

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20241043

Location: 13 Stonecroft Vigo Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of a single storey rear extension with 2 roof lights. Erection of a front porch. Conversion of the garage to habitable space with 1 roof light. Removal of chimney stack. Changes to fenestration.

Applicant: Mr John Pearson

Site Visit Date: N/A – External photos taken on 03/12/2024 and photos provided in Tree Report

Preliminary Matters

The site contains trees with Tree Preservation Orders within the site boundary. During the course of the application, it was noted that there was an information discrepancy with regards to the removal of the tree located closest to the proposed single storey rear extension. This proposed removal did not have approval. As such, the agent was contacted on 26.11.24 to clarify matters. On 03.12.24, the agent confirmed an arborist would be carrying out a survey of the site and on 08.01.25, the respective documents were received.

Upon review of the information provided, it was noted that there is the possibility of bats in the trees, which may have meant further information was required. However, it was considered prudent to first consider whether the proposal raised any concerns before proceeding with the application process.

The proposal included:

- Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension
- Erection of an (open) porch
- Fenestration changes
- Conversion of garage to habitable space
- Removal of chimney stack

The above appeared to be generally acceptable in principle (subject to Vigo Parish Council Covenant Approval). However, it was evident from the planning history of the site that the original dwelling has already been heavily extended. As such it was considered that the principle of a single storey extension constructed in replacement of the existing conservatory could be supported and would likely to be acceptable in design, bulk and massing terms (subject to details and any consultation required), however the large depth of the extension would not be acceptable, particularly where it comes off the rear of the existing side extension by 5.6m. This depth also resulted in the extension being within close proximity to the tree. As such the agent was advised to amend the plans by reducing the depth of the proposed single storey rear extension to align with the existing rear extension, which would reduce the overdevelopment of the site, and also further safeguard the protected tree.

Given the above, the plans were amended to work within the footprint of the existing conservatory. These were received on 10.02.25 and accepted by the Local Planning Authority. With consideration that the

proposal had been reduced, it was considered that re-consultation was not necessary in this instance, and an informative relating to bats, would be sufficient, if planning permission were to be forthcoming.

Submitted Documents/Plans

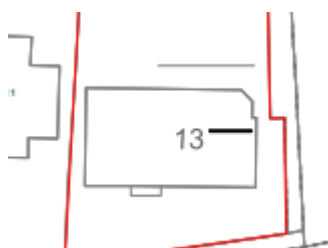
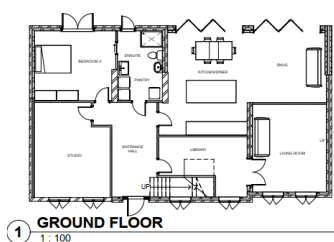
Application Form;
Supplementary Information – Arboricultural Method Statement;
Supplementary Information – Tree Report;
Drawing No. 240801-001 – Elevations Floor Plans Roof Plan Site Location Plan and Block Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 240801-002 F – REVISED PLAN Elevations Floor Plans Roof Plan Site Location Plan and Block Plan – Proposed; and
Drawing No. TPP-01 – Tree Protection Plan.

~~Superseded Documents/Plans~~

~~Drawing No. 240901-002 – Elevations Floor Plans and Roof Plan Site Location Plan and Block Plan – Proposed.~~

Plan Note

There is a slight discrepancy between the proposed floor plan and block plan, however this is negligible. As such, a revision has not been sought.



Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19980663	Erection of conservatory at the rear and erection of first floor rear extension to form bathroom.	Permitted	15.01.1999
19970628	Erection of 1.820m high fence on the southern side boundary.	Permitted	17.11.1997
19940580	Erection of single storey rear extension to form kitchen and cloakroom and erection of part single and part two storey side extension to form lounge and garage with bedroom at first floor level and enlargement of rear garden at side and formation of new vehicular access.	Refused	21.02.1995

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (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 34 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 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)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan (2021-2026)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Vigo Parish Council

Vigo Parish Council discussed the application, and do not have any objections apart from the fact that the porch appears to be in front of the original building line. This would be in breach of covenant.

