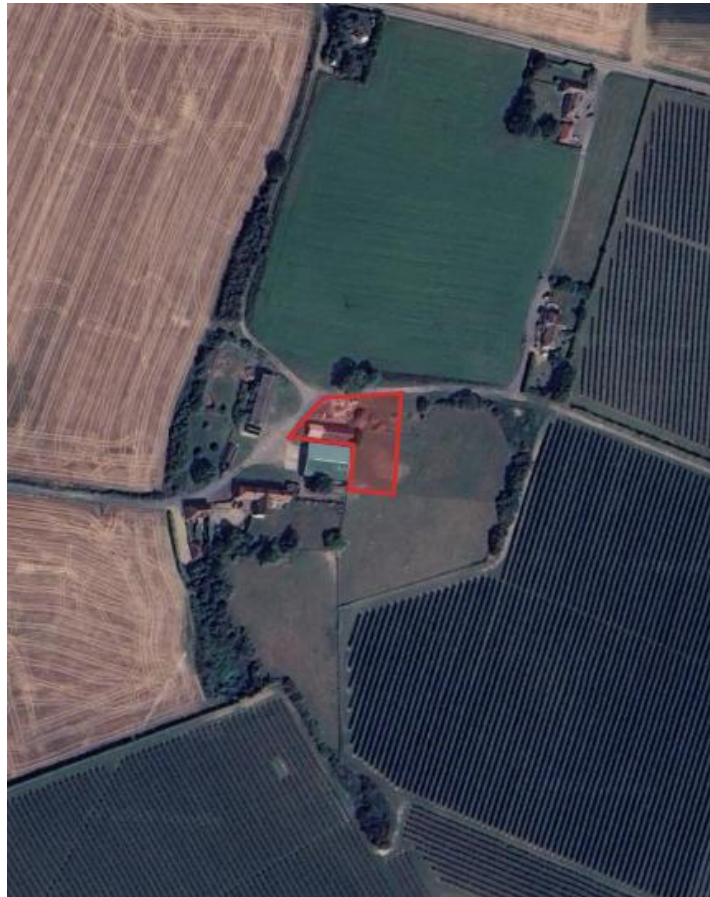




Planning Statement

Incorporating a Design & Access Statement and HIA
Proposed Conversion of Redundant Agricultural Building to Dwellinghouse and
Associated Work at
Green Garm, Green Farm Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3HL
On behalf of Mr & Mrs J Houghton



December 2025

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Planning Statement

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by JJB Chartered Architects Ltd on behalf of the applicant Mr & Mrs Houghton to support a full planning application for the conversion of a redundant agricultural building to a four-bedroom dwellinghouse at Green Farm, Green Farm Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3HL.

1.2 The following submitted documents and drawings accompany the application:

- completed application forms (submitted via the Planning Portal);
- dwg no. 2421-P-01 – existing floor plan, roof plan, sections and elevations;
- dwg no. 2421-P-02C – proposed floor plan, roof plan, sections and elevations;
- dwg no. 2421-P-03A – site location plan;
- dwg no. 2421-P-04A – existing site block plan;
- dwg no. 2421-P-05A – proposed block plan;
- Structural Survey;
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;
- Biodiversity Gain Statement, Statutory Metric; and
- Planning Statement.

1.3 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to advance the planning merits of the proposal, having regard to national and local planning policy and having regard to all other material considerations, including the matters for consideration identified in the Council's pre-application advice.

1.4 This statement includes the following:

- description of the site and surroundings;
- description of the proposed development;
- summary of supporting information;
- relevant planning history and summary of pre-application advice;
- the relevant planning policy context;
- planning considerations; and

- conclusions.

1.5 This planning statement concludes that:

- the principle of the proposed development is acceptable, including being appropriate development in Green Belt;
- the proposal, through considered and appropriate design would retain the essential rural character of the building and would safeguard the landscape;
- the proposal would preserve the significance of the historic environment;
- the proposal would safeguard existing and future residential amenity;
- the proposal would safeguard highway safety;
- due regard is had to protected species and biodiversity net gain;
- the proposal incorporates sustainable construction and drainage; and
- for these reasons the proposal meets sustainable development objectives.

1.6 It should be noted that this Planning Statement is of sufficient content and detail to meet the content expected of a Design and Access Statement covering the following matters:

- use class;
- amount of development;
- layout;
- scale;
- landscaping; and
- appearance.

1.7 The statement also includes sections designed to provide an understanding of the significance of the local historic environment sufficient to inform the impact of the proposal on that environment and its significance.

1.8 As the proposal includes new hardstanding and garden room likely triggering mandatory biodiversity net gain, despite the proposal being mainly a conversion of an existing building.

- 1.9 This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying structural survey and pre-liminary ecological appraisal.

2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

Application Site

- 2.1 The application site, known as Green Garm, is located in open countryside, designated as metropolitan Green Belt.
- 2.2 The site lies approximately 1 kilometre north of the settlement of Shorne. The settlement of Higham lies 1.2 kilometres to the south east. The south bank of the Thames lies 2.35 kilometres to the north.
- 2.3 The application site comprises the brick built and fibre cement roof agricultural building known as the 'Tractor Barn', existing yard area and small parcel of agricultural land. The accompanying Structural Report observes that parts of the building are in the order of 200 years old, but extensive rebuilding was undertaken following the Great Storm of 1987.
- 2.4 The existing barn has a gross external floor area of 164 sq.m in floor and the site area is 3663 sq.m. The following is a photograph of the existing building:



Figure 1 – photograph of existing building (DSA).

