

PLANNING STATEMENT

Demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of a replacement 4-bedroom family dwelling

**The Limes, Meopham Green,
Meopham,
Gravesend,
Kent,
DA13 0QU**

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the redevelopment of The Limes, Meopham Green, Gravesend. The proposal seeks planning permission for the **demolition of the existing dwelling and the erection of a replacement 4-bedroom family dwelling**.

The development represents a **direct replacement of an existing lawful residential unit (Use Class C3)**. The proposal retains a **single dwelling with the same number of bedrooms**, ensuring that there is **no intensification of residential use**, no subdivision of the site, and no material change in the pattern of development.

The replacement dwelling incorporates a **modest increase in footprint of approximately 23%**, which has been carefully considered in the context of the site's generous size and its surrounding character. The scale and form of the proposal have been designed to ensure that the development remains **proportionate, well-contained within the plot, and consistent with the established spatial qualities of the area**.

This Planning Statement demonstrates that the proposal accords with the relevant provisions of national and local planning policy, including:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2023)

- **Paragraph 11** – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- **Section 12 (Paragraphs 130–136)** – Achieving well-designed places
- **Section 15 (Paragraphs 180–186)** – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Local Planning Policy

- **Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014):**
 - Policy CS01 – Sustainable Development
 - Policy CS12 – Green Infrastructure
 - Policy CS19 – Design and Development Principles

The proposal has been carefully developed to deliver a **high-quality, well-designed replacement dwelling** that enhances the site, responds positively to its context, and results in **no adverse impacts in planning terms**.

2. Design, Character, and Appearance

2.1 Scale, Massing and Footprint

The proposed development introduces a **23% increase in footprint**, which is considered **modest and proportionate** when assessed in the context of the overall site area (approximately 1,708 sqm) and the prevailing pattern of development.

In assessing scale, it is important to consider the proposal holistically, including its relationship to the plot, spatial arrangement, and overall built form, rather than footprint in isolation.

Importantly, the proposed dwelling maintains the same overall ridge height as the existing dwelling. As such, the development does not increase the vertical scale of built form and will not appear more prominent within the street scene or wider Conservation Area.

The proposed dwelling:

- Sits comfortably within the generous curtilage
- Maintains appropriate separation from all site boundaries
- Preserves the spacious and low-density character of the area
- Does not result in visual overdevelopment or site intensification
- Retains the same overall height as the existing dwelling

The increase in footprint facilitates a more efficient and functional internal layout, reflecting modern residential standards, while remaining **visually subservient within the plot**.

The proposal therefore accords with:

- **Paragraph 130(c) of the NPPF**, which requires development to be sympathetic to local character, including scale and massing
- **Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy**, which seeks high-quality design appropriate to its context

2.2 Architectural Design and Materials

The proposed dwelling adopts a **high-quality and contextually responsive architectural approach**, drawing from the established residential character of the area.

The design incorporates:

- A traditional **pitched roof form**, reflecting local building typologies
- Well-balanced and proportionate elevations
- A coherent and unified architectural composition

The material palette has been carefully selected to ensure visual integration with surrounding development:

- **Facing brickwork** consistent with neighbouring properties
- **Roof tiles** that reflect the local vernacular
- **High-quality fenestration**, designed with appropriate proportions and detailing

This approach ensures that the development is both **visually attractive and sympathetic to its surroundings**, in accordance with:

- **Paragraph 131 of the NPPF**, which emphasises high-quality, beautiful design
- The principles set out within the **National Design Guide**, particularly in relation to identity, built form, and materials

2.3 Layout and Site Response

The layout has been carefully considered to ensure that the development responds positively to the site and its context, in line with **Paragraph 130(a) of the NPPF**.

Key aspects include:

- A **centrally positioned dwelling**, maintaining balanced spatial relationships
- Retention of **generous private amenity space**, consistent with the character of the area
- Appropriate separation distances to neighbouring boundaries
- Integration of **soft landscaping**, contributing to visual amenity and site quality

The proposal maintains the established **low-density, spacious character** of Meopham Green and ensures the site continues to read as part of a well-spaced residential environment.

