



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240393

Location: Leywood Farm Leywood Road Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a single storey side infill extension to the southern corner of the bungalow.

Applicant: Mr And Mrs Sparks

Site Visit Date: 09/05/2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form
- Drawing No: 03A (Site Location Map)
- Drawing No: 04A (Existing Block Plan)
- Drawing No: 05C (Proposed Block Plan)
- Drawing No: 01 (Existing Plans and Elevations)
- Drawing No: 02A (Proposed Plans and Elevations)
- Heritage/Design and Access Statement

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Outcome	Decision Date
20240042	Application for a Proposed Lawful Development certificate in respect of two single storey side extensions.	Lawful Development Certificate refused	15.03.2024
20040031	Erection of two replacement storage sheds.	Permitted	14.04.2004
19930736	Erection of two single storey extensions to form bedroom and bathroom at the front and utility room at the side. Continued use of former agricultural land for grazing of horses, retention of converted cowsheds as stables and recreational use of remaining farm yard.	Permitted	16.03.1994
19930501	Occupation of a farm worker's bungalow without complying with the agricultural occupancy condition attached to planning permission.	Lawful Development Certificate Granted	02.09.1993
19840125	Erection of single storey front and side extension to form hall kitchen diner lobby utility room and double garage	Permitted	30.04.1984

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 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

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) sets out 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 1st Review (1994) general conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- SPD – Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (October 2021)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2021-2026
- Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020
- The Setting of Heritage Assets by Historic England (2017)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Kent Downs National Landscape Unit

No comments received.

Luddesdown Parish Council

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

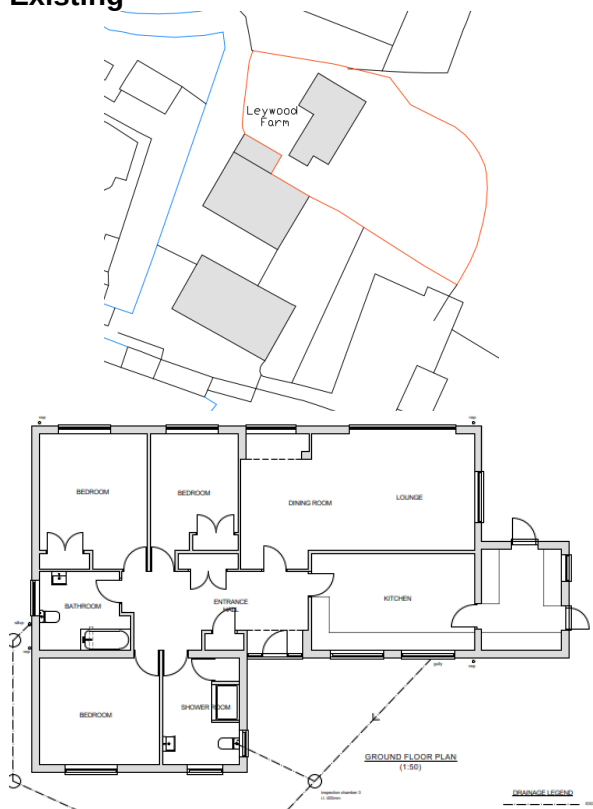
The application was advertised by way of site notice and letters to 3 surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 07.06.2024 and no comments were received.

Analysis

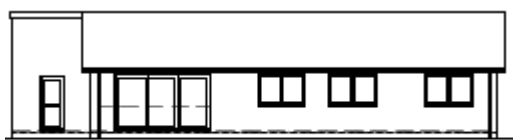
Proposal

The proposal seeks the erection of a single storey side infill extension to the southern corner of the bungalow.

