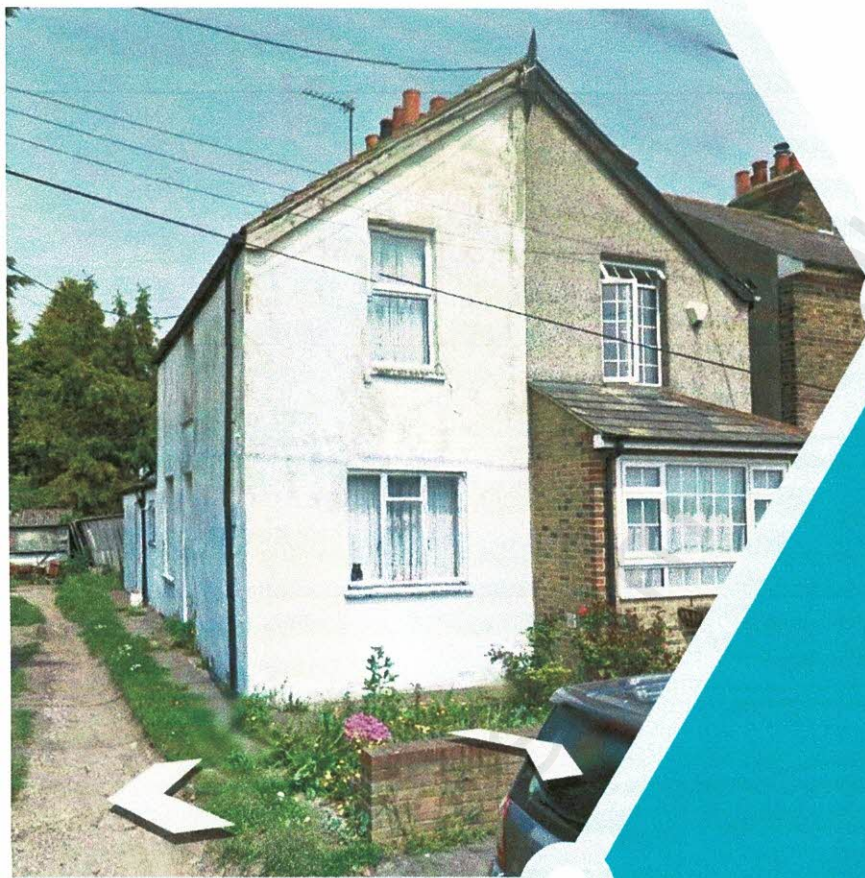


Planning Statement



PLANNING APPLICATION FOR
REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING
GROUND FLOOR EXTENSION
AND ERECTION OF FIRST
FLOOR EXTENSION TO 1 & 3
BULL LANE AND SINGLE
STOREY FRONT EXTENSION TO
1 BULL LANE,
HIGHAM ME3 7LT

JUNE 2022



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement supports a planning application for a rear extension to a pair of semi-detached cottages in Bull Lane, Higham.
- 1.2 The extension will be built as a single development so that the end result will retain the original integrity of the properties as a matching pair.
- 1.3 A front extension will be added to 1, Bull Lane to match the porch already in place at 3.
- 1.4 The planning history of both properties is set out below.
- 1.5 The application is submitted following the refusal of two earlier applications and responds to the reasons for refusal.
- 1.6 The development proposed is policy compliant and is a high- quality sustainable development.
- 1.5 With all matters considered, planning permission should be granted.

2. SITE AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site is a pair of semi-detached cottages at the western end of Bull Lane within the urban part of Higham.
- 2.2 The site is within the Green Belt.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 Under reference 19940293, planning permission was granted for a front porch to 3, Bull Lane.
- 3.2 Under reference 20220098, permission was refused for the erection of a single storey front extension, part two storey part single storey rear extension and single storey side extension at 1 Bull Lane.
- 3.3 Under reference 20220099, permission was refused for the erection of a part two storey part single story rear extension at 3, Bull Lane.

