

Delegated Report

Application No: 20211437

Location: 4 Walmers Avenue, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7EJ

Description: Demolition of existing conservatory, erection of a single storey rear extension, creation of first floor with habitable rooms, dormer windows to front and rear elevations, creation of vehicle crossover and hardstanding.

Applicant: Jamie Beaumont

Site Visit Date: 14.12.2021

Submitted Documents/Plans

The applicant has submitted the following in support of the application:

Application form received 3 December 2021;
Site Location Plan received 3 December 2021;
Drawing (Front Parking) received 3 December 2021; and
Drawing no. 108CP Rev. A Existing/Proposed Block Plans, Existing/Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations) received 17 March 2022.

~~Drawing no. 108CP Existing/Proposed Block Plans, Existing/Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations) received 17 March 2022 SUPERSEDED~~

Relevant Planning History

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Decision</u>
19530190	Erection of bungalow	Permitted	10.09.1953

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

CS01 – Sustainable Development
CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
CS11 – Transport
CS12 – Green Infrastructure
CS19 – Design and Development Principles

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF 2021 sets out that those 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 the review 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 a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan First Review 1994 generally conform with the NPPF 2021, the Council will also seek to replace these saved policies via the emerging Local Plan.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)

SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC Highways and Transportation

This development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority.

GBC Highways Officer

There is no objection to these proposals, as there will be more than adequate car parking available. However, with the increase in bedrooms secure cycle parking should be installed to comply with SPG4. With a potential increase of three bedrooms, provision should be made for three cycles, one per new bedroom.

The applicant should note the driveway should ideally be constructed from a bound permeable material unless an alternative is readily available, as it will not be possible to install a soakaway in the front garden due to Building Regulations requirements.

The applicant should consider installing cables to support a future electric vehicle charging point.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 6 properties, and on site. The consultation periods expired on 30 December 2021 and 7 January 2022 respectively.

No letters of representation have been received.

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

[Further consultations were not considered necessary following design revisions to the proposal due to the lack of previous representations and the reduced nature of the proposal.]

Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing conservatory, and the erection of a single storey rear extension, the creation of a first floor with habitable rooms and dormer windows to the front and rear elevations, and the creation of a vehicle crossover and hardstanding.

Revised plans were submitted following design concerns about the first floor extension at the rear and the roof shape appearing awkward and bulky, and transitioning too harshly to two full storeys from the chalet roof at the front. Changes to the roof have therefore been made.

The single storey rear extension will project 5m to the rear of the property and will have a flat roof up to 2.8m high. The extension will comprise an open plan kitchen/diner.

The first floor extension will increase the height of the ridge by approximately 0.4m, and will alter the hipped ends of the roof to gables. Two pitched roof dormers will be positioned within the front roof slope. At the rear, there will be a large flat roof dormer set within the roof slope. There will be no flank windows at first floor level.

The proposed materials will match the existing.

The proposed crossover will extend over the existing grass verge. The existing front garden is currently at a lower level than the road, and the area of lawn will be raised to create a driveway (for at least 2 cars) level with the crossover and road. The existing steps and pathway will remain as existing. There will be a retaining wall around the driveway and partially along the front boundary, with soft landscaping in front.

Principle Issues

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are the design of the proposed extensions and the impact on the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area, the effect of the proposal on the amenities of existing neighbouring properties, as well as whether the proposed development itself will provide satisfactory living accommodation for future occupiers, and its impact on highway safety and parking provision.

Design and Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area

Development Plan policy places considerable emphasis on the importance of achieving high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The application site currently comprises a bungalow in use as a single dwelling located within the rural settlement of Higham on the northern side of Walmers Avenue. The road is residential and made up of mostly detached and some semi-detached dwellings of varying sizes and styles. The application property is on a fairly narrow but good size plot, with a generous rear garden. There are a number of properties on the road that have extended into the roofspace, including most recently No. 22 (planning permission 20210703 for the erection of a single storey front extension,

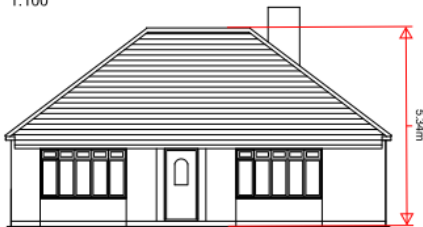
a single storey rear extension, raising of the roof and conversion of roof space to form habitable rooms at first floor level.)



Whilst it would be larger than the existing conservatory, the proposed 5m depth single storey rear extension would remain subservient in terms of the size of the existing property, and would comprise an acceptable increase at ground floor level. The extension would not project excessively beyond neighbouring building lines and would be in keeping with similar additions at neighbouring properties along the road. As it would be at the rear, it would not be visible from any public vantage point.