Existing



FRONT ELEVATION
(1:100)

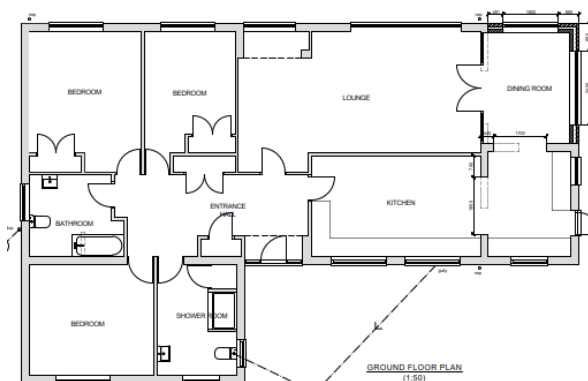
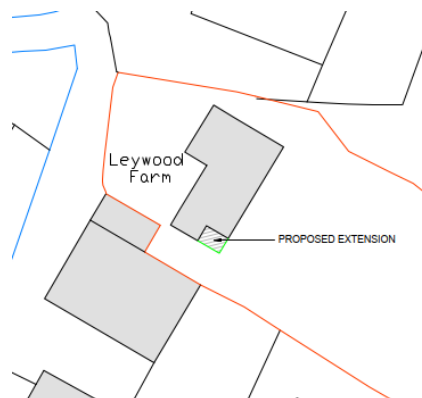


REAR ELEVATION
(1:100)



SIDE ELEVATION
(1:100)

Proposed



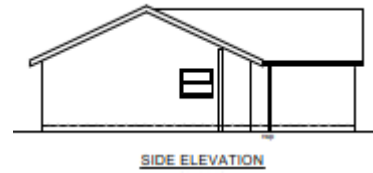
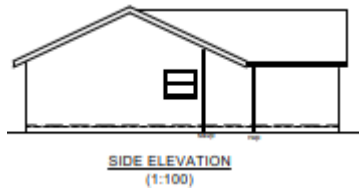
FRONT ELEVATION
(1:100)



REAR ELEVATION
(1:100)



SIDE ELEVATION
(1:100)



Background

An application for a lawful development certificate was refused under 20240042 for the same extension. The reason for refusal was due to the site being situated in The Kent Downs National Landscape.

Main issues

The application site is located in the countryside in the Kent Downs National Landscape and in the Green Belt. It is also located in the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area and within the vicinity of a Grade II listed building known as Boughurst Farm.

The main issues for consideration with this proposal are as follows:

- Principle of development in the Green Belt
- Impact on openness and the landscape character of the surrounding area
- Impact on a listed building setting.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt is development that by definition, is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 goes on to say that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) notes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open (para 142). The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. At paragraph 143 the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) lists the 5 purposes which the Green Belt serves. Of particular relevance in this case is that it assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 154). The listed exceptions include 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.

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) (LPCS) 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 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Furthermore, Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) (LPFR), which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside, sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 154 the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

In particular Policy C13 Local Plan First Review places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling, unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria (ii)). It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting (criteria (vi)). It is considered that these factors are relevant in determining whether the size of an extension is proportionate and as such, these aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and should be afforded weight.

In determining proposals for residential extensions in the Green Belt an assessment will be made against the impact of the 'original' existing development. The original building is the building as it existed on 1 July 1948, however, for older homes constructed prior to July 1st, 1948, the 'original dwelling' refers to the floorspace of the dwelling as it was on this date. Any additions that have occurred since the 'original' dwelling date are considered cumulatively and will be counted as part of the overall increase in floorspace of the dwelling when new additions are being assessed. The reason for this is small reductions in openness, repeated many times, can have a cumulatively detrimental effect.