- 2.5 The application site is accessed off of and to the east of Green Farm Lane. Green Farm Lane in turn connects to the Gravesend Road – A226, 750 metres to the south. The existing access of Green Farm Lane serves Green Farm House and two further dwellinghouses and is constructed to a good standard. A photograph of the access drive at the junction with Green Farm Lane is shown below:



Figure 2 – photograph of access driveway.

The Surroundings

- 2.6 The wider Green Farm site comprises of Green Farm, Green Farm Oast and cottages 1 & 2, together with a modest range of existing non-traditional agricultural buildings. Green Farm dwellinghouse lies 30 metres to the south west, and Green Farm Oast 63 metres to the south west.
- 2.7 The northern site boundary adjoins an existing farm track with arable land beyond. The eastern site boundary is undefined and adjoins grazing land, with a major scale solar farm located a short distance to the east. The southern site boundary adjoins a non-tradition farm building used for farm machinery storage and the western boundary adjoins hardstanding/internal access.
- 2.8 Green Farm and Green Farm Oast are grade II individually listed buildings. The Historic England online resource provides the following listing descriptions:

Green Farm:

18th or early 19th century. Two-storey, T-shaped, brick farmhouse, comprising long north facade in 2 irregular sections with different roof levels, and projecting wing on the south, probably of later date. Gable ended roofs covered with clay tiles.

Five sash windows with glazing bars intact, the 3 ground floor windows at one side of the house are casements. Off centre doorway a top flight of steps with plain iron handrails. Flat wooden hood on wood brackets over half-glazed door.

Green Farm Oast:

18th century red-brick built 3-storey granary close to south-west corner of farmhouse. Clay tiled hipped roof. South side has had wing (probably a later addition) removed.

Figure 3 – Historic England Record.

- 2.9 The locations of the preceding listed buildings relative to the building the subject of this application are shown in the image below (site marked by red dot and listed buildings marked by blue pin):

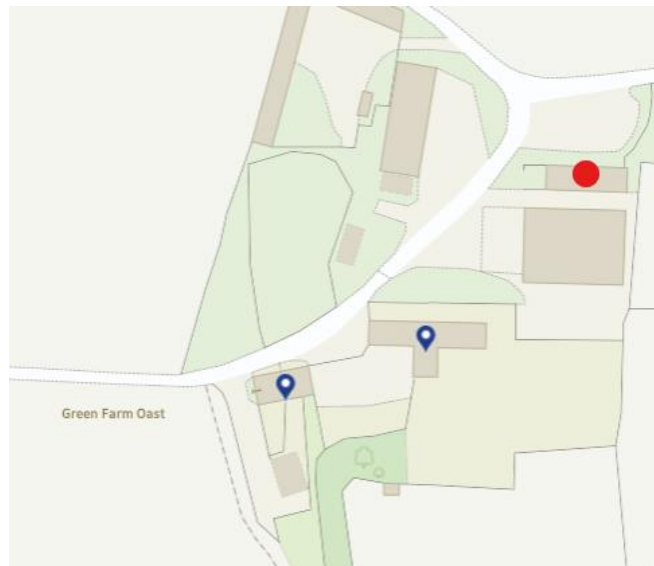


Figure 4 – Historic England Map record.

- 2.10 The prevailing character of the locality is wholly rural. The site falls within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area of the Landscape Character Assessment (2009). In the pre-application response, the Council observes that:

The site is located in the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. This is defined by open arable farmland that gently undulates, generally rises from north to south, although marshland exists to the sides of hamlets and settlements. There are extensive views across open arable land from within the character area and views out of the character area, towards the marshes and the River Thames in the north, from some higher vantage points and areas near the boundary line.

2.11 An aerial image of the site in its context is shown below:



Figure 5 – aerial image of site (Google).

2.12 The site falls within Flood Zone 1 which is identified as being at the least risk of flooding from fluvial and sea sources.

3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 Full planning permission is sought for the conversion of an existing redundant agricultural building to a 4-bedroom dwelling house and associated works including construction of a modest garden room. Associated internal and external alterations are proposed. The proposal is explored in more detail as follows.

Use

- 3.2 The proposed land use is Class C3 dwellinghouses (1 no. 4-bedroom dwellinghouse).

Scale and Amount

- 3.3 The proposal includes the formation of a garden room and first floor increasing the gross internal floor area of the building to 241.78 sq.m.
- 3.4 The proposed accommodation would comprise:

Ground Floor

- entrance hall and cloak room;
- open plan kitchen and dining room;
- sitting room;
- garden room;
- study;
- utility room/pantry;
- shower room; and
- bedroom 1.

First Floor

- 3 no. bedrooms with associated en-suites; and
- landing area.

