



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260334

Location: 26 St Johns Road Higham Rochester Kent

Description: Demolition of existing garage and shed. Erection of external storage building. Erection of single storey side extension with roof lights, new front porch and extension to raised patio.

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Spike

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment and photos provided by agent

Preliminary Matters

During the course of the application, the agent emailed with some small amendments to the plans. These were accepted for consideration, and neighbours were reconsulted. An extension of time was agreed until 03.06.26.

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Supplementary Information – Summary of Amendments;
Supplementary Information – Planning Statement;
Drawing No. EX.01 – Site Location Plan;
Drawing No. EX.03 – Floor Plan, Loft Plan and Section AA – Existing;
Drawing No. EX.04 – Elevations – Existing;
Drawing No. PR12 Rev.A – REVISED Block Plans – Existing and Proposed;
Drawing No. PR13 Rev.C – REVISED Floor Plan – Proposed; and
Drawing No. PR14 Rev. F – REVISED Elevations and Roof Plan – Proposed.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing No. PR. 12 – Block Plans – Existing and Proposed;~~
~~Drawing No. PR.13 Rev. B – Floor Plan – Proposed; and~~
~~Drawing No. PR.14 Rev. C – Elevations and Roof Plan – Proposed.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20210347	Erection of a single storey side extension.	Permitted	13.05.2021

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (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 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

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)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Paragraph 48 of the Framework makes it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. An emerging Local Plan, does not form part of the Development. The Framework, at Paragraph 49 allows local planning authorities to give weight to relevant policies in emerging Local Plans, according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the Framework, the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to those policies.

West Oxfordshire District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government & Rosconn Strategic Land Ltd [2018] EWHC 3065 (Admin) is a High Court judgement that deals with the weight to be given to a Regulation 19 Local Plan. In this judgement the Court found that the weight to be given to an emerging Local Plan, was a matter of planning judgement, which had to be reached having fully considered the relevant part (Paragraph 49) of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan, is in the process of being consulted upon (it has reached Regulation 19 stage), the Council is not yet aware of whether third parties will support or object to specific policies within the Plan, or whether they will consider the policies with the emerging Local Plan



to be broadly sound and consistent with the NPPF (2024). Taking this into consideration, one can only conclude that at this stage of the process, **limited (i.e. minimal) weight should be afforded to the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan**. This position would only change once the emerging Local Plan has progressed towards submission and examination, with the Council being fully aware of policies that are subject to unresolved objections and with knowledge of policies that have had their soundness and conformity against the Framework challenged.

This approach accords with the approach taken in a separate High Court case, Gladman Developments Ltd v SSHCLG & Corby Borough Council; & Uttlesford DC [2020] EWHC 518 (Admin) and Court of Appeal [2021] EWCA Civ 104, which was also the subject of a Court of Appeal Ruling [2021] EWCA Civ 104.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Higham Parish Council

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

Four surrounding properties were consulted and a site notice was displayed on 14.04.26. No comments were received and the overall consultation period expired on 21.05.26.

Site Description

26 St Johns Road is a semi-detached bungalow with an existing detached garage to the side of off street parking to the front for two cars.

