

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20251275

Location: The Coach House, Forge Lane, Shorne, Gravesend

Description: Retrospective permission for change of use of garage to 2 offices and bathroom.

Applicant: Mr Hermanus Gardner

Site Visit Date: 3 February 2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form

Drawing no. 001 (Location and Site Plans)

Drawing no. 002 (Existing / Proposed Floor Plan)

Drawing no. 003 (Existing / Proposed Floor Plan)

Drawing no. 004 (Existing / Proposed Elevations)

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20040652	Application for Listed Building consent for the demolition of existing extensions; renovations, repairs, refurbishment, internal and external alterations in connection with the conversion of the coach house, stables and groom's accommodation into a single family dwelling involving the erection of a single storey side extension and a detached garage and the demolition and rebuilding of the boundary wall.	Permitted	08.09.2004
20030355	Conversion of coach house, stables and groom's accommodation into a single family dwelling involving erection of a single storey side extension and a detached garage.	Permitted	02.12.2003

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development and Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC2 – Policy for Listed Buildings
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- 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 4 – Decision-making
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 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
- 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)
- Shorne Rural Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document 2017

The Council has a statutory requirement under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Section 16(2) and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) require special regard to be paid to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses when considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission respectively.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Dickens Country Protection Society

The Society has no objection to the change of use but, since the changes are retrospective and the building is in the environs of a Grade II Listed Building, the Society would suggest that permitted development rights are removed and conditions are imposed to control any potential residential use.

Shorne Parish Council

It is disappointing that this is a retrospective application. However, the Parish Council has no objection in principle to this application.

The property is within the setting of the Grade II listed Pipes Place.

Conditions should be attached stating that the converted building is only an annex of The Coach House, and cannot be used as separate residential accommodation or for business purposes.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 16 properties, in the press and on site. The overall consultation period expired on 19 February 2026.

No letters of representation have been received from neighbouring properties.

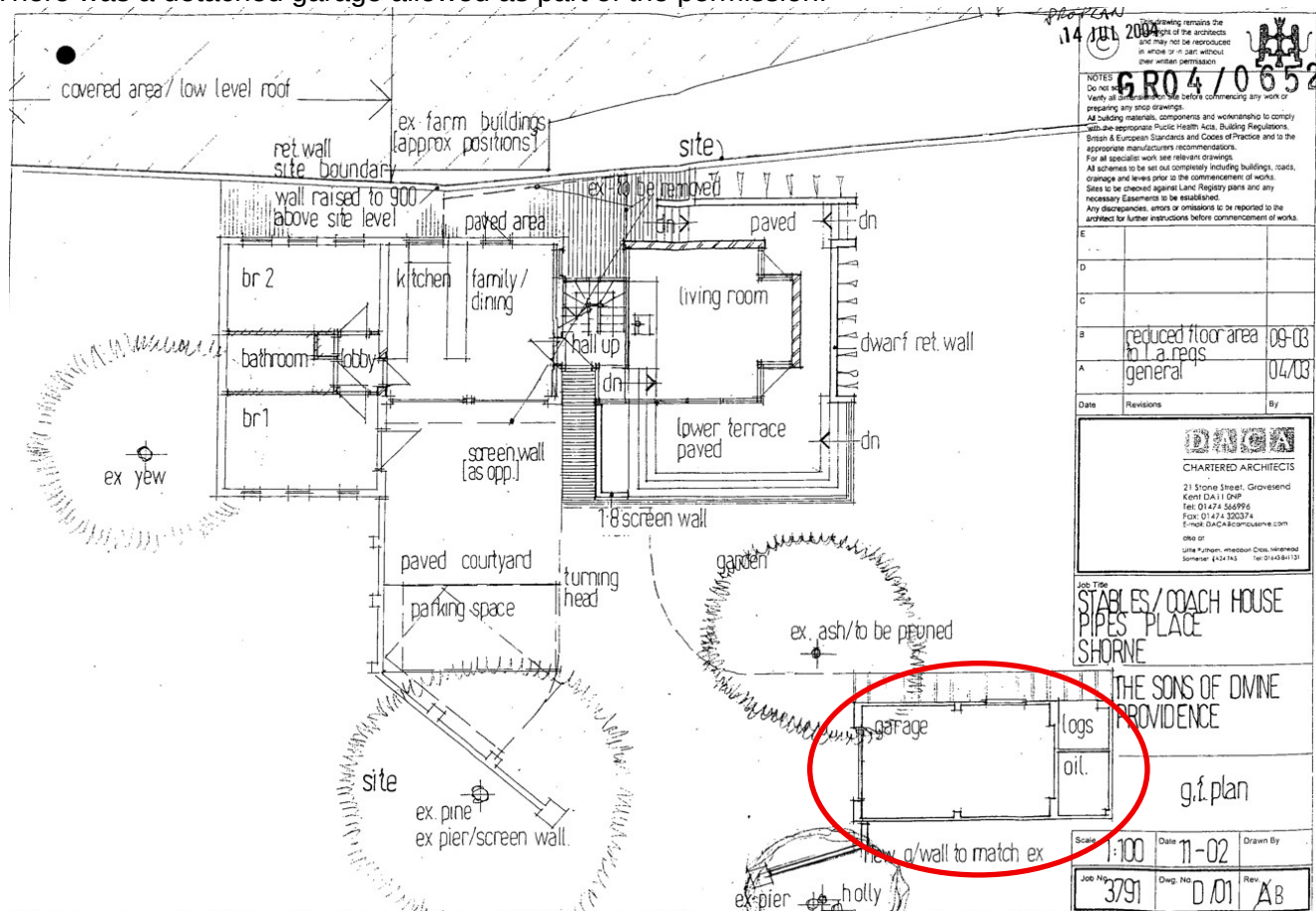
Local Ward Councillors were also consulted but no responses were received.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks retrospective permission for the change of use of the garage to 2 offices and a bathroom.

