



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20221202
Location:	Cherry Hay, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0QQ
Description:	Erection of a single storey rear extension, and a two storey side extension with link section.
Applicant:	Mr West
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

Application Form - 08/11/2022;
Design and Access Statement - dated 11/2022;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-00-01 - Rev. D00 - Site Location Plan (scale - 1:1250);
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-00-02 - Rev. D03 - Site Block Plan as Proposed (scale - 1:500);
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-00-02a - Rev. 1 - Site Block Plan as Existing (scale - 1:500);
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-00-03 - Rev. D00 - Floor Plans as Existing;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-00-04 - Rev. D03 - Floor Plans as Proposed;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-00-05 - Rev. D00 - Floor Plan Overlay;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-20-01 - Rev. D00 - Roof Plan as Existing;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-20-02 - Rev. D03 - Roof Plan as Proposed;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-70-01 - Rev. D00 - Elevations as Existing;
Drawing no. SKA-CH-08-70-02 - Rev. D03 - Elevations as Proposed.

Plan Note

There is a discrepancy between the proposed floor plans and elevations. The elevations show a spiral staircase within the two storey side extension, however this has not been included in the floor plans. The agent was contacted regarding this matter and confirmed that the inclusion of the staircase was an error, as such an informative will be attached to the decision notice.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220798	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a detached outbuilding for use as a games room, home office (non-commercial) and garden store and store room.	CERTIFICATE REFUSED	11.08.2022

20210094	Erection of a single storey rear and side extension.	PERMITTED	25.03.2021
20071029	Outline application for the erection of two, two storey buildings to provide a total of eight flats.	REFUSED	03.01.2008
19791023	Erection of stable block comprising tackroom store and two loose boxes	REFUSED	28.12.1979

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (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 (November 1994):

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

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic 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

Meopham Parish Council - No objection providing the development meets the requirements of GBC's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide.

Dickens Protection Society - The Society notes the existing dwelling is a detached house of some distinction, constructed with knapped flint and brick quoins on the principal elevations. The proposed two storey extension respects this.

In view of the construction and age of the building (it is shown in isolation on the 1871-1890 OS map (KCC online) the Society would suggest it should be considered for listing.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 14th November 2022. In addition, one adjoining property was consulted by post. No representations were received and the consultation period expired 9th December 2022.

Analysis

Site Description

Cherry Hay is a two storey detached property in use as a single dwelling. The property is a unique building within the street scene, through its character and materials, and is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset.



The property has been extended previously at the rear and side, and by a conservatory to the south. There will be demolished as part of this application. It is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt which is a key consideration for this application.

Proposed Development

This application proposes the erection of a single storey rear extension and a two storey side extension, with a link section to the main house. The single storey rear extensions will have a flat roof at a height of 2.9m, a depth of 4.35m and a width of 11.55m. The link section will have a height of 4.75m and a width of 0.9m. While the two storey side extension will have a pitched roof with a maximum height of 6.12m, an eave height of 4.85m, a depth of 8.8m and a width of 4.42m.

The side extension, on the front elevation, will be constructed using matching materials to the main dwelling, in brick and flint, but will be inverted from the dwelling. On the rear and side elevations the side extension will be predominantly timber clad, which will match the single storey

rear. The link section will be glazed at ground floor and zinc at first floor.



The extension will create space for an open plan playroom/diner, kitchen/diner, utility room, cloak room and wc. At first floor the extension will accommodate an ensuite bedroom, walk-in wardrobe and linen room.

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 six 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. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
5. Other matters; and
6. Impact on the Landscape.

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

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 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 149 of the NPPF (2021), 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.

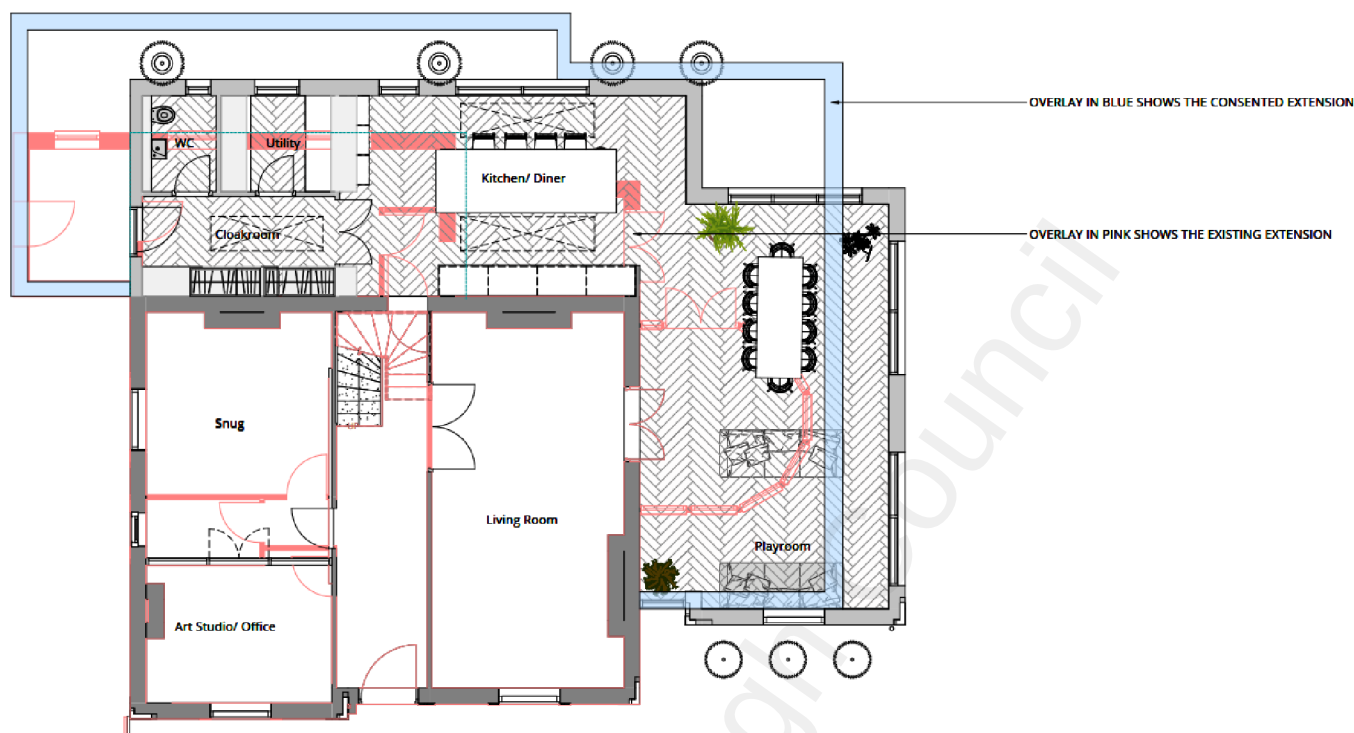
In determining this proposal account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF (2021), 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 (2021).

