



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20220554
Location:	Red Tiles, Pear Tree Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 3JX
Description:	Erection of single storey rear extension, double storey porch, side extension with conversion of garage and roof alterations to incorporate habitable rooms in the roof.
Applicant:	Mrs Daniela Baldacci
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment - with applicant photographs

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

Application Form - 24/05/2022;
Supplementary Information - Site Photographs (1-2);
Drawing no. 22/01/01 - Existing Plans and Elevations;
Drawing no. 22/01/02 - Site Location Plan (scale - 1:1250);
Drawing no. 22/01/03 - Proposed Floor Plans;
Drawing no. 22/01/04 - Proposed Elevations;
Drawing no. 22/01/05 - Existing and Proposed Block Plans (scale - 1:200).

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19900304	Erection of a conservatory at the rear.	PERMITTED	30.05.1990
19530065	Erection of dwelling house and garage	PERMITTED	06.05.1953
19520339	Site for dwellinghouse and private garage	PERMITTED	10.12.1952

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

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

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- 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 Guidance (SPD) (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

External consultees

Meopham Parish Council - The Parish Council has no objection in principle to this proposal, subject to there not being any valid objections from neighbours, but has the following comments: Red tiles is presently a fairly small house (three bedroom, one bathroom) for the size of its plot, on which it is located to one side. It has a structurally detached double garage and a traditional brick with hanging tiles design.

The proposal doubles the existing footprint of the house including a part width single-storey rear extension, to create a five bedroom, five bathroom house that will extend almost the full width of the plot. Very little of the existing external walls will remain and it is proposed for all the walls to be rendered and painted – it could be preferable to repeat the hanging tiles design, at least at first floor level at the front, in order to reduce visual impact.

The proposed side extension does not show subsidiarity with respect to the original house. External parking would seem adequate after loss of the existing large garage but the proposed hardstanding over most of the front garden is regrettable and inappropriate in a rural area.

The addition of a loft level adds more bulk to the property and could be regarded as overdevelopment and having a negative effect on openness of the Green Belt. The rear dormer windows of the bedrooms in the roof could give rise to overlooking of neighbouring properties, particularly to “Brackenside” to the east.

The front dormer windows together with the very large atrium staircase window, which could be made a little smaller, give a very dominant appearance with negative impact on the streetscene in a rural area. Roofslope windows would be preferable at the front.

The atrium staircase could give rise to fire safety concerns especially for the loft level bedrooms.

The colour of the painted render is not stated and this must be established before any permission is granted – a colour within white to cream will be acceptable.

In view of extent of building proposed, permitted development rights should be withdrawn.

Dickens Protection Society - The Society would wish to comment that it is concerned at the possible impact the proposed extension and the introduction of a third storey would have on the openness of the Green Belt.

Local Ward Councillors - No comment received.

Neighbouring properties

Five surrounding properties were consulted no representations were received. The consultation period expired 17th June 2022.

Analysis

Red Tiles is a two storey detached dwelling located on the southern side of Pear Tree Lane. The property benefits from a large attached garage and is on a generous plot. The property has been extended previously, with a conservatory added to the rear in the 1990s.



Proposed Development

This application proposes the demolition of the conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension, double storey porch, first floor side extension and roof alterations to incorporate habitable rooms. The development also proposes an extension to the driveway and increase in hardstanding for vehicular parking. The dimensions of the extensions are given below:

Single Storey Rear

- Depth - 5m
- Width - 10.75m
- Height - 3.25m

Double Storey Porch

- Depth - 1.85m
- Width - 4.8m
- Height (max) - 7.68m
- Height (eave) - 5m

First Floor Side

- Depth - 5.85m
- Width - 7.05m
- Height (max) - 9.25m
- Height (eave) - 5m

Roof Alterations

- Height (increase) - 0.9m
- Height of roof (eave-ridge) - 4.28m

As demonstrated by the comparative screenshots below, the extensions will significantly alter the character of the dwelling and the finished property will be finished a modern material palette of painted render, plain tiles and aluminium fenestration.



The extensions will create space for a new open plan kitchen/living/diner, reception room, utility/pantry and an enlarged hall at ground floor. At first floor there will be a large gallery landing, an enlarged master bedroom with a walk-in wardrobe and two ensuite bathrooms. The new second floor will accommodate two double bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms.

Extension to Dwelling

The application site is located in the Green Belt and as such Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) is relevant. Development in the urban area is prioritised as the sustainable location for development. In the rural area, Policy CS02 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, i.e. in the Green Belt, will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the LPCS.

There are five principle issues in determining this application;

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?
2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
3. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
4. Other matters; and
5. Any very special circumstances?
6. Impact on the Landscape.

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 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. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within the specified exceptions. The relevant exception to consider for this application is part c of paragraph 149 of the NPPF, which states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In determining this proposal account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

In particular Policy C13 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 and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	110.9m ²	162.5m ²	46.5%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	104m ² (excluding garage)	156.7m ²	50.6%

Volume	-	-	-
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The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse exceed the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. Therefore, in purely numerical terms, the extension is contrary to the local plan Green Belt policy, potentially representing a disproportionate increase over the original floor area of the building. The volume calculations of the extensions, over the original dwelling, have not been calculated in this application and will instead be visually assessed.