3.5 The proposed floor plans are shown below:

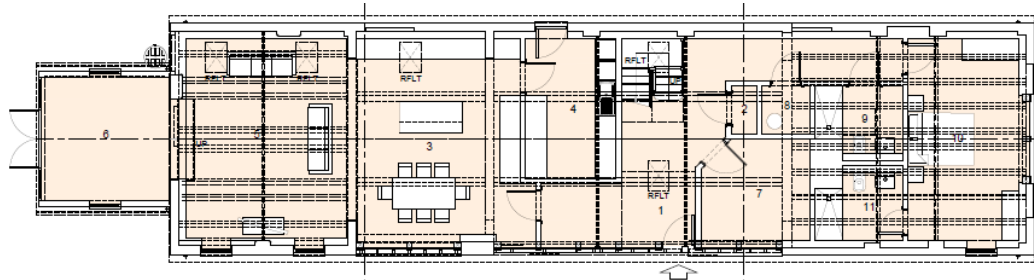


Figure 6 – proposed ground floor plan.

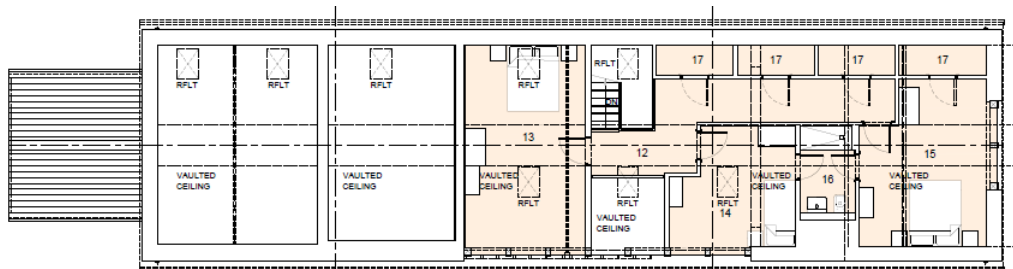


Figure 7 – proposed first floor plan.

Appearance

3.6 The proposed external alterations are summarised as follows

- northern elevation (principal) – re-use of existing full-height openings and limited new openings with verticality emphasis to provide outlook and natural light including to first floor accommodation;
- southern elevation – insertion of roof lights, in addition to the full-height openings to provide outlook and natural to first floor accommodation and installation of 1 no. air source heat pump;
- eastern end elevation – construction of garden room extension; and
- western end elevation – reuse of existing full height opening and fixed back timber shutters.

3.7 The proposed palette of materials comprises:

- main building walls: retention of existing facing brick and refurbishment of existing horizontal timber boarding (western end elevation);
- garden room extension wall: horizontal timber boarding to match existing;
- fenestration: oak joinery to door and window openings and frameless glass to vertical openings (4 no.); and
- roof: natural slate and black metal rainwater goods.

3.8 The proposed elevations are shown as follows:



Figure 8 – proposed principal (northern) elevation.

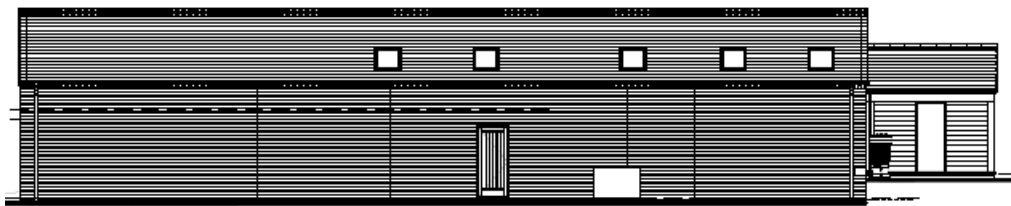


Figure 9 – proposed rear (southern) elevation.

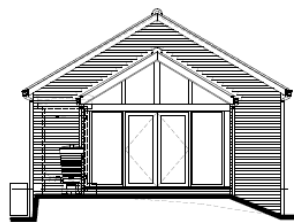


Figure 9 – proposed eastern elevation.

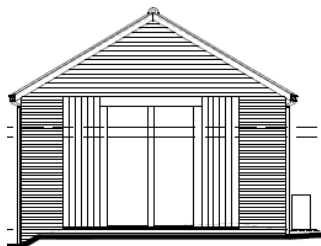


Figure 10 – proposed western elevation.

Layout and Hard and Soft Landscaping

3.9 The proposed site layout/external works are summarised as follows:

- removal of 1 no. tree;
- retention of existing tree;
- existing track and concrete hardstanding/slabs to be removed and returned to grass;
- formation of gravel parking area providing 3 no. parking spaces including installation of 1 no. vehicle charging point;
- pedestrian circulation around building and small patio at eastern end off garden room;
- erection of 1.2 m high post and rail fence and new native hedgerow to enclose the boundaries of the site; and
- external bin store.

