



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240830

Location: Camer Studio Camer Street Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a single storey side extension with roof lights.

Applicant: Long & Leyland

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;
Planning Statement;
Site Location Plan;
Drawing No. 001 – Existing Site Plan;
Drawing No. 002 – Proposed Site Plan;
Drawing No. 010 – Existing Plans;
Drawing No. 011 – Existing Roof Plan;
Drawing No. 012 – Existing Elevations;
Drawing No. 013 – Existing Elevations;
Drawing No. 110 – Proposed Plans;
Drawing No. 111 – Proposed Roof Plan;
Drawing No. 112 – Proposed Elevations;
Drawing No. 113 – Proposed Elevations; and
Drawing No. 114 – Proposed Sections.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20150236	Application for minor material amendment to planning permission reference number 20110989 in respect of enlargement of meter/bin store, relocation of roof lights, provision of balustrade on south elevation, deletion of the rebuilt retaining wall, pond, reinstatement and orchard planting in areas 3 & 4, removal of ground source pump and replacement with wood burning stove, and provision of a flue and external lighting.	Permission	18.05.2015
20150086	***REVISED DESCRIPTION*** Application for the approval of conditions 4, & 13 attached to planning permission reference number 20110989 relating to external facing materials with details of garage construction, surface treatments & bat survey.	Approval of Details	22.04.2015
20110989	Conversion of outbuilding used as an artist's studio into a residential dwelling.	Permission	04.10.2012

19700310	conversion of part of existing building, to form workshop, for owners private and personal use	Permission	11.02.1971
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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
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC2 – Listed Buildings

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 4 – Decision making
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- 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

- 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);
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009);
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan; and
- Design for Gravesham - Design Code (2024).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

Due to the nature and content of the proposed change Meopham Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by the displaying of a site notice and letters sent to five surrounding properties with an overall expiry date of 15th October 2024. Two letters of objection were received making the following comments;

- Impact on rural nature
- Loss of historical significance
- Large footprint
- Negative effect on the balance of community

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

The application is for the erection of a single storey extension to the western facing side with glazed link. The extension would be set back from the north elevation by 3.4m, would project from the west elevation by 3.97m and be 8.7m in length. It would have an eaves height of 3m and ridge height of 5.3m with a pitch roof and 6no. rooflights. The glazed link would be located on the south elevation of the existing property would measure 1m by 2m and a height of 2.55m. The extension would provide 2no. bedrooms and a shower room.

Site and Surrounding Area

The site is Grade 2 agricultural land and is located in the Green Belt, in the Kent Downs National Landscape and in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area as defined on the adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy policies map and this must be the starting point for determining this application. There are seven listed buildings in the area, which surrounds the application site. These are Camer House, Camer Estate (the boundary of which adjoins the lean to shed at the application site), the building 30 metres left of Camer House, Camer Estate (located some 140 metres to the west of the application site), the Bailiffs House, Camer Estate (located some 220 metres to the west of the application site) and nos. 5-6, 7, 8 and 9-10 Camer Street (located some 50 metres to the east of the application site).

The application site is located some 110 metres to the south of Camer Road and on the western side of Camer Street (an unadopted accessway). It is located in a predominantly rural area, between the settlements at Hook Green, Meopham and Sole Street, Meopham. It is some 530 metres to the east of Hook Green and some 600 metres to the west of Sole Street.

The application site is Camer Studio, a detached 2 bedroom, chalet style single residential dwelling which was converted from an artist's studio outbuilding, following planning permission in 2012 (Ref. 20110989). The Studio originally formed part of the larger Camer estate to the west. The property sits in an extensive plot which is accessed from a single track which runs parallel to the residential plot. To the front (south elevation) there is a walled courtyard. Due to the set back location, orientation of the existing property, change in land levels and surrounding trees and landscaping, wider views of the western facing side of the property are not easily afforded.

View from the north of the access road

Location of proposed extension



As laid out in the site description, the application property lies within the Green Belt which forms the starting point for assessing the proposal.

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 153 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 NPPF (2023) 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 143 the NPPF (2023) 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 NPPF (2023) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 154). 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 (LPCS).

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 NPPF (2023), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 154 the NPPF (2023).

