



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230789

Location: 103 Downs Road Istead Rise Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of two storey front infill extension, conversion of the garage to a study, two storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear flat roof dormer and raising the ridge by 300 mm along with extending the patio and building a new retaining wall to the garden.

Applicant: Mrs Ellie Stevens

Site Visit Date: Previous Application – 03/04/2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form
2023/25/01 - Site Location Plan and Existing Block Plan
2023/25/02 – Existing Floor Plans
2023/25/03 – Existing Elevations
2023/25/04 - Site Location Plan and Proposed Block Plan
2023/25/05 – Proposed Floor Plans
2023/25/06 – Proposed Elevations
2023/25/07 – Proposed Elevations
Covering Letter

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230237	Erection of two storey front infill extension, conversion of the garage to a study, two storey rear extension, loft conversion with rear flat roof dormer and raising the ridge by 300 mm along with extending the patio and building a new retaining wall to the garden.	Refused	24.04.2023
19870111	Erection of two storey front extension to form porch and enlarged garage with enlarged bedroom at first floor level	Permitted	30.03.1987
19820782	Erection of a front porch	Permitted	22.11.1982
19770850	Demolition of existing house and erection of two detached houses with integral garages	Permitted	19.12.1977

19770355	Erection of detached garage at front and laying out of vehicular access	Permitted	14.06.1977
19770124	Erection of a single storey extension at rear to form dining room	Permitted	11.03.1977
19760640	Outline application for the erection of 8 semi detached single storey dwellings with detached garages	Permitted	20.10.1976

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places

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);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Ward Councillors: No response received.

GBC Highway Officer:

'I have no objections, the driveway has more than enough space to accommodate the number of vehicles specified in supplementary planning guidance and the store that will be retained in the front of the old garage is suitable for cycle storage.'

Note the position of the cars shown on the proposed block plan (Drawing number 2023/25/04@A3) does not comply with guidance as there should be a gap a minimum of 1.2 metres wide to permit access to the store door, particularly important given the storage of cycles which ideally requires a wider access. However, the depth of the drive at this point is more than capable of accepting an adjusted car parking provision.'

Southern Gas Network: No response received.

Neighbouring properties

5no. surrounding properties were consulted and 1 comment was received from a member of the public, objecting to the development.

Summary of objection:

- The scale of the extension would be excessive and overbearing.
- Impact on light/overshadowing to neighbouring windows and gardens.
- Loss of privacy to neighbouring window from loft conversion balcony
- Poor design of rear roofline.
- Height of apex roof higher than sill level of second storey windows is poor design.

Officer Note:

Comments made regarding subsidence are not a material planning consideration and are a private/legal matter for the applicants and relevant neighbours to discuss.

Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

This application is located in a Rural Settlement inset from Green Belt, where alterations and extensions to residential buildings are generally acceptable in principle as per Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development.

However, all other relevant matters should be considered. In this instance, the main points to consider would be the potential impact on; Visual Amenity (Design, Character and Appearance), Amenity of Future Occupiers and Residential Amenity of neighbours.

It is noted that the proposal provides an alternative scheme to that previously refused under refused planning application ref 20230237.

This scheme changes the previous one by incorporating a reduction in depth to the rear extension by 2 metres.

Summary Information

	Existing Dwellinghouse (m)	Proposed Dwellinghouse (m)	Change (+/-m)
Max height	9.2	9.4	+0.2
Max eaves height	6.1	6.1	NO CHANGE
Max Width	8.25	8.25	NO CHANGE
Max Depth	13.2	17	+3.8

Design, Character and Appearance

This application relates to a detached dwelling located within a street scene which is characterised by mostly detached dwellings of various designs.



The existing dwellinghouse has a footprint of 85m². The proposed dwellinghouse would have a footprint of 137m². This would be an increase of 52m² (a 61.2% increase). To the rear there would be an approximate increase in depth of 3.8 metres. There would be no increase in depth beyond the front most elevation but there would be a 2.5-metre-deep infill to the frontmost elevation to the southeastern side.

In terms of design the proposed front and side elevations would have a similar appearance to those on 105 Downs Road (to the Southeast). The front alterations and rear extension was approved at appeal under planning ref: 20190966 and appeal ref: APP/K2230/D/20/3245961.