3.10 The proposed site layout is shown below:

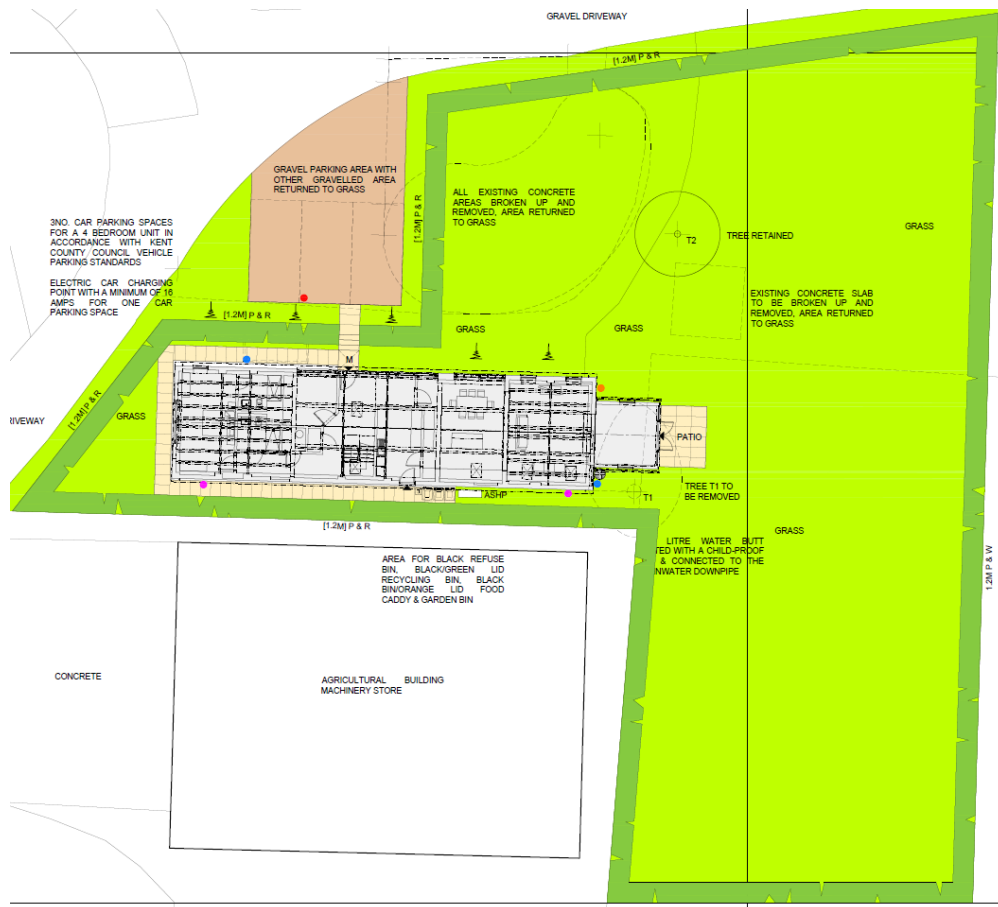


Figure 10 – proposed site layout.

Access and Associated Works

- 3.11 The dwellinghouse would be accessed off Green Lane Farm (public highway) by a good standard and fully metalled private driveway serving to existing dwellinghouses.
- 3.12 Foul water would discharge to the existing/new package treatment plan and surface water would continue to discharge soakaways.
- 3.13 Biodiversity enhancement measures would include:
- installation of 3 no. externally mounted bird boxes, including swift cups;
 - installation of 2 no. externally mounted bat day roost box;
 - creation of permeable boundaries;
 - extensive new hedgerow planting; and
 - creation of meadow grassland.

4.0 Summary of Supporting Information

- 4.1 The application is supported by a structural survey of the existing building and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and pre-development Biodiversity Net Gain Plan. The findings of both documents are summarised as follows.

Structural Report

- the building is in satisfactory condition and suitable for continued use;
- the existing roof material should be replaced;
- some strengthening of the roof structure may be required;
- the existing floor needs levelling and an insulated concrete ground-bearing slab installed;
- the building height would accommodate two storey accommodation;
- limited rebuilding of out of plumb walls is required along with localised repairs and normal repointing; and
- it is concluded that the barn is suitable for conversion to a dwellinghouse.

Preliminary Ecological Survey

The protected species assessment is summarised as follows:

- the building could be used by nesting birds;
- the building has negligible potential for roosting bats;
- potential for the area to be used by foraging and commuting bats;
- no evidence of reptiles by adjacent grassland displays habitat potential;
- no evidence amphibians but ponds in proximity;
- no evidence of badgers;
- no suitable habitat for hazel dormouse on site;
- no suitable habitat for beaver, otter or water vole;
- potential for hedgehog activity; and
- habitat on site offers potential for widespread invertebrate species.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal proposes the following recommendations in summary:

- trees to be retained should be protected in accordance with the relevant British Standard;
- the clearance/construction phase should be outside the bird nesting season unless prior checks are made by a suitable ecologist;
- consideration should be given to the installation of bird nesting boxes and swift nest bricks;
- any lighting should be low or zero UV;
- further survey of nearby ponds is required to ensure suitable mitigation in respect of great crested newts or adopt District Level Licensing;
- precautionary working methods required in respect of reptiles;
- boundary should be permeable to maintain hedgehog commuting; and
- open excavations should be covered or enable means of escape by hedgehogs.

The Pre-development Biodiversity Gain Plan finds that:

- Proposals will result in a net gain of habitat units in excess of 10% which is compliant with legislation pertaining to BNG, the proposals include;
- Provision of neutral grassland; and
- Rural tree planting.