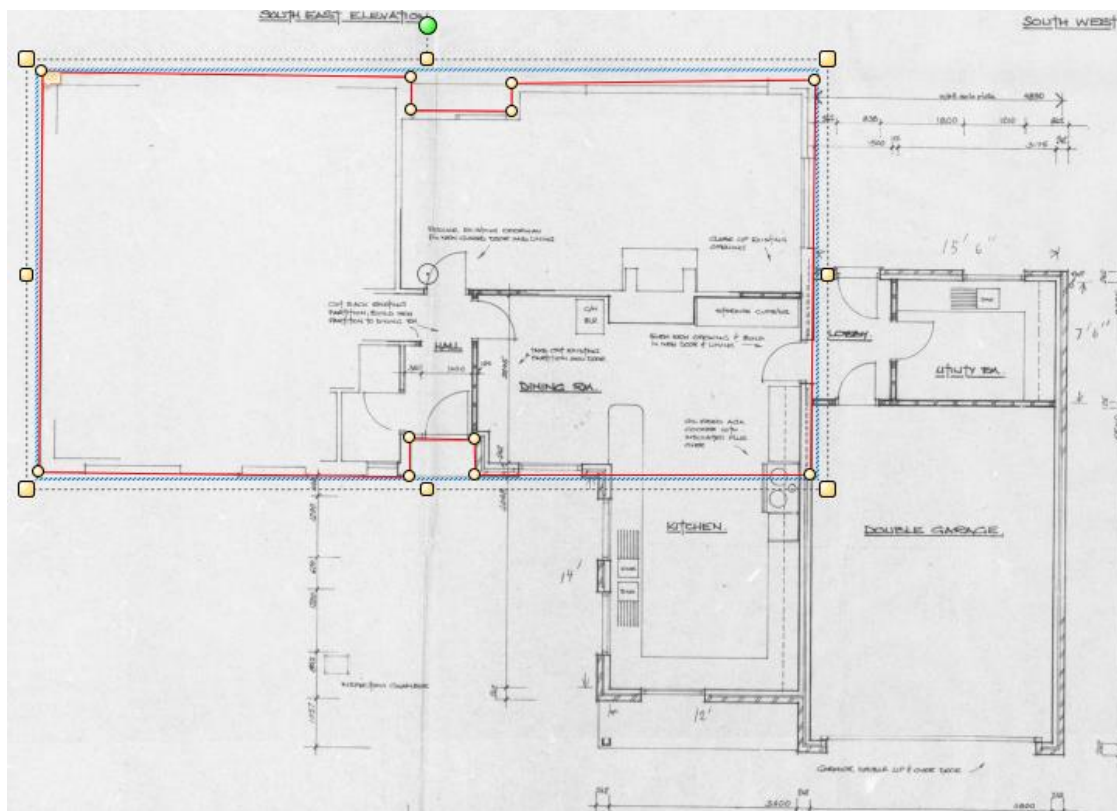
The existing dwelling in this case has been extended a number of times, however we will only look at the original house and dwelling as proposed in the below calculations.

Existing dwelling (as built)

Ground Floor: 114.5sqm

First Floor: N/A

The area highlighted red denotes the area of the original dwelling. These plans were submitted under reference 19840125 and shows proposed extensions.



