



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240835

Location: Ashdown Halfpence Lane Cobham Gravesend

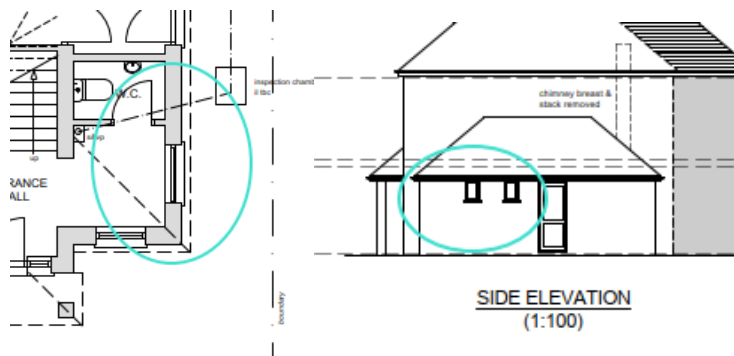
Description: Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a part two storey and part single storey rear extension. And alterations to fenestration.

Applicant: Mr And Mrs Ellery

Site Visit Date: N/A – photos provided within application

Preliminary Matters

During the assessment of the application, it was noted there were some plan discrepancies. There was a fenestration discrepancy, as highlighted below:



In addition, the footprint of the dwelling shown on the block plans didn't match the floor plans. As such, the agent was contacted on 6.11.24 and revised plans were received and accepted by the Local Planning Authority on 7.11.24. Reconsultation, in this instance, was not required.

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Supplementary Information – Design and Access Statement with Heritage Statement;
Drawing No. 01 – Elevations and Floor Plans as Existing;
Drawing No. 02A – REVISED PLANS Elevations and Floor Plans as Proposed;
Drawing No. 03 – Site Location Plan;
Drawing No. 04A – REVISED PLAN Block Plan as Existing; and
Drawing No. 05A – REVISED PLAN Block Plan as Proposed.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing No. 02 – Elevations and Floor Plans as Proposed;~~
~~Drawing No. 04 – Block Plan as Existing; and~~
~~Drawing No. 05 – Block Plan as Proposed.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20080603	Erection of a conservatory at the rear.	Permitted	20.08.2008
19810655	Conversion of existing integral garage into a lounge extension	Permitted	07.09.1981
19810100	Erection of a car port at the side	Permitted	14.04.1981
19791167	Erection of a single storey extension on the north side to form utility room lobby and wc store and porch erection of a two storey extension on the south side to form garage and study with two bedrooms over and erection of a detached garage at the rear	Permitted	16.04.1980

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas

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)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful Places
- 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)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Cobham Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2016)

- Management Plan Rural Conservation Area Appraisals Supplementary Planning Document (2016)
- Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan (2021-2026)

Section 72(1) of the Planning Listed Building 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 the conservation area.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

National Grid UK

No comments received.

Cobham Parish Council

No comments received.

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

GBC Conservation Officer

No comments received.

Kent Downs National Landscape Unit

Thank you for your recent consultation on the above.

On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales were renamed 'National Landscapes' (NLs). Accordingly, the Kent Downs AONB is now the Kent Downs National Landscape. Its legal designation and policy status remain the same.

Also of note is the changes introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which came into force on 26/December 2023. The Act amends the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, which is the primary legislation relating to AONBs and replaces the previous Duty of Regard to AONBs set out at S85 with a new, strengthened requirement that:

'In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty'. (Part 12 - Miscellaneous; Section 245. Protected Landscapes; paras (5) - (10).

This places a much stronger duty on relevant authorities, which includes local authorities, to ensure that their actions and decisions seek to conserve and enhance AONBs, marking a significant change to the legal context of AONB policy.

Further guidance is provided in Appendix 2.

The Kent Downs National Landscape Team has seen a recent uplift in the number of consultations on planning applications. In accordance with the agreed Kent Downs Planning Protocol, which sets out that the Kent Downs Landscape Team will only have a limited land use planning role and will prioritise its involvement in planning to planning policy matters, we will not normally provide bespoke comments on

more minor applications such as this. This does not imply support for, or objection to, the proposal. If our input would be particularly valued in this instance, please get in touch and we endeavour to provide informal advice where our current planning capacity allows.

In determining the application, the local planning authority has a new statutory duty, as set out above, to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape. Further advice on the new duty is provided in Appendix 2 of this letter and in our Interim Advice Note for Local Planning Authorities. The Kent Downs National Landscape Team recommends that to help fulfill the new statutory duty, the Local Planning Authority should ensure that the decision is consistent with relevant national and local planning policy and takes into account the aims, objectives and principles set out in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and its associated guidance documents. Further details of these are provided in Appendix 1.

