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27 March 2024
OUR REF: eh_ra_24

Dear Ms Walton

EARL HOUSE PRIESTWOOD ROAD MEOPHAM GRAVESEND KENT DA13 0DA
PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT ADDENDUM TO SUPPORT
REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION

Introduction / Purpose of Statement

1. I am instructed by my clients Mr & Mrs Dickens to prepare this Planning, Design & Access Statement Addendum in support of a revised planning application for the following development at Earl House, Priestwood Road, Meopham:

“Alteration to roof to create adequate bathrooms. Installation of solar panels”.

2. The application represents a revised submission following the refusal of planning application **20221198** which was dismissed at appeal under reference **APP/K2230/D/23/3322888 (APPENDIX 1)**, which sought the following development:

“Demolition of artists studio, oil store and porch; erection of rear extension and porch; alteration of existing porch with internal alterations.”

3. This amended scheme has carefully reviewed and interpreted the Inspectors conclusions which has informed this revised submission.
4. The purpose of this Planning, Design & Access Statement Addendum is to review the Inspectors decision and then to outline how this revised proposal responds to this. There is still a need to modify and extend the property given the inadequate bathroom facilities at first floor level.
5. The application is supported by revised drawings by Progetto Architectural Planning & Design Services.

Relevant Planning History - The Inspectors Decision - 3322888

6. As outlined in this introduction, this application represents a revised proposal following the refusal of **20221198** which sought the demolition of existing outbuildings the erection of extensions to the property. An extract of the proposal is outlined below:

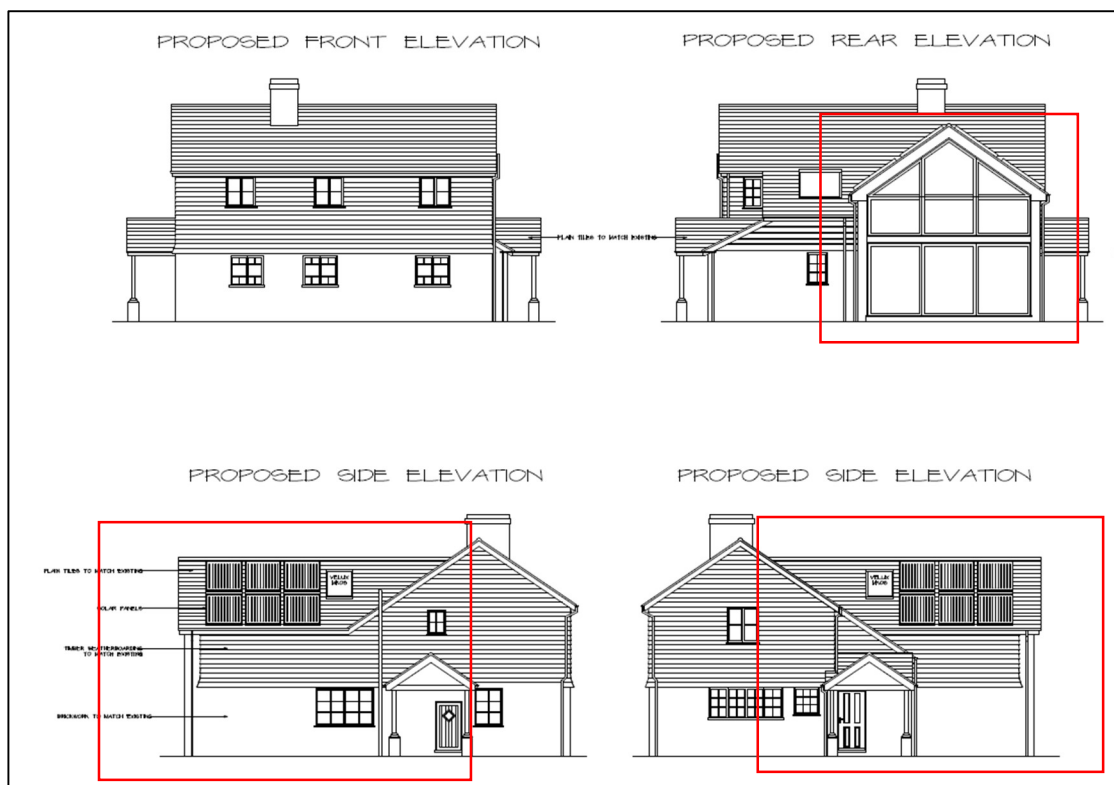


Figure 1: Refused scheme – red boxes highlighting extensions.