In that appeal the officer assessed that the development would not be out of character with the area despite

it not being subordinate to the existing dwellinghouse. However, although the character and design appearance would be similar to this neighbour, its scale would be much larger. This neighbour has a depth of 11.8m the proposed dwellinghouse would have a depth of 17m, which is substantially larger.

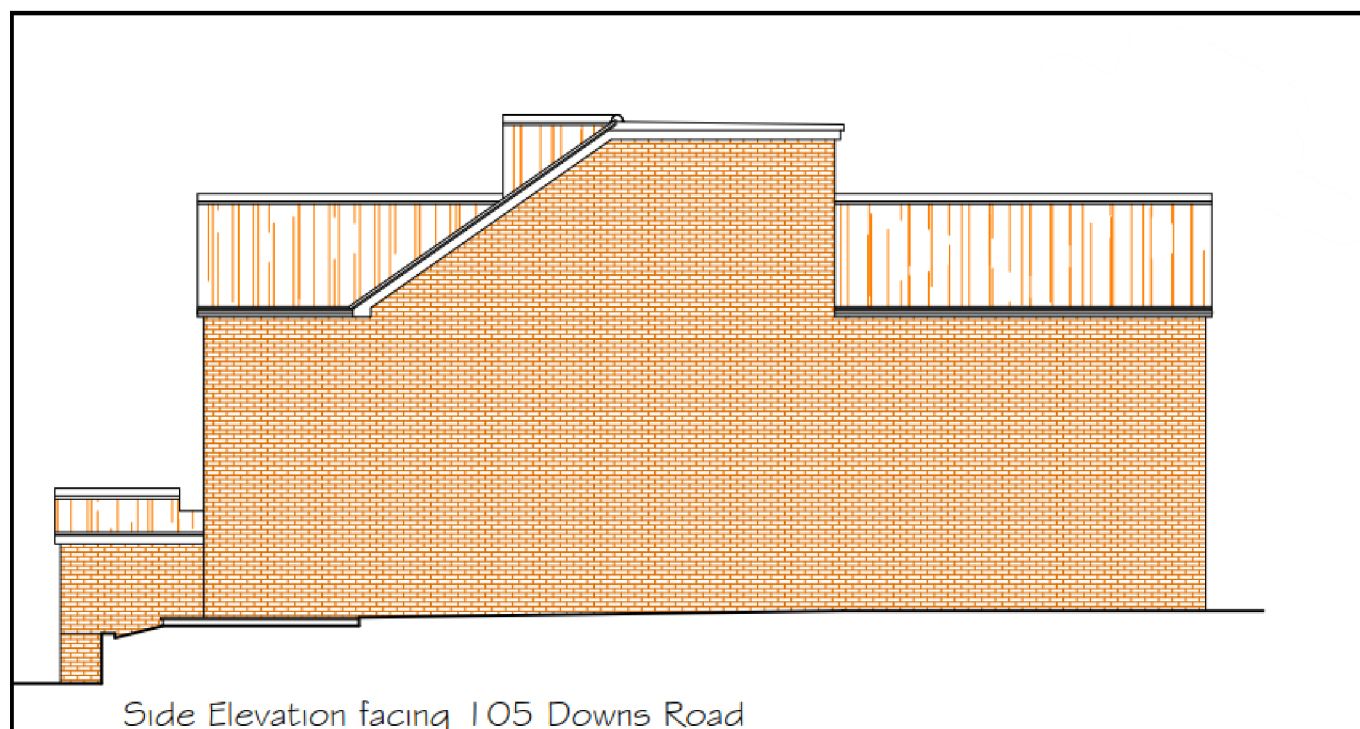
Planning application 20230237 refused that scheme on Design, Character and Appearance grounds. Refusal reason 1 for that scheme is as follows:

'The proposed development by reason of its scale, dominant projecting features, significant depth and incongruent roof form would result in significant harm to the character of this area and would as a result fail to comply with the requirements of the Householder Alterations/Extensions Guide, Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 in terms of design, character and appearance.'

