



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20231288

Location: 23 Silver Birch Avenue Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Conversion of garage to habitable room.

Applicant: Mr Kevin Martin

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form dated 13/12/2023;
Drawing Number RNS/465/LP (OS Plan);
Drawing Number RNS/465/3A (Sections AA and BB);
Drawing Number RNS/465/2B (Ground Floor Plan – Proposed);
Drawing Number RNS/465/BP (Block Plan); and
Drawing Number RNS/468/1A (Floor Plans and Elevations – Existing).

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19791021	Erection of 3 no detached bungalows and garages	Permitted	31.12.1979

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

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

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 raise no objection to this application, subject to the compliance with local planning policy.

GBC Highways Officer

With regards to the application, the proposal does give some concern over the level of parking provision. The image on Google Maps, suggests a layout exists, but does not necessarily conform to standards.



I would therefore propose the applicant needs to submit and have approved a parking plan and no works may take place until alterations to the parking provision are approved and any alterations required completed. Reason to ensure adequate car parking is retained in the interests of nil detriment.

The quickest way to get approval is a double width drive and crossover constructed from a bound permeable paving where new construction is involved. If the applicant were to retain the existing layout, the parking space parallel to the highway would need to be a minimum of

5 long (excluding the perpendicular driveway) and there is insufficient information to determine if this is provided/available.

Neighbouring properties

Nine surrounding properties were consulted and no responses were received. The consultation period ended on the 15th January 2024.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

23 Silver Birch Avenue is a detached chalet style bungalow located on the Southern side of the highway. To the frontage there is some hardstanding to provide off road parking for 2 vehicles.



The application proposes the conversion of the garage adjoined to the front of the property to a habitable room.

The application proposes to convert the existing garage to habitable rooms by replacing the garage door with a window. The proposed development would create space for internal layout changes to include a dayroom.

The proposed window would be aligned to respect the window placement of the existing windows and will be PVCu to match. The front elevation will have a brick finish to match the host dwelling. As such, this proposal is considered to have a minimal impact on the existing dwelling and the immediate street scene.

Therefore, the development hereby proposed will be constructed using appropriate materials and will have no impact on the street scene. As such, the application is in accordance with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed internal layout changes are not deemed to have a detrimental effect for future occupiers and will create space for a dayroom. As such, the proposed development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal would not affect neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light, privacy, outlook or cause a sense of enclosure and therefore is considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

Parking and Highways

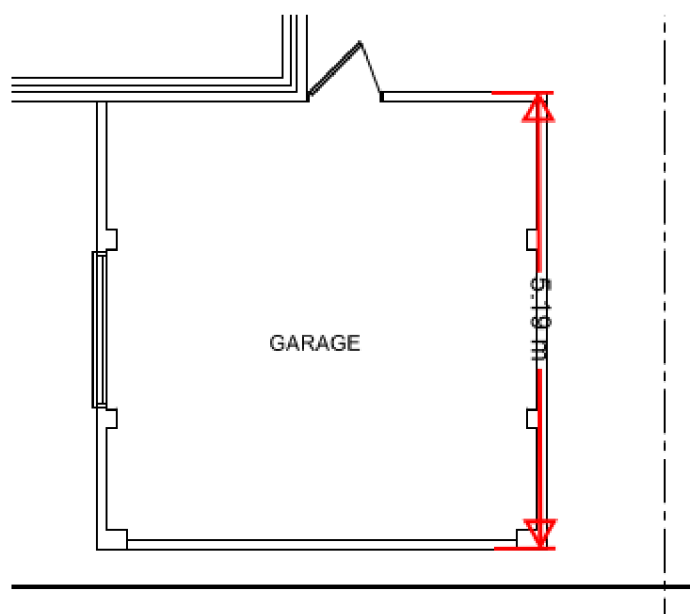
Gravesham's Highways Officer raised concerns with the loss of the garage and therefore the provision of adequate parking at the property.

However, the property currently provides two off-road parking spaces to the frontage and the garage is unlikely to be used for parking a modern car as it falls below the requirements set out by supplementary planning guidance; SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006.), as detailed below:

SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)

Preferred Garage Size for Single Car	5.5m (length) x 3.6m (width)
Preferred Garage Size for Two Cars	5.5m (length) x 6.0m (width)

Existing Garage Length



Furthermore, the conversion of the garage will not result in an increase in bedrooms, and therefore the proposal will not influence the existing parking arrangements.

Whilst the Highways Officer has suggested the applicant submit a parking plan, there is existing off road parking to the frontage, as displayed by the hardstanding and slabbed area and therefore it would not be reasonable for the Local Planning Authority to request this.

As such, there are no highways and parking issues related to the application.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Landscape Character Assessment

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 conversion of garage to habitable room is not considered to impact on the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area as it is within the settlement area of landscape character area.

Contamination

As the building has previously been used as a garage, there could be some contamination in terms of oil and other contaminants derived from garage use. Therefore, a watching brief condition will be included.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy. The proposed conversion of the existing garage to form habitable rooms will have a minimal impact of the street scene, will not detrimentally affect the existing parking arrangements and the proposed external materials will match the existing. The development will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers and will not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties

Recommendation

Permission

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Nina Goodbody	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	5th February 2024	Dated:	6th February 2024