



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260548

Location: Maycroft Wrotham Road Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of garage in front garden.

Applicant: Mr James Murphy

Site Visit Date: 11 June 2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Planning Application form;
Drawing no. 0001-A-001 Location and existing block plans;
Drawing no. 001-A-100 Rev. 02 Proposed layout, elevations and block plan; and
Planning Statement Revision A 12 August 2026.

Superseded Documents/Plans

Drawing no. 001-A-100 Rev. 01 Proposed layout, elevations and block plan; and
Planning Statement 27 April 2026.

Procedural Issues

Following a request from the GBC Conservation Officer, additional information regarding land levels and external facing materials was provided by the applicant. The additional information was subject to further consultation with the GBC Conservation Officer only, because there was no material change to the proposed development.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220173	Application for approval of condition 3 attached to planning permission reference number 20211485 relating to details and samples of all external facing materials.	Approval of details	22.04.2022
20211485	Demolition of existing lean-to, conservatory and single storey extension. Erection of two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.	Permitted	27.01.2022

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
- TC2 – Policy for Listed Buildings
- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

As set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012 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

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 (2026), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

- Section 4 -Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5 – Meeting the challenge of climate change
- Section 12 – Making Effective use of land
- Section 14 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 19 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 20 – 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)
- Hook Green, Meopham Rural Conservation Area Appraisal SPD (2016)

Other material considerations

The Council has a statutory duty under 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects listed buildings or their settings, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) make it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework sets out that when considering development proposals, relevant policies may be given weight, however, this is subject 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 compliance of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to them).

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 of the Framework, which from 17 August 2026 Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan has reached the Regulation 19 Consultation stage, with the consultation having ended on 18 August 2026. The emerging Local Plan does not form part of the Development Plan.

The Council is aware that third parties have raised objections to the wider emerging Local Plan and specific policies within it. Therefore, at present the Council cannot categorically state that the emerging Local Plan can be considered sound and consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) [as an emerging Local Plan being brought forward under the legacy system, it would be examined under the 2024 Framework]. 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

GBC Conservation Officer

Second response:

Levels and visibility from the road – Addressed. A new Section 7 has been added, showing highway level (-0.343m), garage floor (0.00m), fascia (+2.522m), eaves (+2.870m) and ridge (+4.50m), together with retaining wall heights (+0.30m to +0.65m) and the boundary wall (+0.936m). New existing/proposed street-scene elevations (8 and 9) have also been added. Together these confirm the garage sits behind the existing frontage wall and hedging, with only around 1.5m of the hipped roof visible above the boundary treatment from Wrotham Road. This gives me enough information to properly assess visual impact on the setting of Waterditch.

Garage door colour – Addressed. The "or similar" qualifier has been removed; the door is now fixed as Jet Black, RAL 9005, flush-panel design. This should be secured by condition.

Retaining wall facing material – Addressed. Now specified as Ibstock Westbrick Red Purple Multi facing brick, stretcher bond, buff/cream mortar, to match the existing retained brick piers. Should also be conditioned.

Roof finish – The application form and the drawing's Materials and Finishes schedule both specify cement fibre tiles from the Marley Eternit range, "either a Thrutone or Modern range, to match the existing dwelling as close as possible." This is the same type of open-ended wording that applied to the garage door before it was tightened up in Rev 02, and it hasn't been revised alongside the other materials updates. Given the roof is the most visible element of the garage from the street (per the new street-scene elevations), I'd ask that the applicant confirm the specific tile range and colour, secured by condition (sample/match to be agreed with the LPA prior to installation), rather than leaving the final choice open.

Replacement planting for the removed frontage apple tree – Not fully addressed. The applicant has confirmed two replacement apple trees, plus a weeping willow, three white birches and a paper birch, but these have all been planted elsewhere in the garden, behind the coach house. None of this replacement planting is within the frontage where the original tree contributed to the screening and landscaped character of the setting opposite Waterditch. I don't consider planting located out of view from the highway addresses the loss of that frontage tree's contribution to the street scene. I'd recommend the applicant be asked to provide appropriate replacement planting within the retained frontage/soft landscaping area, secured by a landscaping condition, before this point can be regarded as resolved.