7. The application was refused on 3 March 2023 on the following grounds:

1. The proposed two storey rear extension by virtue of its scale, bulk and massing would be a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling, which would harm the openness of the Green Belt. In the absence of any very special circumstances that clearly outweigh this harm, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) and section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

2. The proposed two storey rear extension by virtue of its scale, bulk and massing would create a larger and more prominent dwelling which would have an adverse impact on the landscape character of Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Areas. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

3. The proposed two storey rear extension by virtue of its scale, bulk, massing and design would be an overly dominant and incongruous addition which would not respect the scale or character and appearance of the host dwelling. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

8. After the receipt of the refusal, the applicant appealed the decision on the 24 May 2023. The appeal was dismissed on 2 February 2024, with the Inspectors decision attached at **APPENDIX 1**. The purpose of this section is to outline the Inspectors conclusions on the three main grounds of the appeal.

(i) Green Belt

9. The Inspector concluded that *"the proposed development would represent a substantial cumulative alteration to, and expansion of, the original form of the appeal property"* and therefore considered that *"the proposed extension would represent a disproportionate addition over and above the original building"* which was contrary to the NPPF and Local Plan policy. The Inspector then concluded that very special circumstances did not exist to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt.
10. Notwithstanding this, the following pertinent conclusions were made in respect of the proposed works to improve the current bathroom accommodation:

*13. I have also had regard to the "exception" within Saved Policy C13 which provides for new or improved bathroom facilities. I saw on my visit that the existing first-floor bathroom at the rear of the building has limited headroom across much of its area, and **I agree therefore that it is inadequate in the policy's terms.***

30. The proposed extension would allow for improved headroom within the existing first-floor bathroom (which would become an ensuite bathroom) and facilitate the conversion of an adjoining bedroom to a family bathroom. I saw on my site visit that

both of these rooms have limited headroom across much of their area at present. The scheme would improve this situation considerably, facilitating the use of the dwelling as a home for a multi-generational household. This would be a considerable benefit to the appellants and their family.

31. However, and as I have already described above, the proposed scale of the extension goes way beyond what is needed simply to provide improved bathroom facilities for the family. While I am sympathetic on this point, and acknowledge the need to improve this aspect of the accommodation, this is a factor which in my view can therefore only carry moderate weight in favour of the proposal as a whole.

11. The Inspector therefore concluded that the current bathroom facilities at the property are inadequate, however, the scale of the proposed extensions went beyond what was needed to enhance the bathrooms at the property.

12. The above conclusions by the Inspector have directly informed this resubmission.

(ii) Character and appearance

13. The Inspector upheld the Council's second refusal ground, concluding that *"the proposed extension would dramatically change, and would be at odds with, the character and appearance of the existing building."*

14. The Inspectors conclusions in respect of character and appearance have informed this resubmission.

(iii) Landscape Character

15. The Inspector agreed with the appellants on the landscape character issue, concluding that the *"impact on the overall landscape character would therefore be very limited, and in my view would certainly not amount to causing significant harm in this respect."*

Revised Proposal

16. The development proposed under this revised application has been significantly altered following the conclusions of the Inspector. It now solely seeks to make alterations to the roof to accommodate improved head height to the two proposed bathrooms at first floor level. The previous ground floor extension has been removed from the proposal.

17. The roof alterations will comprise a modest extension which will be set down from the main roof ridge and will be set up from the eaves. It will consist of a hipped roof to minimise its mass and bulk and will comprise matching materials to the existing dwelling.



Figure 2: Revised plans.

18. Solar panels are also proposed to be installed on the rear elevation of the dwelling to maximise renewable energy at the property.

Site and Surroundings

19. The application site is situated on the eastern side of Priestwood Road, just south of the junction with Horn's Oak Road to the south-east of Meopham village.
20. The property consists of a detached dwelling set close to the public highway. It comprises ground floor white painted brickwork with first floor black timber weatherboarding. There is a tiled catslide roof at the rear of the property with small porch on the northern elevation. A detached garage, oil store and artist's studio are positioned on the southern side of the property.
21. There is a parking area in front of the garage and hardstanding for the parking of vehicles.

22. With regard to planning designations, the site is located in the Metropolitan Green Belt. The boundary of the Kent Downs National Landscape is on the northern side of Horn's Oak Road. The site lies within the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. There are no heritage designations associated with the site.

