



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20241105

Location: 73 Parrock Avenue Gravesend Kent DA12 1QG

Description: Construction of a vehicle crossover.

Applicant: Mr M Shoker

Site Visit Date: 13.02.25

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Drawing No. 01A – OS Plan Front Elevations and Block Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 04A – Block Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. 73PA/A3/02 – Front Elevation – Proposed; and
Drawing No. 73PA/A3/03 – Turning Circle Plan – Proposed.

Plan Note

On the site visit it was noted that the extension granted under 20190575 (below) has not been constructed. As such, the existing plans are incorrect. Notwithstanding this, this application proposes the construction of a vehicle crossover. As the local Planning Authority are not looking to support the application, further clarification and revised plans have not been requested.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20190575	Erection of a two storey side extension and rear extension, part single storey rear extension and construction of a dormer window in the rear roof slope.	Permitted	30.07.2019

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T5 – New Accesses

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

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

KCC Highways (First Comment)

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.

Following the above comments, and during the review of the application it was considered that the application proposal raised highways concerns. Although the plans show the crossover would be over 10m to a junction, the plans indicate insufficient visibility splays, insufficient space, and poor manoeuvrability on site to the detriment of highway safety and substandard parking provision. As such, KCC Highways were contacted to advise if there were highways concerns or concerns regarding the proposal from the vehicle crossover team. The response is summarised below:

KCC Highways (Second Comment)

- No visibility splays have been provided to demonstrate what is achievable and the splay to the left is likely impacted by on street parking (although it is noted that the driveway opposite is in the same position and there is no crash history here, and the splay to the right, for oncoming traffic, should be clear).
- Parrock Avenue is subject to on street parking and there is concern over how the vehicle would manoeuvre into/out of the drive in its proposed layout. Cars should not reverse out of driveways really, but when they do they are generally perpendicular to the footway and carriageway. In this instance, the car would be turning as it is reversing, and this could potentially limit visibility of pedestrians on the footway. KCC do permit parallel parking spaces but this would require removal of the wall and introduction of 6 dropped kerbs with two tapers so that the vehicle could leave the drive in a forward gear. This would not be possible due to the position of the tree. As the driveway is quite deep at 4+m, there is a small chance the vehicle could reverse within the site and then is able to drive out in forward gear, but this would need to be tracked to make sure.

- The wall is too high and would need to be a maximum of 0.6m for pedestrian visibility.
- From my point of view, they should make changes / provide additional evidence to support the application.
- Based on the plans provided, the crossover team have advised against this proposal and are therefore unlikely to grant a license for this crossover, should you decide to grant permission based on the current plans.

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

Seven surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 08.01.2025 and no representations were received. The overall consultation period expired on 31.01.25.

Site Description

73 Parrock Avenue is a two-storey end of terrace dwelling located on the corner of Parrock Avenue and Milton Avenue. The property appears to benefit from an existing dropped kerb/access situated to the side/rear of the property along Milton Avenue.

Site Photo





This application proposes the construction of a new vehicular crossover to the front of the property, which would be installed over a grass verge in Parrock Avenue;



Proposed Development

The plans show that the existing timber fence would be replaced with a wall, with a gap left for vehicle access. In addition, the existing front garden would be replaced with a permeable hard surface, along with a small section of soft landscaping.



Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed places) of the NPPF (2024) sets out that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It states developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

The Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision

and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. Generally, the SPD (2021) highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context.

In terms of the property frontage, it is evident that the garden does not benefit from a lot of soft landscaping. As such, the introduction of permeable paving and a section of soft landscaping is considered to be a small improvement on the existing appearance of the frontage. In addition, the installation of a new brick boundary wall would be an improvement on the existing situation.

Notwithstanding the above, whilst there are some vehicular crossovers and hardstanding areas within close proximity to the development, it is noted that this particular section of Parrock Avenue has remained true to the original character of the area, with largely uninterrupted grass verges.