It is recognised that the bungalows at this end of the road are lower scale and largely unaltered from their original form at the front. The existing dwelling has a hipped and pitched roof. In terms of the proposed roof additions, the roof shape would become gable ended, but this would be in keeping with the roof shapes of neighbouring properties, including No. 6 next door and No. 5 immediately opposite. The roof height would also increase by approximately 0.4m, which will not result in any substantial change over neighbouring properties, and within the context of the differing heights of dwellings along the road, this would not be considered to be significantly incongruous or overly dominant. The proposed first floor would be retained within the existing front and rear building lines.

Existing Elevations
1.100



Front

Proposed Elevations
1.100



Front

There are also other examples of front dormers approved along the road, such as at No. 15 (permitted under 20151246) and No. 38 (permitted under 20201330).

No. 15 Walmers Avenue:



Whilst the proposals will alter the appearance of the application property at this end of the road, given the surrounding context and varied character and appearance of the dwellings on Walmers Avenue, this proposal would not be considered to cause any significant harm to the street scene.

The extensions would be constructed of matching materials. It would be important to ensure matching materials to ensure the uniform appearance of the extended property; this should be conditioned.

In terms of the proposals for a front driveway, these are also common provisions along the road. Provided the soft landscaping is carried out as proposed, this would also be in keeping with the street scene, and would be an improvement over some of the front driveways on the road that have no soft landscaping.

Driveway at No. 6 Walmers Avenue:



With regard to the impact on the landscape, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 is relevant to this application, relating to green infrastructure. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) 2009 will be taken into account in determining applications. The site is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. However, as the site comprises an existing residential property within the rural settlement boundary of Higham, the proposal will not have any adverse impact on the landscape character of the area.

Overall, the proposed extensions comprise appropriate additions in terms of their size, scale and appearance, and the proposals would maintain the character and appearance of the site and street scene in general. Provided the proposed materials match the existing, the proposal is considered acceptable in design terms, and would comply with the requirements of Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, and paragraphs 130 and 174 of the NPPF 2021.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2021 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 130f). The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria within Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, 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.

Future Occupiers

The proposals will increase the number of bedrooms at the property by three. It is considered that the proposals would comply with the Council's residential layout guidelines and the Technical

Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards in terms of the proposed accommodation and retained garden. There is no conflict with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 in respect of the living conditions for future occupants of the dwelling.

Neighbouring Properties

As the proposed first floor extensions will not extend beyond the main front and rear building lines of the existing and neighbouring properties, there will be no overshadowing or loss of light caused to the neighbouring properties.

There would be no window within the extended dwelling that would cause any loss of privacy; there are no first floor flank windows. The proposals will introduce additional windows at first floor level to the front and rear of the property; however, these will not create a level of overlooking over and above what would be expected in such a residential area. The additional ground floor door and window to the flank elevations would be likely to be obscured by boundary treatment.

Due to its single storey nature, the single storey rear extension would not be considered to cause any significant loss of light or privacy, nor have any dominant impact on neighbouring properties. Whilst there is no suggestion that the flat roof of the single storey rear extension would be used as a roof terrace, there is the potential for this to happen and it would therefore be considered appropriate to impose a condition to prevent this from happening on any forthcoming planning permission.

Subject to this condition, the proposals would comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Parking and Highways

The parking proposals for the property would give adequate provision for the size of property and would be acceptable. There have been no neighbour objections in this regard. As such the property would retain sufficient off-street parking provision and in respect of parking and highway safety, there would therefore be no conflict with Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan 1994 and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

No cycle or electric vehicle provision is proposed but these are not essential to make the development acceptable, and there is more than adequate space for them to be provided at the property. The applicant should be made aware that cycle and electric vehicle provision would be preferable and should therefore be included as informatives.

An aco drain is proposed within the front garden, and drainage onto the highway is not likely to be an issue due to the proposed land levels ensuring that the driveway would slope away from the road. An informative can be included to advise the applicant that the driveway would be best constructed using a permeable material.

Conclusion

The proposals are considered to be acceptable in terms of the design and impact of the extensions on the application building and the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and with regards to residential amenity and highway matters. The proposals would therefore comply with the requirements of Policies CS11, CS12 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan 1994, and paragraphs 109, 130 and 174 of the NPPF 2021.

Recommendation:

Approval with conditions.

See draft Decision.

Case Officer: Katherine Parkin	Team Leader: Faye Hobbs
Signed: K. Parkin	Signed: 
Dated: 17/03/2021	Dated: 17 March 2022