5.0 Relevant Planning History and Summary of Pre-application Advice

5.1 The site has no relevant planning history, save for the confirmed use of the barn immediate to the south as being a store rather than a livestock building.

5.2 The Council's pre-application advice in respect of the conversion of the building to a dwellinghouse is summarised as follows:

- subject to the building being of permanent and substantial construction, the proposal would be one of the exceptions providing for development in Green Belt;
- the proposal would also need to demonstrate that the openness of the Green Belt would be preserved;
- the proposed fenestration should be simplified, glazing recessed and achieve vertical emphasis;
- no objection in principle to a modest extension but it should not appear very domestic in appearance;
- regard should be had to the historic environment;
- the proposal would not harm landscape character;
- the proposal would need to demonstrate satisfactory residential amenity for the future occupiers;
- no highway concerns, but sufficient on site parking is required;
- the proposal should demonstrate how the proposed development meets sustainable transport objectives;
- a financial contribution of £328.27 is required to mitigate impact on the North Kent Ramsar Site and Special Protection Areas; and
- mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain must be addressed.

6.0 Planning Policy and Legislative Context

National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2024) (NPPF)

6.1 The revised NPPF came into effect in December 2024 and is a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are considered to be relevant.

- Paragraph 7 – sustainable development objectives;
- Paragraph 11 – presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Paragraph 39 – the positive and creative approach;
- Paragraph 61 – significantly boosting the supply of homes;
- Paragraph 110 – sustainable patterns of growth;
- Paragraph 115 – safe access for all users;
- Paragraph 124 – effective use of land;
- Paragraph 129 – efficient use of land;
- Paragraphs 131 to 135 – good design;
- Paragraph 136 – trees;
- Paragraphs 142 – 160 – protecting Green Belt land;
- Paragraphs 181 – sustainable drainage;
- Paragraphs 187 and 192 – 195 – natural environment and biodiversity; and
- Paragraphs 210 – 215 – historic environment.

6.2 The relevant NPPF content is not repeated in full or summary here but is referred to and analysed in so far as the NPPF policies are relevant to the proposal in the following section: Planning Considerations.

The Development Plan

6.3 The adopted development plan for the area comprises the following documents:

- the Gravesham Core Strategy and Policies Map – September 2014 (Core Strategy); and

- the saved policies of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review – November 1994 (Local Plan).

6.4 The relevant policies of the above development plans, as indicated in the Council's pre-application response, are summarised below.

Core Strategy

6.5 The following Core Strategy policies are considered to be relevant:

- Policy CS01 - sustainable development;
- Policy CS02 – scale and distribution of development;
- Policy CS11 – transport;
- Policy CS12 – green infrastructure;
- Policy CS18 – climate change;
- Policy CS19 – design and development principles; and
- Policy CS20 – heritage and the historic environment.

6.6 Policy CS01 of the Core Strategy echoes the NPPF's objectives for ensuring that Councils adopt a presumption in favour of sustainable development, including working proactively with applicants. Policy CS01 further provides that where proposals accord with the Core Strategy, they will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.7 Policy CS02 provides that proposals outside of settlement boundaries in Green Belt will be assessed against national policies for the protection of Green Belt and policies in this plan.

6.8 Policy CS11 seeks to ensure that new development mitigates impact on the highway and transport networks and that sufficient onsite parking is provided in accordance with the adopted standards.

6.9 Policy CS12 provides that site of biodiversity value, including Special Protection Area and Ramsar sites are protected. The policy also seeks to ensure that landscape character is conserved, restored and enhancement.

- 6.10 Policy CS18 requires that development proposals incorporate sustainable drainage and water demand management to achieve a maximum of 105 litres per person per day of consumption.
- 6.11 Policy CS19 sets out the Council's objectives to ensure that new development is visually attractive and locally distinctive, enhancing the character of the area and delivering satisfactory living conditions including adequate amenity space, and is resilient to the effects of climate change.
- 6.12 Policy CS20 seeks to preserve and enhance the historic environment, including applying appropriate weight to the conservation of the historic environment.
- 6.13 Noting that the Core Strategy policies are overdue full review, it is unclear whether the Core Strategy has been subject partial review to determine conformity with national policy, but a review of the above policies indicates general conformity with the latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Local Plan

- 6.14 The following Local Plan policies are considered to be relevant:
- Policy P3 – vehicle parking standards; and
 - Policy TC2 – policy for listed buildings.
- 6.15 Policy P3 requires development proposals to make provision for vehicle parking in accordance with Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards.
- 6.16 Policy TC2 generally echoes national policy in respect of the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 6.17 The following Supplementary Planning Documents are relevant to the proposal:
- Kent County Council Parking Standards;
 - Landscape Character Assessment;
 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement 2015;

- Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard; and
- Design for Gravesham.

Kent County Council Parking Standards

- 6.18 The adopted standards require provision for electric vehicle charging in new development and that 4 bedroom houses should have a on-site provision for 3 parking spaces.