I hope this is of assistance to you. I would be happy to discuss further if this would be helpful.

KCC Biodiversity Team

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (KCC EAS) for Local Planning Authorities. It is independent, professional advice and is not a comment/position on the application from the county council. It is intended to advise the relevant planning officer(s) on the potential ecological impacts of the planning application and if sufficient/appropriate ecological information has been provided.

Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have must be directed in every instance to the planning officer, who will seek input from the EAS where appropriate and necessary.

We have reviewed the information submitted in support of this planning application and advise that **sufficient information has been provided.**

If planning permission is granted, we advise that conditions securing ecological avoidance, mitigation measures and the implementation of ecological enhancements are attached.

Site of Special Scientific Interest

The proposed development is within 176m of the Shorne and Ashenbank Woods SSSI. The proposed development is small as it is only for a house extension and so it is considered unlikely that it will have a negative impact on the designated sites.

Bats

One side of the house will be extended and so it is our understanding that the roof will be amended on the rear elevation. Following our records, bats are present within the immediate area and as such we cannot fully rule out their presence onsite.

We suggest that a precautionary bat mitigation strategy must be undertaken prior to any demolition/construction works. In the unlikely event of a bat being found then works should cease immediately and a licence from Natural England sought.

We suggest the following condition wording :

Prior to any demolition/construction works, a precautionary bat mitigation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

To ensure no harm occurs to bats during the demolition/construction works, the precautionary strategy shall include :

- A 1FD Schwegler bat box should be placed in a tree nearby prior to the start of works and it must be detailed within the site and landscape plans;*
- A tool box talk will be undertaken to contractors involved in the demolition;*
- A licenced bat ecologist will search for evidence of bat activity around the building (i.e. bat droppings, stains);*
- Once any features for bats have been searched for or dismantled to the level required, and no bats found, the works may continue without further restriction.*

Artificial lighting has been proven to significantly impact on the behaviour of insects, birds, bats, and other nocturnal mammals, including those which will potentially benefit from any proposed landscaping and enhancements.

We advise that the Bat Conservation Trust's *Guidance Note 8 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK* is adhered to in the lighting design for the works undertaken and the proposed house extension. We advise to secure this as a condition of planning permission if granted.

Ecological enhancements

Under section 40 of the NERC Act (2006) and paragraph 180 of the NPPF (2023), biodiversity must be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Additionally, in alignment with paragraph 186 of the NPPF (2023), the implementation of net gains for biodiversity should be encouraged. Enhancement features are not considered as part of a measurable net gain; however, in addition to the measurable net gains we expect enhancement features to also be incorporated into an enhancement plan within the red line boundary. These can include bat and bird bricks/durable boxes, log piles, hibernacula, and hedgehog homes as well as generous native planting.

As such we suggest the following condition wording:

Within 3 months of planning permission being granted, details of how the development will enhance biodiversity will be included within the final site plan and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details will be implemented and thereafter retained.

If you have any queries regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

- Design and access Statement, Penfold Project Services, September 2024

Neighbouring properties

One surrounding property was consulted, a site notice was displayed on 18.09.24 and the application was advertised in the paper on 18.09.24. No neighbour responses were received as a result of the consultation carried out and the overall consultation period expired on 18.10.24.

Site Description

The application site consists of a detached two storey dwelling situated in the Parish of Cobham - a rural settlement inset from the Green Belt. It lies within the Ashenbank and Cobham Parkland Landscape Character Area, the Cobham Conservation Area and the Kent Downs National Landscape.



FRONT ELEVATION S EXISTING

This application proposes the demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a part two storey and part single storey rear extension along with alterations to fenestration.

Proposed Development

The proposed development would create space for an enlarged kitchen, dining room and lounge at ground floor level, and layout changes at first floor level to facilitate two enlarged bedrooms, a new dressing room and two new ensuites. The development would have the following dimensions:

Single Storey Element	Two Storey Element
• Height 3.12m (max) including parapet walls • Depth 4.50m • Width 11.03m	• Height 7.99m (max) • Depth 2.30m • Width 11.03m

Existing	Proposed
A line drawing of the existing house's side elevation. It shows a two-storey structure with a gabled roof and a chimney. A small conservatory is attached to the ground floor on the left. The drawing is labeled 'SIDE ELEVATION (1:100)'.	A line drawing of the proposed house's side elevation. It shows the same two-storey structure, but the conservatory has been replaced by a new single-storey extension. A new window is indicated on the first floor of this extension. The drawing is labeled 'SIDE ELEVATION (1:100)'.



