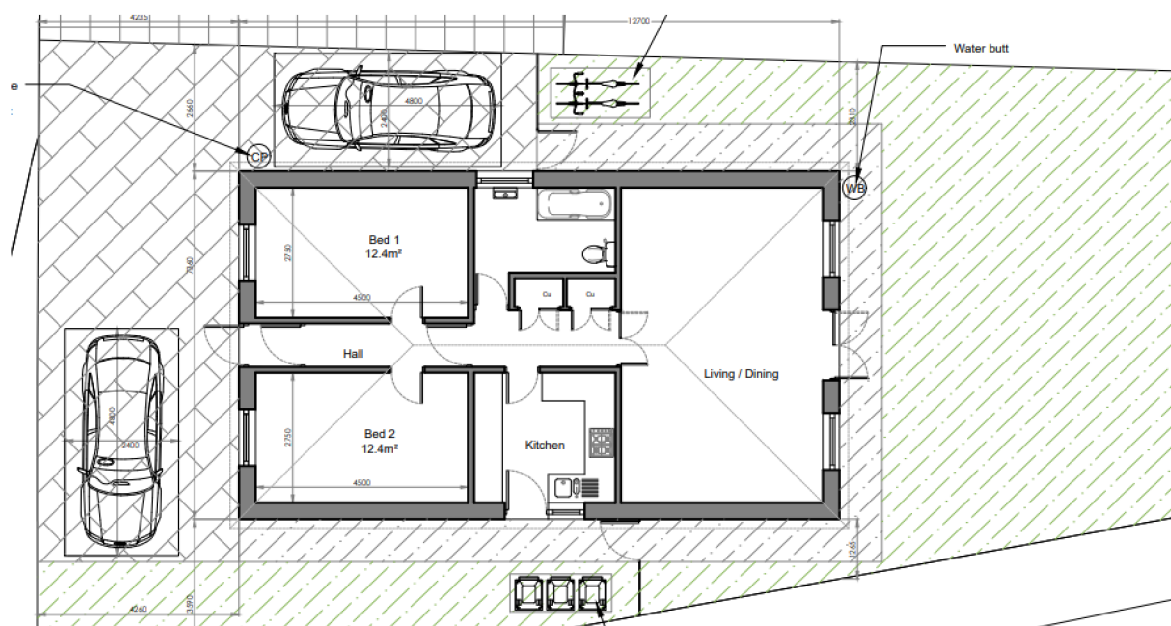
Principle of the Development

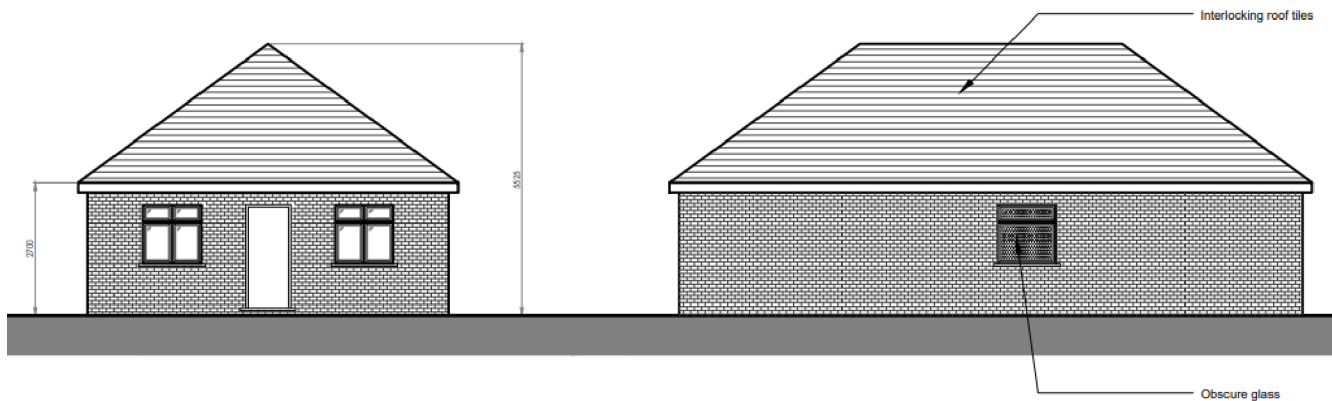
The principle of the residential development of the site is acceptable as the site is within the urban boundary of Gravesham. Moreover, paragraph 61 of the NPPF (2024) states;

“To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community”.