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 and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	108m ²	180m ²	66%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	151m ²	276m ²	82%
Volume	-	-	-

The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse exceed the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. Therefore, in purely numerical terms, the extension is contrary to the local plan Green Belt policy, potentially representing 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, before assessing the visual proportions of the extensions it is important to highlight the previous planning approval (ref. 20210094), which allowed a footprint increase well above the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. The previous approval was for a single storey wrap around extension which added significant bulk to the original building. Although this application proposes additional built form than previously approved, through the two storey element, this approved increase remains a material consideration. The overlay image below demonstrates the existing, approved and proposed footprints:



Nevertheless, the numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF 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 does not provide a figure.

It is also important to highlight that the property already has an existing single storey rear/side extension which this application is rebuilding and expanding upon. While this isn't original footprint, it does currently exist and visually has some merit.

The single storey rear extension is not excessive in size or bulk, it will not extend beyond the northern flank elevation and is reduced in depth from the previous approval. It provides a more consistently designed extension than the current one which extends beyond the flank elevation, and the modern looking conservatory. The two storey side extension, although separated from the dwelling by the link section, has been well designed to be subservient and subordinate to the main dwelling. The separation distance through the link section is not considered to add to the prominence of the extension, it will be constructed using zinc cladding with a glazed section at ground floor. Moreover, the choice of materials and separation are considered to respect the historic character of the main dwelling, which is considered a non-designated heritage asset and therefore the development is in accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF (2021).

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition to the property, despite the numerical assessment, and as such the proposal would not be inappropriate development, which is by definition harmful to the Green Belt due in part to the high-quality design. It therefore complies to Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and to paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

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

Paragraph 137 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. The development will enlarge the dwelling substantially, with a two storey side extension that will extend beyond the flank wall by 5.35m (including the link section) and 2.18m back from the rear elevation. While these factors are considered to have some impact on the openness of the Green Belt, the overall bulk and massing of the extension are significantly reduced by good design strategies such as subservience.

Moreover, the overall bulk of the footprint has been reduced since the previous approval, which will lessen the impact on the spatial openness of the Green Belt. This reduction also mitigates some of the impact of the upper storey extension by reducing built form.

Overall, although the extensions hereby proposed will cause some harm to the openness, this development is not considered to significantly harm the open permanence of the Green Belt. There is no loss of a gap between two forms of built development resulting from the addition. However, a condition relating to hard and soft landscaping will be attached to the decision notice to ensure that the openness of the Green Belt is not compromised by hardstanding and the development results in a biodiversity net gain, in accordance with Section 15 of the NPPF (2021).

Reference back to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF (2021) 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' and it is not considered necessary in this instance.

4. 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 places) of the NPPF (2021) 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 new 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.

As aforementioned in this report, the proposed extensions are proportionate to the main dwelling and have been well designed to ensure that they do not dominate the main property but respond well to it. The two storey side extension is subservient and notably smaller than the main dwelling, which reduces its prominence and the proposed materials respond and reflect the characteristics of the property. This is not necessarily the conventional approach to extending a property, but is a clever design which safeguards the important proportions of the existing property which should be considered as a non-designated heritage asset. The rear extension is also considered acceptable. It has been reduced in scale from the previous approval and will not dominate the original building. It is also an improvement on the existing extensions. The timber cladding on the flank and rear elevations will not be visible from any public vantage point and is high quality. In addition the rear

extension will have a green roof.

Overall, the extensions hereby proposed are considered to be well-designed, proportionate and responsive to the original building and as such are in accordance with Gravesham's Design Guidance (SPG) (2021), Policy CS19 and CS20 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

5. Other matters

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers. The garden is large and will not be significantly reduced as part of this development. The rooms proposed are in accordance with Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and will receive sufficient natural light. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Neighbouring

There will be no impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of loss of light, overlooking, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. As such the proposal is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021). No neighbour representations have been received.

Parking and Highways

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

6. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by gently undulating topography with a mix of arable and pasture farmland, three large settlements located along the A227 and traditional architecture surrounding village greens providing local vernacular.

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 extensions are not considered to cause any detrimental harm to the character of the Meopham Downs landscape.

Conclusion

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

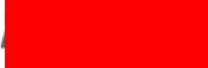
The proposed extensions by virtue of their high quality design, subservience and proportionate scaling to the main dwelling, are considered appropriate development in the green belt which preserve its openness and permanence. The development will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers and neighbouring properties, will not impact on the highway network nor the Meopham Downs landscape character area.

Therefore, it is recommended that the application is approved subject to conditions.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	22 nd December 2022	Dated:	22 December 2022