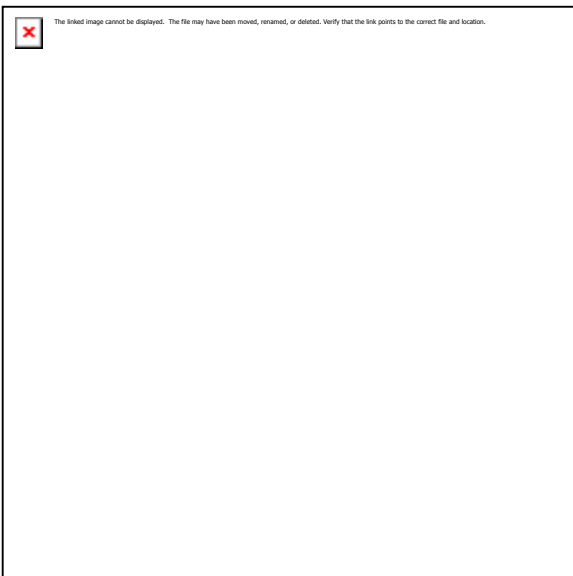




# Delegated Report

## *Householder Planning Application*

**Planning Application No:** 20220348

**Location:** Long Acre Rhododendron Avenue Meopham Gravesend

**Description:** Erection of a single storey rear extension with rooms in the roof space.

**Applicant:** Mr & Mrs Clegg

**Site Visit Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

### Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;  
Drawing No. 2022-01-07-001 Rev A – Existing Plans Elevations; and  
Drawing No. 2022-01-07-002 Rev A – Proposed Plans Elevations.

### Relevant Planning History

| Reference | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Decision   | Decision Date |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| 20100468  | Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20090781 for erection of a replacement dwelling, to lower the floor level of the ground floor to make it the same level as the living area, thus removing the steps. | Permission | 01.06.2010    |
| 20090781  | Erection of a detached three bedroom replacement dwelling with rooms in the roof space and a detached double garage                                                                                                                                 | Permission | 12.01.2010    |
| 200060083 | Outline application for the erection of a detached replacement dwelling.                                                                                                                                                                            | Permission | 20.03.2006    |
| 19780275  | Outline application for the erection of two detached four bedroom dwellings                                                                                                                                                                         | Refused    | 05.04.1979    |

|          |                    |            |            |
|----------|--------------------|------------|------------|
| 19520150 | Erection of chalet | Permission | 30.05.1952 |
|----------|--------------------|------------|------------|

## 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

### Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

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

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.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD, October 2021
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

## Consultations, Publicity and Representations

### KCC – Heritage Conservation (E & W)

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, I consider it unlikely that these proposals, immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling, would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

### Meopham Parish Council

Objection to this planning application on the grounds of the overall scale of the development being inappropriate given the property's location within the greenbelt.

### GBC – Highways Officer

I have no objections to this proposal as there is adequate car parking in the front garden. However, the size of the office is very large for a home office and I would suggest a condition that prevents its use for a business based at the property, this is to allow for any traffic generated and the car parking demand by such use to be assessed.

With the increase of bedrooms a secure cycle parking space should be provided to comply with SPG4