Google Images





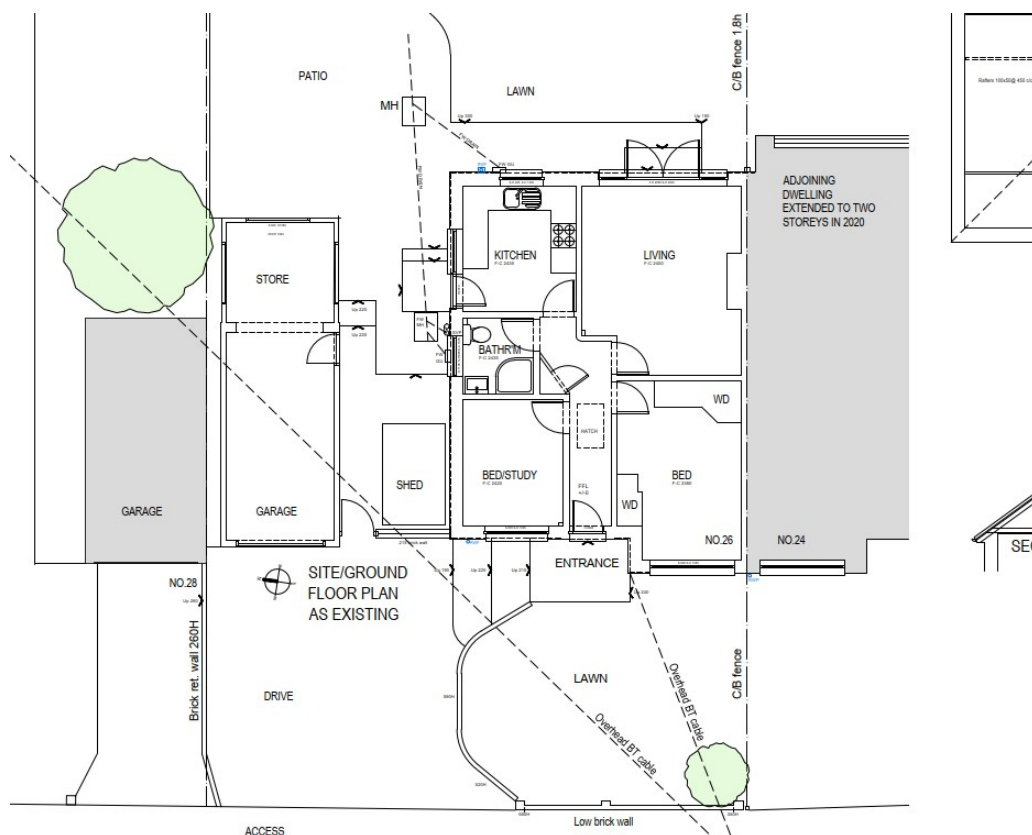
This application proposes the demolition of the existing garage and shed, with the erection of an external storage building. In addition, the erection of single storey side extension with roof lights, new front porch and extension to raised patio is proposed.

