

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230324

Location: 82 Hermitage Road Higham Rochester Kent

Description: AMENDED APPLICATION / REVISED DESCRIPTION
Erection of part two storey and part single storey rear extension and single storey front extension.

Applicant: Mr M Goodin

Site Visit Date: 24 May 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Planning Application form;
Drawing no. S10 Rev. P2 Existing block plan received 29 June 2023;
Drawing no. S11 Rev. P2 Proposed block plan received 29 June 2023;
Drawing no. S12 Rev. P4 Existing layouts and elevations received 24 August 2023; and
Drawing no. S13 Rev. P4 Proposed layouts and elevations received 11 September 2023.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. S13 Rev. P4 Proposed layouts and elevations received 24 August 2023;~~
~~Drawing no. S13 Rev. P2 Proposed layouts and elevations received 29 June 2023;~~
~~Drawing no. S12 Rev. P2 Existing layouts and elevations received 29 June 2023;~~
~~Drawing no. S10 Rev. P1 Existing block plan received 05 April 2023;~~
~~Drawing no. S11 Rev. P1 Proposed block plan 05 April 2023;~~
~~Drawing no. S12 Rev. P1 Existing layouts and elevations 05 April 2023; and~~
~~Drawing no. S13 Rev. P1 Proposed layouts and elevations 05 April 2023.~~

Procedural issues

This application has been submitted with planning application reference 20230333 for the erection of a part two storey and part single storey rear extension, single storey front extension; porch at the side and conversion of the garage into a study at no. 82A Hermitage Road.

The applicant has confirmed that there would be no encroachment over any boundary of the application site.

The proposed development was originally described and publicised as 'Erection of a two storey rear extension; single storey front extension and conversion of garage into a study.' Following an amendment to the proposal, the description was amended to that shown above and a second round of publicity was undertaken.

The submitted drawings contained a number of inaccuracies in their depiction of the size and location of the existing fenestration at the application property and at no. 82A Hermitage Road. Following a request from the case officer, more accurate drawings were submitted.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19790454	Erection of a single storey extension to form hall and w.c. at the side	Permitted	01.08.1979

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places

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)
- Kent Design Guide Review: Interim Guidance Note 3 Residential Parking (2008)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Highways Officer

Initial response:

I have no objections the driveway is sufficient to meet current car parking standards. However, as the existing garage could be used for the storage of cycles, alternative provision should be made at the rate of one cycle per bedroom.

It is however noted, that rooflights are being installed in the front elevation without any details of what the loft will be used for.

Second response:

I have no highway objections.

Higham Parish Council

No response received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised on two occasions by a site notice and to seven neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received.

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 two storey rear extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that they should not dominate the host property, should generally not be built adjoining the side boundaries of the site, should have roof designs that reflect and not overwhelm the main roof and window patterns and proportions that are in keeping with the host building and local character. For front extensions, the document states that they are generally discouraged but where proposed, they should respond to and enhance the character of the existing dwelling and street, be of a scale that is proportionate to the host building and preserve its original features.

Hermitage Road is predominantly residential in character with a variety of types and styles of dwelling. The application property is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling with a gable end concrete tiled roof, faced with brickwork and render and has an attached garage at the front. It is one of a pair of dwellings that have an individual style in the surrounding street scene.

It is noted that a partially constructed single storey rear extension, with a depth of four metres, already extends across the full width of the application property. Therefore, the proposed development would add a first floor element to this construction. As no planning permission exists for the existing extension, the proposal could regularise a potential breach of planning control.

The proposed development would add a single storey front extension with a depth of 2.5 metres across the full width of the building, with a lean-to pitched roof. The front extension would be subservient to the main building, with matching brickwork and fenestration and would not detract from the character of the dwelling.

The proposal would also add a part two storey and part single storey rear extension with a depth of 4 metres at ground floor level and 3 metres at first floor level, across the full width of the building, with a low pitched, hipped roof. The rear extension would adjoin the side boundary with no. 82A Hermitage Road. The roof design would be subservient to the main roof but be in a style and pitch that does not match with the existing. However, the low pitched and hipped design would minimise bulk and would not be widely visible in the surrounding area.

Cumulatively, the extensions to the application property would result in a significant increase in the size and bulk of the building but would not represent an overdevelopment of the site and would not be detrimental to its character.

The application site is located in the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 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 will be taken into account in determining applications. In relation to the Higham Arable Farmlands LCA, this document states that the overall condition of the landscape is poor and that it has moderate sensitivity. It recommends that the key landscape elements in poor condition should be restored and that the whole area should be safeguarded as a prominent landscape feature in the wider landscape.

The application site is located in a village and the proposed development would be within an existing residential curtilage. The proposal would result in an increase in the amount of built development but would not adversely affect the overall landscape character of the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design and would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of existing building or the surrounding area. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants. In this regard, the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The application property was originally a three bedroom dwelling (albeit with one bedroom that was below the size required by the Nationally Described Space Standard 2015 (NDSS)). The proposed development would result in a two bedroom dwelling (as the substandard bedroom would be converted into an en-suite). Both the proposed bedrooms would meet the size requirements of the NDSS.

According to the Residential Layout Guidelines June 2020 (RLG) a two bedroom dwelling should have a minimum garden area of 37.2 square metres and a minimum depth of 7.6 metres. The proposed residual garden would comply with these requirements (despite there being a large outbuilding).

