

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260009

Location: 43 Field Lane Gravesend Kent DA11 7FY

Description: Loft conversion incorporating a rear dormer with juliet balcony and three roof lights to front roof slope.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Melvin

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form Dated 03/12/2025;
Site Location Plan;
Drawing Number 002 (Floor Plans – Existing);
Drawing Number 003 (Elevations and Section – Existing);
Drawing Number 004 (Floor Plans – Proposed); and
Drawing Number 005 (Elevations and Section – Proposed).

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20141214	Outline planning application for the development of up to 400 new homes and associated infrastructure including provision of open space, with access off Coldharbour Road.	Permitted	10.01.2018

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

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)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Ward Councillors – No comments received

Neighbouring properties

Six surrounding properties were consulted and a site notice was displayed on 16/01/2026.

Neighbours raised material planning concerns with the following:

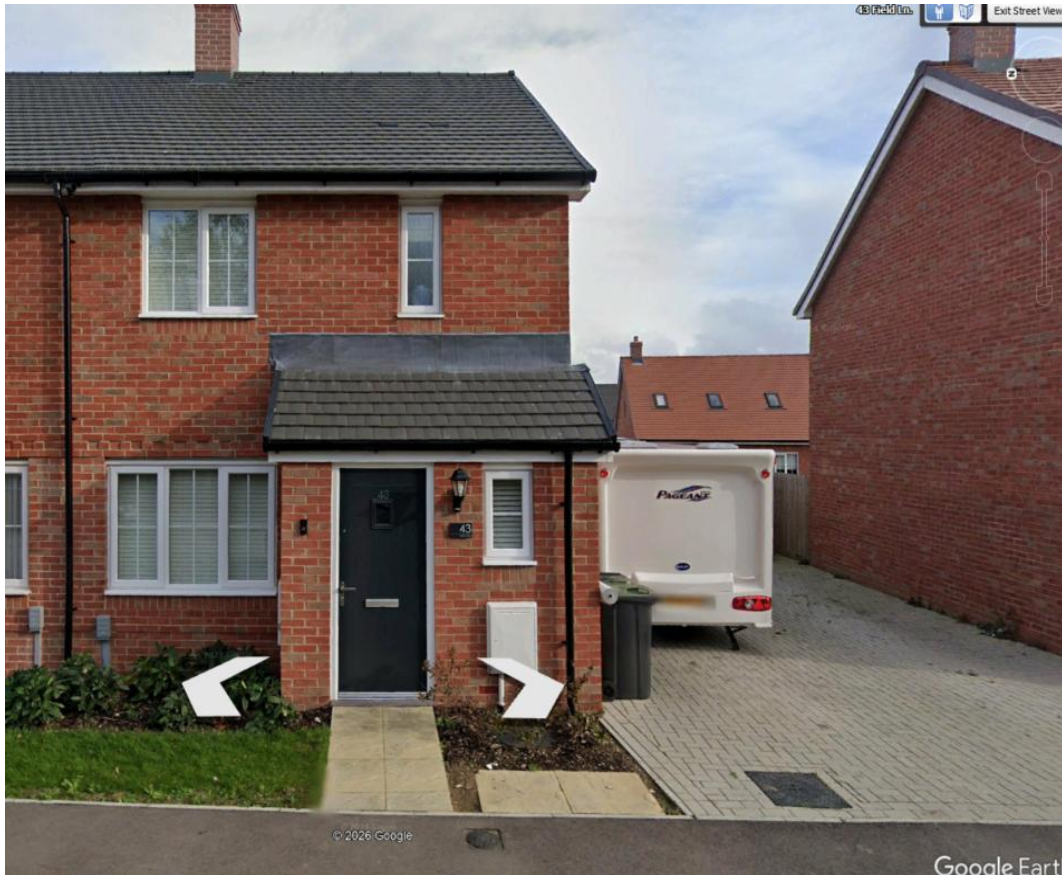
- Detrimental impact on neighbouring privacy / increased overlooking;
- Proposed design not in keeping with surrounding area.

The consultation period ended on 27/01/2026.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

43 Field Lane is a two-storey semi-detached dwellinghouse located on the eastern side of the highway. The property is part soft landscaped to the frontage with hard standing to the side for off road vehicular parking.



The application proposes a loft conversion with rear dormer and Juliet balcony and three roof lights to front roof slope.

The proposed dormer would have a height of 2.18m and a width of 4.68m. It would be inset from the flanks by 0.2m and 0.5m, set down from the ridge by 0.2m and set in from the existing eaves by 0.6m. The proposal would create space for a fourth bedroom and would introduce a Juliet balcony to the rear elevation. The dormer would be constructed with vertical hanging tiles.

Neighbouring concerns were raised with the proposed design and the impact on the surrounding street scene.