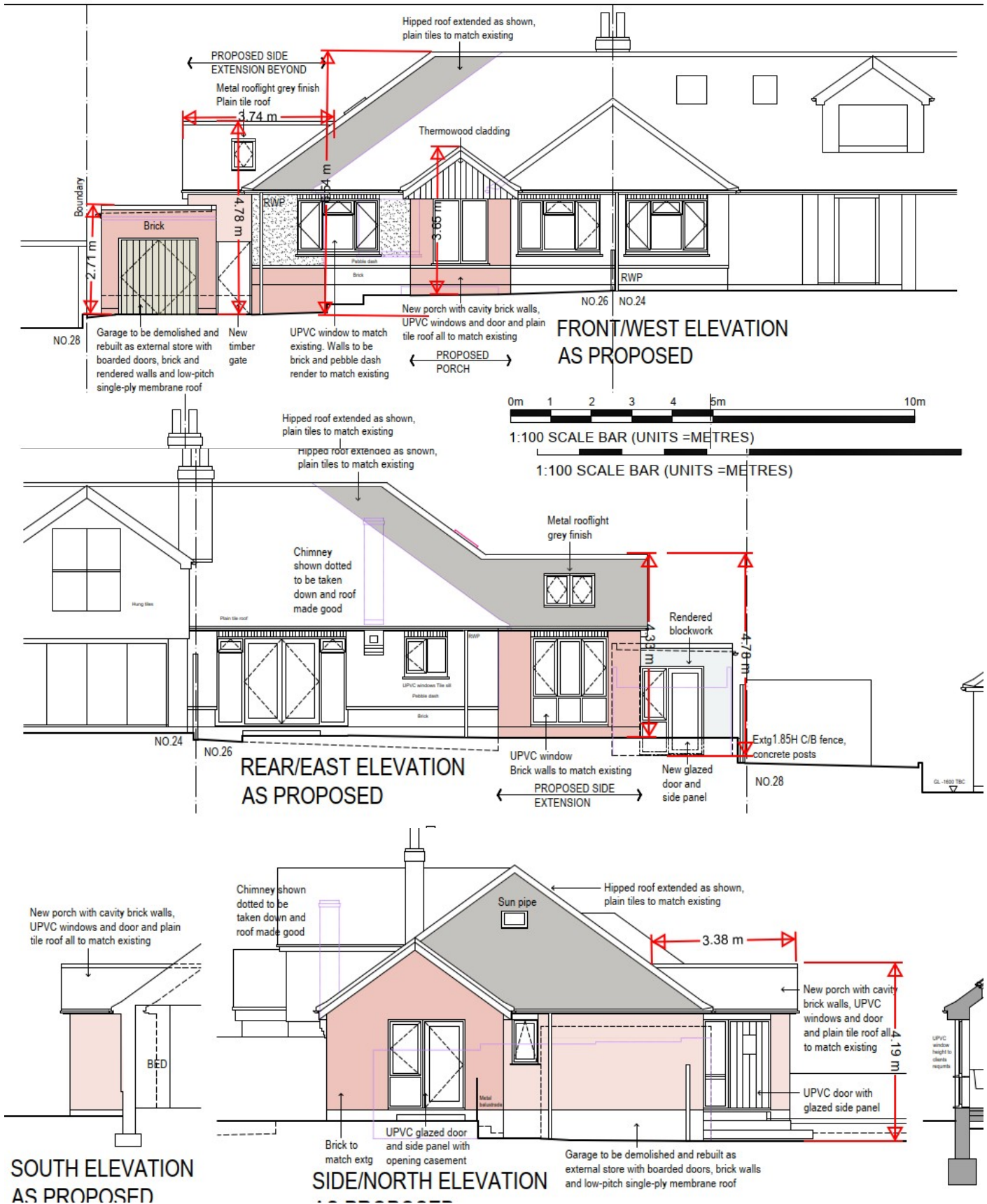
Proposed Development

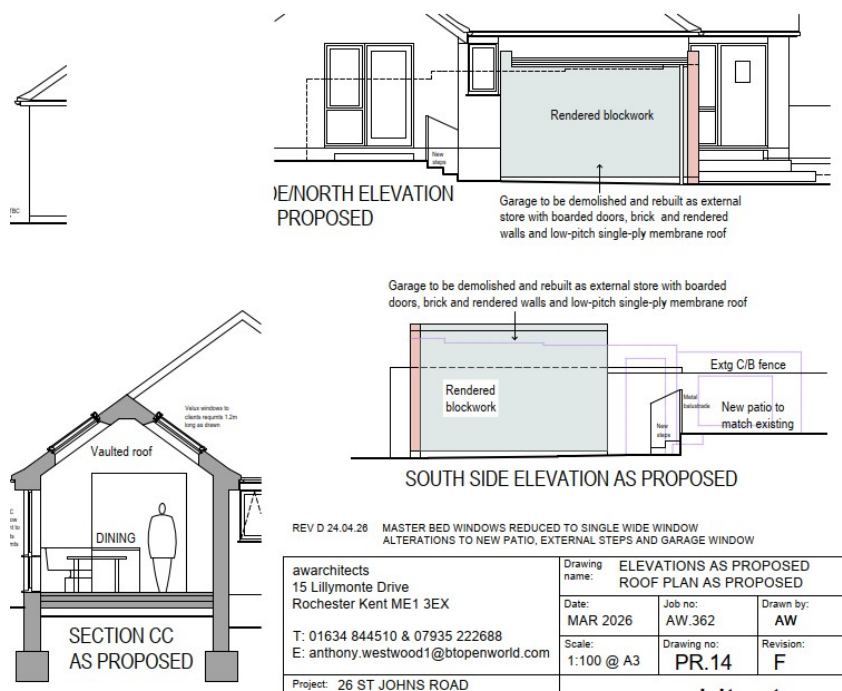
The development would result in the demolition of the existing garage and store, and the creation of a new external storage area. The extensions would create space for an entrance hall/porch, an enlarged bedroom, a utility room and a dining room. In addition, there would be an extension to the existing patio area.

Case officer measurements are indicated on the plans

Existing plans and Elevations:







Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the policies map. As such, the principle of the development is acceptable, providing it complies with other policy considerations. The key considerations are assessed below.

Design, Character and Appearance

The property is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. Relevant Policy considerations include paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024, which aims for development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Policy CS12 (LPCS) (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.

Furthermore, Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed places) of the NPPF (2024) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

In addition to the above, the Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance (SPD) (2021) states *it is important to ensure that any extensions or alterations to a home are well designed, well-built and sympathetic to their surroundings. By doing so we can ensure that there are no adverse effects on the original house, immediate neighbours, the local view of the street, as well as the character and appearance of the local area.*

With consideration to the planning history for the area, is considered that approvals are not directly comparable and have been granted prior to the adoption of the Gravesham Design Guidance. In addition, each application needs to be assessed on its own merits.

