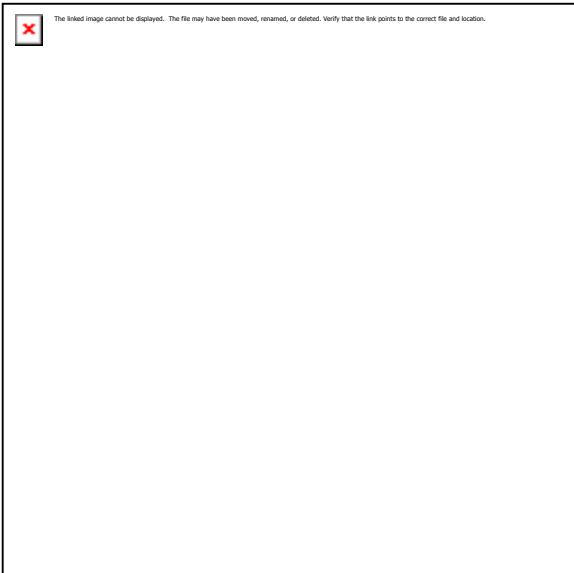




# Delegated Report

## Householder Planning Application

**Planning Application No:** 20220698

**Location:** Long Acre Rhododendron Avenue Meopham Gravesend

**Description:** Erection of a single storey rear extension with rooms in the roof space.

**Applicant:** Mr & Mrs Clegg

**Site Visit Date:** Desktop Assessment

### Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form
- Drawing No: 2022-01-07-001 (Existing Plans and Elevations)
- Drawing No: 2022-01-07-002 (Proposed Plans and Elevations)

### Relevant Planning History

| Reference | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Outcome    | Decision Date |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| 20211426  | Erection of a mobile home with hardstanding, new retaining wall and lay gravel to existing access.                                                                                                                                                  | Refused    | 27.05.2022    |
| 20220348  | Erection of a single storey rear extension with rooms in the roof space.                                                                                                                                                                            | Refused    | 19.05.2022    |
| 20100468  | Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20090781 for erection of a replacement dwelling, to lower the floor level of the ground floor to make it the same level as the living area, thus removing the steps. | Permission | 01.06.2010    |
| 20090781  | Erection of a detached three bedroom replacement dwelling with rooms in the roof space and a detached double garage                                                                                                                                 | Permission | 12.01.2010    |

|           |                                                                             |                |            |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------|
| 200060083 | Outline application for the erection of a detached replacement dwelling.    | Permissio<br>n | 20.03.2006 |
| 19780275  | Outline application for the erection of two detached four bedroom dwellings | Refused        | 05.04.1979 |
| 19520150  | Erection of chalet                                                          | Permissio<br>n | 30.05.1952 |

## Development Plan

### Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 - Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

### Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) sets out those 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 The review 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 a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) general conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

## Other material considerations

### National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- SPD4 - Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

## Consultations, Publicity and Representations

### Meopham Parish Council

No objections.

### GBC – Highways Officer

*“This proposal gives rise to a little concern, due to a door to the outside being provided downstairs below the office, it would take only minor alterations to create an office independent of the main dwelling, although access to welfare facilities would have to be provided.*

*As there is some scope for commercial activities to take place on site, particularly given the size of the property, these should be restricted by condition, so if a commercial use is ever envisaged the Council has the opportunity to review the situation before making a judgement on the suitability of the site.*

*As the number of bedrooms is being increased by one a secure cycle parking space should be provided.”*

### Neighbouring properties

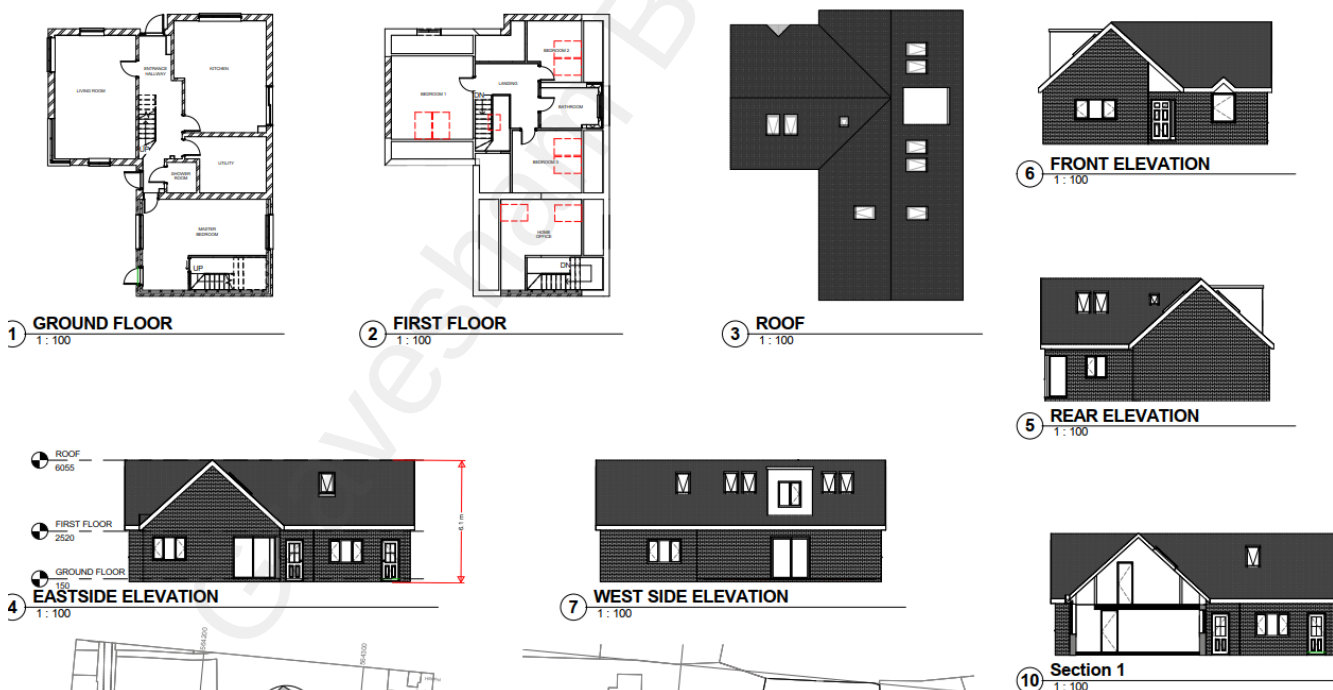
The application was advertised by way of site notice and letters to six surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and no comments were received.