3.4 Both were refused for the same two reasons:

1. *The proposed development significantly enlarges the property, introduces disproportionate features and is poor design. These additions result in increased bulk and incongruous appearance which is both inappropriate development within and harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, and fails to preserve the character or appearance of the host dwelling. Therefore, the development hereby proposed is contrary to Policies CS02 (Scale & Distribution of Development), CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policy C13 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside) of Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021), as well as Sections 12, 13 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).*
2. *The extensions by virtue of depth and height on the site boundary results in an oppressive, unneighbourly form of development, which results in overshadowing, an unacceptable*

sense of enclosure and poor outlook, thus failing to safeguard neighbouring amenity contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

3.5 This application addresses both reasons for refusal as is explained below.

3 PLANNING POLICY

3.5 The Planning Acts require a planning application to be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan for the area unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.6 The Development Plan is the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014). The relevant policies are:

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

3.7 The following Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) are also relevant:

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 – Extensions for Dwellings in the Countryside Other material considerations.

3.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) is a material consideration

- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land

3.9 The relevant Supplementary Planning Guidance is as follows;

- SPG2 - Residential Layout Guidelines (1996)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2000)

4 THE APPLICATION

- 4.5 Both properties are to be similarly extended to the rear so that the integrity of the pair is retained.
- 4.6 At ground floor both outliers will be simply rebuilt without being further extended to the rear. The previous applications proposed a 2m extension to each property.
- 4.7 At first floor both will be extended only by 3.250m compared with 4.5m in the previous applications.
- 4.8 As the photographs show the appearance of both properties will be improved.
- 4.9 The proposed extension will be proportionate and beneficial in design terms.
- 4.10 The materials, windows and roof coverings are consistent with the host dwellings.
- 4.11 Because of the relationship between the two properties and those adjoining, the extensions are not intrusive on residential amenity.
- 4.12 The Council can now add a planning condition to ensure that the development is built in accordance with the plans submitted. This means that the second reason for refusal is no longer in play.
- 4.13 When dealing with the previous two applications, the Council recognised that both had applied for matching extensions but took the view that as one may not be built, the impact of only one being built would have a detrimental impact on the other.
- 4.14 With this single application, it is reasonable to deal with this by condition.
- 4.15 The proposed development has been significantly reduced in scale, modestly enlarges the properties, is proportionate and in matching design and materials. The development proposed satisfies Policies CS02 (Scale & Distribution of Development), CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policy C13 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside) of Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), Gravesham's Householder

Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021), as well as Sections 12, 13 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

4.16 The photograph of the rear show that 5, Bull Lane already has a two- storey projection.

4.17 The front extension to 1 will be for a porch similar to that permitted in 1994 at 3.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.5 The application site is a pair of two storey semi-detached cottages.
- 5.6 They are built in rendered blockwork with front facing gable features.
- 5.7 The proposed extension would be located to the rear of the property. The footprint would remain similar to that existing.
- 5.8 The rear extensions would not be apparent from Bull Lane. Views of the extensions would be oblique and there would not be a significant visual impact.
- 5.9 The front extension to 1 would match that already in place and permitted at 3.
- 5.10 The extensions are in accordance with Policies of the Core Strategy and NPPF.
- 5.11 The properties are in Higham and washed over by the Green Belt.
- 5.12 Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 is relevant.
- 5.13 Development in the urban area is prioritised as the sustainable location for development.
- 5.14 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.
- 5.15 Development outside those settlements will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the Local Plan Core Strategy.
- 5.16 National policy is set out in the NPPF.
- 5.17 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.