### Neighbouring properties

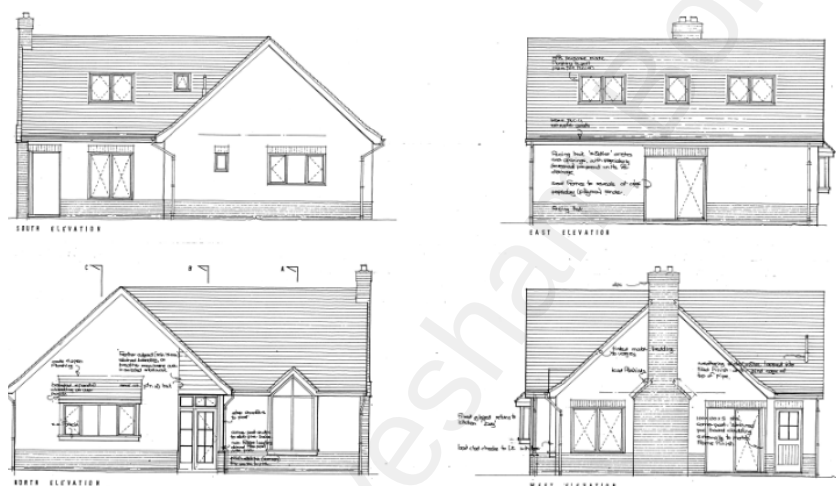
The application has been advertised by the displaying of a site notice and individual neighbour letters to 6 properties, with a consultation expiry date of 29<sup>th</sup> April 2022. No letters of representation have been received.

The Local Ward Councillors were also consulted and no responses were received.

## **Analysis**

### Background

From the planning history, planning permission was granted for the *erection of a detached three bedroom replacement dwelling with rooms in the roof space and a detached double garage* in 2009 (Ref. 20090781), and subsequent non-material amendment for *erection of a replacement dwelling, to lower the floor level of the ground floor to make it the same level as the living area, thus removing the steps* in 2010 (Ref. 201000468). It would appear from the plans available that the property that was constructed is predominantly in accordance with the approved plans, with the exception of a dormer on the west facing roofslope on the existing property and lack of chimney stack on the gable end side elevation. Overall, the property appears to be the original property as originally constructed.



There does not appear to be any history in relation to the removal of the chimney stack either as an amendment to the approval or as a later modification, or the construction of the side dormer.

The key issues in consideration of this application is whether;

- the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, if inappropriate its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land with it;
- the proposal would impact on adjoining properties;
- the proposal would impact the living conditions of future occupiers
- the proposal would result in any parking and highway safety issues;
- the proposal would adversely impact on the landscape character of the site;

### Site Location and Surrounding Area

The site is located in the Green Belt and in the Harvel Wooded 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.

The application site at Long Acre is a detached bungalow set in a large plot much further back from the road than the surrounding properties and not highly visible from public vantage points. The property benefits from a detached double garage to the front and extensive driveway.

#### Proposal

The proposal comprises of the erection of single storey rear extension with rooms in the roof space. The single storey rear extension would project approx. 10m from the existing principle rear elevation, be 6.83m wide and 2.8m in height to the eaves and 6m to the ridge with a pitch roof and gable end arrangement. The proposed works would result in a master bedroom with dressing room and toilet on the ground floor and home office on the first floor. The first floor would not have a link to the main dwelling but would instead be accessed from a new staircase from the master bedroom.