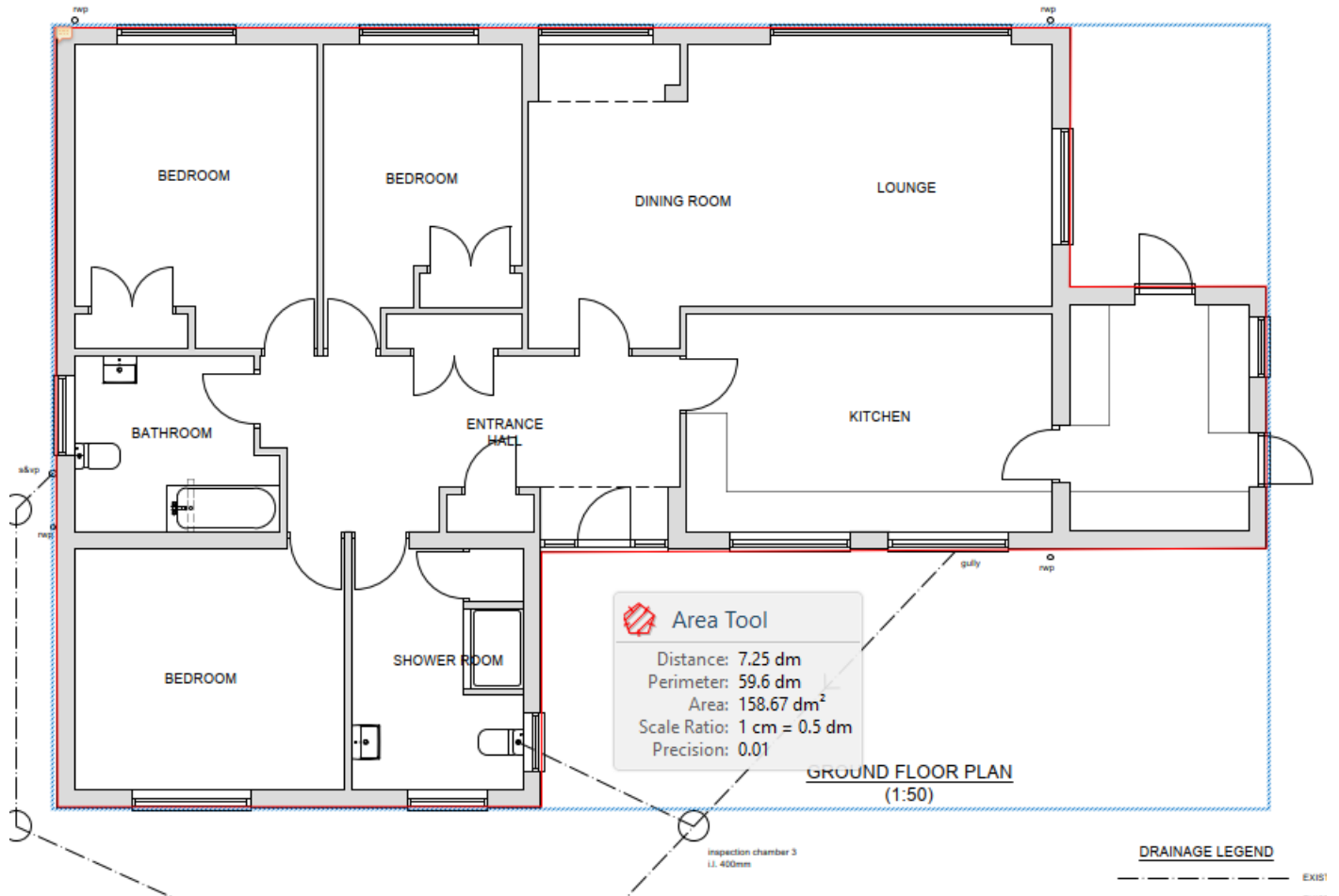
Total: 114.5sqm (House as built)

Existing Size

Ground Floor: 158.67sqm

First Floor N/A

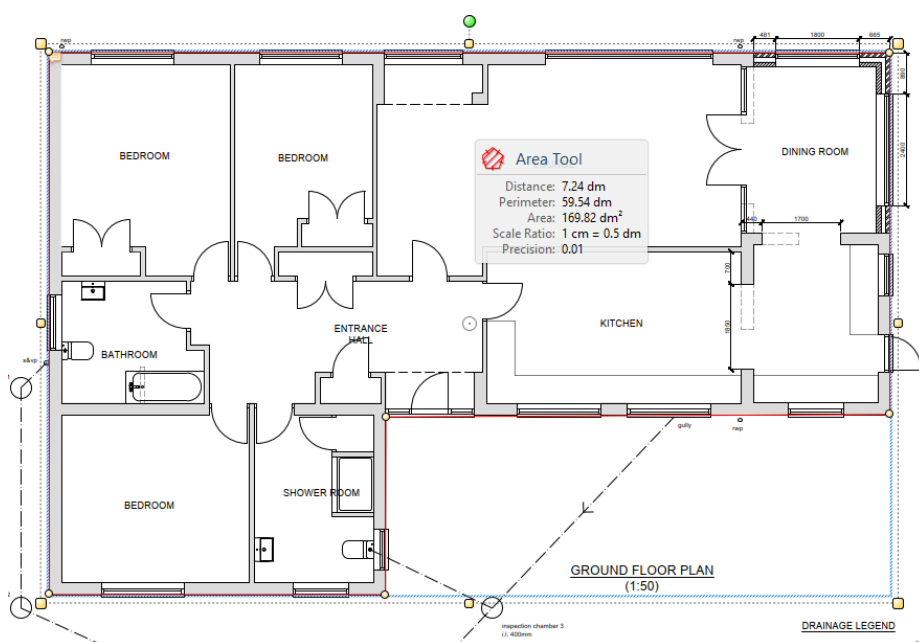
Total = 158.7m2 (As Existing)