- 5.18 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.
- 5.19 Paragraph 149 advises that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within one of 7 exceptions.
- 5.20 The relevant exception to consider for these extensions is part c of paragraph 149 which states that the extension or alteration of a building is appropriate provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- 5.21 "Disproportionate" is not defined in the NPPF. Each case has to be judged on its merits.
- 5.22 The extension proposed here is complimentary to the existing dwellings and clearly proportionate.
- 5.23 Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It is out of date and little weight can be given to it. It is criteria based and does not include the concept of proportionality in the NPPF. This is not surprising as it dates from 1994.
- 5.24 In any event the proposed extension satisfies the majority if not all the criteria.
- 5.25 Policy C13 states that extensions to dwellings will be considered on their merits but the Borough Council will expect the following criteria to be satisfied:-
- (i) The existing dwelling must be an "original dwelling" in permanent use as a dwelling.
 - (ii) 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.
 - (iii) Those extensions which provide essential basic amenities such as a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, which are currently not available or are clearly inadequate, will normally be permitted.
 - (iv) The extension shall not be in a form which would facilitate the future formation of a separate residential curtilage.
 - (v) The dwelling to be enlarged must have sufficient curtilage to accommodate the extension without undue visual intrusion into the open countryside.

- (vi) The appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of any extension shall be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting.
- (vii) Proposals for domestic garages and for other outbuildings will be considered on their individual merits but will be required to be well designed, discreetly sited and subservient to the scale of the main dwelling on the plot.

- 5.26 1 and 3 Bull Lane are permanent dwellings; the modest increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling; the extension provides essential basic amenities such as a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, which are currently inadequate; the extension is not in a form which would facilitate the future formation of a separate residential curtilage; the dwellings to be enlarged both have sufficient curtilage to accommodate the extension without undue visual intrusion into the open countryside; the appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of the extension is appropriate to the existing dwellings and the Green Belt setting.
- 5.27 In purely numerical terms, the extension satisfies the first part of criteria (ii).
- 5.28 Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that it is acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- 5.29 The NPPF does not provide a figure. The reason is clear.
- 5.30 Proportionality is a matter of judgement rather than measurement.
- 5.31 Each case has to be considered on its merits.
- 5.32 The extension complies with Policy CS02 of the Local Plan Core Strategy, Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review and paragraph 149 of the NPPF 2021.
- 5.33 The proposed development would not result in disproportionate additions to the properties and would not be inappropriate development which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt.
- 5.34 As the extension is complementary to the existing cottages and the cottages are within the built-up area of Higham, the proposals would not impact on the scenic beauty of the landscape.

- 5.35 The extension to the rear is not visible from any public vantage point and does not erode the openness of the Green Belt.
- 5.36 Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy requires new development to be visually attractive and locally distinctive. The proposed extension is.
- 5.37 It also conserves and enhances the character of the local built and natural environment and integrates well with the surrounding area.
- 5.38 The proposed rear extension complies with the development and design principles of Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and is not detrimental to the character or appearance of the property or the wider context.
- 5.39 The proposal does not result in any additional bedrooms being created.
- 5.40 Both upgrade an existing kitchen area at ground floor.
- 5.41 Both improve the bathroom and washing facilities.
- 5.42 The properties have large rear gardens and the proposed extensions do not compromise the available amenity space.
- 5.43 The proposal safeguards the amenity of the future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.
- 5.44 The proposal safeguards neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.
- 5.45 There are no parking or highway issues with the applications.
- 5.46 Policy CS12 of Gravesham Core Strategy (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.

- 5.47 The extension will not have any detrimental impact on the landscape due to the properties' location in a residential street in Higham.
- 5.48 it is not considered necessary to put forward very special circumstances to support the applications.
- 5.49 However, if very special circumstances were considered necessary, they are provided by the fallback position of what is possible as permitted development.
- 5.50 The General Permitted Development Order facilitates the erection of a rear extension of 6m, subject to prior approval.
- 5.51 A single storey rear extension 6m deep and 4m in height would be possible for both 1 and 3. While this would facilitate essentially the same size of addition, it would be much more visually intrusive than what is proposed in these applications.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.5 The proposed extension to 1 and 3 Bull Lane is a proportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling. It is not harmful to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.6 The proposal is in accordance with the development and design principles of CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.
- 6.7 The proposal satisfies Policy CS02 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review 1994 and Sections 12 and 13 of the NPPF.
- 6.8 The application addresses in full both reasons for refusal of the earlier two applications.
- 6.9 Planning permission should be granted for the application.

Gravesham Borough Council