



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240050

Location: 1 Strand Close Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of part two storey side and rear extension and part single storey side and front extension with the excavation of the garden and erection of a new retaining wall.

Applicant: Mr Lee Jameson

Site Visit Date: Previous application ref. 20230142 on 14 April 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Unnumbered drawing – Proposed Retaining Wall At Garden Level;
- Drawing no. LJ/24/1 – Proposed Plans & Elevations;
- Drawing no. LJ3ST – Proposed Roof & Garden Plan, Proposed Block Plan;
- Drawing no. LJ-2ST – Existing Plans & Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230142	Erection of a proposed two storey side extension and ground floor front extension.	Refused	17.04.2023
20210468	Erection of a single storey rear/side infill extension, new pitched roof to replace flat roof on existing ground floor side extension and alterations to rear garden retaining wall and steps.	Permitted	02.06.2021
19800590	Formation of vehicular driveway and hardstanding for disabled driver	Permitted	05.09.1980

Following determination of application ref. 20230142 the applicant submitted a pre-application enquiry for comments on a revised scheme for a proposed two storey side extension and single storey front extension.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 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 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

We object to this application on the grounds of overdevelopment of this site, with additional concerns raised over the removal and replacement of a retaining wall being detrimental to the neighbouring property and public footpath.

Dickens Country Protection Society

Concerned at the impact the proposed side extension in front of the building line could have on the street scene on this prominent corner with Huntingfield Road.

KCC Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, based on existing Historic Environment Record data for the area and the relatively limited extent of the proposed works, I consider it unlikely that these proposals would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

Neighbouring properties

7 surrounding properties were consulted with an overall consultation expiry date of 18 March 2024 – one response received (objection) the comments of which can be summarised as follows:

- The rear extension will have an overbearing effect and considerably reduce the light to them and block what little view they have.

Officer's Analysis

This application is a re-submission of application ref. 20230142 which was for erection of a proposed two storey side extension and ground floor front extension and which was refused on 17 April 2023 but also now proposes a two storey rear extension which was not proposed in application ref. 20230142.

Application ref. 20230142 was refused on the following ground:

The proposed extension by virtue of its siting, size, bulk, massing and design would be an overly dominant and incongruous addition which would not be in keeping with the scale or character of the host dwelling, would project beyond the building line and would be harmful to the streetscene. As such the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

It therefore needs to be seen in this latest application whether this ground of refusal have been resolved and whether the proposal which now also includes the erection of a two storey rear extension element and new retaining wall with the existing timber fencing reaffixed to the top of it, is acceptable or not.

The principle considerations in the assessment of the application are as follows:

Design, Character and Appearance

This matter related to ground of refusal no. 1 of application ref. 20230142.

The application property consists of an end of terrace dwelling on a corner plot at the junction of Strand Close and Huntingfield Road. The area is characterised by other terraces and also semi-detached dwellings.

The site is seen in the below aerial photo (application property marked with a star):



The Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) states the following in respect of two storey side extensions:

Two Storey Side

10.5 Two storey extensions can have a more significant impact on the appearance of the street. Care is also needed when considering the relationship between any proposed extension and the boundary with neighbouring properties as the separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of the property and in some locations are part of the character of the area. Depending on the orientation of the neighbouring property, side extensions also have the potential to impact their amenity. To ensure these potential issues are resolved, two storey side extensions should be designed in accordance with the guidance below.

- **Footprint:** Extensions should generally aim to appear subservient to the host building by lying behind the main front building line, though where designed well or having regard to positive local character, other approaches can be supported. See advice of extensions to corner properties in the following section.
 - **Height:** Extensions should not exceed the eaves height of the host building.
 - **Width:** Extensions should generally be no greater than half the width of the host building. The existing rhythm of the street, including for example characteristic gaps between properties, the symmetry of pairs of semi-detached homes or groups of terraced houses, should not be unreasonably interrupted. A minimum gap of 1 metre should be retained between the extension and the flank boundary.
 - **Design:** Extensions are of greater visibility, and should incorporate roof designs to reflect and generally be subservient to the main property's roof. The use of flat or false pitched roofs visible from the street should be avoided. Patterns of windows should reflect the host building and local character. Walls to extensions should not form the site boundary with the public highway, as these can be oppressive and encourage antisocial activities.
 - **Materials:** Matching external materials and window / door frames should be used.
 - **Overlooking:** Extensions should avoid inserting any flank windows where they would allow new, or significantly increased overlooking views into neighbouring gardens / properties.
 - **Light / Outlook:** The 45 / 25 degree rule will be used to assess the impact of the extension on neighbouring light / outlook.
- **Garden Space:** Adequate garden area for the enlarged house should be retained following development
 - **Bin Storage:** Adequate provision for discreet storage of waste bins in the front garden



Ground floor set back 0.5m



Unacceptable flat roof

Two storey side extensions should be subordinate in scale to the original house.



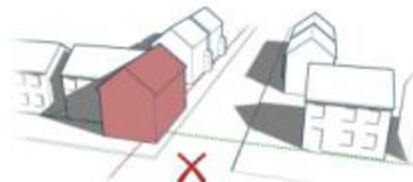
Side extensions should be set back and set in to avoid the 'terrace effect'.