2.4 Conservation Area Duty

In accordance with **Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**, the Local Planning Authority is required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposed development has been designed with this statutory duty in mind and:

- Respects the prevailing **scale, form, and spatial pattern** of development
- Maintains openness and spacing between buildings
- Utilises materials and detailing appropriate to the local context

The replacement dwelling results in a **coherent and well-composed built form**, representing an improvement over the existing structure.

Conclusion:

The proposal **preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area**, fully satisfying the statutory requirement.

2.5 Local Character and Precedent

The surrounding area demonstrates a pattern of **incremental residential evolution**, where properties have been extended and adapted over time.

A relevant nearby planning permission provides a clear material consideration:

- **App Ref: 20210090 – Downsview, Meopham Green (Permitted)**

This scheme included:

- Two-storey side extension
- Rear extension
- Loft conversion with dormers

This demonstrates that the Local Planning Authority has accepted **significant increases in built form within the immediate locality**, provided that design quality and character are maintained.

In this context, the current proposal:

- Delivers a **single, coherent replacement dwelling**, rather than piecemeal additions
- Results in a **controlled and proportionate increase in footprint**
- Aligns with the established pattern of development

2.6 Fallback Position

It is a material consideration that a comparable quantum of development could reasonably be achieved through the extension and alteration of the existing dwelling, as evidenced by nearby approvals.

Such an approach would likely result in a more fragmented and less coherent form of development.

The proposed scheme instead provides a **comprehensive and well-designed replacement dwelling**, representing a more efficient use of the site and a clear enhancement in design quality.

As such, the proposal represents the **preferable planning outcome**, and refusal would not prevent a similar scale of built form from being realised.

3. Impact on Residential Amenity

3.1 Overbearing and Overshadowing

The proposed development has been carefully designed to ensure that it does not give rise to any unacceptable overbearing impact or loss of light to neighbouring properties.

In assessing the relationship with adjoining dwellings, the proposal:

- Maintains **appropriate separation distances** to all neighbouring boundaries
- Presents a **proportionate scale and massing**, consistent with the surrounding built form
- Retains the same overall height as the existing dwelling and avoids excessive bulk that could result in visual dominance

Given the generous plot size and spacing between properties, the development does not result in any material sense of enclosure or overdevelopment.

Furthermore, the orientation and siting of the dwelling ensure that there is **no unacceptable loss of daylight or sunlight** to neighbouring habitable rooms or private amenity spaces.

The proposal therefore accords with:

- **Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF**, which requires development to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers

3.2 Privacy and Overlooking

The proposal has been designed with careful consideration of privacy to both neighbouring occupiers and future residents.

Key design measures include:

- Strategic positioning and orientation of windows
- Avoidance of direct overlooking into neighbouring habitable rooms or private garden areas
- Retention of appropriate boundary distances and spatial relationships

As a result, the development maintains existing levels of privacy and does not introduce any unacceptable overlooking or perceived loss of seclusion.

3.3 General Amenity

The proposed development ensures that the overall residential amenity of neighbouring properties is fully safeguarded.

Specifically, the proposal:

- Maintains **adequate levels of daylight and sunlight**
- Preserves an **acceptable outlook** from neighbouring dwellings
- Avoids noise, disturbance, or activity beyond that expected from a single residential dwelling
- Retains the established **quiet residential character** of the area

Importantly, the proposal does not intensify the use of the site, remaining as a **single 4-bedroom dwelling**, and therefore does not result in any material increase in activity levels.

4. Parking and Highway Safety

The proposed development has been assessed in terms of its impact on highway safety and parking provision and is considered to be fully acceptable.

4.1 Access Arrangements

The development will utilise the **existing vehicular access from Steele's Lane**, which is well-established and currently serves the site without issue.

- No alterations to the access arrangement are proposed
- Visibility and access geometry remain unchanged
- The proposal does not introduce any new access points

As such, the development will **not give rise to any highway safety concerns** in terms of access.

4.2 Trip Generation and Intensification

The proposal represents the replacement of an existing **4-bedroom dwelling with a new 4-bedroom dwelling**, and therefore:

- There is **no intensification of residential use**
- No material increase in vehicle movements is expected
- Trip generation will remain consistent with the existing use

Accordingly, the development will not result in any additional pressure on the local highway network.