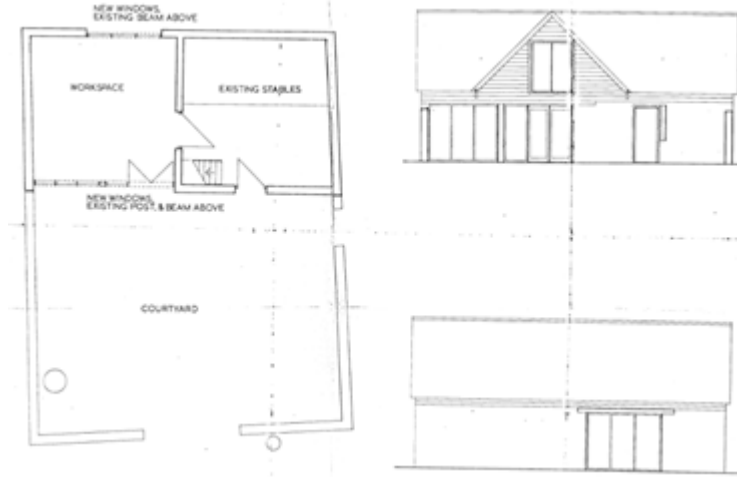
In particular Policy C13 (LPFR) places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling, unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria (ii)). It also requires the massing, scale and form 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 (2023) 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

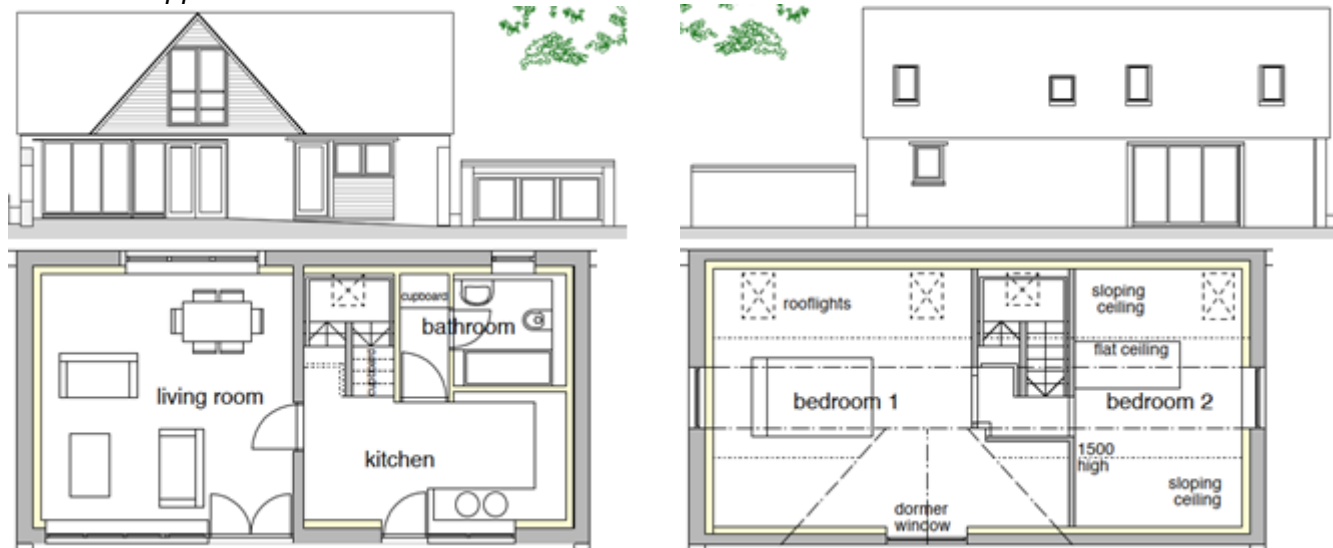
openness, repeated many times, can have a cumulatively detrimental effect.

As stated within the site description, the ‘original’ dwelling in this case is a per the original conversion into a residential dwelling, as permitted in 2012. Prior to this, the building was used as an artist’s studio and the original plans from the 1971 planning application (Ref. 19700310) for its continued use as a workshop, show that the building has not been altered.

19700310 Approved Plans



20110989 Approved Plans



Therefore without any evidence to the contrary, the existing property is the ‘original’ dwelling as converted and has not been extended.

The following calculations show the dwelling as built and the proposed extension.

Existing dwelling (as built)

Ground Floor: 44.6m²

First Floor: 52.16m²

Total: 96.76m²

Proposed Extension

Ground Floor: 31.65m²

First Floor: N/A

Total floor space increase from dwelling as built: 31.65m²

Total Overall Floorspace: 160.06m²

Percentage increase over original dwelling: 33.7%

Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) 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 is within the one third limit and is therefore within the parameters set by Policy C13 (LPFR).

In addition to according saved Policy C13 (LPFR), the original dwelling is a modest chalet style detached dwelling. It has not been extended since its conversion and only has the addition of the bin store to the side which was included in the original conversion. In terms of the proposed extension, it has been designed to reflect the existing dwelling, with pitch roof. It has been set back from the rear building line and would not attach to the host dwelling, in order to preserve the original features. The eaves and ridge height would also be set lower than the host dwelling. The glazed link would be a contemporary addition, however this would lend itself to showing the proposed extension is a modern addition.