It also states the following in respect of extensions to houses on corner plots (as is the case here):

Extensions to houses on Corner Plots

10.6 Corner plots may provide opportunities to create large extensions that face onto the return road and in some cases can create a landmark building feature. Their location makes them highly visible from two streets and can provide an opportunity to improve the appearance of an area. Houses on corner plots may have capacity for two-storey extensions that extend to the side or rear. Extensions should follow the relevant advice given in preceding sections and ensure:

- **Building Line:** Development should generally reflect the surrounding building lines where they are a key and clear part of the local character. Any projection forward of the building line on the return street must be very carefully considered as this will be highly visible. This may be resolved through the massing (such as stepping), fenestration or material treatment of the proposal. Views along the return street to the proposed building should be understood and taken into account.
- **Roof Form:** The relationship between the roof of the existing property and an extension on a corner is carefully considered.
- **End Walls:** Extensions that result in overbearing end walls, including blank, uncharacteristic gables, or flank walls, will generally not be acceptable. Walls to extensions should not form the site boundary with the public highway, as these can be oppressive and encourage antisocial activities.



Development should not dominate the street corner.



Development should generally reflect the surrounding building lines

It states the following in respect of two storey rear extensions:

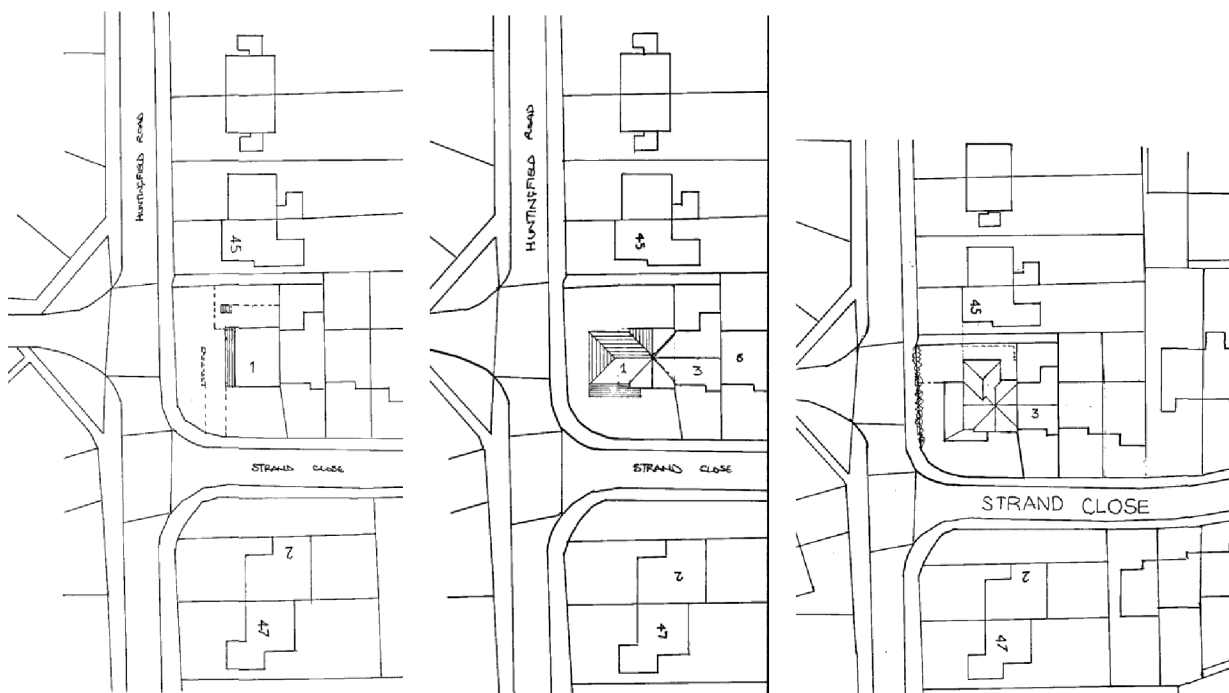
Two Storey and First Floor Rear Extensions

10.3 Two-storey rear extensions are often desirable as they create more space within a home, however they are not appropriate in all circumstances e.g. mid-terraced properties, and need to be carefully designed to avoid negatively impacting neighbouring properties. Proposals for two-storey rear extensions should consider the surrounding context, and ensure that:

- Depth: The extension does not dominate the original property. This can cause the site to appear overdeveloped, and cause long dark internal spaces to be formed. Extensions to extensions will generally not be supported.
- Height: two storey extensions can have very significant impact on neighbouring amenity, so should generally not be built up to site boundaries with neighbouring gardens / properties.
- Width: Extensions should not be of greater width than the original building.
- Design: Taller extensions are of greater visibility, and should incorporate roof designs to reflect, tie in with and not overwhelm the main property's roof. Patterns and proportions of windows should reflect the host building and local character.
- Materials: Using matching external materials and window / door frames is especially relevant for two storey extensions.
- Overlooking: Extensions should avoid inserting any flank windows, or involve raised platforms where they would allow new, or increased overlooking views into neighbouring gardens / properties.
- Light / Outlook: The 45 / 25 degree rule will be used to assess the impact of the extension on neighbouring light / outlook.
- Garden Space: Adequate garden area for the enlarged house should be retained following development.