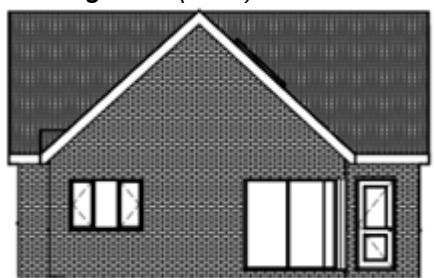
*Existing Rear Elevation*



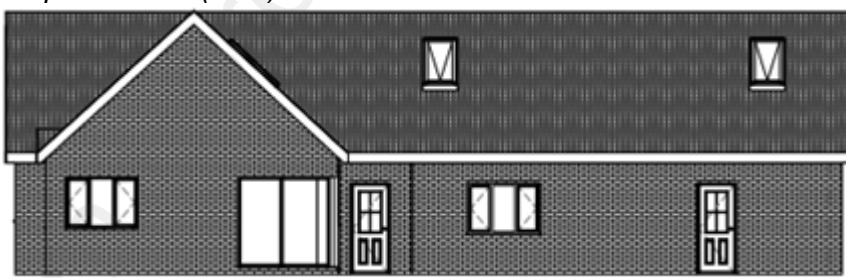
*Proposed Rear Elevation*



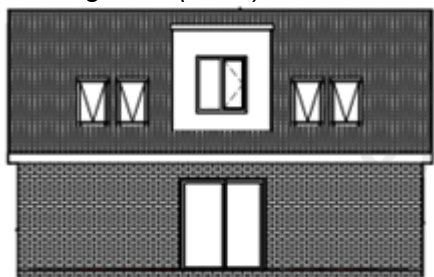
*Existing Side (East) Elevation*



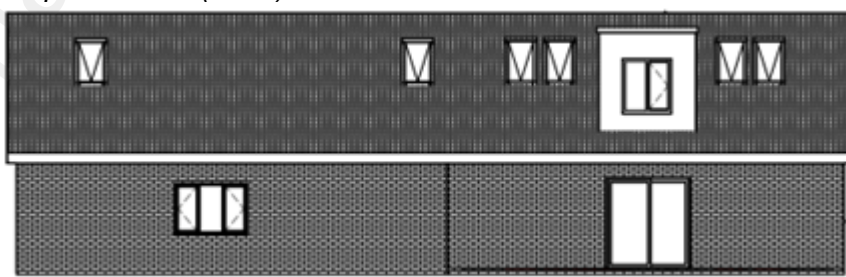
*Proposed Side (East) Elevation*



*Existing Side (West) Elevation*



*Proposed Side (West) Elevation*



#### 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 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.

The NPPF (2021) 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 138 the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 149). 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 (2021), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 the NPPF (2021).

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 (2021) 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.

The existing dwelling in this case appears to have been extended by way of the side dormer to create additional floorspace to extend the existing bathroom within the roofspace.

#### **Existing dwelling (as built)**

Ground Floor: 78.12m<sup>2</sup>

First Floor: 57.71m<sup>2</sup>

Total: 135.83m<sup>2</sup>

#### **Dormer Extension**

First Floor: 59.48m<sup>2</sup>

#### **Proposed Extension**

Ground Floor: 139.23m<sup>2</sup>

First Floor: 95.15m<sup>2</sup>

Total: 234.38m<sup>2</sup>

Total floor space increase from dwelling as built: **100.32m<sup>2</sup>**

Total floor space proposed: **236.15m<sup>2</sup>**

Total floor space increase of proposed extension over original dwelling: **73.85%**

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 significantly exceeds the one third limit and therefore is not within the parameters set by Policy C13 (LPFR). 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 modest detached bungalow with pitch roof and gable roof design, facilitating habitable space within the roofspace. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed rear extension has been designed to match the host dwelling, it would not appear as a subservient extension due to its extensive 10m projection to the rear and the eaves and ridge height being at the same level as the existing roof. It is therefore considered that the proposed extension, in addition to exceeding the one third limit set out in Policy C13 (LPFR), it would also result in an increase in the bulk and appearance of the dwelling. As such it is considered that the proposed development would result in a detrimental impact in terms of bulk or appearance of the dwelling.

In summary it is considered that this extension is contrary to local and national planning policy.

#### Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

Having determined that the proposal is an inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is necessary to assess the effect on the openness and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. The NPPF (2021) 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.