I appreciate this is not a planning matter, but I did want to bring it to your attention. The covenant I am referring to states that no walls, hedges or fences can be erected in front of the building line. This restriction formed part of the original planning permission granted to the developers of the village, which required the village to be "open plan".

If you are minded to permit the application, could you please ensure that there is an informative in your letter to state that covenant approval must be sought from us in advance of any work taking place.

Kent Downs National Landscape Unit

Thank you for your recent consultation on the above.

On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales were renamed 'National Landscapes' (NLs). Accordingly, the Kent Downs AONB is now the Kent

Downs National Landscape. Its legal designation and policy status remain the same.

Also of note is the changes introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which came into force on 26/December 2023. The Act amends the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, which is the primary legislation relating to AONBs and replaces the previous Duty of Regard to AONBs set out at S85 with a new, strengthened requirement that:

‘In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty’. (Part 12 - Miscellaneous; Section 245. Protected Landscapes; paras (5) - (10).

This places a much stronger duty on relevant authorities, which includes local authorities, to ensure that their actions and decisions seek to conserve and enhance AONBs, marking a significant change to the legal context of AONB policy.

Further guidance is provided in Appendix 2.

The Kent Downs National Landscape Team has seen a recent uplift in the number of consultations on planning applications. In accordance with the agreed Kent Downs Planning Protocol, which sets out that the Kent Downs Landscape Team will only have a limited land use planning role and will prioritise its involvement in planning to planning policy matters, we will not normally provide bespoke comments on more minor applications such as this. This does not imply support for, or objection to, the proposal. If our input would be particularly valued in this instance, please get in touch and we endeavour to provide informal advice where our current planning capacity allows.

In determining the application, the local planning authority has a new statutory duty, as set out above, to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape. Further advice on the new duty is provided in Appendix 2 of this letter and in our Interim Advice Note for Local Planning Authorities. The Kent Downs National Landscape Team recommends that to help fulfill the new statutory duty, the Local Planning Authority should ensure that the decision is consistent with relevant national and local planning policy and takes into account the aims, objectives and principles set out in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and its associated guidance documents.

Further details of these are provided in Appendix 1.

I hope this is of assistance to you. I would be happy to discuss further if this would be helpful.

Health and Safety Executive

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

Five surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 03.12.24 and no responses were received. The overall consultation period expired on 27.12.24.

Site Description

13 Stonecroft is a detached, two storey property located on the corner of Stonecroft. The site lies within The Kent Downs National Landscape Area and the Vigo Scartop Woodlands Landscape Character Area.

Site Photos



The dwelling has as an existing hardstanding area and attached garage.