For ease of reference the existing, refused and current proposed plans are as follows:

Block Plans

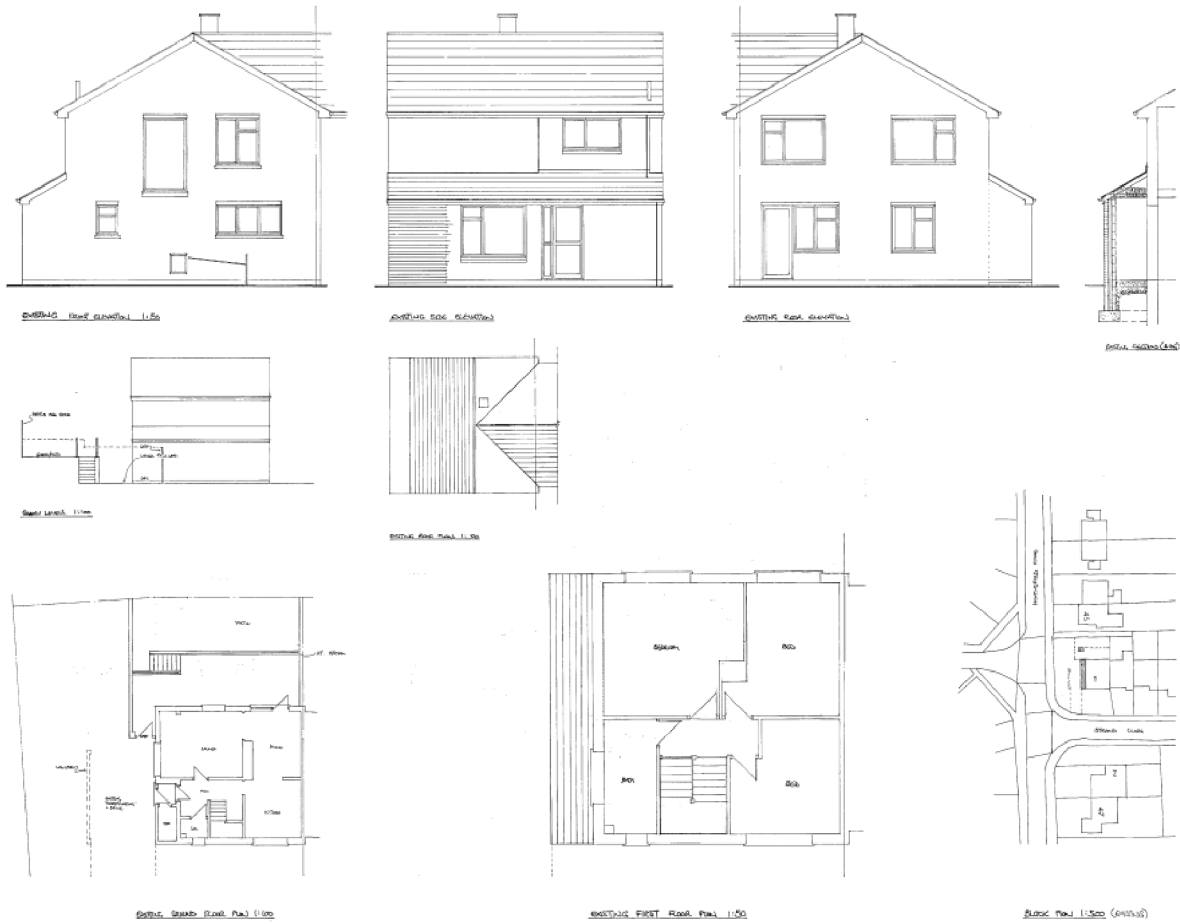


Existing

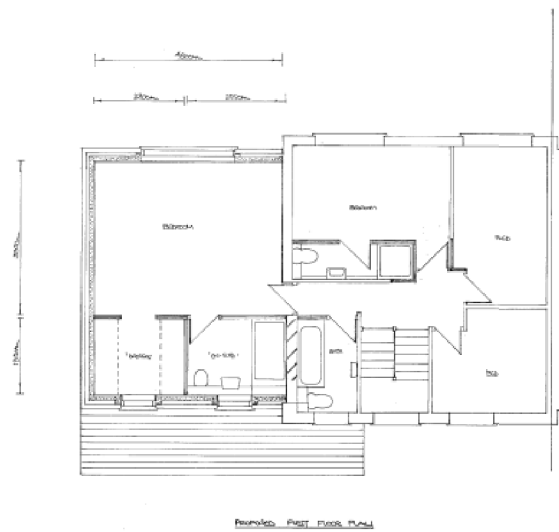
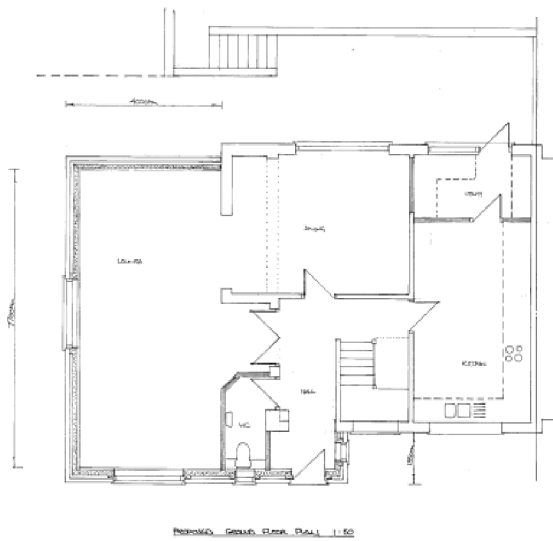
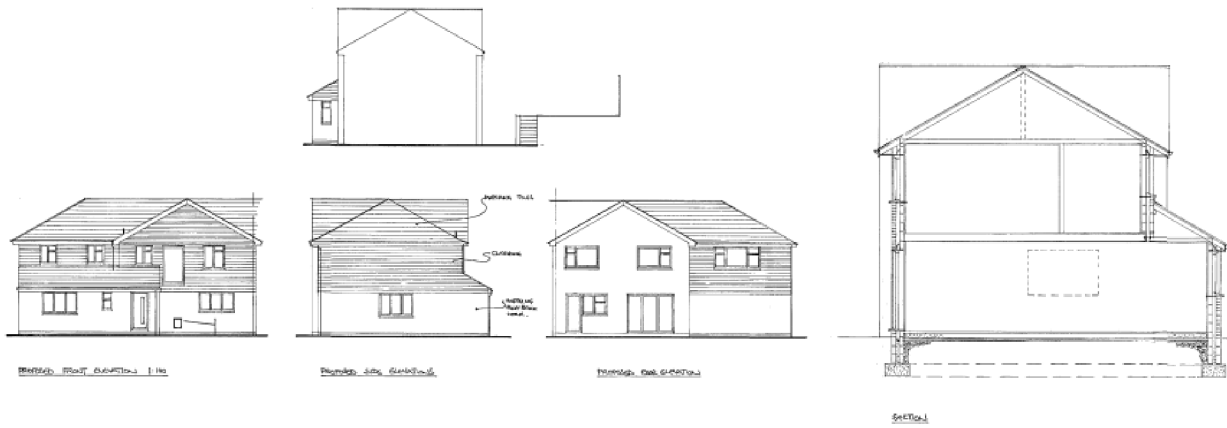
Refused

