



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230188

Location: Greenwood Carters Hill Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a single storey front extension to include 2 skylights and alterations to existing side extension to construct a bigger entrance hall.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Nerijus & Sandra Brazys

Site Visit Date: 14th March 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;
Drawing No. A02 – Front, Rear and Side Elevations As Existing;
Drawing No. A03 – Ground, First, Mansard Floor Plans, Section A-A, 3D Views As Proposed;
Drawing No. A05 – 3D Views As Proposed; and
Drawing No. A06 – Site Location and Block Plans.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20000840	Alterations to increase height of roof and width of front gable to form open porch and allow conversion of roofspace to form 2 no. bedrooms and bedroom with ensuite shower room/w.c.	Permission	28.03.2001
19920347	Details pursuant to GR/91/636 for the erection of two detached bungalows with detached double garages at the front.	Permission	13.07.1992
19910636	Outline Application for the erection of 2no. bungalows.	Permission	23.10.1991
19910132	Outline application for the erection of 3no. bungalows.	Refused	19.08.1991

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 4 – Decision making
- 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Meopham Parish Council

Meopham Parish Council raises no objections to this planning application.

KCC – Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way NS273 lies to the south east of the site. The route may be affected by the application, and I therefore enclose a copy of the Public Rights of Way network map showing the definitive line of this path for your information.

It is important to advise the applicants that a public right of way must not be stopped up, diverted, obstructed or the surface disturbed and there must be no encroachment on the current width, at any time now or in future. This includes any building materials or waste generated during any of the construction phases. Please note that no furniture or fixtures may be erected on or across Public Rights of Way without the express consent of the Highways Authority.

GBC – Highways Officer

The property is large with more than adequate car parking provision. However, with the increase in the number of bedrooms, two secure cycle parking spaces should be provided to comply with the requirements of SPG4.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by a site notice and individual neighbour letters to 7 properties with an overall consultation expiry date of 7th April 2023. No comments have been received.