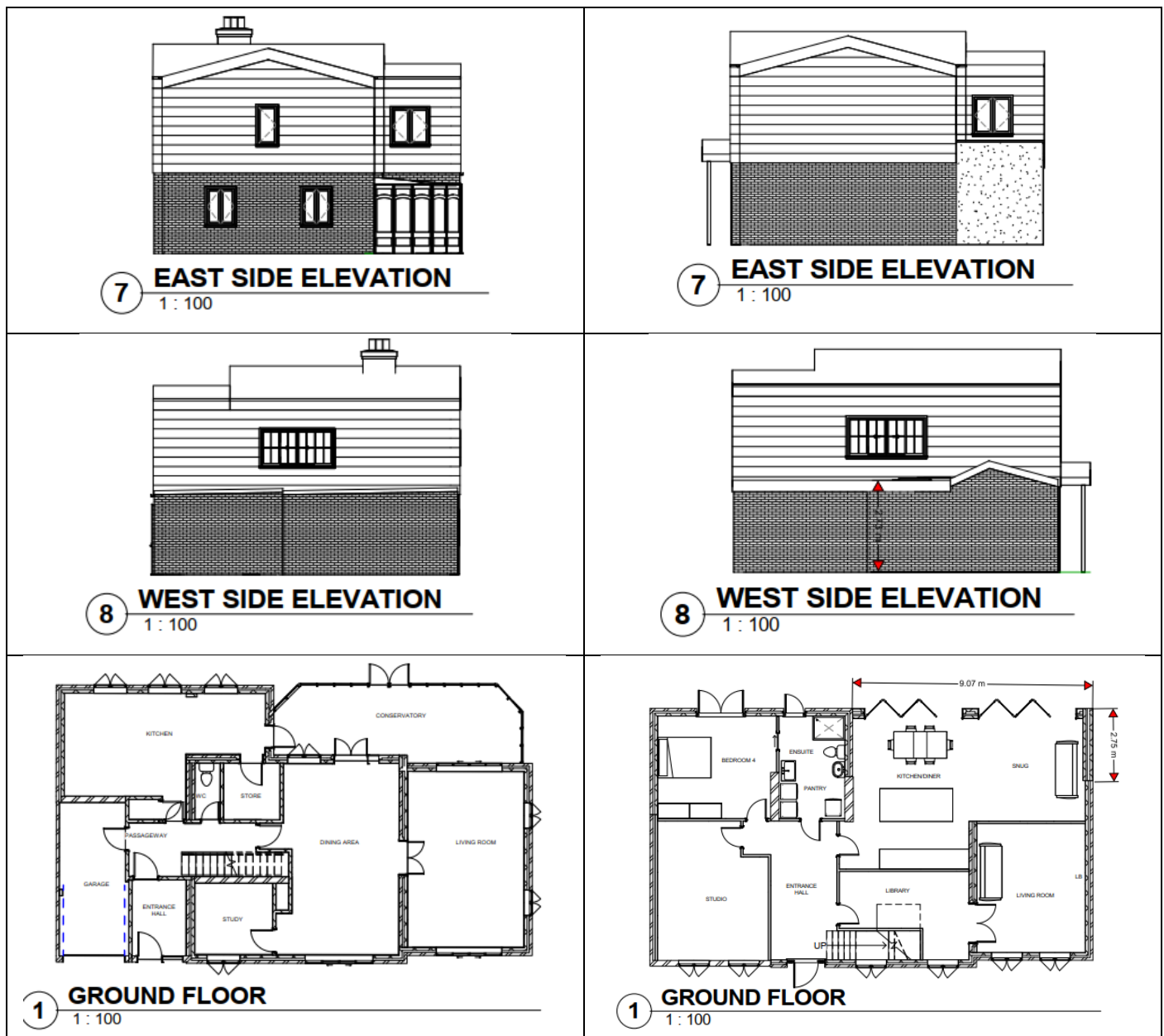
Proposed Development

The proposed development includes:

- Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a replacement single storey rear extension
- Erection of an (open) porch
- Fenestration changes
- Conversion of garage to habitable space including roof alterations (studio room is to be used as a creative space for working from home)
- Removal of chimney stack

The dimensions are indicated on the plans below:

Existing	Proposed
5 FRONT ELEVATION 1:100	5 FRONT ELEVATION 1:100
6 REAR ELEVATION 1:100	6 REAR ELEVATION 1:100



Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the policies map. As such, the principle of the development is acceptable, providing it complies with other policy considerations. The key considerations are assessed below.

Impact on the Landscape and, Design, Character and Appearance

The property is situated within the Kent Downs National Landscape, and the Vigo Scartop Woodlands Landscape Character Area. Relevant Policy considerations include paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024, which aims for development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Policy SD2 of the Management Plan 2021-2026 recognises the need to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities, distinctiveness of the AONB and Policy SD8 states that proposals which negatively

impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated. Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014) 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.