The application site is located in the urban area of Gravesham. Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy “prioritises the development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development”.

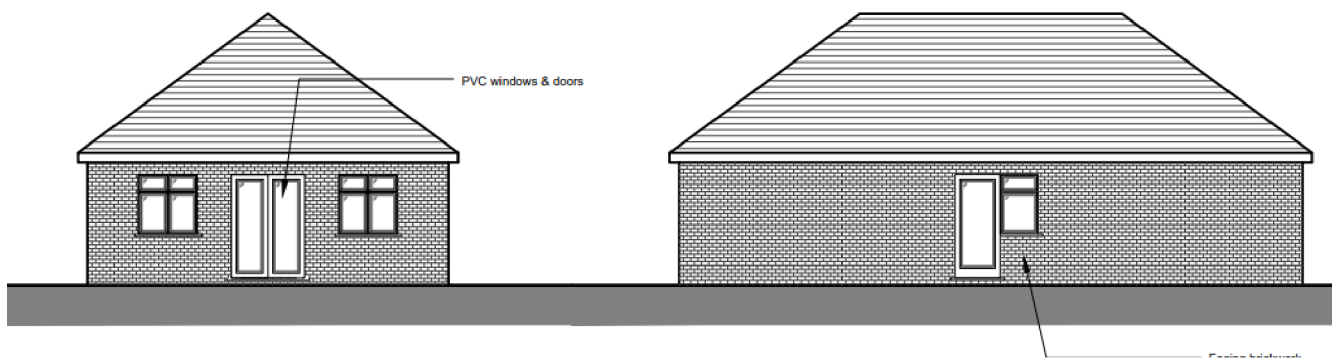
The proposed development for one dwelling would offer only a very modest contribution towards meeting this local need and, accordingly, officers consider this should be accorded appropriate weight in support of the application. However, this has to be balanced against other requirements of the development plan and the NPPF (2024) which require new development to contribute positively to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and to create a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers





1 PROPOSED FRONT (NORTH-WEST) ELEVATION
ELEVATION VIEW Scale 1:100

3 PROPOSED SIDE (NORTH-EAST) ELEVATION
ELEVATION VIEW Scale 1:100



Proposed floor plan and elevations

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states;

“The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”.

This is reflected in Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy which requires new development to be “visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive” and to “conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment”. It also requires new development to “integrate well with the surrounding local area”.

Furthermore, Policy CS19 (LPCS) states;

“...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”.

The Council’s Design for Gravesham Supplementary Planning Document (2024) provides further guidance regarding design, character and appearance.

The area surrounding the application site comprises a two storey detached dwelling (with pitched roofs) immediately adjacent to the site and backs onto a school with various associated school buildings, including a single and two storey prefabricated building with a flat roof. The immediate area is therefore of

varied character. Within this mix of varied height and style buildings, the proposed dwelling would appear acceptable. The single storey nature of the property as a bungalow is out of keeping, but not to the detriment of the character of the area. The property is set back from the street scene and so will not be overly visibly.

Whilst the design of the bungalow is less than inspiring, the surrounding buildings are not of any particular design either. Moreover, the mix of materials in the vicinity of the site is such that the proposed dwelling – with brick and interlocking roof tile – would not appear incongruous. Nonetheless, materials will be conditioned to be approved.

