
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 February 2026

by Rae Gee BA (Hons) Dip TP PGCert UD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 February 2026

Appeal Ref: 6003265

1 Sunnyside, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent DA13 0AP

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Niall Sinyard against the decision of Gravesend Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 20251065.
 - The development proposed is conversion of garage into habitable room. Erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for conversion of garage into habitable room. Erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension at 1 Sunnyside, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent DA13 0AP in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 20251065, subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have taken the description of development from the Council's decision notice as this more accurately describes the proposal.
3. The appeal site lies within the Meopham Green Conservation Area (CA) wherein I have a statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.
4. The Council do not dispute the acceptability of the rear extension element of the proposed development, and I see no reason to disagree.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host dwelling, having regard to whether it would preserve or enhance the Meopham Green Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

6. Wrotham Road is varied in terms of an array of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties of varying architectural styles. The appeal dwelling (No1) forms one half of a pair of a two-storey semi-detached property. The dwellings are set back from the highway with a front driveway. The pair of dwellings are largely reflective of a neighbouring pair of semi-detached dwellings in terms of their position within the street, along with their general scale, design and external

materials of construction. Whilst the two pairs of semi-detached dwellings provide some unity, they differ considerably from dwellings within the wider streetscene.

7. I have not been provided with a CA character appraisal. However, from my observation the significance of the CA is largely characterised by its collection of historic buildings and overall verdant character. The appeal property is an attractive dwelling located within a prominent roadside position that contributes positively to the variety in architectural form and appearance found within the CA.
8. The proposal would convert an existing attached garage and would extend above it. In doing so, the first-floor element would extend the existing roof profile. Whilst this element of the proposal would not be subordinate to the existing roof ridge, or set back from the existing wall, it would maintain the existing set back from the front gable elevation which visually breaks up the overall bulk and mass of the dwelling.
9. The proposal would result in a degree of unbalancing when viewed in isolation with the adjoining property. Nevertheless, the proposal would be extended in a manner not dissimilar to No 4 Wrotham Road, which forms the opposite end of the pair of semi-detached dwellings. Accordingly, when viewed in this context the proposal would not be uncharacteristic, nor would the proposal be an incongruous addition to the streetscene. Furthermore, the window detailing and external finish would be reflective of the existing property and pair of semi-detached dwellings such that it would maintain the attractive appearance of the property.
10. Notwithstanding the appeal property's prominent roadside location, in the vicinity of the appeal site the highway is relatively narrow and long-range views of the property are obscured to some degree by existing built form and mature vegetation. Accordingly, the proposal would not be unduly prominent within the wider streetscene or CA. For these reasons I do not concur that the proposal is of a poor design, harmful to the significance of the CA.
11. In reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD 2021 which sets out key principles for new developments. Amongst other things, this highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context.
12. For the reasons stated above, I conclude that the proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the host dwelling, and that it would preserve the significance of the Meopham CA. Accordingly, I find no conflict with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and saved Policy TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994). These policies, among other things, requires new development to conserve and enhance the character of the local built and historic environment and to integrate well with the surrounding local area.

Conditions

13. In addition to the standard time limit condition, I recommend a condition requiring that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans. This is in the interests of certainty.

14. I have considered the conditions put forward by the Council . However, it is not necessary for the bathroom window to be obscure glazed given its position relative to neighbouring properties.
15. Further to the request for a watching brief to be in place during construction in case any contamination is found and subsequent mitigation no further justification has been provided . In the absence of clear and precise reason for this condition having regard to the Planning Practice Guide I do not consider that this request meets the tests for imposing planning conditions.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters, I conclude that the development would comply with the development plan as a whole. The appeal is therefore allowed.

Rae Gee

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Location & Proposed Block Plan SS-002 P01, proposed Floor Plans ss-005 and Proposed Elevations SS-006 P01.

*****End of Schedule*****