It is noted that there was a previous approval (20210347- now expired) for the erection of a side extension to the property:

Extract from previous delegated officers report indicating the extent of the side extension:



Although this extension was found to be acceptable, it is considered to be entirely different to the side extension proposed within this application.

The proposed external materials would largely match the existing, and acceptable external materials could be secured by condition, which is desirable to ensure a good visual relationship between the existing dwelling and proposed new development. However, the proposal would also need to meet other design principles in terms of scale, design and character.

External Store

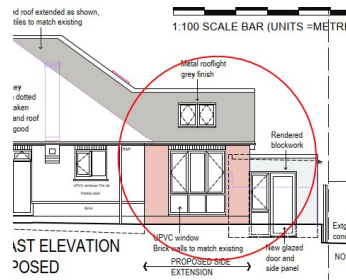
As per the Gravesham Householder Design Guide (2021), garages (and outbuildings) should usually be positioned to the side (and rear) of the dwelling. In the case of this application, there is an existing garage and store already in situ. However, the new external store would be approximately 0.31m higher than the existing garage. In this part of St Johns Road, the land slopes downwards to the North, meaning No.28 St Johns Road is on a significantly lower land level than the application site. As such, the resultant height increase would be particularly prominent within the street scene, disrupting the existing rhythm.

Porch/Front Extension

The porch/front extension is considered to be large in scale. It would be constructed with a gable end roof and is overall considered to be a dominant addition to the dwelling that would not integrate well with its character. The incongruous appearance of the porch/front extension is further exacerbated by the existing front hipped projection shared with No. 25, whereby the extension would subsume and dominate this feature, to the detriment of the host dwelling and street scene.

Side Extension

Although the part of the extension similar to and approved under 20210347 could be considered acceptable in isolation, the extension as a whole is not considered to be acceptable. Although it is noted it would be set down from the main roof ridge, the gable element (highlighted below) is considered to be poor design resulting in an unsympathetic addition that would jut out from the flank wall of the dwelling and would be highly visible from the street scene to the detriment of the appearance of the host dwelling and street scene. This is further exacerbated by the slope of the land, as aforementioned previously.



Raised Deck/Patio Area

The extension to the raised patio area would essentially replace the existing store. As such, there are no concerns in terms of design. This shall be explored further in the amenity section of his report.

Overall Design Conclusion

Overall, the development is considered to be poor design resulting in an incongruous and dominant dwelling to the detriment of the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. The proposed extensions and alterations are considered to be unsympathetic additions excessive in scale and would result in an awkward amalgamation of varying roof forms which would, in particular, negatively impact the appearance of the dwelling from the street scene and disrupt its rhythm. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Gravesham's SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) (2020) sets out expected room sizes and garden space post development. The proposed block plan indicates sufficient garden depth and area would be retained post development. In terms of room sizes, the proposal would also accord with the guidance. Overall, the proposal is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

No neighbour representations were received as a result of the consultation carried out for this application.

Neighbouring amenity is generally considered in terms of whether development would cause a sense of enclosure, loss of light, loss of privacy or loss of outlook. In situ, the development is unlikely to result in a detrimental loss of light, loss of outlook or cause a sense of enclosure, given the existing situation and the distance between the development and neighbouring properties. Similarly, given the existing situation with the rear patio, the development is not considered to result in a further detrimental impact to neighbouring privacy and it is noted that the existing neighbouring tree also provides some screening. However, it is likely that if planning permission were to be forthcoming, the fenestration in the flank wall of the extension facing No.28 would be conditioned to be obscure glazed. Therefore, overall the development accords with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024) in terms of safeguarding neighbouring amenity.

Parking and Highways

The plans show that two parking spaces would be retained post development. As such there are no concerns in terms of highways and parking.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Gas Pipelines

The site lies within proximity of Gas Pipelines. As such, if planning permission were to be forthcoming, an appropriately worded informative could be added to the decision notice, advising the applicant that they must contact Southern Gas Networks before carrying out any works.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is contrary to local and national planning policy.

The development is considered to be poor design resulting in an incongruous and dominant dwelling to the detriment of the character and appearance of the host dwelling and surrounding area. The proposed extensions and alterations are considered to be unsympathetic additions excessive in scale and would result in an awkward amalgamation of varying roof forms which would, in particular, negatively impact the appearance of the dwelling from the street scene and disrupt its rhythm. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Recommendation

Refusal

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	3rd June 2026	Dated:	3rd June 2026