

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250708

Location: Wonky Log Valley Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a detached garage.

Applicant: Paul & Elaine Mayes

Site Visit Date: 25 July 2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application for Planning Permission form;
Existing site location plan;
Proposed site location plan;
Drawing no. 001 Rev. 001 Proposed layout and elevations for garage;
Drawing no. 001 Rev. 001 Existing and proposed front elevations, proposed street view and site section;
Drawing no. 002 Rev. 001 Existing and proposed block plans received 10 September 2025; and
Planning Briefing Note.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. 001 Rev. 001 Existing and proposed block plans received 15 July 2025;~~

Procedural Issues

Following a request from the case officer, the applicant provided an amended existing and proposed block plan illustrating the location of an existing outbuilding that would be removed upon the completion of the proposed development.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20171321	Erection of detached garage with a low pitched roof and solar panels.	Permitted	13.04.2018
20170383	***REVISED DESCRIPTION/REVISED PLANS*** Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a detached single storey split level 2no. bedroom dwelling.	Permitted	30.06.2017
20161107	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a detached two storey 2no. bedroom dwelling.	Refused	12.01.2017

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (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)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 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
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 – Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2025)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC - Highways & Transportation

Referring to the above description, it would appear that this development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority in accordance with the current consultation protocol arrangements. If there are any material highway safety concerns that you consider should be brought to the attention of the HA, then please contact us again with your specific concerns for our consideration.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-information>

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>. Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

Meopham Parish Council
No response received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and to three neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received and the overall consultation period expired on 15.08.2025.

Officer's Analysis

Green Belt

The application site is located in the Green Belt and as such, paragraphs 142 and 143 and 153-160 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF 2024) and Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 are most relevant.

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) 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 the Local Plan Core Strategy.

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF 2024 sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Paragraph 143 lists five purposes that the Green Belt serves.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF 2024 states;

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness⁵⁵. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Footnote ⁵⁵ reads as follows:

⁵⁵ Other than in the case of development on previously developed land or grey belt land, where development is not inappropriate.

Therefore, in the following assessment, substantial weight will be given to any harm to the Green Belt (including its openness) unless the development is not inappropriate development.

Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF 2024 set out the circumstances in which new built development can be considered as not inappropriate in the Green Belt. In this instance, paragraph 154(c) is most relevant and sets out that;

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.

It has been held by the Courts that curtilage buildings can be considered as part of an assessment under Paragraph 154(c). Given its position and function, the proposed garage can reasonably be considered as a normal domestic adjunct to the dwelling. Thus, in the context of this application, the proposed development can be taken as an extension to the dwelling.

Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) 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 2024, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with that document.

In particular Saved 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 2024 and should be afforded some limited weight.

Therefore, as a general rule (and in line with Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy

(2014)), the Borough Council considers that extensions which exceed the overall floor area of an original building by one third (33%) or more, are likely to be disproportionate additions. However, it is acknowledged that floorspace is only one measure of such impact and in coming to a conclusion on this issue, the Council has regard to a range of other factors including the volume, scale, mass and height of the proposal.

In this instance, the original building at the application site would constitute the replacement dwelling erected under planning permission reference 20170383. This building has a floor area of some 73 square metres and a height of some 4.5 metres. The proposed development would comprise of a detached garage with a floor area of 36 square metres and a height of 3.6 metres. As such, there would be a 51% increase in floor area above original dwelling, which numerically would be considered a disproportionate addition. However, in terms of volume and bulk, the proposed garage would be 0.9 metres lower than the highest part of the dwelling, it would have a flat roof and be set down on lower ground.

Despite the relatively large size of the proposal compared to the existing dwelling, the proposed development would cause minimal harm to the openness of the Green Belt. This is because the proposal would be set down on the lowest part of the site, it would be screened from general view by a proposed yew tree front border and because an existing outbuilding would be removed as part of the proposal, which would offset some of the increase in built form across the site, as a whole. The removal of the existing outbuilding can be secured by planning condition.

It is noted that planning permission was previously granted for a frontage garage at the application site (under reference 20171321). The current proposal is only 2.25 metres wider and 0.5 metres longer than the approved building. The maximum height would be 0.1 metres lower. Therefore, the principle of a frontage garage has previously been accepted and the increase in built form above the previously approved scheme would be relatively small.

It is also noted that the application site has permitted development (PD) rights. Therefore, an outbuilding at the rear of the site could be lawfully erected, which would be likely to have a significantly greater adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt, than the proposed development. This is because a PD outbuilding could have a larger footprint than the current proposal and would be in an elevated position (because it would have to be located behind the dwelling). Therefore, there would be merit, in terms of openness, in allowing the proposed development and removing permitted development rights for future outbuildings at the site.