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.

The proposed dormer is not considered to be visually attractive or sympathetic to the host dwelling.

The dormer would be set on a modest sized roof which would give the impression of a top-heavy development which is considered to be of poor design. Furthermore, the proposal includes a large Juliet

balcony which would extend 3m in width and would further exacerbate the large addition to the modest property. As such the proposed dormer would result in the dwelling having an incongruous, bulky and overdeveloped appearance

Moreover, whilst the dormer is located to the rear of the dwelling, due to the land levels of the application site and the surrounding area, the dormer would be highly visible from various public vantage point. There are no similar developments within the local vicinity and as such the proposal is considered to be out of keeping and detrimental to the surrounding street scene:





Overall, the proposal is not considered to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or wider street scene and would result in the dwelling having an incongruous, bulky and overdeveloped appearance. As such the proposal is considered to be harmful to the visual amenity of the area and is contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

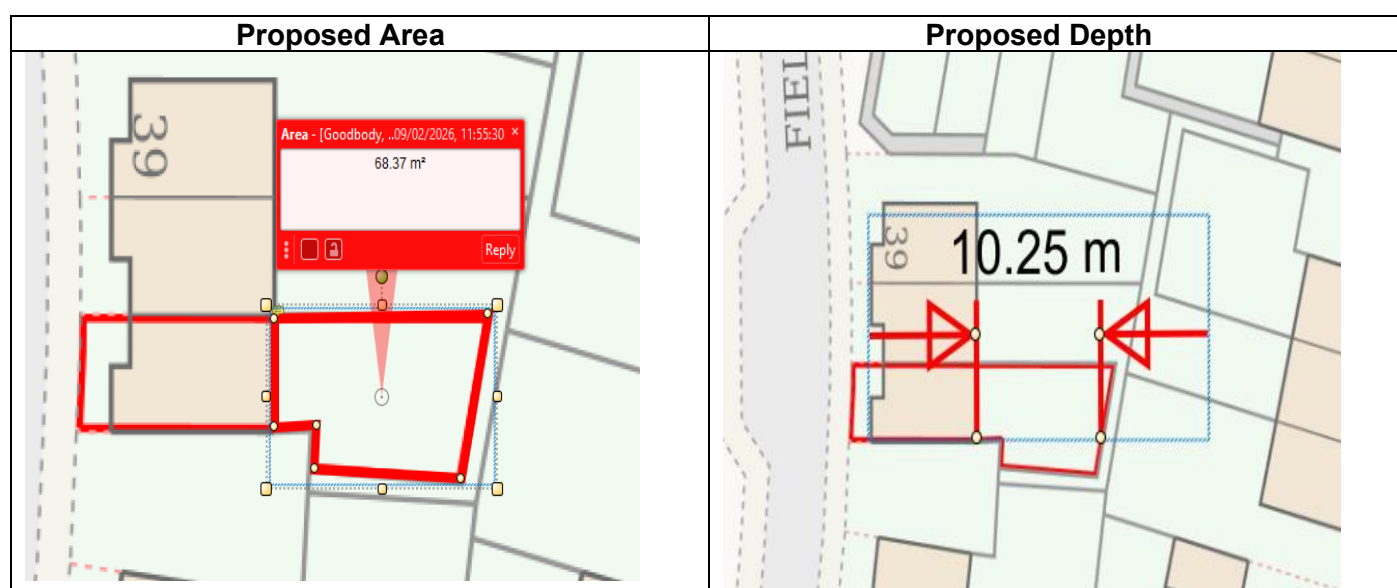
The NPPF (2024) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

The application proposes to increase the number of bedrooms at the property from three to four. Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines state that the garden space for a four-bedroom property should have a minimum depth of 10m from the rear elevation and a minimum useable area of 100m²:

Table 2

Accommodation with :	Minimum garden area (sq. metres)	Minimum depth from rear wall of house (metres)
1-2 bedrooms	37.2	7.6
3 bedrooms	60.0	10.0
4 or more bedrooms	100.0	10.0

Post development, the application site would retain a private amenity area of approx. 68.37m² and a minimum depth of 10.25m.



While the remaining depth is in accordance with the recommended guidelines, the remaining area would be substantially below the recommended guidelines and as such the application is not considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers.

A recent appeal case APP/K2230/D/23/3326998 for the refusal of a rear extension at 1 Harvest Lane, Gravesend, due to substandard amenity space has also been dismissed as follows:

If the proposed extension was constructed, the resultant garden would be undersized and impractical for a dwelling of its size. I therefore conclude that the proposal would not provide appropriate living conditions for residents of the appeal property, with regard to the provision of external amenity space. The proposal would also be contrary to CS Policy CS19 which indicates that new development will provide appropriate levels of private amenity space. Furthermore, it would be contrary to paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) where it advises that planning decisions should ensure that developments create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Please see appendix 1 for full appeal documentation.

