



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240018

Location: Eden Cottage Round Street Cobham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a rear single storey infill extension and part conversion of the garage with alterations to fenestration.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs S Borner

Site Visit Date: 01/02/2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form
- Drawing No: 23/420/04 (Rev C) (Existing Elevations, Location Map and Block Plan)
- Drawing No: 23/420/03 (Existing Plans and Elevations)
- Drawing No: 23/420/06 (Proposed Elevations)
- Drawing No: 23/420/05 (Rev B) (Proposed Plan, Roof Plan and Block Plan)

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20160730	Erection of a single storey side extension comprising of living room, dining room, kitchen, wet room and bedroom ancillary to the main dwelling.	Refused	21.09.2016
20120012	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged dining room	Permitted	16.03.2012
20110886	Construction of additional dormer window in the side roof slope.	Permitted	29.11.2011
20110481	Application for Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed erection of a single storey side extension to form a family room.	Certificate Granted	07.07.2011
20070723	Application for Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed demolition of the outbuilding and erection of a single storey detached building to provide playroom, kitchen and shower room.	Certificate Granted	03.10.2007
20010850	Erection of first floor rear extension to form bedroom and construction of a dormer window in the existing side roof slope.	Permitted	03.12.2001
20010523	Erection of first floor rear extension to form bedroom and construction of a dormer window in the existing side roof slope.	Refused	14.08.2001
19870705	Erection of single storey side extension to form double garage single storey rear extension to form kitchen diner and erection of front porch	Permitted	30.09.1987

19840281	Retention of enlarged garage	Permitted	24.05.1984
19810077	Extension to existing cottage to provide bathroom and corridor link to existing outbuildings which are to be used as a study sitting room and bedroom	Permitted	14.04.1981
19780732	Erection of a part one and part two storey extension at the rear to form a kitchen and enlarged lobby with bedroom and bathroom over	Permitted	20.09.1978

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
- C13 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

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 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020).
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006).
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015).
- Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Cobham Parish Council

No objections

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

GBC – Highways Officer

I have no objections as there adequate car parking on the driveway. I would however suggest a parking plan should be conditioned, so the provision is protected.

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by way of site notice as there are no adjoining dwellings. The consultation period expired on 23.02.2024 and no comments were received.

Analysis

Proposal

The proposal seeks to erect a rear single storey infill extension and part conversion of the garage with alterations to fenestration.

Existing



Proposed





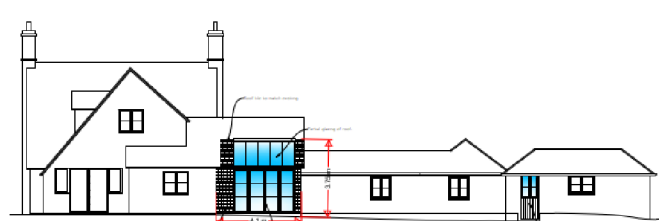
Side Elevation



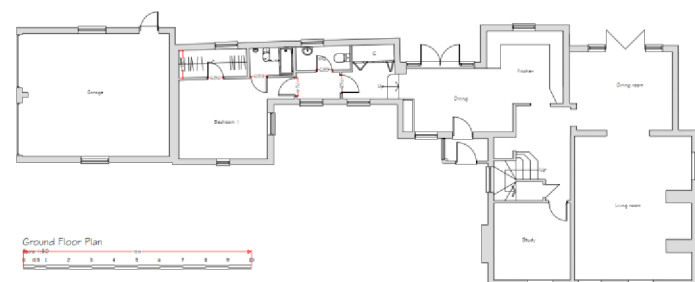
Side Elevation



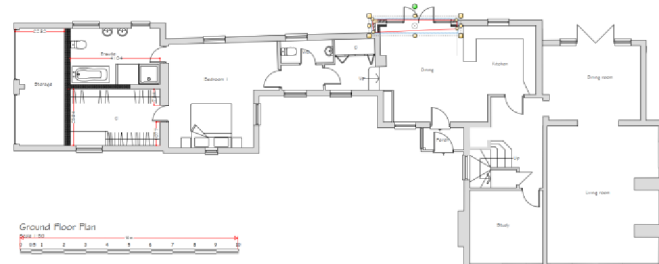
Rear Elevation



Rear Elevation



Ground Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan

Background

The dwelling has been subject of several planning applications. Many have been permitted with the below planning consent imposing the below condition which is of significance to this current proposal.