On balance, it is considered that the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition above the size of the original building at the application site. As such, the proposal would be in line with paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF 2024 and Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and it would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

It should be highlighted that because the proposal would be appropriate development under paragraph 154 of the NPPF 2024, it is not necessary to go on to examine the proposal in the context of paragraph 155 of the NPPF 2024.

Design, Character and Appearance

The application site is located in the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Local Plan Core Strategy is relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications.

According to the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment, the Harvel Wooded Downs LCA is characterised by varied topography with steep valley sides and plateaux. Ancient woodland, chestnut coppice and small paddocks and pastures can be found. Views both within and out of the character area are limited because of the combined effect of topography and the heavily wooded character of the landscape.

It is noted that the application site is located in a rural area, which has been somewhat urbanised and that the residential nature of the application site would be retained. The proposed development would result in the introduction of new built form at the front of the application site, which would consolidate and extend the level of built development on the plot and in the wider area. However, by virtue of its design and proposed screening, the proposal would not be harmful to overall landscape quality. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to landscape character and would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding local area. In particular, the design of new development should be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.

In relation to outbuildings, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that proposals;

- Should only be used for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the house;
- Should not deprive the existing property of adequate private garden space and should be subordinate to the existing dwelling and plot;
- The Council will consider factors such as the scale, height, proximity to boundaries, roof design, finishing materials and prominence in the street scene or rear garden environment;
- Should not detract from the character of the area; and
- Should not have an adverse impact on the amenity of the surrounding properties in terms of noise and disturbance created through access or overlooking/overshadowing of existing properties.

The area surrounding the application site has a variety of dwellings in different types and styles and with a variety of external facing materials and outbuildings. There are numerous examples of small bungalows that have detached garages located on their site frontages, including the property located immediately to the south (La Clef, Valley Lane).

The dwelling at the application site is a single storey, split level building, clad in timber weatherboarding, with a low pitched roof. The external facing materials for the proposed garage would match with the existing dwelling and include a living wall that would help to assimilate the building into the landscape. The proposed garage use would be incidental to the enjoyment of the existing dwelling and there would be no loss of private garden area. The building would appear subservient to the existing dwelling because it would have a flat roof, be lower in height and be set down on lower ground. Therefore, despite its prominent frontage location, the proposal would not look out of place in the surrounding area. Furthermore, the building would be screened by landscaping on the site frontage (which can be secured by planning condition).

Overall, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design and would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of existing building or the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would not adversely impact upon the private amenity space of the application property and would not adversely impact on the privacy, daylight or sunlight of its occupants. As such, the proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of future occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the design of the proposed development, to the screening provided by boundary treatments and to the layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overlooking,

overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surrounding dwellings. No neighbour representations have been received.

Parking and Highways

Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) require new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a two bedroom dwelling should have two vehicle parking spaces and a single garage should have dimensions of 3.6 metres (width) by 5.5 metres (length), with a double garage requiring the same length and a minimum width of 6 metres.

The application site is a two bedroom dwelling and the proposed garage would have a width of 5.6 metres and a length of 5.7 metres, which would be just below the minimum standard for a double garage. However, due to there being sufficient space to park a second vehicle on the driveway, it is considered that the sufficient provision for the parking of cars would be provided. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a mandatory requirement for all new development and proposals must deliver a BNG of at least 10% unless they are exempt. In this instance, the proposed development is a householder proposal and therefore is exempt from BNG.

Notwithstanding the BNG exemption, biodiversity is an important consideration in all new development. Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) states that there will be no net loss of biodiversity in the Borough and that opportunities to enhance, restore, re-create and maintain habitats will be sought, in particular within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas and within new development.

The proposal includes a living wall and proposed landscaping on the site frontage, which will be positive features in terms of biodiversity and as such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Climate change

Policies CS18 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 require new development to take advantage of opportunities to build in resilience to the effects of climate change.

The proposal includes solar panels, which would deliver renewable energy. As such, the proposed development would be in line with Policies CS18 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3. However, as the proposed development is within the confines of an existing residential garden and only a relatively small amount of groundworks would occur, then it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to groundwater or archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Materials to match existing

Use as a garage

Formation and retention of driveway

Landscaping
No further outbuildings
Removal of outbuilding

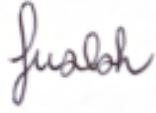
Conclusion

The proposal would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

Recommendation

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	23rd September 2025	Dated:	24 September 2025