## **Analysis**

### Proposal

The proposal seeks the erection of a single storey rear extension with rooms in the roof space. The extension will project approx 5.1m and span approx 6.8m with an overall height of approx 6.1m. The extension will be finished with a dual pitched roof to match the profile of the host dwelling.

To the ground floor the extension will include a window in the eastern and western elevations which will serve a bedroom, the extension will also have its own door entrance so it will have independent access. In the roof space the extension will include an office area and include a sky light in the east and western elevations. The first floor will not be linked to the main dwelling but would instead be accessed from a new staircase from the master bedroom.



### The appropriateness of the development within the Green Belt

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt is development that by definition, is 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.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) notes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. At paragraph 138 the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) lists the 5 purposes which the Green Belt serves. Of particular relevance in this case is that it assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 149). The listed exceptions include the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) (LPCS) prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. In the rural area it 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 (which is the case here), will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Furthermore, Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) (LPFR), which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside, sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

In particular Policy C13 Local Plan First Review 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 National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and should be afforded weight.

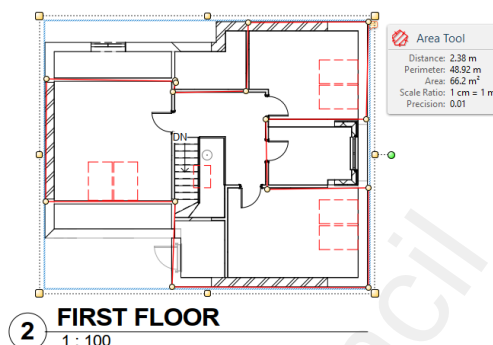
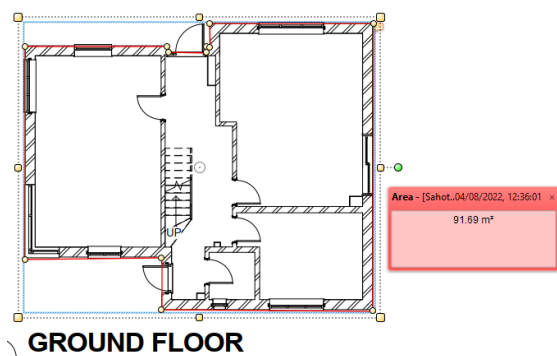
In determining proposals for residential extensions in the Green Belt an assessment will be made against the impact of the 'original' existing development. The original building is the building as it existed on 1 July 1948, however, for older homes constructed prior to July 1st, 1948, the 'original dwelling' refers to the floorspace of the dwelling as it was on this date. Any additions that have occurred since the 'original' dwelling date are considered cumulatively and will be counted as part of the overall increase in floorspace of the dwelling when new additions are being assessed. The reason for this is small reductions in openness, repeated many times, can have a cumulatively detrimental effect.

The existing dwelling in this case appears to have been extended by way of the side dormer to create additional floorspace to extend the existing bathroom within the roofspace.