Proposed

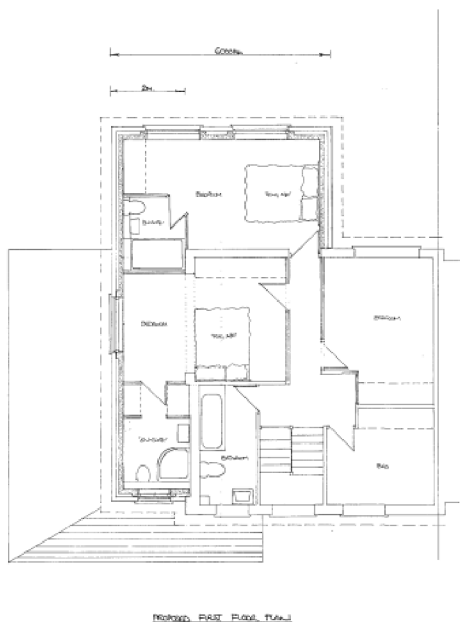
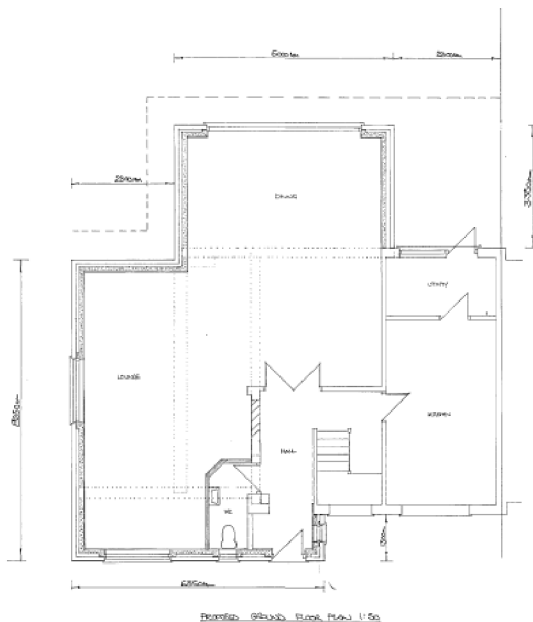
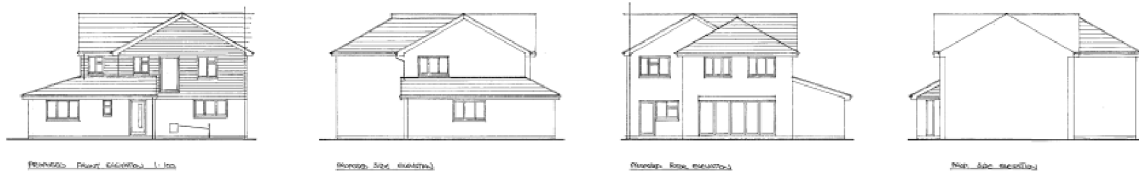
Existing Elevations & Floor Plans



Refused Elevations & Floor Plans (ref. 20230142)



Proposed Elevations & Floor Plans (ref. 20240050)



In previous refused application ref. 20230142 the proposed two storey side extension would have brought the building line forward of what was a determined building line on this side of Huntingfield Road. The extension was also very large being 5m in width and its depth being almost the full depth of the dwelling with further depth being added with the single storey extension proposed on the Strand Close elevation. The two storey side extension would have been built in line with the ridgeline of the host dwelling and would have projected forward of the Strand Close elevation at ground floor and have only minimal set back at first floor level. Overall it would have been a large and bulky incongruous addition which would not have respected the character and appearance of the host dwelling or the streetscene.

In this revised application the comments are as follows. With respect to the side extension element of the proposal this would now be a part two storey, part single storey side extension. The first floor element of the two storey extension would now be in line with the building line in Huntingfield Road but the ground floor element would still project beyond the building line. The whole of the two storey side extension should ideally be in line with the building line in Huntingfield Road however, the fact that the first floor would be in line with the building line is considered the most important factor. The projection of the ground floor element beyond the building line whilst not ideal would on balance just about be considered acceptable; it would project forward at ground floor level only therefore the massing is much reduced compared to the full two storeys that was proposed to project yond the building line in the previous application. With this reduced massing the ground floor element would be akin to a porch or single storey front extension etc which is therefore of less prominence than a two storey projection. The main building line would still be retained as it would remain at first floor level.