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

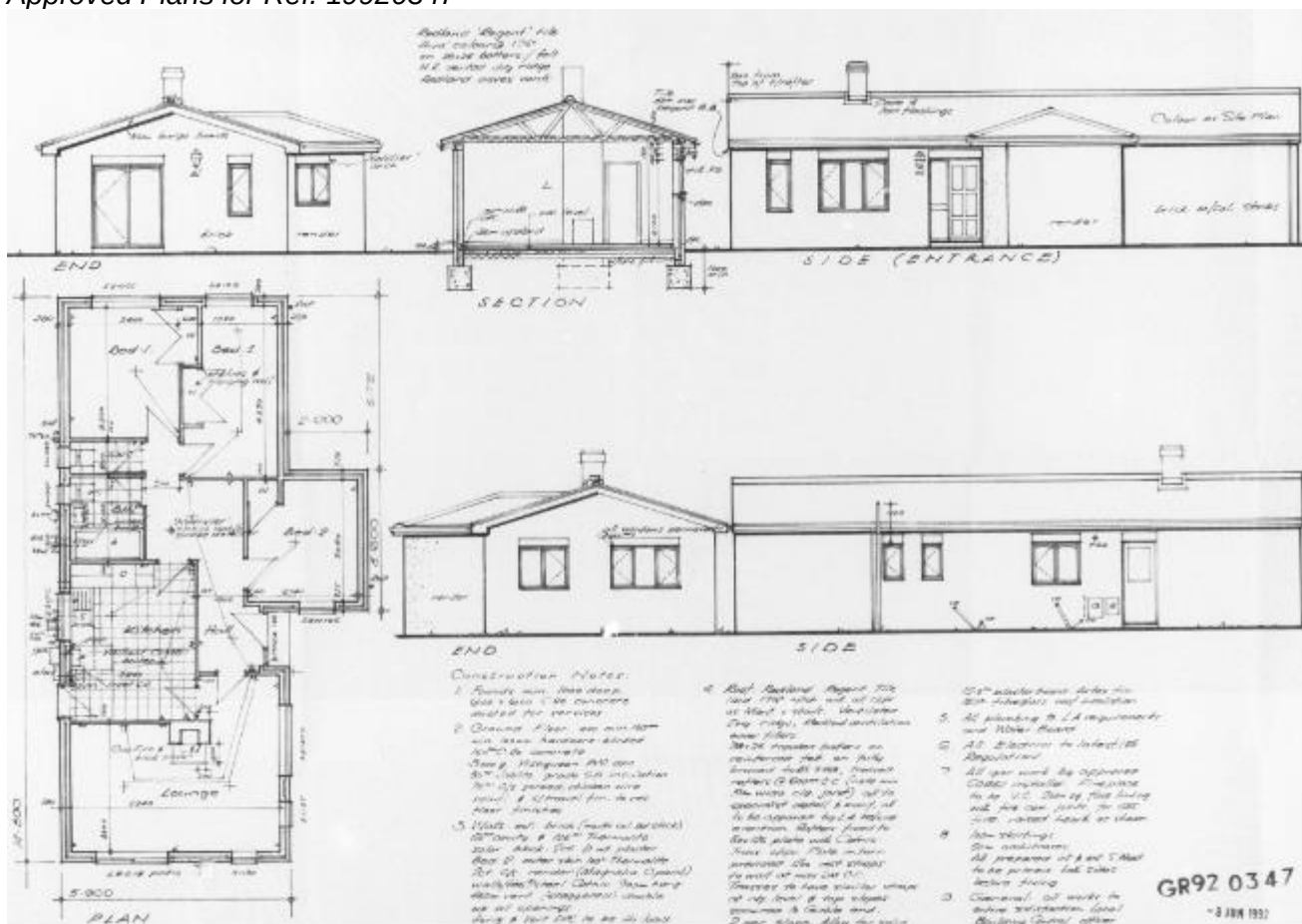
Officer's Analysis

Background

It would appear that the original dwelling was constructed some time after 1992, following outline planning permission dated 23rd October 1991 (Planning Ref. 19910636) and reserved matters approval dated 13th July 1992 (Planning Ref. 19920347). Looking at the planning history, it would appear that planning permission was approved for *alterations to increase height of roof and width of front gable to form open porch and allow conversion of roofspace to form 2 no. bedrooms and bedroom with ensuite shower room/w.c.* on 23rd March 2001 (Planning Ref. 20000840) and was implemented in its entirety. Therefore the property as it is today is not the 'original' dwelling.

The detached garage to the south of the property formed part of the 1992 reserved matters planning permission and was constructed at similar time to the original dwelling.

Approved Plans for Ref. 19920347



Approved Plans for Ref. 20000840



Site and Surrounding Area

The site is located in the Green Belt and in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area as defined on the adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy policies map and this must be the starting point for determining this application.

The application site at Greenwood, Carters Hill is a detached dwelling, that has been extended to form a two storey dwelling and is set in a large plot with a detached double garage. The property is set back from the highway by approximately 32.23m, with entrance gates set in from the highway by 15m. The property benefits from a large detached double garage to the front and driveway providing road parking for more than three cars.



The proposal is for the erection of a single storey side extension along the southern facing elevation, projecting 3m from the side of the existing dwelling, 6.7m in depth, 3.05m in height to the eaves and 4.33m to the ridge with a pitch roof with 2no. rooflights and bi-fold doors with gable glazing, together with the infilling of the existing canopy porch.

The proposal would create an enclosed porch entrance and new open plan kitchen, dining and living room and reconfiguration of the remaining ground floor layout to create 2no. additional double bedrooms. The first floor would remain unchanged.

Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations



The key issues in the consideration of this application is;

- Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
- its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land with it;
- the effect on character and appearance
- whether the proposal would impact the living conditions of future occupiers
- whether the proposal would impact on neighbouring properties;
- whether the proposal would result in any parking and highway safety issues;
- any other material considerations.

The appropriateness of the development within 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 148 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 NPPF (2021) notes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by

keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. At paragraph 138 the NPPF (2021) 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 NPPF (2021) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 149). 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 (LPCS).

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 NPPF (2021), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 the NPPF (2021).

In particular Policy C13 (LPFR) 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 NPPF (2021) 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 since its original construction, as laid out within the Background section. The following calculations show the dwelling as built, the existing extensions and the proposed.

Existing dwelling (as built)

Ground Floor: 77.83m²

First Floor: N/A

Total: 77.83m²

Existing Dwelling (as extended)

Ground Floor: 77.83m²

First Floor: 69.67m²

Total floor space increase from dwelling as built: 69.67m²

Total Overall Floorspace: 147.5m²

Percentage increase over original dwelling: 89.51%

Proposed Extension and Infill

Ground Floor: 13.8m²

Total floor space proposed: **161.3m²**

Total floor space increase of proposed extension over original dwelling: **17.73%**

Total floor space increase of existing and proposed extensions over original dwelling: **107.24%**

Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) 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 significantly exceeds the one third limit and therefore is not within the parameters set by Policy C13 (LPFR). Therefore, it will be necessary to assess the proposal on the overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling and whether it appears visually disproportionate.