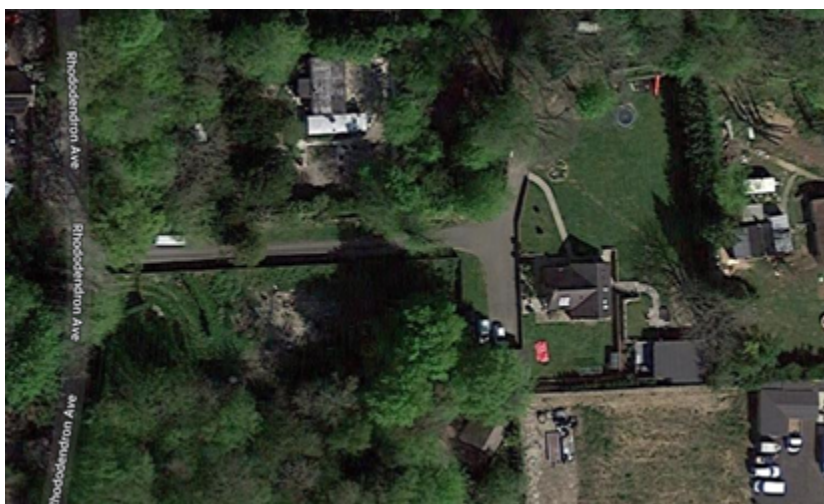
The proposed extension would project approx. 10m from the existing principal rear elevation and have an eaves and ridge height level with the existing. Looking at the original property, which is a modest 3 bedroom dwelling, the proposed storey extension would increase the external footprint by 74.32%, resulting in material harm to the openness of the Green Belt and would represent encroachment into the countryside.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy CS02 (LPCS) and Section 13 of the NPPF (2021).

#### *External works*

It has been stated on the application form and submitted drawings, that all external materials would match the existing.

#### *Satellite View*



### Character and appearance

The application property is located on Rhododendron Avenue Hill within the Green Belt. The property is located to the rear of its plot and as such views are obscured. The proposed single storey rear extension would have a pitch roof and gable end that would have a depth greater than the depth of the host dwelling, and the eaves and ridge height would be line with existing roof. The proposed extension whilst designed to match the main property does not have subservient appearance and does not accord with the guidance laid out in the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021). Overall it is considered that the proposed extension would result in a significant increase in the size, bulk and scale of the host property and would not result in modest addition to the host dwelling as originally constructed.

Taking account of all the above, it is considered that the proposal would be contrary to Policies CS02 and CS19 (LPCS), Sections 12 and 13 of the NPPF (2021) and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021).

### Impact on future occupiers

The revised NPPF (2021) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the living space of the main dwelling and as such accords with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

### Impact on neighbouring properties

The impact on neighbouring properties is considered with regard to criteria specified within Policy CS19, which states new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land.

Given the separation distance between properties and the scale of the proposal, it is considered the proposal would not result in loss of light, privacy, outlook and increased overshadowing. No objections have been received. As such the development is in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) in respect of the living conditions for neighbouring properties.

### Parking and Highways

The proposal would result in one additional bedroom, however the existing garage and driveway provide parking for more than three vehicles and therefore the development would accord with KCC Vehicle Parking Standards, and the proposals would therefore comply with Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan and Policy CS11 (LPCS).

### Any Other Material Planning Considerations

### *Landscape Character Area*

Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced and the greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB and its setting.

The application site is located within the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. The topography is varied with steep valley sides and plateaux with ancient woodland, chestnut coppice and small paddocks and pasture. The area is characterised by haphazard mosaic of residential plots and small holdings set within the woodland. The condition is moderate and the guidelines are to conserve and create.

Due to the layout of the site, position of the proposed extension and surrounding built form, it is considered that there would be no direct impact on the landscape character area. As such the proposal would accord with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Section 15 of the NPPF (2021).

### **Conclusion & Recommendation**

For the reasons given above, the proposed extensions would result in a detrimental impact on the dwelling and character of the area, in particular the Green Belt and is considered to be contrary to local or national planning policy and is therefore recommended for refusal.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

|                      |                           |                     |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Case Officer:</b> | Mrs Amanda Grout          | <b>Team Leader:</b> | <b>Richard Hart</b>             |
| <b>Signed:</b>       | <i>A Grout</i>            | <b>Signed:</b>      | <i>R Hart</i>                   |
| <b>Dated:</b>        | 17 <sup>th</sup> May 2022 | <b>Dated:</b>       | <b>18<sup>th</sup> May 2022</b> |