At 5.5m high at the ridge of the roof and sited fairly centrally within its plot, the proposal would not appear cramped within the plot. The proposed development's impact upon the character and appearance of the site and the street scene would be acceptable and in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS), as well as paragraph 131 of the NPPF (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires that all development should be 'fit for purpose' and be 'adaptable to allow changes to meet the need of users' and that 'the design and layout of new residential development, including conversion, will accord with the adopted Residential Layout Guidelines' (RLG) (2020). Moreover, on 25 March 2015 the Government issued a written ministerial statement, which introduced new technical housing standards in England and set out how these would be applied through planning policy. These Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) came into effect on 1 October 2015.

The Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Minimum Spaces Standards document (2015) require a two bedroom, single storey dwelling to have a minimum floorspace of 61sqm (3 person) or 70sqm (4 person).

The proposed dwelling would exceed both of these sizes. Moreover, the bedrooms would also exceed the minimum size of 11.5sqm. The rooms would be of suitable dimensions to allow for a flexible layout of furniture and some storage space. In addition, the size of the garden would provide ample amenity space for the future occupiers of the property. The proposed development would therefore provide for a suitably high level of amenity for its future occupiers, in accordance with the above- quoted policy and guidance.

The site does back onto St George's Secondary School and in relative close proximity to the proposed dwelling as seen in the image below;



However the windows at first floor are high level which prevents any overlooking, and the building is also 24m away from the proposed bungalow. The ground floor windows will be safeguarded through fencing and planting. It is also important to highlight that being a school, the key occupation time will be during the daytime hours, minimising any impact.

Overall, subject to conditions, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

The NPPF (2024), Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy (2014) and the Design Guide SPD (2024) all require new development to have an acceptable impact upon the amenity for the occupiers of the neighbouring properties.

The only property that would be materially affected by the proposed dwelling is the neighbouring property at 75-77 New House Lane. There are no windows in the flank elevation of this dwelling facing the application site. The proposed dwelling would be sited around 5m from the dwelling at 77 New House Lane and would project to the rear by less than 2m. Given the proposed dwelling would be sited to the south- west of 77 and would have a roof which would pitch away from 77, it is not considered that it would have an advance overshadowing or overbearing impact for it.

There would only be one window in the flank elevation of the proposed dwelling facing 77, at ground floor level, serving a bathroom. This would be obscure glazed to a minimum height of 1.7m above internal floor level: there would be no adverse overlooking impacts in this regard.

The other properties (at 81, 83 and 85 New House Lane) would not be adversely impacted upon by the proposed dwelling due to the distances involved and the single storey nature of the proposal.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to safeguard neighbour amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2024).

Parking and Highways

The proposed development needs to be considered against Policy CS11 (LPCS) which states that new development should mitigate their impact on the public highway and that transport assessments should be provided and implemented to ensure delivery of travel choice and sustainable opportunities for travel. Furthermore, it states that sufficient car parking in new developments will be provided in accordance with adopted standards which will reflect the availability of alternative means of transport accessibility to services and facilities. This is also reflected by Saved Policy T1 (LPFR) which requires proposed development to be adequately served by the highway network and Saved Policy P3 (LPFR) which sets out highways parking standards for development.

The proposed dwelling would have two bedrooms. The two parking spaces proposed would provide sufficient parking for the development, complying with the Council's parking standards.

It is noted that the proposed site plan indicates a right of way outside the red line of the application site. However, this is not required to enable access to the site as it may be directly accessed from the road/ driveway running along the front of the site.

The proposed development would be provided with two cycle parking spaces, in accordance with the Council's standards. Their provision and retention may be conditioned. The proposal would not result in any severe cumulative impact on the highway network in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF (2024), as well as Policy CS11 (LPCS).

Other Material Planning Considerations

Biodiversity Net Gain

The additional ecological/ biodiversity net gain information submitted with the application has been

assessed as being sufficient to meet the requirements of the BNG legislation. The proposal has been assessed that it is likely that off- site habit creation will be required to create a net gain in biodiversity in this case. It is generally inappropriate to rely solely on conditions to secure off- site biodiversity net gain. The following would need to be secured as part of the off- site biodiversity net gain through the standard informative:

- The submission of a habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP);
- Notice of HMMP implementation and completion of the habitat creation and enhancement works;
- Timescales for completion of habitat creation, and the submission of a completion report;
- Submission of a monitoring report;
- A habitat monitoring fee to be paid to the local planning authority on every habitat management monitoring event.