Planning Policy

23. The following documents have been reviewed as part of this addendum:

- NPPF 2023
- NPPG
- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)
- Saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994).
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)

24. I have referred to the relevant policies in the below assessment.

Planning Merits

(i) Common Ground for Revised Planning Application

25. There were three grounds of refusal under planning application **20221198**. Given the conclusions of the Council under the application, as well as the assessment made by the Inspector under appeal decision **APP/K2230/D/23/3322888 (APPENDIX 1)**, the following matters can be considered common ground between parties as part of this revised planning application.

Green Belt	The existing first-floor bathrooms at the rear of the building have limited headroom across much of its area, and therefore are inadequate in Green Belt policy's terms.
Landscape Character	Extensions to the rear of the house will have a very limited impact on the overall landscape character of the area given the plot is largely enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows.
Standard of Accommodation	The rear rooms within the catslide roof have limited headroom across much of their area at present. Extending these would improve this situation considerably, facilitating the use of the dwelling as a home for a multi-generational household. This would be a considerable benefit to the owners of the property.

Residential Amenity	Given the distance of the property to adjoining dwellings there would be no impact on this property with regards to loss of privacy overshadowing or outlook
Parking & Highways Safety	The application dwelling has a large area of hardstanding with space for two spaces and more therefore the site can provide sufficient off-street parking provision for the property.

26. Given the above conclusions, the main issues associated with this revised application are discussed below.

(ii) Green Belt

27. The extent of the proposed extensions has now been significantly altered given the conclusions of the Inspector at appeal (**APPENDIX 1**). On this basis, the revised proposal now solely seeks to improve the head height of the two rear rooms within the catslide roof.

28. Policy CS13 states that Extensions to dwellings will be considered on their merits but the Borough Council will expect the following criteria to be satisfied:-

- (i) The existing dwelling must be an “original dwelling”* in permanent use as a dwelling.
- (ii) There will be an overall limit of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally) prior to any later extension or alteration, unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.
- (iii) Those extensions which provide essential basic amenities such as a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, which are currently not available or are clearly inadequate, will normally be permitted.**
- (iv) The extension shall not be in a form which would facilitate the future formation of a separate residential curtilage.
- (v) The dwelling to be enlarged must have sufficient curtilage to accommodate the extension without undue visual intrusion into the open countryside.
- (vi) The appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of any extension shall be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting.
- (vii) Proposals for domestic garages and for other outbuildings will be considered on their individual merits but will be required to be well designed, discreetly sited and subservient to the scale of the main dwelling on the plot

29. Criteria (iii) therefore provides flexibility on extensions in the Green Belt, if they provide essential basic amenities such as a bathroom and toilet or kitchen, which are currently not available or are clearly inadequate. It is common ground between parties that given the conclusions of the Inspector that the rooms within the catslide roof are inadequate in policy terms.
30. The revised application now solely seeks to provide essential basic amenities of extended bathrooms at the property, improving the head height of these rooms and enhancing the current situation considerably, thus facilitating the use of the dwelling as a home for a multi-generational household. Given this, the revised proposal complies with exception criteria (iii) of Policy CS13 and therefore represents appropriate development in the Green Belt.

(iii) Character and Appearance

31. The scale and mass of the proposed extension has been substantially reduced in size and no longer proposes to extend the footprint of the dwelling. The revised scheme seeks roof alterations to improve the head height of the existing rooms in the catslide roof only.
32. The roof extension is set down from the main roof ridge and is set up from the eaves line. This ensures that the addition appears proportionally on the property and the legibility of the catslide roof is preserved. The roof addition will appear in harmony with the existing dwelling with the hipped roof minimising the mass and bulk of the proposal.
33. The proposal will match the materials of the existing property ensuring that the addition will assimilate with the character of the dwelling.
34. The solar panels will be discreetly situated on the rear elevation of the property and will significantly enhance the energy efficiency of the property.
35. For the above reasons the revised development will preserve the character and appearance of the host building. As a result, it will comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy which sets out development and design principles and, among other things, seeks to ensure that new development is well-related to the character and form of adjoining buildings.

Conclusion

36. This Planning, Design & Access Statement Addendum has outlined a detailed analysis that the revised scheme presented overcomes the previous refusal ground raised by the Council under planning application **20221198** and the Inspector under appeal decision **APP/K2230/D/23/3322888**.

37. In view of the above, it is concluded that the revised development proposed in this application is consistent with the aims and detailed requirements of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), the Saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) as well as the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Yours sincerely



Neal Thompson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
ROBINSON ESCOTT PLANNING

APPENDIX 1 – APPEAL DECISION - APP/K2230/D/23/3322888