Condition ii attached to planning permission reference number 19870705 restricts the use of the existing garage:

years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted
 (11) The garage hereby permitted shall be used for the accommodation of private vehicles only.

"The garage hereby permitted shall be used for the accommodation of private vehicles only."

As such, planning permission is required to alter the use of any part of the garage.

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 National Planning Policy Framework (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 National Planning Policy Framework (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 National Planning Policy Framework (2023) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 153). 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) 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 (2023), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 153 the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

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 (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.

Eden Cottage has previously been considerably extended. The 19780732 application indicates the original footprint of the Eden Cottage and it was considerably smaller than it is today. It was quite simply a two up/two down property with the first floor being smaller due to the cat-slide style roof. The original footprint of the property was 110.13 m². The property has been extended to the rear, side and has also been linked to a detached stable which was then extended for a double garage. The additional footprint, not including the extension which is the subject of this application, is 185.58 m², resulting in a **68.5%** increase. This clearly indicates by how much the property has already been extended by and that without adequate justification or the existence of very special circumstances.

The proposed extension would add an additional 3.81 m² to the property which is modest however contributes to the incremental increase.

Existing dwelling (as built)

110.13m²

Footprint after subsequent extensions

185.58 m²

Footprint after Proposed Extension

3.81m²

Total: 189.39

Total floor space increase from dwelling as built: **79.26m²**

Total floor space increase of proposed extension over original dwelling: **71.96%**

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 detached two storey dwelling situated on a generous plot in an isolated location within the parish of Cobham. The proposed rear extension whilst modest is still above the 1/3 increase in overall floorspace, however on balance it is considered that the scheme is not so harmful to warrant a refusal, nor one which could easily be defended at appeal. The extension is not visible 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 (2023) 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 modest increase on the overall footprint the proposal, does not result in any material harm to openness of the greenbelt.

Character and Appearance

Eden Cottage is a detached two storey property in use as a single dwelling. It is a characterful property which is brick at ground floor and wooden clad at first floor level. The property has been extended considerably in the past and includes various single storey extensions. There is an outbuilding to the rear. It is situated on a large plot approximately 0.34 ha. It is a stand-alone property located very close to the road, behind a 1 metre high picket fence and farm style gate. There is a large parking area to the side of the property. The property has an attached double garage. There are a number of established trees to the south of the site.

The property is within the Green Belt and the Meopham Downs Character Assessment Area. The property is relatively secluded with the closest neighbouring dwelling being in excess of 80 metres away.

The proposal seeks to make minor alterations which will not be visible from the main streetscape. The first alteration seeks a modest single storey side and rear extension which will provide a modest increase to the footprint of the dwelling, the proposed extension will be constructed using brickwork to match the existing and will include a partially glazed roof. In terms of design this is not considered to harm the character and appearance of the dwelling.

The second element of the proposal is to carry out a part conversion of the existing garage, this element of the proposal will retain a door in the rear elevation with the lower glazed panels being replaced with a solid element to offer the occupant privacy. The garage doors in flank elevation will be retained and again there will not be any impact on wider character of the area.

The proposal is considered acceptable in terms of design and appearance and is compliant with CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed bedroom will have a footprint of 21.45sqm which is generous in terms of the council's technical guidance, the room will be served by an ensuite and a separate dressing room. There is adequate light and outlook received by this room as it is double aspect with attractive views of the front and rear of the plot. There are no concerns regarding this area being utilised as an annexe.

The proposal is therefore considered to adequately safeguard the amenity of future occupants and complies with CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines 2020.

Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the remote nature of the dwelling the proposal would not result in any material harm to any neighbouring dwellings.

The proposal is therefore considered to adequately safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupants and complies with CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and SPG2 Residential Layout Guidelines 2020.

Parking and Highways

The proposed garage has been conditioned to ensure it is maintained for vehicle parking only and so any alterations to it require a grant of planning consent.

The proposal will result in the loss of the garage as it will be turned into a storage area/habitable room. In terms of size, it will have a maximum depth of 2.2m and is therefore not capable of accommodating a vehicle, however there is adequate off-road parking to the front of the plot to serve the needs of the development.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on the landscape - In addition to being within the Green Belt, the application site is located within the Meopham Downs Character Area, as set out in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment document.

Policy CS12 of the Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy LPCS (2014) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states at 5.7.26 that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

It is considered that this development would not be detrimental to the Meopham Downs Character Area, as

the property is located in a small settlement and development would not impact on the wider rural landscape.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is recommended for permission subject to conditions.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Sharon Sahota	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	14.03.2024	Dated:	19 March 2024