Landscape Character Assessment

- 6.19 The site falls within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. This is defined by open arable farmland that gently undulates, generally rises from north to south, although marshland exists to the sides of hamlets and settlements. There are extensive views across open arable land from within the character area and views out of the character area, towards the marshes and the River Thames in the north, from some higher vantage points and areas near the boundary line.

Residential Layout Guidelines

- 6.20 The adopted guidelines set out minimum residential room sizes, minimum private garden areas, standards for ensuring adequate privacy and avoidance of overshadowing, provision of natural lighting.

Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)

- 6.21 The NDSS sets out minimum overall gross internal floor areas based on occupancy levels and minimum bedroom sizes.

Legislative Context

- 6.22 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

7.0 Planning considerations

7.1 The key issues for the consideration of the proposal based on the identified policy framework, and having regard to all other material considerations are whether:

- the principle of the proposed development is acceptable including having regard to national policy framed to protect Green Belt;
- the proposal through considered and appropriate design would safeguard the essential rural character of the building and landscape character;
- the proposal would conserve or enhance the historic environment;
- the proposals would safeguard existing and future residential amenity;
- the proposal would maintain highway safety and deliver sufficient on-site parking;
- due regard is had to ecology and whether the proposal would enhance biodiversity;
- the proposed drainage measures are appropriate and the proposal would achieve sustainable construction objectives; and
- whether the proposal having regard to the above matters, would deliver sustainable development.

7.2 These matters are considered in detail as follows.

The Principle

General Housing Policy

7.3 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of new homes.

7.4 Paragraph 73 states that *"Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly."*

7.5 The proposal is consistent with the national policy objectives for the delivery of new homes at a time of continued housing crisis.

Green Belt Impact

- 7.6 The application site falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt as highlighted in the Council's pre-application response.
- 7.7 Policy CS02 of the adopted Core Strategy effectively defers to national policy for the consideration of proposals in Gravesham Borough with Green Belt, outside of existing settlement.
- 7.8 Section 13 of the NPPF sets out the national policy requirements for ensuring the protection of the Green Belt.
- 7.9 Paragraph 143 identifies the five purposes of Green Belt, including prevention of urban sprawl, prevention of urban coalescence, safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, preservation of the setting of historic towns and assisting in urban regeneration.
- 7.10 Paragraph 153 provides that substantial weight is given to any harm to Green Belt, including harm to openness. Paragraph 153 further provides that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to Green Belt.
- 7.11 Paragraph 154 lists the type of development that are not considered inappropriate including criterion h) iv. which provides for the re-use of buildings in Green Belt that are of permanent and substantial construction, providing that the proposal preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 7.12 In the context of this proposal for the re-use/conversion of an existing building, paragraph 154, including criterion h) iv, therefore imposes three tests for the assessment of the proposal:
- 1 – is the existing building of permanent and substantial construction;
 - 2 – would the proposal preserve the openness of Green Belt; and
 - 3 – would the proposal give rise to conflict with the five purposes of Green Belt.

These tests are considered in turn as follows.

- 7.13 The existing building is of predominantly masonry construction and is therefore substantial. Moreover, the accompanying Structural Report confirms that the building, save for localised and normal repair is suitable for re-use. The first test of paragraph 154 is therefore met.
- 7.14 The proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal is re-use of an existing building with modest extension and therefore giving rise to no greater harm to the openness. However, the proposal would remove substantial areas of existing hardstanding and there would therefore be a net increase in openness in the form of soft landscaping compared to the existing site conditions. The second test of paragraph 154 is therefore met.
- 7.15 The proposal would not undermine the five purposes of Green Belt. As a conversion scheme, and by reason of its location, the proposal would not result in urban sprawl, it would not give rise to coalescence, and there would be no impact on the setting of an historic town. Moreover, by reason of being a conversion and modest extension, and achieving a net reduction in hardstanding, the proposal would not result in countryside encroachment. And, the proposal for the same reasons would not undermine urban regeneration objectives.
- 7.16 It is noted that the Council observes in its pre-application advice that: *‘Given the location of the barn and the limited size of the proposed extension, it is considered that in these respects the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt.’* and *‘Given the scale of the proposal, it is unlikely that it would conflict with any of the purposes set out in paragraph 143.’*
- 7.17 For all of the above reasons, the principle of the proposed development is considered to be acceptable meeting the requirements of national Green Belt policy and therefore Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy.

Design and Character Impact

- 7.18 The key policies for consideration in the context of the above matters are paragraphs 131 to 135 and 187 of the NPPF and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

7.19 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that new development, in terms of design, functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area, and that it is visually attractive and sympathetic to local character. These objectives are echoed in Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

7.20 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF require recognition to be given to the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and to protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

Design and Character Impact

7.21 The proposal comprises re-use/conversion of the existing building. The proposed external works have been carefully designed to retain the essential rural/agricultural of the building through re-use of existing window openings and minimising new openings. Moreover, all features of an overtly domestic nature, such as chimneys, porches, dormer windows etc have been excluded from the design.

7.22 The main messages to arise out of the pre-application response, in order to achieve good quality design reflecting local distinctiveness, were to simplify the fenestration to the northern elevation, achieve greater vertical emphasis to the fenestration and reduce the domestic character of proposed garden room extension. The scheme has been revisited in light of those comments and it has been changed accordingly. The resulting design emphasises the rural character of the building.