**Existing dwelling (as built)**

Ground Floor: 91.69m<sup>2</sup>

First Floor: 66.22m<sup>2</sup>



Total: 157.91m²

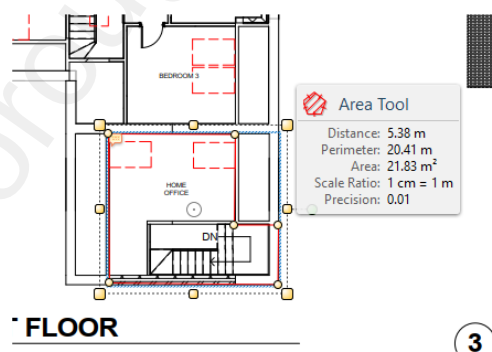
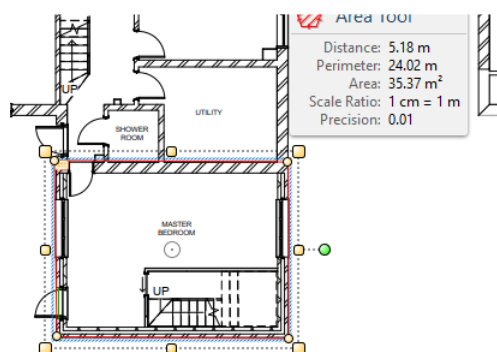
### Dormer Extension

First Floor: 8.35m²

### Proposed Extension

Ground Floor: 35.37m²

First Floor: 21.83m²



Total: 57.2m²

Total floor space increase from dwelling as built: **65.55m²**

Total floor space proposed: **223.46m²**

Total floor space increase of proposed extension over original dwelling: **42%**

Saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review provides the local interpretation of national policy and states 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.

In this case the increased floorspace still exceeds the one third limit and therefore is not within the parameters set by Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review. Therefore, it will be necessary to assess the proposal on the overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.

The existing dwelling is a modest detached bungalow with pitch roof and gable roof design, facilitating habitable space within the roofspace. It is acknowledged that the proposed rear extension has been reduced in scale from the previous application and is still above the 1/3 increase in overall floorspace, however on balance it is considered that the revised scheme is not so harmful to warrant a refusal, nor one which could easily be defended at appeal. Whilst the extension is slightly larger, it is set back from the

highway and is not easily visible from a public vantage point.

In summary it is considered that on balance this extension is acceptable.

#### Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2022) highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. Policy CS12 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes within the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that proposals will take account of the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment.

Given the slight increase on the overall footprint the proposal does not result in any material harm to openness of the greenbelt.

#### Character and Appearance

The application site is located in the Green Belt and in the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area as defined on the adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy policies map.

The property is a detached bungalow set in a large plot much further back from the road than the surrounding properties and not highly visible from public vantage points. The property benefits from a detached double garage to the front and extensive driveway. The proposal is a reworking of a previous application for a single storey rear extension with a conversion of the roof space. The previous reasons for refusal were:

*The proposal represents a disproportionate addition and exceeds the one third limit to the original dwelling, which will harm the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), Policies CS01 (Sustainable Development), CS02 (Scale and Distribution of Development) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*

*By virtue of the size, scale and design, the proposed rear extension is considered to be unacceptable, as it is a bulky, dominant and un-subservient addition to the application property, that is considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the property itself. The development would fail to protect or enhance the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. The development is therefore contrary to the requirements of paragraphs 130, 174 and 179 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021, Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD, October 2021, and the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment 2009.*

The current revised proposal sees a significant reduction in the scale and bulk of the previously proposed large extension. Whilst SPD4 Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) states that an extension should be set down from the main roof, it is difficult to achieve this when the property is a bungalow and so there must be a degree of lenience in this regard.

The extension is located to the rear of the original house and it is considered that the revised plans adequately address the previous reasons for refusal in terms of reduction to the scale and bulk of the development.

The proposal is therefore acceptable and compliant with CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

#### Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the living space of the main dwelling and as such accords with Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

#### Neighbouring Amenity

Given the separation distance between properties and the scale of the proposal, it is considered the proposal would not result in loss of light, privacy, outlook and increased overshadowing to neighbouring properties. No objections have been received. As such the development is in accordance with Policy CS19 of The Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 in respect of the living conditions for neighbouring properties.

#### Parking and Highways

The proposal would result in one additional bedroom, however the existing garage and driveway provide parking for more than three vehicles and therefore the development would accord with KCC Vehicle Parking Standards, and the proposals would therefore comply with Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan and Policy CS11 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

#### Any Other Material Planning Considerations

##### *Landscape Character Area*

Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced and the greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB and its setting.

The application site is located within the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. The topography is varied with steep valley sides and plateaux with ancient woodland, chestnut coppice and small paddocks and pasture. The area is characterised by haphazard mosaic of residential plots and small holdings set within the woodland. The condition is moderate and the guidelines are to conserve and create.

Due to the layout of the site, position of the proposed extension and surrounding built form, it is considered that there would be no direct impact on the landscape character area. As such the proposal would accord with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

#### **Conclusion & Recommendation**

The proposal adequately addresses the previous reasons for refusal under application 20220348 and is deemed acceptable and compliant with CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, and Sections 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

|                      |                                                                                     |                     |                              |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Case Officer:</b> | Mrs Sharon Sahota                                                                   | <b>Team Leader:</b> | <b>Richard Hart</b>          |
| <b>Signed:</b>       |  | <b>Signed:</b>      | <i>R Hart</i>                |
| <b>Dated:</b>        | 18 <sup>th</sup> August 2022                                                        | <b>Dated:</b>       | 19 <sup>th</sup> August 2022 |

Gravesham Borough Council