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed places) of the NPPF (2024) sets out that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It states developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

In addition to the above, the Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance (SPD) (2021) states *it is important to ensure that any extensions or alterations to a home are well designed, well-built and sympathetic to their surroundings. By doing so we can ensure that there are no adverse effects on the original house, immediate neighbours, the local view of the street, as well as the character and appearance of the local area.*

Materials

The proposed external materials for the development would match the existing dwelling, which is desirable to ensure a satisfactory visual relationship between the existing and new development. This could be secured by condition if planning permission were to be forthcoming.

Fenestration Alterations and Chimney Removal

There are no concerns with the removal of the chimney. In terms of fenestration changes, these alterations would be sympathetic to the appearance of the existing dwelling and would result in the ground and first floor windows being aligned well; which is desirable.

Porch

The open porch is not excessive in scale and the apex of the pitched roof would not exceed the windows of the first floor level of the dwelling. It is considered to be a subservient addition to the dwelling, but shall be subject to Covenant Approval from Vigo Parish Council. This can be added as an informative if permission were to be forthcoming.

Proposed Single Storey Rear Extension

As aforementioned above, the dwelling has already been previously extended. There is an existing rear conservatory in situ and the proposed rear extension would essentially replace the conservatory and be constructed within the parameters of its footprint. It would not be excessive in scale, and presents as a subservient addition to the dwelling. Therefore, on balance, and given the presence of the existing conservatory, the extension is considered to be acceptable.

Garage Conversion

The conversion of the garage would include fenestration changes and roof alterations. The new false pitched roof to the existing garage is not ideal when read in conjunction with Gravesham's Householder Design Guidance (2021), however, overall it is considered to be an improvement on the existing situation where the roof height is not uniform.

Impact on the Landscape

In terms of impact on the landscape, the proposed development is not considered to harm the landscape. The extension would be a subservient addition, constructed within the existing patio area (as evidenced by the photos included with this application). Overall, it is considered that the proposal, in situ, would not detrimentally increase the prominence of the dwelling and would not cause harm to the Kent Downs National Landscape or the Vigo Scartop Woodlands Landscape Character Area. In this respect, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014).

Overall, in terms of design, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policies CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014), along with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Gravesham's SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) (2020) sets out expected room areas and garden space post development. The plans demonstrate that there would be sufficient space for future occupiers and there would be no change to the garden space. Therefore, the development would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

No neighbour responses were received as a result of the consultation carried out for the application.

In situ, the development is not considered to detrimentally impact neighbouring amenity in terms of causing a sense of enclosure, loss of privacy, loss of outlook or loss of light. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

The proposed development would result in the loss of the garage. However, there is no increase in bedrooms, the garage at 2.13m in width is substandard, and there is an existing hardstanding area that provides off-street parking within the property frontage. The proposed porch, in situ, would not impact the parking area. As such, there would be no change to the existing situation and therefore there are no concerns in terms of parking and highways that arise as a result of the proposal.

Biodiversity

As aforementioned above, there are trees on site with attached Tree Preservation Orders. The Tree Survey information documents demonstrate that the existing trees, including root protection areas would not be detrimentally impacted by the development, given the measures that shall be carried out during construction of the development. In addition, the reports show some of the trees demonstrate medium to low condition for bat habitat, however, it should be noted the extension element of the proposal would be constructed within the confines of the existing conservatory and patio area and would not impact the main property roof. Therefore, it is considered that appropriate conditions and/or informatives would be sufficient to ensure there would be no detrimental impact to the trees or potential bats. Therefore, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in respect of Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is

unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Conclusion

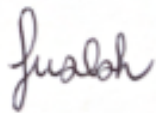
The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

The development would be constructed using appropriate external materials, is acceptable in terms of scale, design, character and appearance, In addition there would not be a detrimental impact to the Landscape Character area or to the appearance of the National Landscape. Moreover, the development does not harm the amenity of future occupiers and neighbours and does not detrimentally impact the street scene.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	
Dated:	26th February 2025	Dated:	26 February 2025