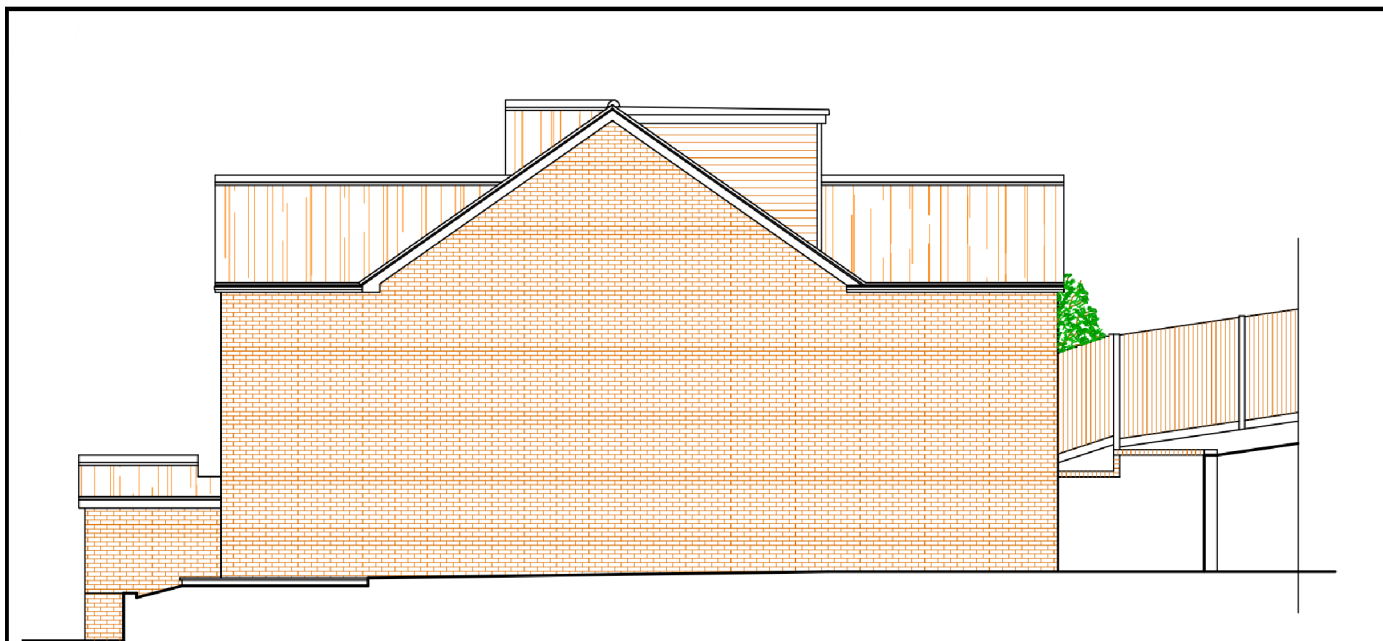
The proposed scheme would reduce the footprint over the scheme to reflect the footprint of nearby neighbouring dwellinghouses more appropriately. Although it is noted that it would still fall on the larger end of that scale.

The previous assessment stated:

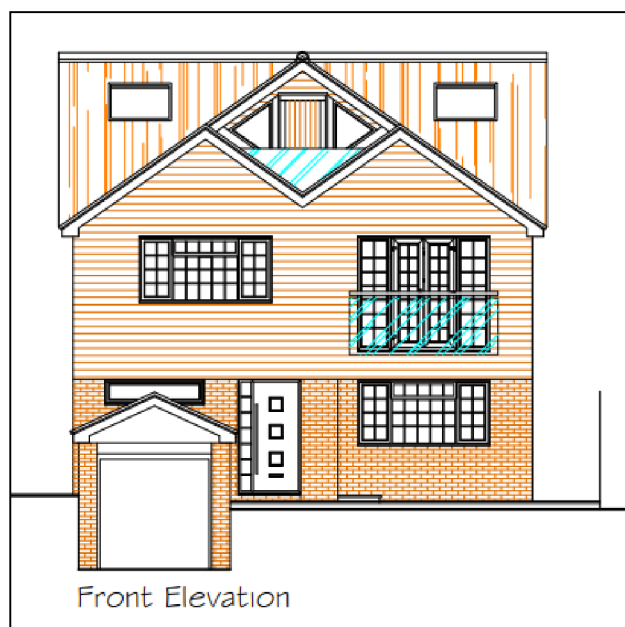
There are concerns regarding the significant scale and increase to this dwellinghouse and it would not be considered subservient to the main dwellinghouse. While it is evident that similar scaled properties at two storey are evident within the area and have similar design which should be taken into consideration as part of the existing character, the current proposal differs as it has incorporated all the various extension types of the neighbouring properties, being two storey front and rear. In this case, the extensions proposed would result in a larger dwellinghouse than 105 Downs Road and while of similar design, this dwellinghouse is not as deep to the front as the proposed dwellinghouse would be. This proposal would also result in a cluttered appearance in roof form as a result of the double gable, dormer to the front and the tall pitched roof line which would run perpendicular to the front elevation and at the rear a double gable and large dormer which extends from a flat roof. The eclectic and cluttered roof form do not constitute good design and would appear incongruent with the existing dwellinghouse and wider setting. The side elevation below shows the mix of roof types and the impact they have in terms of harsh and eclectic appearance and how it would not be cohesive once built and also how it would result in a large and blank façade to the side elevation which would be of poor design. The side elevation is shown below (Not to Scale):



