



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20231276
Location:	Former Site of Dillybank, Dillywood Lane, Higham, Rochester, Kent
Description:	Erection of a rear single storey infill extension to enlarge the living area.
Applicant:	Mr Shoker
Site Visit:	24 January 2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application Form – dated 08 December 2023;
 - Covering Letter – dated 08 December 2023;
 - Drawing no. 001 – Rev. B – Proposed Block Plan (scale – 1:200);
 - Drawing no. 001 – Rev. A – Existing Block and Site Location Plans;
 - Drawing no. 003 – Rev. B – Proposed Plans and Elevations;
 - Drawing no. 005 – Rev. A – Existing Plans and Elevations.
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- ~~Drawing no. 001 – Rev. A – Proposed Block Plan (scale – 1:200) – SUPERSEDED;~~
 - ~~Drawing no. 003 – Rev. A – Proposed Plans and Elevations – SUPERSEDED.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220900	Demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of a 3 bed detached house with associated parking and amenity space.	PERMITTED	06.10.2022
20210553	**REVISED DESCRIPTION** Alterations to roof, loft conversion with skylight windows to rear, erection of a rear first floor. Demolition of single detached garage, relocation and replacement with a double garage. Existing single storey side extension to have new flat roof with a roof lantern.	PERMITTED	22.10.2021
20030366	Erection of a conservatory at the rear.	REFUSED	30.04.2003
20020504	Erection of a conservatory at the rear.	REFUSED	27.08.2002

19810170	Erection of two storey rear extension to form dining room with bedroom over and single storey rear extension to form enlarged lounge	PERMITTED	06.04.1981
19970377	Change of use of agricultural land at the rear to residential garden; demolition of existing garage & utility room and erection of single storey extension on the north eastern elevation to form lounge, bedroom with ensuite shower room/wc & utility room; erection of open sided porch at the front and detached garage in the front garden.	PERMITTED	09.10.1997
19540248	Erection of house and garage	PERMITTED	04.08.1954
19530183	Development of land for three dwellings	PERMITTED	07.10.1953

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (September 2014):

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

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (November 1994):

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

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 Guidance (SPD) (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal consultees

Local Ward Councillors – No comment received.

External consultees

Higham Parish Council – No comment received.

Dickens Protection Society – The Society would comment that it does not agree that the dwelling under construction can be considered an original dwelling. The Society, however, has no objection to the enlargement of the proposed rear extension.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 11 January 2024.

In addition, five surrounding properties were consulted and one representation was received. The representation registered objection to the scheme highlighting the following material and non-material planning considerations:

Material Planning Considerations

- Out of character with rural setting
- Overbearing impact
- Cumulative increases over and above footprint of original property
- Garage is out of character with the local area

The consultation period expired 02 February 2024.

Analysis

The application site lies within the Green Belt.

The Former site of Dillybank contains a large detached two-storey dwelling currently under construction following planning permission granted in 2022 (ref. 20220900). Although currently under construction, the property is substantially complete with a detached double garage on the frontage.



Extension to Dwelling

The application site is located in the Green Belt and as such Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) is relevant. Development in the urban area is prioritised as the sustainable location for development. In the rural area, Policy CS02 states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the policies map. Development outside those settlements, i.e. in the Green Belt, will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the LPCS.

There are five principle issues in determining this application;

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?
2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
3. Any very special circumstances?
4. Impact on the Landscape;
5. The effect on the character and appearance of the area; and
6. Other matters.

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 152 of the NPPF (2023) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 goes on to say that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within the specified exceptions. The relevant exception to consider for this application is part c of paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023), which states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In determining this proposal account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF (2023), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2023).

In particular Policy C13 places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria ii). It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting (criteria vi). It is considered that these factors are relevant in determining whether the size of an extension is proportionate and as such, these aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the NPPF (2023) and should be afforded due weight.

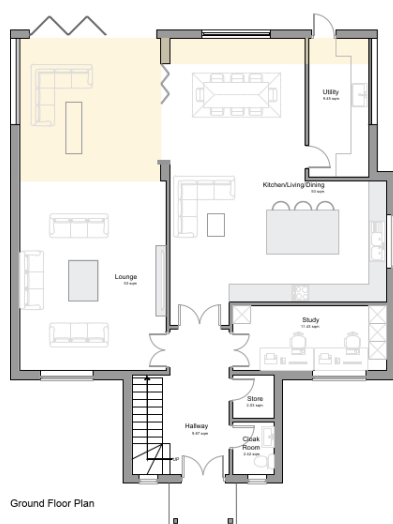
Due to the property being substantially complete, and the permission being implemented, the consideration against Saved Policy C13 is taken against the approved property from application ref. 20220900, as the original dwelling.

