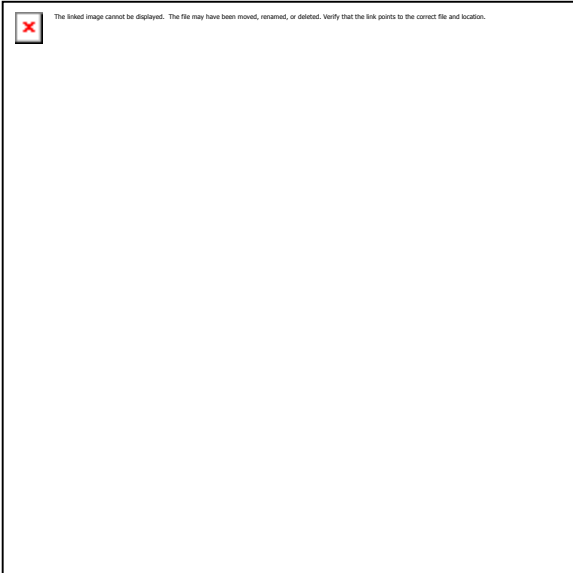




Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20220523

Location: Little Westwood Thong Lane Shorne Gravesend

Description: Demolition of existing rear single storey extension, and erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.

Applicant: Mr Mark Cason

Site Visit Date: 31st May 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;
Drawing No. 1222.WD.01 – Existing Floor Plans, Site Block Plan and Location Plan;
Drawing No. 1222.WD.02 – Proposed Floor Plans;
Drawing No. 1222.WD.03 – Existing Garage and Workshop Floor Plan;
Drawing No. 1222.WD.05 – Existing Elevations and Cross Section;
Drawing No. 1222.WD.06A – Proposed Elevations; and
Drawing No. 1222.WD.07 – Proposed Section and Site Block Plan.

Relevant Planning History

None.

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
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

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
- 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic 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
- Thong Rural Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Shorne Parish Council

The Parish Council has no objection in principle to this proposal, subject to there not being valid objections raised by neighbours, but has some comments as follow:

The property is semi-detached, one of the historic “Homes for Heroes” and located in the Green Belt and within the Thong Village Conservation Area.

We are unclear from the plans submitted as to whether it is also being proposed to make further changes to the historic barn and its later lean-to and other extension, this needs to be clarified.

The proposals double the existing residential floor area.

The front elevation view remains compatible with the existing house, and on this view the side extension

appears subservient but it is not subservient at the rear. Two rooflights are noted at the front – the necessity for these might be reviewed (although we note that there is one at “Green Acre” nearby).

The changes at the rear remove the catslide roof element and create a parapeted flat roofed profile and a modern appearance which are less compatible with the existing house.

We would welcome the opinion of the Conservation Architect.

Lower Thames Crossing proposals: Our understanding at present is that the pair of houses to the north of this site will not be demolished.

National Highways

No objection as Highways Act 1980 Section 175B is not relevant to this application.

KCC – Heritage Conservation (E & W)

No comments received.

GBC – Conservation Architect

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by a press notice and the displaying of a site notice and individual neighbour letters to 5 properties, with a consultation expiry date of 24th June 2022. No letters of representation have been received.

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

Analysis

Background

There does not appear to any planning history relating to the property. Looking at the satellite images, the property has not been extended. There is a single storey rear projection which is to be demolished as part of this current proposal, which appears to be the original property as originally constructed;



(Source: Kent Heritage Maps)

Satellite Image (1940)

Satellite Image (1960)



Satellite Image (1990)



Satellite Image (2021)



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 Higham Arable Farmlands 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 Little Westwood is a two storey semi-detached set in a generous plot with large detached barn/outbuilding to the side/rear with extensive driveway to the side.

Proposal

The proposal comprises of the demolition of existing rear single storey extension, and erection of a two storey side extension and single storey rear / side extension. The single storey rear / side extension would project approx. 4.62m from the existing principle rear elevation, be 11.25m wide (extending across the rear of the proposed two-storey side extension) and 3.44m in height with parapet wall. The two storey side extension would project 3.76m from the principle side elevation, be 5.87m in length and 4.44m in height to the eaves and 7.6m in height to the ridge with a pitch roof with rooflights to the front and rear. The proposal also includes one rooflight in the front and rear roofslope of the existing roof. The proposed works would result in a large open plan family room with bi-fold doors, utility room, kitchen and dining room on the ground floor and a master bedroom with en-suite.