As such, by way of the proposed increase in bedrooms, the development would result in a substandard garden area, subsequently providing unacceptable living conditions for existing and future occupiers. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

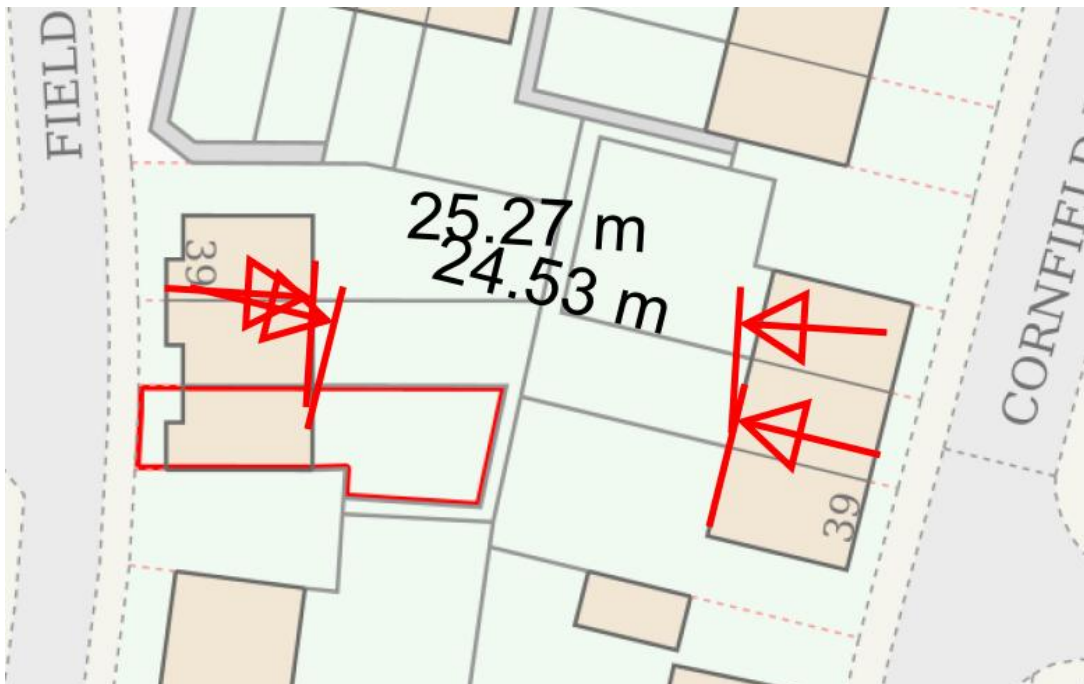
Neighbouring Amenity

Concerns were raised with the potential detrimental impact the proposal would have on neighbouring privacy.

The proposal introduces a window/Juliet balcony at second floor level to the rear elevation, serving a bedroom, which is considered a habitable room. There are no existing habitable windows to the second-floor level of the host dwelling or to any of the surrounding properties.

Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines recommends the privacy distances for facing habitable rooms where there is a private garden area within the field of view, a minimum of 26m should be maintained.

As shown below, the proposed window would marginally fail to meet the recommended 26 metre distance from habitable second floor room to the habitable windows of neighbouring properties known as 39 and 41 Cornfield Drive and as such would not be reasonable to refuse the application on these grounds.



However, there are concerns with the impact on neighbouring privacy by way of the land levels of the application site and its subsequent elevated position to the properties on Cornfield Drive:



Resultantly, the development is considered to have an overbearing impact of perceived overlooking which is exacerbated by the inclusion of the imposing Juliet balcony.

Therefore, whilst the development is short of the recommended privacy distances, and the Local Authority has concerns with the detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity in terms of perceived overlooking, the shortfall is considered to be marginal and as such it would be unreasonable to refuse the application on these grounds.

Overall, in terms of neighbouring amenity, the application is considered to be in accordance with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

The application proposes to increase the number of bedrooms at the property from three to four. However, there is sufficient off-road parking to accommodate for the increase in bedrooms and as such there are no concerns with highways and parking.

Conclusion

The proposal is not considered to be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or wider street scene and would result in the dwelling having an incongruous, bulky and overdeveloped appearance. As such the proposal is considered to be harmful to the visual amenity of the area and is contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

As such, by way of the proposed increase in bedrooms, the development would result in a substandard garden area, subsequently providing unacceptable living conditions for existing and future occupiers. Therefore, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Recommendation

Refusal

(For detailed **conditions** and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Nina Goodbody	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>N Goodbody</i>	Signed:	R Hart
Dated:	24 February 2026	Dated:	2nd March 2026