Photo demonstrating uninterrupted grass verge



Site Photo



Grass verges contribute positively to the visual appearance of the street scene. The plans show that part of the existing grass verge would need to be removed as part of this proposal, which would be to the detriment of the street scene. Similar proposals have been dismissed at appeal stage. In the report for appeal APP/K2230/D/19/3241135 (13 Harden Road), the inspector confirms “the soft landscaping forms a verdant character and appearance to the street scene. Overall, the grass verge is a characteristic feature of Harden Road which gives a strong sense of local distinctiveness and uniformity” and “the black tarmac would contrast undesirably with the appealing view the grass verge provides creating a discordant feature that would harmfully erode the verdant character and appearance of the area.” In addition, the inspector for APP/K2230/D/21/3266269 (176 Livingstone Road), dismissed the appeal and stated “the proposal would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the host dwelling and the street scene.” Under APP/K2230/D/21/3288644 (37 Scott Road), the inspector noted that “grass verges are a feature which make a positive contribution to the spacious, open and suburban character and appearance of the locality” and “Together and amongst other things Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 (CS), require new development to be visually attractive, fit for purpose and that it should conserve and enhance the character of the local built environment. There should be no loss of biodiversity and opportunities to enhance, restore, re-create and maintain habitats will be sought.” Furthermore, the inspector deduced “the proposal would unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the host property and the street scene.”

As such, proposed vehicular accesses over grass verges has been proven by the above appeal decisions to be unacceptable and damaging to the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area. Therefore, the proposed vehicular access would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the street scene by virtue of the removal of a section of the largely uninterrupted grass verge which is a positive feature in Parrock Avenue and the surrounding area. This would result in an adverse impact on the visual appearance of the surrounding area and the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024.)

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal would result in off-road parking provision for future occupiers. Overall, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 of the

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

No neighbour responses were received as a result of the consultation carried out for the proposal. In situ, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

It was noted on the site visit that the frontage of the property appears very constrained in size:



In addition, it is noted that the site already has a rear access. Although this may not be currently utilitise, it is important to note that it exists;



The proposed development requires planning permission. As aforementioned above, KCC Highways and KCC Crossover Team have confirmed there are highways concerns with the application. This includes the lack of visibility splays due to the boundary walls, but also exacerbated by the high amount of on-street parking which occurs both sides of the highway, resulting in limited visibility and space to manoeuvre a vehicle. Also the manoeuvrability of the car off of the driveway is considered convoluted due to the parallel parking arrangement which is less than ideal, again exacerbated by high levels on street parking, and also proximity to a junction. the proximity of the existing tree and the height of the wall are also concerns. These factors are considered to compromise highway safety. In addition, the KCC Crossover Team have advised against the proposal and would therefore be unlikely to grant a license for the crossover, if planning permission were to be forthcoming.

By virtue of the convoluted parking manoeuvre required to access the driveway, the high amount of on-street parking on both sides of the relatively narrow road, being further exacerbated by the proximity to the junction, the proposal would compromise highway safety by way of insufficient visibility and manoeuvrability within the proposed layout. As such, the proposal is considered to fail to accord with Policy T5 - New Accesses of the Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994), SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006) along with Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

Biodiversity

The proposed development would result in the loss of some soft landscaping; namely the grass verge. Whilst this is unfortunate, it is noted that some new soft landscaping is proposed. Therefore, on balance, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Groundwater Protection Zone

The site is located within a Groundwater Protection Zone 1 area, however, the proposal would be unlikely to be impacted by this constraint.

Contamination

The site is located within the Pine Avenue Historic Landfill Site Buffer Zone. As such, if permission were to be forthcoming, a watching brief condition would be added to the decision notice.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is contrary to local and national planning policy.

The proposed vehicular access would have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the street scene by virtue of the removal of a section of the largely uninterrupted grass verge which is a positive feature in Parrock Avenue and the surrounding area. This would result in an adverse impact on the visual appearance of the surrounding area, considered to be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024.)

By virtue of the convoluted parking manoeuvre required to access the driveway, the high amount of on-street parking on both sides of the relatively narrow road, being further exacerbated by the proximity to the junction, the proposal would compromise highway safety by way of insufficient visibility and manoeuvrability within the proposed layout. As such, the proposal is considered to fail to accord with Policy T5 - New

Accesses of the Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994), SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006) along with Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

Recommendation

Refusal.

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	13th February 2025	Dated:	14 February 2025