However, the numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It does not provide a figure.

The proposed extensions to the property are considered to be disproportionate additions, over and above the original dwelling. The extensions add significant visual bulk, by doubling the width of the property at first floor level and noticeably increases its height, which is exacerbated by the mansard roof and barn hipped edges. This is evidenced by the screenshots above, which clearly demonstrate that the proposed extensions will significantly, and disproportionately, increase the scale, bulk and massing of the property, and therefore the cumulative built development is inappropriate.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would result in a disproportionate addition to the property and as such the proposal would be inappropriate development which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is therefore contrary/complies to Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and to paragraph 149 (NPPF).

2. *The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt*

Paragraph 137 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 openness of the Green Belt has both spatial and visual aspects, and any new built form of development is harmful to its open character. As alluded to in the earlier assessment, the extensions proposed will significantly, and disproportionately, increase the scale of the property and add significant bulk. The extensions will double the width of the property at first floor and above, and will increase the height of the building. These additions would create a significant new building bulk in the Green Belt, which amounts to “inappropriate development” in terms of Green Belt policies and has an adverse effect on the openness of the Green Belt.

Reference back to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF informs us that inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Whether the development causes any other harm and whether there are any other relevant considerations to balance the overall planning argument, should now be considered.

3. *The effect on the character and appearance of the area*

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) 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.

Gravesham's newly published Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. This SPD highlights the importance of extensions being subordinate to the host building, that compliment and correspond with the character of the dwelling and wider context.

The proposed extensions will considerably increase the scale and bulk of the property, and by doing so fail to conserve its original character. As aforementioned, Gravesham's SPD (2021) states that any alterations or extensions should respect the original character of the existing dwelling and respond to its features. The proposal does not respect to the original character of the property nor respond to the original features, by virtue of the scale and massing of the extended dwelling. Moreover, the proposed materials further exacerbate the failure to conserve the original character. It is acknowledged that the properties on Pear Tree Lane are varied with no uniformity in design and many of which have been extended previously. However, the majority of these extensions have retained the original character of the property and have been designed to ensure proportionately to its scale.

Furthermore, the extensions are not subordinate or subservient to the original dwelling, which are key design principles. The side extension will match the height of the extended roof, which has been increased by 0.9m from its original position and as such is neither subservient nor subordinate. The roof itself is a dominant feature that adds significant bulk to the proposed dwelling, and is cluttered with dormer windows.

Overall, the extended dwelling is out of scale with, and does not reflect or respond to the original character of the property. Gravesham's Design Guidance (SPD) (2021) and Policy CS19 (LPCS) seek for new development to be visually attractive and conserve the character of the built environment, which the proposal fails to achieve. Moreover, the size and bulk of the roof are considered poor design, the lack of subservience or subordination result in an incongruous and disproportionate property. As such, the proposal is contrary to Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021), Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) (NPPF).

4. Other matters

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers. The garden is large and will not be significantly reduced as part of this development. The rooms proposed are in accordance with Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and will receive sufficient natural light. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Neighbouring

There will be no impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of loss of light, overlooking, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. As such the proposal is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Parking and Highways

There are no parking or highways issues relating to the proposed development. Although the garage will be removed, the driveway will be extended and there is sufficient space to park vehicles in accordance with Gravesham's adopted parking standards (SPG 4) (2006) for a five bedroom property.

5. *Very special circumstances*

No specific arguments have been put forward by the applicant in relation to the assessment of 'very special circumstances'.

6. *Impact on the Landscape*

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within the Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by an undulating topography, chestnut coppice woodland and a strong sense of enclosure. The developments are often located around traditional village greens, are buildings have varying styles and ages with chequered brickwork and ornamental brickwork.

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.

Although the Shorne Woodlands landscape area contains varied styles of building at different ages, the proposed property would be bulky and at a significant scale, with a modern material palate, that would harm the established character of the rural area.

7. *Impact on Biodiversity*

There are concerns with the extent of hardstanding proposed in the frontage of the property. This will have an urbanising impact by virtue of removing biodiversity and landscaping. Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) states that development should result in a biodiversity net gain, which is not the case with the proposed driveway. Moreover, the extension of hardstanding is considered harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. The existing driveway is considered large enough to accommodate vehicles to accord with the adopted parking standards (SPG 4) (2006) and therefore the extension of the driveway to the detriment of biodiversity is not required. As such, the proposed development is contrary to Sections 13 and 15 (NPPF).

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is contrary to local and national planning policy.

The proposed extensions will significantly increase the size and scale of the property, which is inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The extensions would disproportionately enlarge the dwelling and add considerable bulk, which is harmful to the open character of the Green Belt and are poor design that fails to respond to the character of the dwelling or the landscape. As such, the proposal is contrary to the Design Guidance SPD (2021), Policies CS12 and CS19 of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved policy C13 of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review (1994), as well as Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

The extension to the driveway and expansion of hard landscaping to the front of the property fails to provide a net gain of biodiversity and is harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, contrary to Sections 13 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

As such, it is recommended that the application is refused.

Recommendation:

Refusal

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

Case Officer:	Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	18 th July 2022	Dated:	19 July 2022