Initial response:

Levels/visibility - The site is shown rising from the entrance, with retaining walls proposed to manage the slope, but no section drawing has been submitted showing existing/proposed levels or the height of the garage and retaining structures relative to the highway. Given the sensitivity of the setting opposite a listed building, this information is needed before the visual impact can be properly assessed. A levels/section drawing should be requested.

Garage door colour - The schedule specifies "JET BLACK (RAL 9005) OR SIMILAR," which is ambiguous. This should be clarified and, if approved, fixed by condition (e.g. RAL 9005, no discretion for an alternative).

Policy - Regard should be had to s.16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) Policies CS19 (Development and Design Principles) and CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment); and NPPF (Dec 2024) Chapter 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment).

Happy to comment further once the above points are addressed.

KCC Highways & Transportation

The following is a summary of the comments received. The full response can be found on the GBC website.

Based on a review of the submitted block plan (drawing no. 001-A-100), I can confirm that the proposed garage will not impact the existing visibility or manoeuvring arrangements on site.

Kent County Council Highways typically advises a garage length of 7 metres to ensure sufficient space for both secure cycle storage and vehicle parking. However, given that the garage has a width of 4.675 metres, which exceeds the minimum size requirements set out in Kent County Council's Vehicle Parking Standards (Supplementary Planning Guidance 4), I am satisfied that the proposed garage dimensions are acceptable.

Conclusion:

I refer to the above planning application and confirm that provided the following requirements are secured by condition or planning obligation, then I would raise no objection on behalf of the local highway authority:-

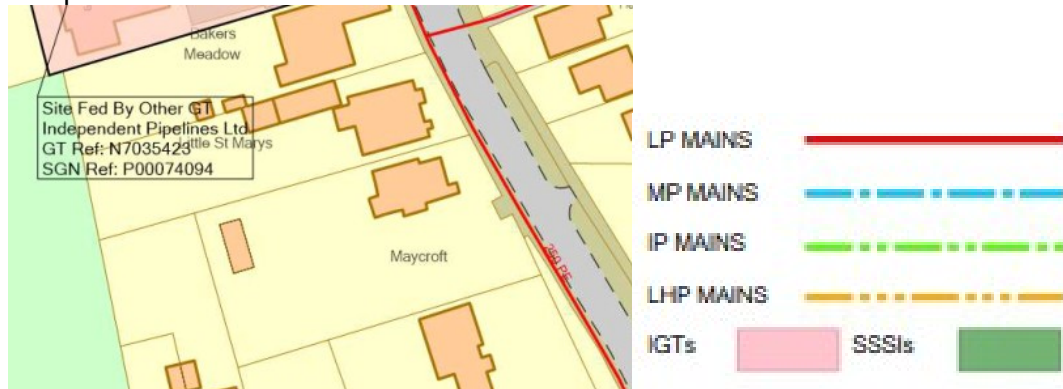
- Provision and permanent retention of the garage shown on the submitted plans (drawing number: 001-A-100) prior to the use of the site commencing.

Southern Gas Networks

The following is a summary of the comments received. The full response can be found on the GBC website.

Although SGN has a high pressure gas pipeline in the vicinity, the safety and integrity of our high pressure assets will not be affected by the proposal based on the information submitted.

Extracts from map:



Meopham Parish Council

No objection.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and press notice and to eight neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received. The overall consultation period expired on 09.09.2026.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

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 (especially where it will be visible from the street) and should be unobtrusively located to the side and rear of the dwelling; 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.

Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 places a high priority on the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment. Saved Policy TC2 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 states that for development affecting the setting of listed buildings, the integrity of the listed building should be maintained and that proposals should be

sympathetic to the listed building in terms of massing, scale, appearance and materials. Saved Policy TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 sets out that development within or affecting conservation areas will be carefully judged for its impact and will be expected to make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The Hook Green, Meopham Conservation Area and a Grade II listed building (Water Ditch, Wrotham Road) are located immediately to the east of the application site. The proposed development would be located adjacent to the site frontage, where an existing laurel hedge and brick wall would provide some screening. As such, the proposal would not be widely visible in the surrounding street scene. Following the submission of additional information, the GBC Conservation Officer has not raised an objection to the proposal and suggests a number of planning conditions to ensure that the proposed external facing materials are appropriate and that replacement tree planting is undertaken.

The proposed garage would have a hipped roof to match the existing dwelling and the external facing materials and surfacing for the extended driveway and retaining wall would also match with those existing. The garage would appear subservient in size to the dwelling at the application site. It is noted that there are at least two existing frontage outbuildings located in the area surrounding the application site.

The proposal would involve the loss of an apple tree and a false acacia tree from the site frontage, which would undermine the verdant setting of the listed building and conservation area located opposite. As such, replacement tree planting should be subject to a condition attached to any planning permission granted.

In order to ensure that the garage would remain adequately screened in future and to retain the verdant appearance of the site frontage, the existing laurel hedge and front wall should be conditioned to be retained permanently.

In order to ensure that the external facing materials are appropriate to the historical setting, appropriate conditions can be attached to any planning permission granted.

Overall, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design, would not detract from the character or appearance of the surrounding conservation area or listed building and would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014, Saved Policies TC2 and TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD 2021.

The application site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area where, according to the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment 2009, the overall condition of the landscape is good and it has moderate sensitivity. The document recommends that the key landscape elements should be conserved and reinforced. Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) requires proposals to take account of the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment 2009 and to ensure that landscape character is conserved, restored and enhanced.

The proposed development would result in an increase in built development, within the confines of an existing residential garden, located in the village of Meopham. The domestic character of the application site would be retained and the development would not be especially visible in the wider landscape setting. Therefore, there would be no adverse impacts to landscape character and the proposed development would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 and the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment 2009.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would not affect the private amenity space or internal layout 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

The closest dwellings to the application site are Lyndhurst, Wrotham Road (located to the north); Fircroft, Wrotham Road and no. 16 Cheshunt Close (located to the south); and no. 18 Cheshunt Close (located to the west). Water Ditch, The Stables, Taralee and High Firs, Wrotham Road are all located to the east, across the roadway.

Due to the design of the proposed development and to the layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surrounding dwellings. As such, the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Parking and Highways

The application property has four bedrooms and on-site parking is available on the site frontage for at least three vehicles. The proposed development would provide a single garage and extend the existing driveway. It is noted that KCC Highways & Transportation have not raised an objection and require the permanent retention of the proposed garage via a planning condition. However, since the application site already has sufficient parking, it would be unreasonable to require the new garage to be retained permanently. Instead, the use of the garage for the parking of a vehicle for residential occupiers and the retention of a vehicle access to it, can be protected by appropriately worded planning conditions.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the application site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and 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.

The highways advice given by KCC Highways & Transportation can be brought to the attention of the applicant via an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of some palaeolithic potential and multi-period background archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2. 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.

The application site is located in close proximity to a high pressure gas pipeline (along the site frontage). Southern Gas Networks have advised that the safety and integrity of the pipeline would not be affected by the proposal and as such, there would be no adverse impacts to gas infrastructure.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Submission and approval of roofing material prior to installation

Submission and approval of replacement tree planting prior to first use.

Except for the roofing material, facing materials in accordance with drawing no. 001-A-100 Rev. 2 and Planning Statement 12 August 2026.

The laurel hedge and front boundary wall (as shown on drawing no. 001-A-100 Rev. 2) to be retained permanently.

Use for parking only

Formation and surfacing of extended driveway

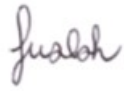
Conclusion

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:	16th September 2026	Dated:	16 September 2026