The part two storey part single storey side extension would now be of reduced width compared to the previous refusal and would be modest at both ground and first floor levels. The first floor element would be only 2.1m width and the ground floor element would be 2.8m therefore less than half the width of the host dwelling. The ridgeline would not be set down from the ridgeline of the main dwelling but the first floor element would be set back from the main front wall by 0.36m. Although the ridgeline is not set

down it is considered that as the extension would be set back from the front wall and given the very modest width of the extension particularly at first floor level then the lack of set down is acceptable on this occasion. The front of the side element would not be set back at ground floor as this is where the proposed single storey front extension is proposed but given that this is at ground floor level only the projection is considered acceptable; it would be of modest depth and not project beyond the building line in Strand Close. The proposed single storey front extension and ground floor element of the side extension would have a pitched roof which would be in keeping with the host dwelling and the two storey element would have a pitched roof with gable end which would be in keeping also.

In respect of the proposed part two, part single storey side extension element of the proposal it is therefore considered that the amendments to it in respect of reducing its width has made it a more subservient extension and this also means the extension would no longer project beyond the building line at first floor level at least. Although it would project beyond the building line at ground floor level this is just about considered acceptable given that it is at ground floor level only and is akin to a porch or front extension which are commonplace in streetscenes and the building line would still be retained at first floor level. The proposed part two storey, part single storey side extension element is therefore now considered acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance and those issues with the proposed side extension in the previous application considered resolved. The proposed single storey front extension is also considered acceptable.

In respect of the proposed two storey rear extension which is new to this application and was not proposed previously, this would be 3.3m in depth and would extend out half from the existing dwelling and the rest behind the proposed two storey side extension all as one extension. It would have a hipped roof which would sit just down from the ridgeline of the host dwelling. It is not a small extension but there is half of the rear of the original dwelling that would still be visible and although the roof would ideally be set lower down to be more subservient, it would at least be set down just below the ridgeline of the host dwelling. Its depth would be 3.3m which is subservient to the existing depth of the dwelling which is 7.5m.

Also as part of these new proposals in this application it is proposed to construct a retaining wall along the rear boundary to a height of 1.6m with the existing rear timber fence refixed to the top of it; the overall height to the top of the fence from ground level would be 3.4m. Whilst there are no objections to the proposed retaining wall in respect of design terms, there are objections to the existing fence that it is proposed to re-affix on top of it. A fence to that excessive height affixed to the top of another form of boundary treatment (in this case a wall) would appear as a highly incongruous form of development which would be harmful to the character of the streetscene and is therefore unacceptable.

Therefore, whilst the design, character and appearance issues with the previous application in respect of the two storey side extension element of the proposal have been resolved and therefore the ground of refusal of the previous application, there is now a new issue in respect of the existing fencing that would be refixed to the top of the retaining wall proposed along the rear boundary.

In summary the proposal to re-affix existing fencing to the top of a new retaining wall along the rear boundary by virtue of its height would be a highly incongruous form of development which would be out of keeping with the character of the area and harmful to the streetscene. As such in respect of design, character and appearance the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) and section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

Landscape Character

The site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. As the proposal is for extensions to a property in a built-up area of housing within the rural settlement of Hook Green, it is considered there would be no harmful impact on the surrounding landscape character and in this respect the proposal is compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS).

Amenity of Occupiers

The proposal would result in the property increasing from a three to a four bedroom dwelling and SPG2 (2020) sets out the minimum private garden area and rear garden depths according to the number of bedrooms a property has:

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

The existing and proposed garden areas and rear garden depths (excluding parking areas) are:

Existing

Existing Garden Area – 174 sq. m
Existing Rear Garden Depth – 6.2m

Proposed

Rear Garden Area – 84 sq. m
Rear Garden Depth – Ranges in depth from 3m (from the rear wall of the proposed extension) - 6.6m (from the original rear wall of dwelling and the bit to the side)

The proposal would result in the property changing from a dwelling which currently far exceeds the minimum garden area to being one where it would be significantly undersized. The actual proposed private rear garden area would be undersized in respect of area as it would be only 84 sq. m (undersized by 16 sq.m). It is noted that the property has a front garden area however this is not private as it is at the front and open onto Strand Close.

In respect of the rear garden depth the property already has an undersized rear garden depth. The proposal would result in the section of the rear garden where the extension is proposed becoming even more undersized. The rear garden would range in depth from 3m – 6.6m and although the rear garden is already undersized this would be making the section where the two storey rear extension is proposed even more under (it would be undersized by 3.4m - 7m).

In the previous application although an additional bedroom was to be added and the additional requirement for extra garden space and depth applied as it was to increase from a three to a four bedroom property in that proposal too, a two storey rear extension was not proposed so there was no reduction in the loss of the rear garden area or depth in the previous application.

The proposal would result in the dwelling having an undersized private garden area and would result in the dwelling having an even more undersized private rear garden depth than existing which would be harmful to the amenity and living conditions of existing and future occupiers of the dwelling. As such the proposal in respect of occupier amenity is contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF (2023).