7.23 Through sensitive conversion, reduction in hard landscaping and appropriate and sensitive boundary treatment, the proposal would overall conserve the character of the local rural landscape.

7.24 For all of the above reasons, the proposal would be consistent with the objectives of national policy and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on the Historic Environment

- 7.25 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that special regard shall be had to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
- 7.26 The key policies for consideration in the context of impact on the historic environment are paragraphs 207 to 215 of the NPPF. These requirements are echoed in Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan.
- 7.27 In summary, the wording of relevant national and local policy requires development proposals to firstly identify the significance of potentially impacted heritage assets, and for an assessment then to be made of the impact of the proposal on that significance in sufficient detail proportionate to the scale of development – all under the pervading statutory requirement to conserve or enhance the asset.

Identification of Significance

- 7.28 In this case, the designated heritage assets potentially impacted by the proposed development are considered to be:
- Green Farm House; and
 - Great Farm Oast.
- 7.29 The Historic England listing description for both building is useful of identifying their significance. In summary, the significance is considered to comprise:
- Green Farm House - architectural interest as a good surviving example of a gentlemen farmer's vernacular farmhouse; and
 - Green Farm Oast – architectural interest as a good surviving example of a three storey granary and its intrinsic and historical association with the farmhouse on the same site.

Impact on Significance

- 7.30 The proposal would conserve and enhance the setting of the identified designated heritage assets for the following reasons.
- 7.31 The proposal would return the existing building in good order to something similar to its original appearance, including removal of the unsightly fibre cement roof material and its replacement with a traditional roofing material. Moreover, the combination of appropriate a sensitive boundary treatment to the site edges, coupled with a net reduction in inappropriate hard landscaping and part replacement with sensitive materials, would result in the potential for overall enhancement of the setting.
- 7.32 However, the author is mindful of the siting of the existing building in relation to the listed buildings and the intervening structure and other modern structure of the farm. By reason of the site and those structures, the positive impact of the changes would not be significant and overall, the proposal is most likely to conserve the current setting.
- 7.33 The proposal therefore meets the objectives of paragraphs 207 to 215 of the NPPF, Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan.
- 7.34 And for the same reasons, the proposal would meet the statutory requirements of sections 66 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Residential Amenity

- 7.35 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF seeks to create places that achieve a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. This requirement is echoed in Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy and the guidelines set out in the adopted local and national standards.

Existing Residential Amenity

- 7.36 The proposal would give rise to no impact, harmful or otherwise, on existing residential amenity.

Future Residential Amenity

- 7.37 The proposal would provide satisfactory living conditions for the future occupiers in all respects including standard of accommodation, natural light, outlook and private amenity area.
- 7.38 The relationship of the building to the existing adjacent building is acknowledged. The lawful use of the adjacent building is as a store and it is designed as such. It is not designed as a livestock building and there is therefore little potential for harm to residential amenity arising from livestock noise and odour.
- 7.39 The use of the neighbouring building as a store is not intensive, but instead it is sporadic, but with greater potential for high intensity in short periods, such as during harvest. The building does not have any mechanical infrastructure, for example of grain drying. The building has no opening facing north or east, reduce to potential harmful noise escape.
- 7.40 Moreover, the proposed dwelling has been designed so that openings are directed away from the neighbouring building.
- 7.41 The proposal, having regard to the above observations would therefore provide future occupiers with satisfactory residential amenity.
- 7.42 The proposal, for all of the above reasons would safeguard existing and future residential amenity consistent with the requirements of paragraph 135 of the NPPF and Policy Q2 of the Local Plan.

Access, Highway Safety, Parking and Sustainable Patterns of Growth

- 7.43 Paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that safe and suitable access to the site be achieved for all users. The national policy objectives are echoed in Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy.

- 7.44 Paragraph 110 seeks to create sustainable patterns of growth which reduce reliance on the private motor vehicle for movement and to encourage a modal shift.
- 7.45 Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan requires new development to deliver sufficient onsite parking meeting the Council's adopted parking standards.

Access and Highway Safety

- 7.46 Vehicular access to the site is via a good standard private driveway off Green Lane Farm. Green Lane Farm is a relatively narrow rural country road in the vicinity of the application site, with a number of other properties having direct access to the carriageway in the locality.
- 7.47 The standard of visibility from the private drive in both direction is good, given the absence of hedgerows on the east side of the public highway.
- 7.48 There is adequate on site turning and manoeuvring space on site to ensure that all vehicles would enter the carriageway in a forward gear.
- 7.49 It is noted that at the time of the conversion of the oasthouse/granary to two dwellings, the Local Highway Authority raised no objection to the proposal. There appear to be no material change in physical or policy circumstances since that time to justify reaching a different conclusion on this proposal for one additional dwellinghouse.

Accessibility

- 7.50 It is acknowledged that the application site is in a rural location which is already served by a public right of way NS 171 with limited public transport links. Given the modest scale of development proposed, improving the accessibility of the site would be disproportionate.
- 7.51 The settlements of Gravesend, Higham and Shorne are located a short drive from the site, including noting the provision for electrical vehicle charging on site as required by the adopted parking standards.