The above image shows the previously refused scheme and the below image shows the proposed scheme here.



Whilst it is clear the depth reduction has improved the balance of the dwellinghouse, the scheme continues to demonstrate an eclectic and cluttered roof form which does not constitute good design and would appear incongruent with the existing dwellinghouse and wider setting. In particular, the appearance of the gable ends at the front rear and sides, and then the additional roof dormers to each elevation, cause an appearance of overdevelopment.



The neighbouring property; 105 Downs Road by comparison has a more simplistic use of gable ends to the front and sides and dormer extension to the rear, as shown in the images below. The issue here is overuse of multiple extensions on each elevation.



Therefore, it is considered that on balance the dwellinghouse as proposed would be inappropriate in terms of design, character and appearance, constituting over development of the site and it would not overcome refusal reason 1 on the previous scheme.

On balance, the proposed development would **NOT** comply with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2023) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The NPPF (2023) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that 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. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

The proposed rooms would meet the required minimum space standards and would continue to have adequate rear garden depth and area as per SPG2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020.

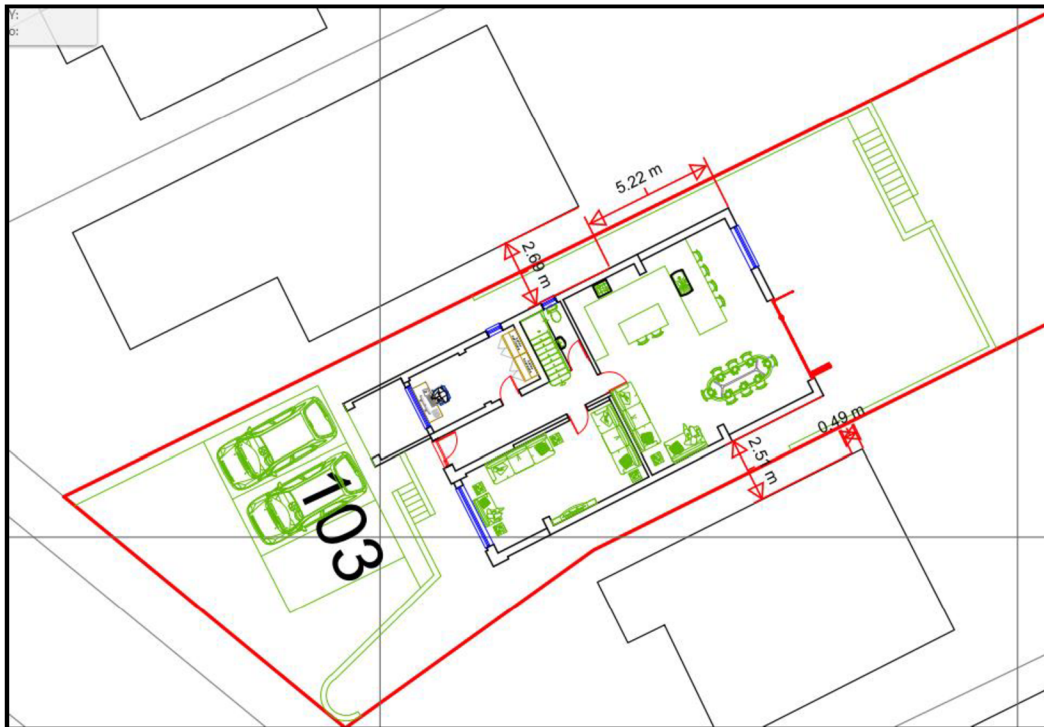
Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, one objection to the proposal was received.