Proposed Extension

Ground Floor: 169.82sqm

First Floor: N/A



Total: 169.82sqm (Proposed)

As Built 114.5sqm

As Proposed 169.82sqm

Total floor space increase from dwelling as built: **55.32m²**

Total floor space proposed: **11.15m²**

Total floor space increase of proposed extension over original dwelling: **48.31%**

Saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review provides the local interpretation of national policy and states there will be an overall limit of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally) prior to any later extension or alteration, unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.

In this case the increased floorspace still exceeds the one third limit and therefore is not within the parameters set by Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review. Therefore, it will be necessary to assess the proposal on the overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.

The existing dwelling is a modest detached bungalow with pitch roof and gable roof design. The proposed extension is modest and given its rearward siting it will not be readily visible from a public vantage point. Given that the extension will not introduce excessive bulk and massing to the dwelling it is considered that on balance this extension is acceptable.

Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF 2023 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also states that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. Paragraph 001 of the Planning Practice Guidance 2019 on Green Belts looks to assess the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt by taking into account the spatial and visual aspects of a development, its duration and remediability, and the activity levels generated.

As established above, the application proposal, by virtue of its size, would not involve an inappropriate form of development at the application site that would be harmful to the Green Belt.

The extension is modestly sized, subservient, within the curtilage of a very generous plot and so the amount of harm to the openness of the Green Belt in this location will be limited and localised, and is therefore not considered to adversely impact openness.

Landscape Character

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 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 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well-designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2023 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 site lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape. Reflective of paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2023, Policy SD2 of the Management Plan 2021-2026 recognises the need to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities, distinctiveness and natural resources of National Landscapes. Principle SD8 seeks to ensure that proposals do not negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the National Landscape.

The application site is also located in the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area 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 Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) will be taken into account in determining applications.

In relation to the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area, the LCA states the area is defined by undulating topography with arable farmland and pasture, irregular field patterns, fields divided by native hedgerows and areas of native woodland that all contribute to the rural character of the area. The condition of the landscape is generally good, its sensitivity high. The guidelines for the area focus on maintaining the character of sparse and distinctive built development and conserve small-scale farmsteads.

The site is fairly open at the front with post and rail fencing and gates. Leywood Farm is set well back from the road and It is considered that the proposal will not have any detrimental impact on the landscape character area.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed extension would not detract from the openness of the Green Belt and would conserve the rural landscape context of this site within the Kent Downs National Landscape and Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area. As such, the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policies CS02, CS12 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan 1994 and the Section 15 of the NPPF 2023.

Design and Impact on Listed Building(s)

The NPPF 2023 also 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 203). 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 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 massing, scale, appearance and materials.

Given the modest scale of development and the proximity of Leywood Farm from Boughurst Farm which is a Grade II listed building it is considered that there will not be any detrimental impact on the setting of a listed building and so the proposal is compliant with Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan 1994 and section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is recommended for permission.

For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Sharon Sahota	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	14/06/2024	Dated:	14th June 2024