	Original Dwelling (ref. 20220900)	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	136.2m²	170m²	25%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	216.8m²	249.9m²	15%
Volume	-	-	-

The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse are below the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. Therefore, in purely numerical terms, the extension is not contrary to the local plan Green Belt policy and potentially does not represent a disproportionate increase over the original floor area of the building. The volume calculations of the extensions, over the original dwelling, have not been calculated in this application and will instead be visually assessed.

However, the numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023) states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It is does not provide a figure.

The extension hereby proposed is single storey and would extend beyond the previously approved rear projection by 1.3m and infill the gap to the side with a width of 5.1m, up to the flank wall of the property. It is the same height as the existing, approved, rear projection. Therefore, the extension is not excessive in size or bulk, and is proportionate to the main dwelling.



It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition to the property and as such the proposal would not be inappropriate development. It therefore complies to Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and to paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023).

2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also states that the essential

characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

Any new built form of development is likely to impact on the openness of the Green Belt, however it is important to establish the degree of harm. Openness of the Green Belt has both a spatial and visual aspect.

As discussed in the above section, the proposed extension would increase the footprint of the dwelling but is not excessive in size or bulk by virtue of being an infill. Therefore, in spatial terms, the development would not have any detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In visual terms, the extension is located to the rear of the dwelling and would experience little to no visibility from Dillybank Lane or the surrounding area. As a result of this, the proposed development would have limited impact on the visual openness of the Green Belt.

Reference back to paragraphs 152 and 153 of the NPPF (2023) informs us that inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Whether the development causes any other harm and whether there are any other relevant considerations to balance the overall planning argument, should now be considered.

3. Very special circumstances

No specific arguments have been put forward by the applicant in relation to the assessment of 'very special circumstances'.

4. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by very gently undulating topography of open arable farmland with pockets of orchards and garden nurseries. The developments spread from the original Saxon settlement of Lower Higham in the North, with more contemporary developments in the South around main road networks.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states at 5.7.26 the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

The proposed extension would be consolidated to the rear of the building and is not significantly deeper than the already approved rear projection on the dwelling. Given the location of the extension immediately to the rear of the dwelling, the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the landscape character in general. As such, the proposal would not be contrary to Policy CS12 (LPCS).

5. The effect on the character and appearance of the area

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) 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 and beautiful places) of the NPPF (2023) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

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

case, the rural character of the area and other surrounding dwellings should be considered.

The extension hereby proposed is not excessive in size or scale to dominate the host dwelling and is subservient at an appropriate height. It is considered to be well designed by matching the existing rear projection and will be constructed using matching materials. It would not have any impact on the character of the street scene, by virtue of its location on the rear of the dwelling.

Overall, the proposed extensions will have no impact on the street scene and are proportionate to the main dwelling. Therefore, the development is considered to be well designed and in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

6. Other matters

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'. The proposed extensions would provide good sized rooms for future occupiers and is in accordance with local residential layout guidelines. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

Neighbouring

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires new development to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF (2023) requires development to have a high standard of amenity for existing users (in this case surrounding properties).

The proposed single storey extension is not considered to impact on the amenity of any neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking, overshadowing, sense of enclosure or outlook. The extension is set in from both boundaries with neighbouring properties and is not considered to have any overbearing impact on amenity. Therefore, the proposal is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

An objection was received from a surrounding resident, raising the following concerns:

- Out of character with rural setting
- Overbearing impact
- Cumulative increases over and above footprint of original property
- Garage is out of character with the local area

The concerns with the development being out of character and cumulatively over the original property have been assessed in sections 5 and 1 of this report. The overbearing impact has been considered in this section, with the single storey section not considered to have any impact on the amenity of adjoining properties. Lastly, the garage does not form part of this proposal and was permitted in the previous application (ref. 20220900).

Parking and Highways

There are no parking or highways issues related to this proposal.

Conclusion:

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning

policy.

The proposed extension is an infill, with a slight increase in depth compared to the approved rear projection. It is single storey and not excessive in size or bulk, is located at the rear and would have limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt or landscape. There will be no impact on the amenity of future occupiers or neighbouring properties and there is sufficient space available for off-street parking.

As such it is recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	5 th February 2024	Dated:	05 February 2024