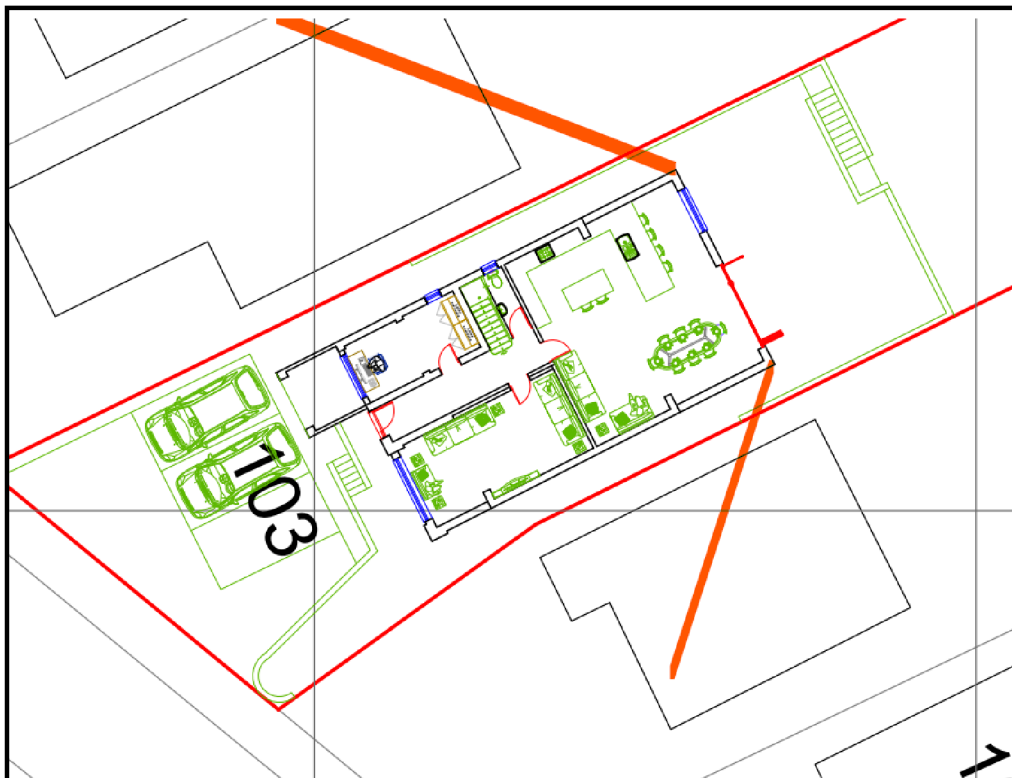
Image of Rear Elevation taken during the site visit

The image below (Not to Scale), taken from the proposed block plan, with dimensions added shows the distances of the dwellinghouse as proposed from the boundary with neighbours and the depth variation, for clarity.



The neighbours most likely to be impacted by the development are 101 Downs Road and 105 Downs Road.

The following plan (Not to scale) shows a 45 degree test indicating areas of overshadowing.