Neighbouring Amenity

No. 45 Huntingfield Road

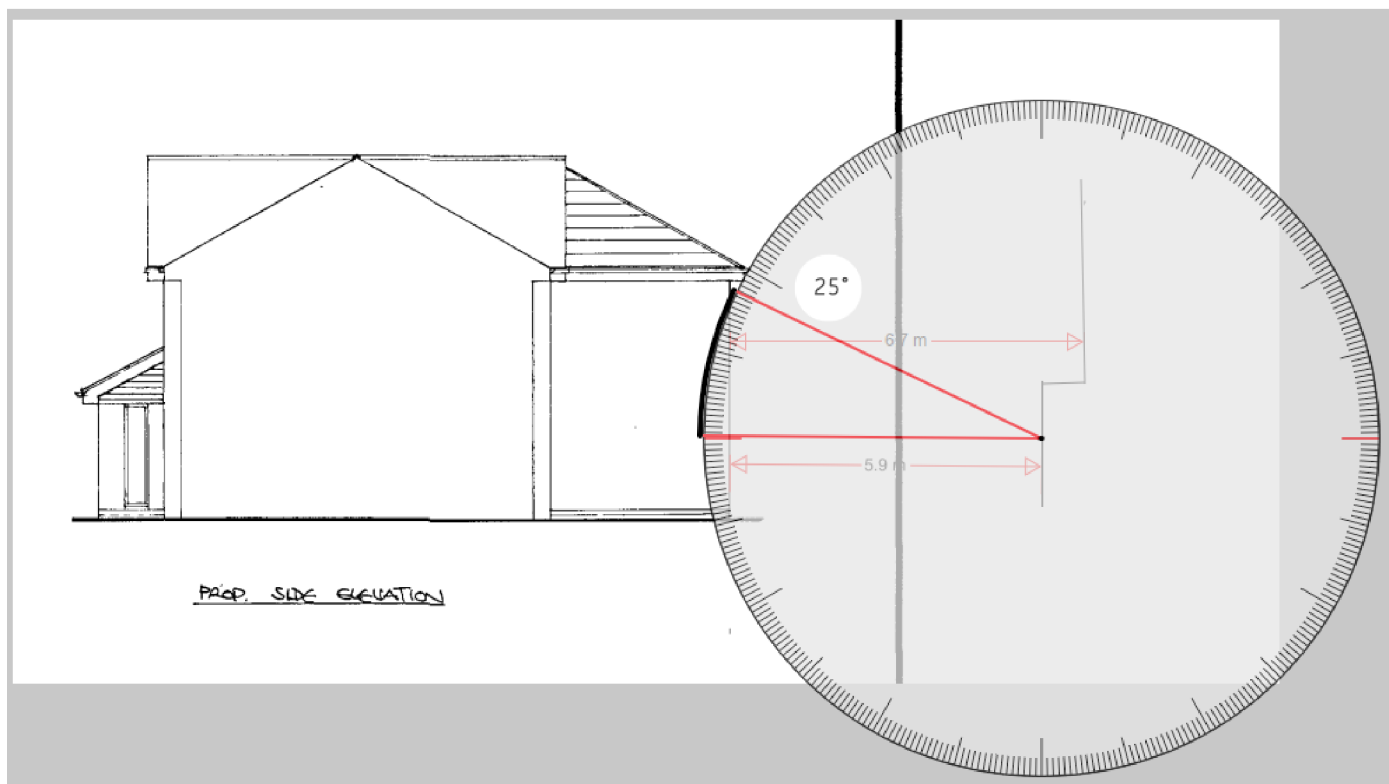
No. 45 Huntingfield Road is located to the west of the application dwelling.

Neighbouring amenity was not an issue in the previous proposal and there was no impact on no. 45 as the proposed two storey side extension was to be built slightly set in from the existing rear wall of the dwelling therefore, due to its siting it would have caused no material harm on the windows in the front or side elevations of no. 45 with regards overshadowing or loss of light or overlooking over and above the existing situation.

In this application as well as a proposed part two storey, part single storey side extension and single storey front extension previously proposed, a two storey rear extension is now also proposed. The proposed two storey rear extension would be built behind half of the existing rear elevation of the dwelling and extend

across behind the two storey side element proposed. This means that the application dwelling would therefore be closer to no. 45 than the existing situation at both ground and first floor levels and the rear elevation of the extension would face onto the flank elevation of no. 45.

Due to this the 25 degree test is the applicable test. SPG2 (2020) states that in order to protect against overshadowing, all applications for residential development will be expected to comply with the “25 degree rule”. This states that if any part of the new development obstructs the 25 degree line from the centre of the lowest window in the adjacent building, then overshadowing and loss of light may occur to those lowest windows. The 25 degree test has been carried out from the centre of the lowest windows in the flank elevation of no. 45 (i.e. the ground floor windows which appear to serve a kitchen) and this is as follows:



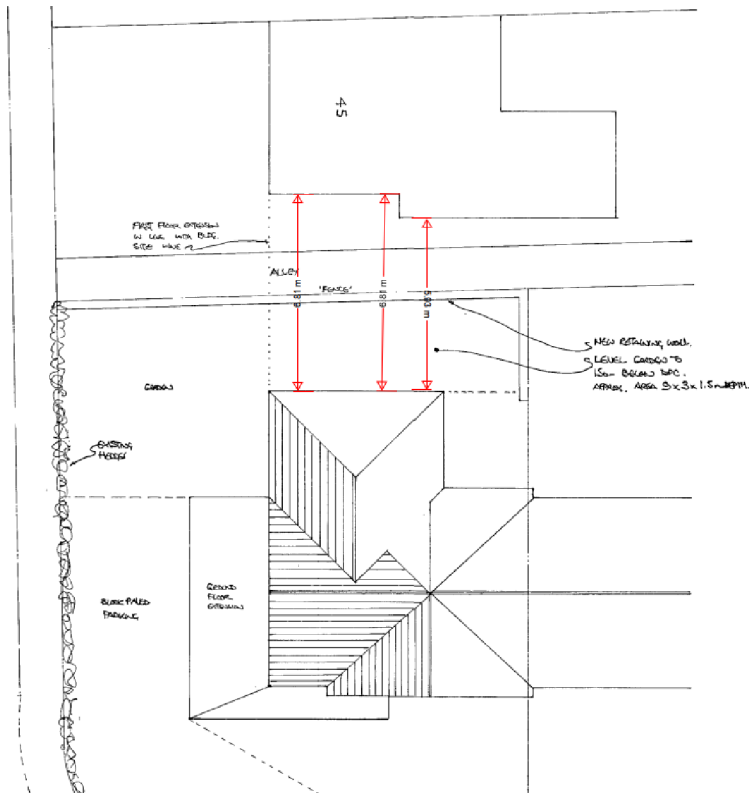
As can be seen this shows that the proposed two storey rear extension element of the proposal would obstruct the 25 degree line and therefore this denotes that overshadowing and loss of light may occur to the ground floor windows of no. 45. At the close proximity that the rear wall of the proposed extension would be to the windows in the flank of no. 45 it would also generally be an overbearing and unneighbourly form of development.

Furthermore, in respect of overlooking SPG2 (2020) states that where windows of habitable rooms face each other a window-to-window distance of at least 21m should be provided and that the minimum distance from the window of a habitable room to any house wall which contains no habitable room windows can be reduced to 11m.

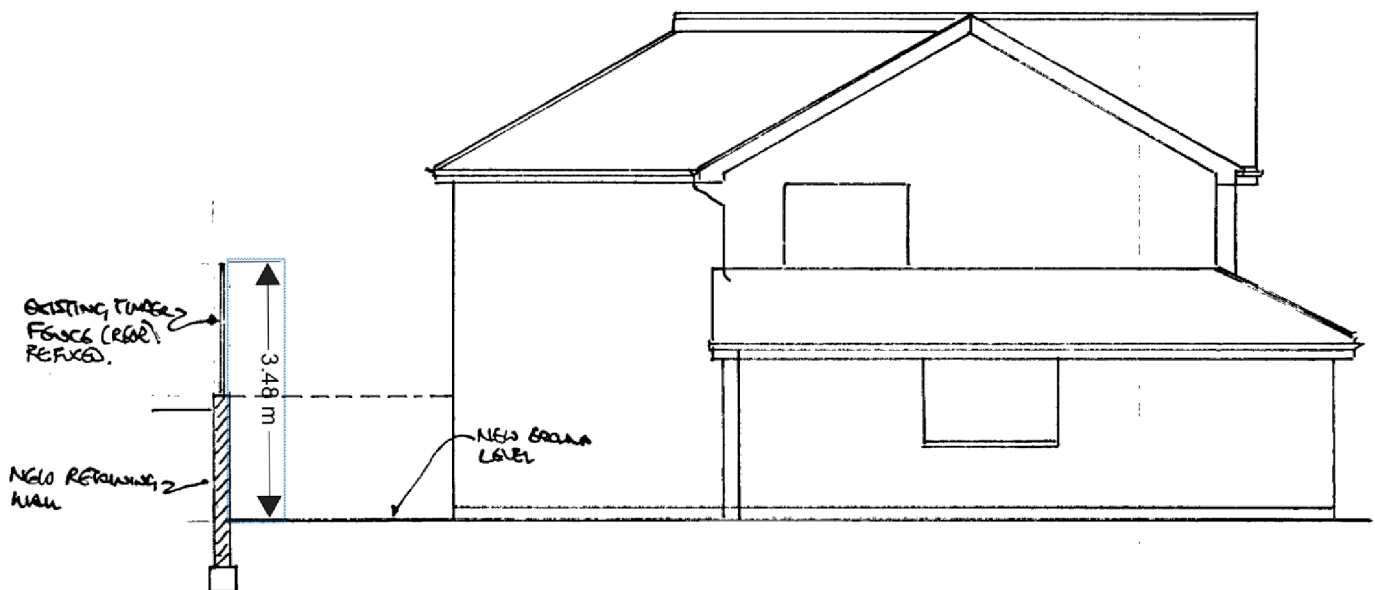
At ground floor level there would be the facing dining room window in the proposed extension (habitable) to what appears to be kitchen windows in no. 45 (non-habitable). The distance between these windows would be 5.9m which would be under the 11m minimum required for facing habitable and non-habitable windows.

At first floor level there would be the facing bedroom windows in the proposed extension (habitable) to what is presumed to be bathroom (non-habitable), landing (non-habitable) and bedroom windows (habitable) in no. 45. All of these windows would be in the field of view of the two first floor bedrooms windows proposed in the extension. The distance between these windows would be 6.8m which would be under the 11m required for facing habitable and non-habitable windows and even less under the 21m required for facing habitable to habitable windows in the case of the bedrooms.