The proposed development would result in the loss of a bathroom window in the first floor, rear elevation but a proposed window in the first floor, side elevation would replace the lost natural light to this room.

In order to prevent a loss of privacy for future occupiers, any proposed bathroom/w.c./en-suite windows should be conditioned to be permanently obscure glazed.

Overall, the proposed development 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), the NDSS and the RLG.

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of neighbouring occupiers. In this regard, the NDSS and the RLG are relevant.

The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows to the application property. The RLG set out that privacy distances between facing windows should be met, in order to prevent overlooking. A privacy distance of 21 metres is required for facing windows where there is no private garden area in between and a privacy distance of 26 metres is required where a private garden is within the field of view.

The closest residential properties to the application site are nos. 80 and 82A Hermitage Road (located to the west and east respectively). Nos. 6 The Larches is located to the south and nos. 25 and 27 Hermitage Road are located to the north, across the roadway.

As a result of the proposed development, two bedroom windows would be set back, closer to the boundary with no. 6 The Larches. There would be a privacy distance of 21 metres from the two bedroom windows in the proposed first floor rear elevation at the application site, to the side elevation of no. 6 The Larches.

The existing boundary fence would not screen overlooking, but by virtue of its location in the side elevation, the affected window would be likely to be a secondary window and as such, the expectation of privacy would be reduced. As there is a side garden area and not a private garden area between the affected window and the proposed windows, then a privacy distance of 21 metres would be required. Therefore, no adverse overlooking impacts would occur.

The living room window in the proposed front elevation would be set forward by 2.5 metres and at first floor, a bedroom window would be replaced with an en-suite window (which would be conditioned to be obscure glazed). The privacy distance to nos. 25 and 27 Hermitage Road would be 26 and 24 metres respectively. Therefore, no adverse overlooking impacts would occur.

The w.c. window in the proposed side elevation would face the side elevation at no. 80 Hermitage Road but as the proposed window would be obscure glazed, then there would be no adverse overlooking impacts.

The proposed rear extension would result in the application property being set back significantly behind the rear elevation of no. 80 Hermitage Road. There would be a separation of 2.2 metres from the side boundary between the dwellings. The following image illustrates the relationship between no. 80 and the application site;



By virtue of the proposed set back, the proposed development would cause some adverse overshadowing and overbearing impacts to no. 80 and it is noted that the difference in levels between the properties would exacerbate these impacts. However, due to the orientation of the buildings and their separation, it is considered that these adverse impacts would not be so significant as to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

The proposed extension would adjoin the side boundary with no. 82A Hermitage Road and have a depth of 3 metres at first floor level (4 metres at ground floor). A bedroom window and conservatory/dining room window at no. 82A are located close to the site boundary. The following image illustrates that the proximity of the windows/conservatory;



By virtue of the proximity to the boundary and its depth, the proposed rear extension would cause some adverse overshadowing and overbearing impacts to no. 82A Hermitage Road. The proposed rear extension would breach a 45° line taken from the edge of the proposed development across the affected bedroom window in layout form but in elevation, the proposal would not breach. For the conservatory/dining room window, the proposal would breach a 45° line taken from the edge of the proposed development to the conservatory/dining room window in both layout and elevation form. As the application site is south facing, there would be some adverse impacts to morning sunlight but for the remainder of the day, sunlight would not be impeded. It is noted that the proposed roof design would reduce the bulk of the extension when viewed from no. 82A Hermitage Road.

It is important to note that the same two storey rear extension is proposed to be erected at no. 82A Hermitage Road (under application reference 20230333), which would theoretically overcome any overshadowing and overbearing impacts, by moving the affected bedroom window rearwards and aligning the rear elevations of both properties. No objections have been raised by the occupier of no. 82A Hermitage Road and there does not appear to be any reason why the two extensions would not be constructed together. However, as the two properties are under different ownership, there is no guarantee that both extensions would be built at the same time.

Overall, taking the above factors into account, it is considered that the adverse overbearing and overshadowing impacts from the rear extension to the occupiers of no. 82A Hermitage Road would not be so significant as to warrant a refusal of planning permission, whether the proposed rear extension at that property is constructed or not.

The proposed front extension would have a depth of 2.5 metres across the full width of the property. Due to the separation between the buildings and their orientation, there would be no adverse overshadowing impacts to no. 80 Hermitage Road.

For no. 82A Hermitage Road, the proposed front extension would breach a 45° line taken from the edge of the proposed development across the closest ground floor window (a living room) in layout form but in elevation, the proposal would not breach. Therefore, there would be no significant adverse overshadowing impacts to no. 82A Hermitage Road.

In order to prevent any future loss of privacy to neighbours, any planning permission granted should be conditioned to preclude the insertion of any windows or openings in the side elevations of the proposed development.

Overall, 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

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 require new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

As a two bedroom property, the adopted Vehicle Parking Standards require a maximum provision of two parking spaces. However, it is noted that the Highway Authority have more recent guidance that requires a minimum of 1.5 spaces to be provided for a two bedroom property in a village location.

The application property has three bedrooms and has on-site parking for three vehicles. The proposed development would result in the building decreasing three to two bedrooms. The GBC Highways Officer has not raised an objection to the proposed development.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and would not be detrimental to highway safety. As such, the proposal 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.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3. 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.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Materials to match existing

Obscure glazing to en-suite/w.c. windows

No further openings in flank elevations

Retain existing garage and frontage parking

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	21 September 2023	Dated:	22 September 2023