Although there is no definition of the term “disproportionate additions” within the NPPF, Policy C13, provides a useful guide. It places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling and also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting. For the reasons set out above, this proposal would meet these tests and as such it is considered that this proposal would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt

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

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF 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.

The side extension would only project to the side of the existing building by 3.97m. The eaves and ridge height are lower than the host dwelling and the overall external footprint would only have an area of 38.53m². Due to its location, lower ground level and position in relation to the host dwelling and surrounding landscaping, it would not be highly visible from public vantage points and the wider rural area. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Design and visual impact

Section 12 of the NPPF relates to “achieving well-designed and beautiful places” and sets out the Government’s requirements in relation to design issues. Paragraph 131 is particularly relevant:

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

The aims set out in paragraph 131 of the NPPF are reflected in Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy. This requires new development to be “visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive” and to “conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment”. It also requires new development to “integrate well with the surrounding local area”. In addition, Policy

CS19 requires the following:

“....the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. Account will be taken of the scale, height, building lines, layout, materials and other architectural features of adjoining buildings.”

The design and visual impact of the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable. The extension is set back from the rear elevation of the original dwelling and the pitch roof respects the main dwelling and the ridge would be lower than that of the main dwelling which would ensure that it remains subservient. The detailed design of the extension, fenestration and materials would be timber windows and weatherboarding which retains a rural design and would reflect materials in the original dwelling.

The existing dwelling largely screened from public views by trees. As such the proposed extension would not be subject to significant public view and would not be visually prominent within this locality.

In light of the above considerations, the design and visual impact of this proposal must be considered acceptable. The development would meet the criteria set out in the NPPF and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on landscape

Section 15 of the NPPF 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 Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 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.

The site is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. The key characteristics are defined in the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment as follows:

- Gently undulating topography with a mixture of arable and pasture farmland
- Neat pattern of small square fields in the south
- Broader irregular shaped fields to the north
- Narrow lanes and roads lined with hedgerows
- Three large settlements located along A227 running east and west
- Traditional architecture surrounding village greens provide local vernacular

The condition is good and the guidelines are to conserve and reinforce the key landscape elements.

Within the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan, states the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty and local character, qualities and distinctiveness when assessing design, scale, setting and materials of new development.

Due to the modest size of the proposed development, it is considered that it would not conflict with the characteristics of the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area as identified in the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment and would not result in a detrimental impact on the Kent Downs National Landscape and would meet the tests set out in Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and the guidance within the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan.

Listed building issues

The application site is located in an area where there are seven listed buildings. The application site is located some distance from the listed buildings and the proposed extension has been located further to the west of the existing dwelling. As such, it is considered that the proposal would not have any impact on the

setting of the surrounding listed buildings or the historic character of the area. The proposal would be in accordance with Policy CS20 (LPCS) and Section 16 of the NPPF (2023) and Saved Policy TC2 (LPFR)

Impacts on residential amenity

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to, *inter alia*, provide “a high standard of amenity for existing and future users”. In addition, Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to “safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land”.

The proposed bedroom provide good sized bedrooms with access to sufficient light and outlook.

The property is located significantly away from any neighbouring dwellings and therefore would be no neighbouring amenity impact from the proposal.

In light of these considerations, the proposed extension would not have a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of existing/future or neighbouring occupiers and would meet the tests set out in the NPPF and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Highway issues

This proposal would result in two additional bedrooms, resulting in a four bedroom dwelling. The property benefits from a detached garage and driveway with additional areas for parking.

The proposal is in accordance with Policy CS11 (Transport) (LPCS) and Policies T1 (Impact on Highway) and T5 (Access to Identified Highway Network) (LPFR).

Archaeology

The site is located in an Area of Archaeological Potential. However, given that the increase in the footprint of the resulting extension would be minimal compared to the existing, it is considered that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant below-ground archaeological impact. In respect of archaeology the proposal is therefore considered compliant with Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review.

Conclusion

For the reasons set out in this report, this development would not result in “disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building” and has been designed to have a subservient and appropriate appearance to the host dwelling. As such it would not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt. Furthermore, it would not impact the openness of the Green Belt.

In all other respects the proposal is also seen as acceptable. It has been shown to be appropriate in terms of its design and visual impact, its impact upon the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area, the Kent Downs National Landscape, surrounding heritage and its impact upon residential amenity. It is also considered acceptable in terms of highway safety and archaeological issues.

Recommendation:

Permission.

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

Case Officer:	Ms Amanda Cue	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
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Signed:	<i>A Cue</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	12 th November 2024	Dated:	13th November 2024