This is demonstrated in the below:



Furthermore, a new retaining wall is also proposed and the existing rear timber fence would be refixed to the top of it along the rear boundary. This would prevent the overlooking between the ground floor windows of the proposed extension and those in the flank of no. 45 but it would not prevent the overlooking between the first floor windows proposed in the rear of the extension and the first floor windows in the flank of no. 45. Furthermore, due to the overall height to the top of the fence being 3.4m from ground level this fencing would also have an overbearing and unneighbourly impact on the occupiers of no. 45: (extract below shows height of fence:



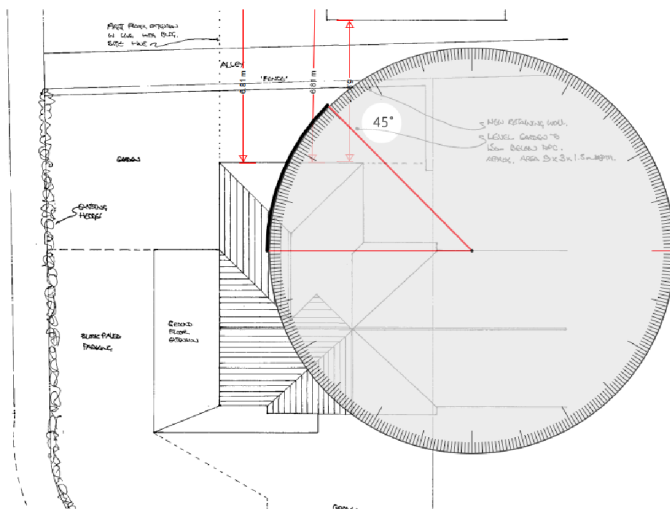
PROP. RETAINING WALL TO RISE/SIDE TO ALLOW EXCAVATION + LEVELLING OF GRADING.

The occupiers of no. 45 would therefore be impacted on by the two storey rear extension element of the proposal and the proposal to reaffix existing fencing to the top of a proposed retaining wall, by virtue of overshadowing, loss of light and overlooking and proposal would generally be an overbearing and unneighbourly form of development which would be harmful to their amenity and privacy.

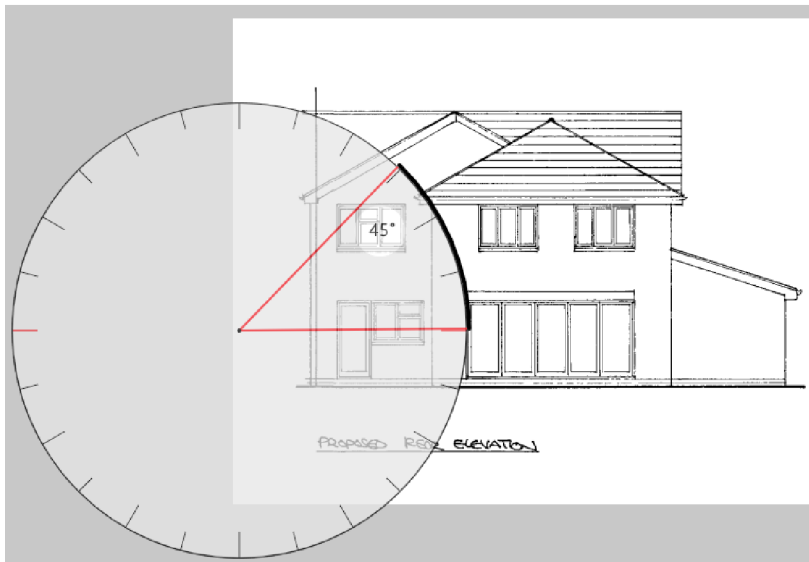
No. 3 Strand Close

No. 3 Strand Close is located to the north of the application dwelling. Due to the proposed two storey rear extension and the orientation of no. 3 to it the 45 degree is the applicable test which needs to be carried out from the nearest window in order to assess overshadowing and loss of light on no. 3. This is shown below:

45 degree test on plan:



45 degree test on elevation:



As can be seen this shows the proposed two storey rear extension element of the proposal would not project beyond the 45 degree line on either plan or elevation therefore denoting there would be no overshadowing or loss of light. There are no windows proposed in the north flank elevation of the proposed rear extension element therefore no overlooking to no. 3.

Due to the siting and distance of the proposal from any other neighbouring properties there would be no impact on any other neighbouring properties with regards overshadowing, loss of light or overlooking.

In summary, the proposed two storey rear extension element of the proposal by virtue of its siting and proximity to the neighbouring dwelling and the proposal to reaffix existing fencing to the top of a proposed retaining wall along the rear boundary due to its height, would cause overshadowing, loss of light and overlooking to the occupiers of no. 45 Huntingfield Road and would generally be an overbearing and unneighbourly form of development which would be harmful to their amenity and privacy. As such in respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) and paragraph 135 (f) of the NPPF (2024).

Parking and Highway Safety

SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006) states that for a property with four or more bedrooms there shall be a maximum of 3 spaces per dwelling. The Council's Highways Officer confirmed in previous application ref. 20230142 that two spaces will be required. It can be seen from the submitted plans and on site that there is sufficient space for the parking of two vehicles on the existing hardstanding at the property and as such a parking plan is not considered required. It is therefore considered that the proposal would be acceptable with regards parking and highway safety and in this regard the proposal would be compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Archaeology

The site is located in an area of Archaeological Potential but KCC Heritage confirm that the proposals are unlikely to have a significant below-ground archaeological impact. It is therefore considered there is no need for any archaeological work or watching brief condition in this case, should permission be forthcoming. In respect of archaeology the proposal is considered compliant with saved Policy TC7 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is considered acceptable in respect of landscape character, parking and highway safety and archaeology however, it is unacceptable in respect of design, character and appearance, occupier amenity and neighbouring amenity.

Recommendation: Refusal

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	16th April 2024	Dated:	17 th April 2024