Existing Front Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevation



Existing Rear Elevation

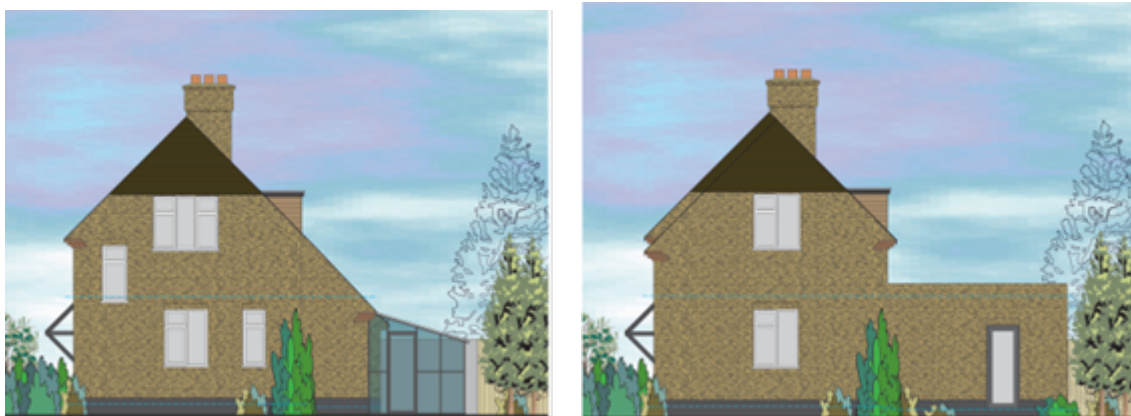


Proposed Rear Elevation



Existing Side) Elevation

Proposed Side 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 appears to be the original dwelling (excluding the conservatory). The rear projection as already established is original, but the glazed rear porch is not.

Existing dwelling (as built)

Ground Floor: 46.21m²

First Floor: 38.38m²

Total: 84.59m²

Proposed Extension

Ground Floor: 56.09m²

First Floor: 18.04m²

Total: 74.13m²

Total floor space with proposed extension: **158.69m²**

Total floor space increase of proposed extension over original dwelling: **87.63%**

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.

The supporting Heritage Impact / Planning Assessment have included the barn/outbuilding within their calculations and state in paragraph 3 of the appearance section that *the proposed extensions total 78.41 sqm well below one third of the original building floor area of 284.78 sqm limiting the potential for extensions to 94.92 sqm in this case*. However when making these assessments, only the original residential dwelling is taken into account when calculating the one third increase. As such, 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 semi-detached dwelling with a pitch roof and gable roof design at the front and attractive catslide roof to the rear with partial dormer. Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed two storey side extension has been designed to match the host dwelling in terms of the pitch roof and been set back from the principle front building line, as well as having both a slower eaves and ridge height, these are only very minimal distances/measurements. Furthermore with a width of 3.76m, the proposed extension is greater than half of the width of the original dwelling, which measures 7.47m.

Paragraph 10.5 of the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021), states that *extensions should generally be no greater than half the width of the host building*. It also states that *the symmetry of pairs of semi-detached homes or groups of terrace houses, should not be unreasonably interrupted*.

Overall it is considered that the proposed extension would not appear as a subservient extension due to its width and overall height and bulk. In addition it would unbalance the symmetry of the semi-detached pair to which the host dwelling sits.

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 and an unbalancing of the semi-detached pair.

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 extensions would result in the loss of the attractive catslide roof to the rear, together with a 3.76m wide projection on the side. Looking at the original property, which is a modest 3 bedroom dwelling, the proposed extensions would increase the external footprint by 64.71m², 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 Thong Lane, within the Green Belt and within the Thong Conservation Area. The property forms part of a semi-detached pair, neither of which have been significantly altered since their original construction. Part of the rear extension would be obscured by the original dwelling, however it does extend to the rear of the proposed two storey side extension. The rear extension would remove the catslide roof which has a positive contribution to the dwelling and the dwelling as a whole has a positive contribution to the Thong Conservation Area, as laid out in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

The proposed extensions 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) and would result in a bulky addition to this modest dwelling. Furthermore, it would have a width of more than half the width of the original dwelling and would result in an unbalancing of the semi-detached pair. Overall it is considered that the proposals result in an unservient addition to the

property which would not respect the host dwelling or the adjoining property, having detrimental impact on the streetscene and the Thong Conservation Area. It is therefore 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, CS19 and CS20 (LPCS), Sections 12, 13 and 15 of the NPPF (2021) and paragraph 10.5 of 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 Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. The topography is very gently undulating with open arable farmland. The area is characterised by original Saxon village of Lower Higham and more recent development to the south, marsh side hamlets and settlements, and isolated farmsteads and scattered properties with locally distinct styles and materials. The condition is poor and the guidelines are to restore and create.

The proposed side extension would be more visible within the streetscene which would face directly onto the open fields to the east. As such it is considered that it would have a visual impact on the landscape character area. As such the proposal would not 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)

Case Officer:	Mrs Amanda Grout	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:	<i>A Grout</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	13 th July 2022	Dated:	14 July 2022