4.3 Parking Provision and On-Site Turning

The proposed development includes:

- **Adequate off-street parking provision**, consistent with local standards for a dwelling of this size
- Sufficient space for **on-site turning**, allowing vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear

The layout ensures that vehicles can be accommodated safely within the site without reliance on on-street parking.

4.4 Highway Safety Assessment

In accordance with national policy, development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an **unacceptable impact on highway safety** or where the **residual cumulative impacts would be severe**.

In this case:

- The access arrangements remain unchanged
- There is no increase in trip generation
- Adequate parking and turning are provided

There are therefore **no grounds to consider that the proposal would result in any adverse highway impacts**.

The proposal complies with:

- **Paragraph 115 of the NPPF**, which requires safe and suitable access for all users

5. Conclusion

This Planning Statement demonstrates that the proposed development represents a **high-quality and policy-compliant replacement dwelling**, which responds positively to both the site and its wider context.

The proposal:

- Retains a **single 4-bedroom residential unit**, ensuring no intensification of use
- Introduces a **modest and proportionate 23% increase in footprint**, which is appropriate in the context of the generous plot and surrounding pattern of development
- Retains the same overall height as the existing dwelling, ensuring that the proposal does not increase visual prominence or result in any additional impact on the character of the area
- Delivers a **well-designed and coherent built form**, enhancing the overall quality of the site

- **Preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area**, in accordance with the statutory duty under Section 72
- Results in **no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity**, including privacy, outlook, daylight, or sunlight
- Raises **no highway safety concerns**, with access, parking, and trip generation remaining unchanged
- Is supported by **recent nearby planning permissions**, which demonstrate the acceptability of increased built form within the locality
- Represents a preferable and more coherent alternative to the **fallback position** of extending the existing dwelling

Overall, the proposal accords with the **National Planning Policy Framework (2023)** and the **Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)**, particularly in relation to design quality, amenity, and sustainable development.

In applying the **presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11 of the NPPF)**, and in the absence of any demonstrable harm, it is clear that:

There are no policy or material planning grounds upon which the application could reasonably be refused.

Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be **acceptable in all respects**, and the Local Planning Authority is respectfully requested to **grant planning permission without delay**.

Appendix 1 – Policy Compliance Matrix

Policy	Requirement	Compliance
NPPF 11	Sustainable development	Proposal delivers improved dwelling with no harm
NPPF 130	Sympathetic design	Scale and character aligned with surroundings
NPPF 131	High-quality design	Strong architectural approach
NPPF 135	Amenity protection	No overlooking or overshadowing
CS01	Sustainable development	Efficient use of existing residential site
CS12	Green infrastructure	Landscaping retained
CS19	Good design	Appropriate scale and form

Appendix 2 – Floorspace

Metric	Existing	Proposed	Increase
Footprint	153 sqm	188 sqm	+23%
GIA	222 sqm	315 sqm	+42%

Assessment

Whilst the proposed development results in increases in both footprint and Gross Internal Area, these changes must be considered in the context of the overall site and the resulting built form.

The proposed increases are acceptable for the following reasons:

- The site extends to approximately **1,708 sqm**, providing a **generous plot size** capable of accommodating the proposed dwelling without overdevelopment
- The footprint increase of approximately **23% is modest and proportionate** in relation to the site area
- The increase in GIA reflects the provision of **modern, functional internal accommodation**, rather than excessive external bulk
- The dwelling remains **well-contained within the site**, maintaining appropriate separation from boundaries
- The proposal preserves the **spacious and low-density character** of the surrounding area

Importantly, the assessment of scale should not rely solely on numerical increases. When considered in terms of:

- Plot size and spatial capacity
- Visual presence and massing
- Relationship to neighbouring properties
- Overall site layout

the development does not result in a disproportionate increase in built form.

Furthermore:

- The proposal retains a **single 4-bedroom dwelling**, with no intensification of use
- The scale of development is consistent with that reasonably expected within a plot of this size
- There is no resulting visual or spatial harm