Ecological enhancements

Other biodiversity enhancement measures, which are unrelated to BNG, are detailed in the submitted Ecological Enhancement Plan within the Ecological Enhancement & Management Plan, Matthew Game, 17th February 2025. However, the following amendments are advised:

- New planting: we advise the new planting to be of native species only
- One bat box to be erected on the existing building: we advise to put a bat brick integrated in the new building (long lasting)
- Hedgehog highways
- Bird box

The enhancements in the proposed development are supported as they accord with paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF 2024, which states: *“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs”.*

The following condition is advised: *“Prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved, an updated site plan/ elevation plan detailing the submitted ecological enhancement included within the Ecological Enhancement & Management Plan, Matthew Game, 17th February 2025, will be incorporated in to the site, and will be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details”.*

Recreational Pressures on the Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area (SPA) and SAMMS

The Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar site and Special Protection Area (SPA) are internationally important for nature conservation as the area is a wetland and supports important numbers of wintering water birds and migrating birds. There has been a decline in the number of birds using these sites in recent years. Studies show that this could be due to people using the estuary and marshes for recreation purposes. The North Kent Bird Disturbance Report concludes that all new housing development within 6km of the North Kent Ramsar Sites or Special Protection Areas (including the Thames Estuary and Marshes) and larger housing development beyond 6km from the sites could have an adverse impact on them. This is because new housing development is likely to lead to further increases in recreational use of the sites, which means that further declines in the bird population cannot be ruled out. Possible mitigation measures are set out in the Thames, Medway and Swale Estuaries Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy. Having considered a number of options, the Council have decided to impose a tariff on new housing development. Developers will need to pay £337.49 for every new dwelling provided within 6km of the Ramsar site and SPA and for larger housing developments beyond 6km from them. The money raised will be used to pay for schemes to avoid the adverse impacts of new housing development on the birds.

In this instance, the proposed development would result in the creation of an additional residential properties and as such, additional recreational activity would result. Therefore, it is considered that there would be an adverse impact to the Thames Estuary and Marshes Ramsar Buffer Zone, which should be mitigated in line with Policy CS12 (LPCS). In such cases the Borough Council has adopted a tariff that is

payable for each new dwelling unit within 6km of the SPA/Ramsar site of £337.49 per new dwelling unit.

The applicant has paid the SAMMS Mitigation Contribution Agreement for the new residential property and therefore has met the requirements of the Habitat Regulations and Section 15 (specifically paragraphs 192 and 193) of the NPPF (2024) and Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014).

Landscaping

The proposed development will require a landscaping scheme in order to enhance the living environment for the future occupiers of the property and to help assimilate the development into the street scene. The landscaping details submitted with the application are limited. It is therefore considered appropriate to require a more detailed landscaping scheme. This may be achieved by condition. Details of the hardsurfacing and boundary treatments may also be conditioned, in order to achieve a satisfactory appearance for the development.

Refuse

The proposed wheelie bin enclosure would be within the maximum 25m refuse pulling/ carrying distance from the edge of the carriageway. This is acceptable. Its provision may be conditioned.

Permitted Development Rights

It is considered necessary and appropriate that the permitted development rights for the dwelling relating to Classes A, B, C and E of Schedule 2 to Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 be removed by condition in order to protect the amenity of the occupiers of the neighbouring dwellings.

Conclusion

The proposed dwelling would have an acceptable impact upon the street and upon the character and appearance of the area. The dwelling would provide a suitable standard of amenity for its future occupiers without adversely harming the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring and surrounding properties.

Harm to highway safety would not arise from the proposed development and off- site biodiversity enhancements may be achieved as part of the scheme.

The proposed development therefore complies with the relevant Gravesham Local Plan policies (2014), the guidance in the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents and in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Recommendation

The recommendation is that the application be approved.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Thomas Gabriel	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	24 th September 2025	Dated:	26 September 2025