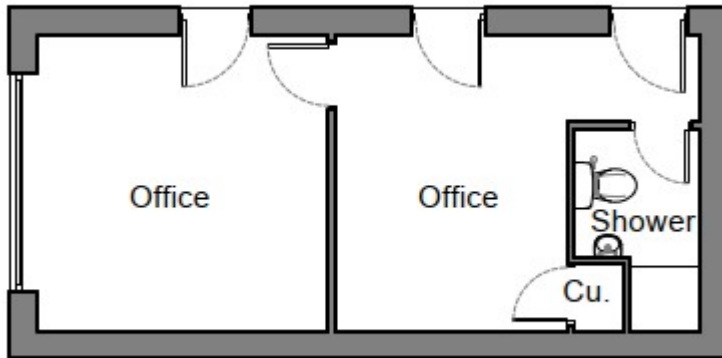
The property was permitted to convert to a dwelling with extensions in 2003 (see Planning History above). There was a detached garage allowed as part of the permission:





Notably, there were no conditions on the permission restricting the use of the garage or preventing its physical alteration.

The submitted application form states the work was carried out in June 2005. The layout is now as follows:

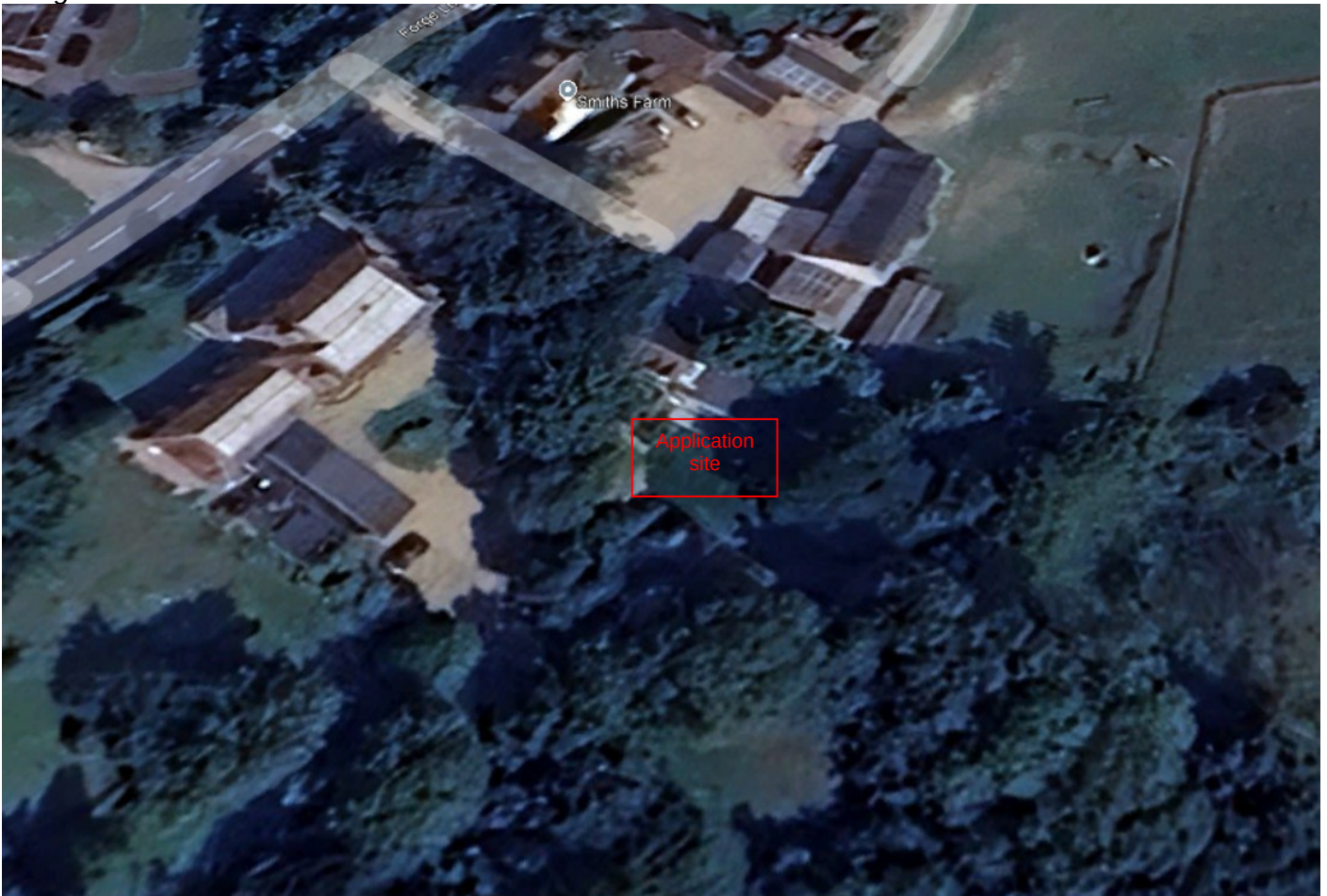




Principle Issues

The site lies outside the rural settlement boundary of Shorne, in the Green Belt. It is within the Shorne Village Conservation Area and adjacent a Grade II Listed Building to the east, Pipes Place. It is also within the Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area.

Google Earth Aerial View:



The main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are as follows:

- Principle of development in the Green Belt
- Impact on landscape character

- Design and Listed Building/Conservation Area impacts
- Residential amenity
- Parking and highways

Principle of development in the Green Belt

Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 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 Core Strategy 2014.

Green Belts are of great importance. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by preserving the open and permanent characteristics of Green Belts (paragraph 142 of the NPPF 2024). Paragraph 153 of the NPPF 2024 states that 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.

Local Planning Authorities should regard development as inappropriate in the Green Belt, unless certain exceptions apply (paragraph 154 of the NPPF 2024). In the case of this proposal, the following exceptions are applicable:

(c) 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.

The changes to the existing outbuilding occurred in excess of 10 years ago. It was altered by altering/adding window and door openings. The building was not extended. The proposal would therefore not be deemed inappropriate under exception (c).

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are: ... iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;...

The existing outbuilding was re-used as ancillary office accommodation related to the main dwelling on the site. The outbuilding is in good condition and required no works other than what would have been expected to enable it to be used in the manner involved. The development does not affect openness at the site as the works fall within the existing footprint of the building, and would not conflict with any of the five purposes of the Green Belt set out in paragraph 143 of the NPPF 2024:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

The proposal would therefore not be deemed inappropriate under exception (h).

The existing outbuilding would be considered a 'domestic adjunct' considering its location and use in relation to the main dwelling; it is clearly within the residential curtilage of The Coach House and has a close visual relationship to it. The outbuilding has an ancillary home office use linked to the main dwelling.