The original dwelling was a modest single storey 3-bed detached dwelling. It has been extended a first floor level to create a spacious two storey detached dwelling. The proposed single storey side extension has an external footprint of 20.32m². Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposed extension is modest when viewed separately and has been designed to have a subservient addition to the host dwelling, it would result in an increase of external footprint that extends closer to the highway and together with the first floor extension already approved would result in a detrimental cumulative impact when considering what the original property was. It is therefore considered that the proposed extension, in addition to exceeding the one third limit set out in Policy C13 (LPFR) when added to the existing extension, it would also result in an increase in the bulk and appearance of the dwelling. As such it is considered that the proposed development would result in a detrimental impact in terms of bulk or appearance of the dwelling.

In summary it is considered that this extension is contrary to local and national planning policy in terms of green belt.

Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

Having determined that the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is necessary to assess the effect on the openness and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. The NPPF (2021) notes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

The proposed extension would project approx. 3m from the existing principal side elevation which fronts Carters Hill Lane, bringing it closer to the front boundary. Looking at the original property, which was a modest 3 bedroom single storey dwelling, prior to being extended, the proposed side extension would increase the external footprint by 18.08% above the existing (extended) property, and together with the first floor extension would result in material harm to the openness of the Green Belt and would represent encroachment into the countryside.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be contrary to Policy CS02 (LPCS) and Section 13 of the NPPF (2021).

External works

It has been stated on the application form and submitted drawings, that all external materials would match the existing.

Satellite View



Character and appearance

The application property is located on the western end of Carters Hill Lane within the Green Belt. The property is located is bounded by a high level brick wall and is set back generously from the highway. Due to the orientation of the property, the proposed extension would be highly visible from public vantage points. The proposed single storey side extension would have a pitch roof which would extend the footprint of the property further towards the front boundary of the property. The proposed extension whilst designed to match the main property would be highly visible from Carters Hill Lane due to the orientation of the property and this elevation is what is viewed first when entering the vehicular entrance. Currently the southern elevation of the property has French doors and small single window at ground floor and a single window at first floor. The proposed extension whilst having a modest projection would have bi-fold doors with glazing above which would dominate this elevation. Whilst the pitch roof of the extension would respect the host dwelling, the southern elevation would be a gable which is the elevation most visible. The pitch of the roof would be much shallower than the main roof and the proposal would be at odds with not only the pitch but the design of the barn hip of the southern elevation.

In terms of the infill to the porch area, this would not significantly alter the appearance as the roof would remain the same.

Taking account of all the above, it is considered that the proposal would be contrary to Policies CS02 and CS19 (LPCS) and Sections 12 and 13 of the NPPF (2021).

Impact on future occupiers

The revised NPPF (2021) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the living space of the main dwelling and as such accords with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Impact on neighbouring properties

The impact on neighbouring properties is considered with regard to criteria specified within Policy CS19, which states 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.

Given the separation distance between properties and the scale of the proposal, it is considered the proposal would not result in loss of light, privacy, outlook and increased overshadowing. No objections have been received. As such the development is in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) in respect of the living conditions for neighbouring properties.

Parking and Highways

The proposal would result in two additional bedrooms, however the existing garage and driveway provide parking for more than three vehicles and therefore the development would accord with KCC Vehicle Parking Standards, and the proposals would therefore comply with Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan and Policy CS11 (LPCS).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Landscape Character Area

Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced and the greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB and its setting.

The application site is located within the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. The topography is gently undulating with a mixture of arable and pasture farmland. The area is characterised by neat pattern of small square fields in the south, broader irregular shaped fields to the north, with narrow lanes and road lined with hedgerows. The condition is good and the guidelines are to conserve and reinforce.

Due to the layout of the site, position of the proposed extension and surrounding built form, it is considered that there would be no direct impact on the landscape character area. As such the proposal would accord with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Section 15 of the NPPF (2021).

Conclusion & Recommendation

For the reasons given above, the proposed extensions would result in a detrimental impact on the dwelling and character of the area, in particular the Green Belt and is considered to be contrary to local or national planning policy and is therefore recommended for refusal.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Amanda Grout	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:	<i>A Grout</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	28 th April 2023	Dated:	28 April 2023