7.52 Moreover, there are covered bus stops at the junction of the Gravesend Road and Green Farm Lane, enabling the potential for access to public transport a short distance from the application site.

7.53 There is also sufficient space on site to provide secure cycle storage facilitating movement by bicycle.

Parking

7.54 The proposal includes 3 no. on site parking spaces and provision of electric vehicle charging meeting the Council's adopted parking standards.

7.55 For all of these reasons highway safety would be maintained, satisfactory off-road parking is provided, and whilst not ideal, there is access to public transport not far from the application site. The proposal therefore complies with paragraphs 110 and 115 of the NPPF and Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan.

Ecology, Biodiversity and Arboricultural Impact

Ecology and Biodiversity

7.56 Paragraphs 187 and 192 to 195 of the NPPF require due regard to be had to the matter of wildlife habitats and biodiversity, including a requirement to identify and pursue opportunities for achieving a net gain in biodiversity. These objectives are echoed in Policy S12 of the Core Strategy.

7.57 The proposal is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which confirms that subject to normal mitigation, including precautionary measures, including adoption of District Level Licensing, the proposal would not give rise to adverse ecological impacts.

7.58 The accompanying pre-development biodiversity gain plan confirms that mandatory biodiversity net gain is achieved through onsite replacement and enhancement.

- 7.59 In addition to meeting mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements, the following additional enhancement measures are proposed
- installation of 3 no. externally mounted bird boxes, including swift cups;
 - installation of 3 no. externally mounted bat day roost box;
 - creation of permeable boundaries;
 - extensive new hedgerow planting; and
 - creation of meadow grassland.
- 7.60 The application acknowledges and accepts the requirement for a proportionate financial contribution towards the mitigation of the RAMSAR site and Special Protection Area.
- 7.61 The proposal for the above reasons would meet the objectives of paragraphs 187 and 192 to 195 of the NPPF, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy.

Other Material Considerations

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.62 Paragraph 181 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that development does not increase flood risk through, amongst other measures, the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems. This requirement is echoed in Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy.
- 7.63 The proposal would result in a net reduction in hard surfacing on site reducing the surface water run-off rate from the site.
- 7.64 New hard surfaces on site would be permeable.
- 7.65 Surface water arising from the building would continue to discharge to on site soakaways.
- 7.66 Foul water would discharge to the existing/new compliant package treatment plant of sufficient capacity to serve a four bedroom dwellinghouse.

- 7.67 The proposal, in light of the above observations, makes appropriate provision for sustainable drainage consistent with the requirements of paragraph 181 of the NPPF and Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy.

Sustainable Construction

- 7.68 Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy requires new development to adopt the Building Regulation's optional higher water efficiency standard.
- 7.69 The proposed construction would achieve as a minimum, the requirements of the Building Regulations in respect of thermal and ventilation efficiency to minimise energy consumption.
- 7.70 The proposal would incorporate water efficiency measures, including water saving appliances, to ensure that daily household consumption does not exceed 110 litres per person, per day.
- 7.71 The proposal for the above reasons would meet the objectives of Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy.

Sustainable Development

- 7.72 The NPPF emphasises that the purpose of the planning system is to achieve sustainable development. It also advises that there are three elements to achieving this: an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. The proposal is considered to meet each of these objectives.
- 7.73 The economic objective is met in that the development, comprising a construction project would employ locally appointed contractors. Moreover, the occupiers of the proposed new home would contribute to local business and the local economy in the area.
- 7.74 The social objective would be met through provision of adequate housing, and participation of the occupiers in the local community.

- 7.75 The environmental role would be met through good design, safeguarding of character, including landscape character, conservation of the historic environment, safeguarding residential amenity, through achieving net gain in biodiversity and delivering sustainable construction.
- 7.76 It is therefore concluded that the proposal delivers sustainable development consistent with the objectives of local and national planning policy.

The Planning Balance

- 7.77 The principle of the proposed development is acceptable and would protect Green Belt. The proposal delivers distinctive local design and safeguards landscape character. The proposal conserves the historic environment. The proposal safeguards highway safety and there are nearby opportunities for sustainable movement. The proposal would provide adequate living conditions for future occupiers. Due regard is had to biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage and sustainable construction. It is submitted that the merits of the proposal significantly and demonstrably outweigh adverse impacts.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The principle of the proposed development in Green Belt is acceptable.
- 8.2 The proposed development would deliver locally distinctive design and safeguards landscape character.
- 8.3 The proposal conserves the historic environment.
- 8.4 The proposal safeguards highway safety and delivers sufficient on-site parking for the existing and future occupiers. There are opportunities for sustainable movement nearby.
- 8.5 The proposal would deliver satisfactory living conditions for the future occupiers.
- 8.6 The proposal would deliver biodiversity enhancement.
- 8.7 The proposal would deliver habitat units in excess of 10% compliant with BNG legislation.
- 8.8 Due regard is had sustainable drainage and sustainable construction objectives.
- 8.9 The proposal for all of the above reasons is also considered to meet national and local sustainable development objectives.
- 8.10 The Council is therefore strongly urged to approve the application.