However, a key planning concern with outbuildings such as this is that there is the potential for them not to be ancillary to the main dwelling on the site, even when they are not within the Green Belt. In this particular case, the outbuilding has its own separate access as it is detached from the main dwelling. If it were to be subdivided away from the main dwelling, it could lead to additional parking requirements, hardstanding,

boundary treatments, and other domestic paraphernalia that would all have a negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Such a proposal would not be acceptable. Given the concern relating to the potential for plot severance in this Green Belt location, it will be essential to impose a condition restricting the use of the outbuilding as ancillary and related to the main dwelling.

On the basis of the above considerations, and subject to the inclusion of a restricted use condition, the proposed development would not be inappropriate in the Green Belt and would comply with the requirements of Section 13 of the NPPF 2024 relating to the protection of Green Belt land and Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2024.

Landscape Impacts

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024 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.

The application site is also located in the Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area within the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (GLCA) 2009 and as such, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014 is also relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the GLCA will be taken into account in determining applications. The GLCA states that the character area is defined by undulating landform and extensive tree cover, which provides an enclosed character and subsequent low visibility within the area. The overall condition of the landscape is good and has moderate sensitivity. It is recommended that key landscape elements should be conserved and reinforced, including the wooded character of the area.

Visually, the changes to the outbuilding are minor and do not represent a significant change in the character and appearance of the site. On this basis, the proposal would not result in an adverse visual impact on wider landscape character.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would conserve the rural landscape context of this site within Shorne Woodlands Landscape Character Area. As such, the proposal would comply with the relevant requirements of Policies CS02 and CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014, and paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024.

Design and Listed Building/Conservation Area Impacts

Section 12 of the NPPF 2024 relates to achieving well-designed and beautiful places and sets out the Government's requirements in relation to design issues. Paragraph 131 emphasises the importance of achieving high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 also 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 Coach House is located in the Shorne Conservation Area but the outbuilding is just outside the boundary.

The property comprises a detached converted dwelling in a good size plot with a detached outbuilding. The outbuilding was approved as part of the original planning permission converting The Coach House to a dwelling in 2003. The outbuilding is single storey, faced in brick, located in the garden and is not visible from a public vantage point. The external changes to the outbuilding from the conversion of the garage to offices were minor and had no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the application property and surrounding Conservation Area.

The NPPF 2024 places great significance on the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets, and on new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph

210). This is echoed in Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, which states that the significance of the Borough's heritage assets and their setting should always be preserved or enhanced. Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan 1994 sets out that for development involving alterations to listed buildings or affecting the setting of listed buildings, the primary consideration is the maintenance of the integrity of the original listed building. Proposals must be sympathetic in terms of their appearance and materials.

The outbuilding is some distance away from the Grade II Listed Pipes Place, which lies to the west of the application site outside its curtilage. Due to the distance of this modern outbuilding from the listed building, and the small-scale nature of the changes made to it, the proposal does not cause any harmful impact on the setting of the Grade II Listed Building.

Overall, the proposal would be in accordance with Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan 1994, Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 131 ,135 and 203 of the NPPF 2024.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2024 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 135f). 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.

As the outbuilding is existing and well separated and screened from neighbouring dwellings, the changes would not have caused material harm to any adjoining properties. No representations have been made from neighbouring properties.

Overall, the proposal would not harm the amenities of neighbouring properties, and as such, would comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF 2024.

Parking and Highways

The proposal does reduce the dedicated parking provision at the site. However, there is ample space within the existing driveway to accommodate vehicles associated with the property. There were no conditions on the original permission restricting the parking space at the site, which would indicate this was not a concern at the time. There have also not been any representations submitted on this matter. There would therefore be no adverse parking or highway issues resulting from the proposal, which would comply with Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Conclusion

The retrospective changes made to the outbuilding to convert it from a garage to offices and a bathroom are acceptable in terms of the design and impact on the application site and neighbouring listed building, the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and with regards to residential amenity and highways and parking matters. The proposals would therefore comply with the requirements of Policies CS11, CS12, CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, saved Policies TC2, T1 and P3 of the Local Plan 1994, and paragraphs 115, 131, 135, 187 and 210 of the NPPF 2024.

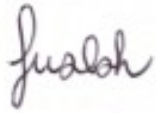
Recommendation

Permission subject to conditions.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Katherine Parkin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
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Signed:	K. Parkin	Signed:	
Dated:	19 February 2026	Dated:	20 February 2026