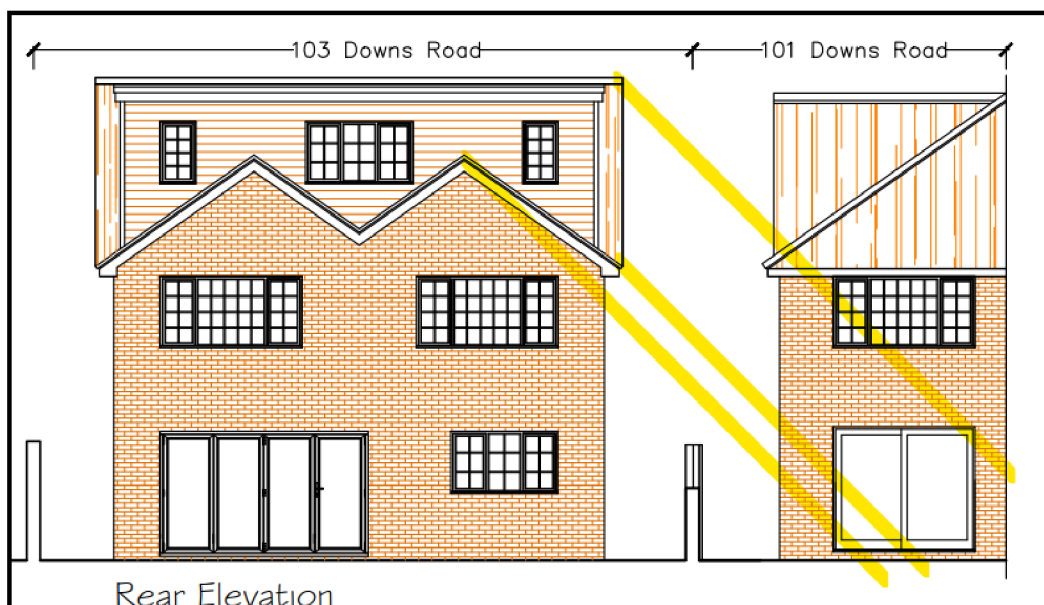


101 Downs Road

This neighbour is located to the north-west. The proposed dwellinghouse would be set in by 1.39m from the shared boundary with this neighbour.

The 45 Degree test shows that there is likely to be significant overshadowing of this neighbour's rear openings.

The below 45 degree test (Not to Scale) provides further insight into the extent of potential overshadowing to this neighbour:



Although this shows that the ground floor sliding doors at the rear and side windows would be overshadowed. Given the 4.3 metre setback of the higher dormer element, the rear windows would likely not be overshadowed. Planning approval for this neighbour's rear extension obtained under planning ref 19860544 indicated that the windows on the rear elevation entirely serve a combined sitting/dining room. The two openings closest to this neighbour only be partially overshadowed by the rearmost gable element and its eaves. It is also considered that the two storey depth from this neighbour's rear elevation, now reduced (5.22m) beyond this neighbour's rear elevation would not result in an overbearing appearance, given the location, distanced between the buildings and lower height of the rear gable elements.

105 Downs Road

This neighbour is located to the south-east. The proposed dwellinghouse is set in by 1.3 metres from the shared boundary with this neighbour.

As the 45 degree test shows, there is limited potential for this building and its openings to be overshadowed. It is also noted that this neighbour's plot is located to the south east and given the sun's southerly route from east to west, any significant overshadowing is unlikely.

The proposed dwellinghouse would not extend beyond the rear elevation of this neighbour's dwellinghouse and so would not result in any significant overbearing bulk in close proximity to this neighbour's dwellinghouse.

No concerns are raised with regard to direct overlooking.

Refusal reason 2 for previous application 20230237 was as follows:

'By virtue of the excessive depth and height to the rear, the proposed development would result in harm the living environments of future occupants of 101 Downs Road. The ground floor windows which serve a habitable room would experience a significant loss of light and the rear aspect of the development would result in overbearing appearance and a sense of enclosure. The proposal would therefore fail to provide a high standard of amenity for neighbouring's sites which conflicts with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 126 and 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.'

The reduced depth as proposed by this scheme would overcome that refusal reason.

The proposal is therefore considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in compliance with policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Highways and Parking

Adequate vehicle and cycle parking provision is available in accordance with paragraphs 110 to 113 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 subject to further details of cycle parking provision.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development has sought to make amendments to previous planning refusal 20230237. It has not fully overcome the first refusal reason related to Design, Character and Appearance. It has however, addressed the second refusal reason regarding Impact on the adjoining neighbour.

The proposed development by reason of its scale, dominant projecting features, significant depth and incongruent roof form would result in significant harm to the character of this area and would as a result fail to comply with the requirements of the Householder Alterations/Extensions Guide, Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 in terms of design, character and appearance.

On balance, the recommendation is to refuse the application.

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

Case Officer:	Ms Lisa Williams	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	8th September 2023	Dated:	14 September 2023