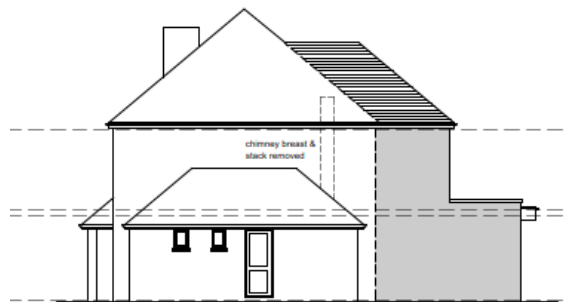
REAR ELEVATION
(1:100)



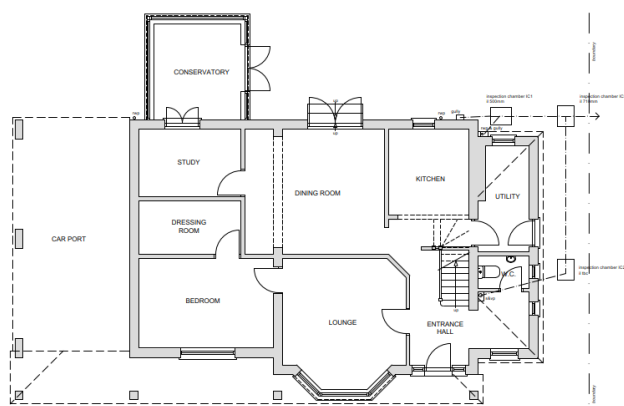
REAR ELEVATION
(1:100)



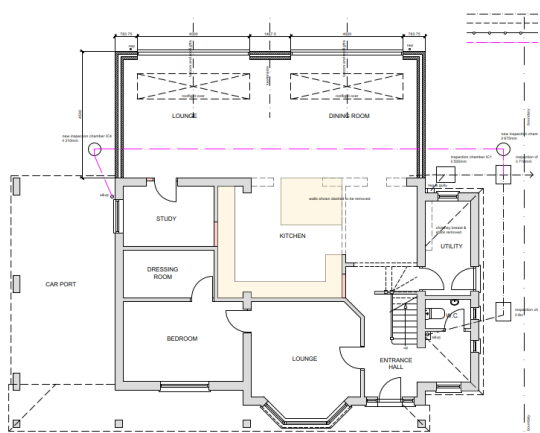
SIDE ELEVATION
(1:100)



SIDE ELEVATION
(1:100)

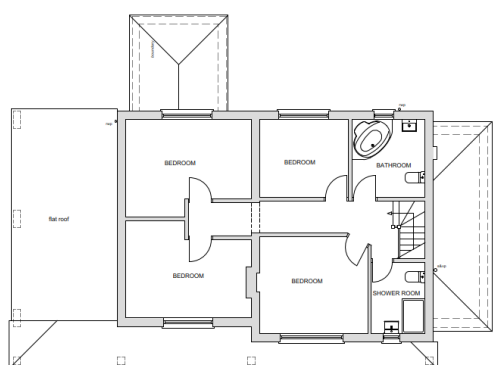


GROUND FLOOR PLAN
(1:50)

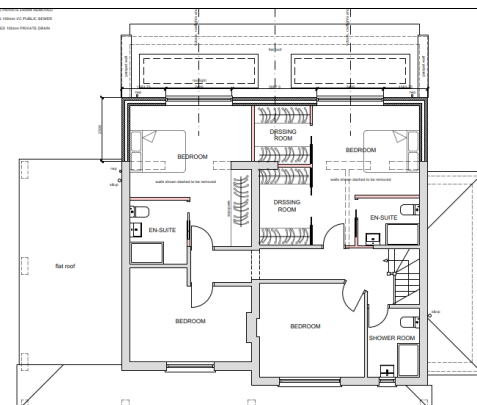


GROUND FLOOR PLAN
(1:50)

MATERIALS
ROOF
ROOF TILES - COLOUR TO
PLANNED



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
(1:50)



FIRST FLOOR PLAN
(1:50)

Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the policies map. As such, the principle of the development is acceptable, providing it complies with other policy considerations. The key considerations are assessed below.

Impact on the Conservation Area, the Landscape and, Design, Character and Appearance

The site is located within the Cobham Conservation Area and as such, a principle issue in determining this application is whether the proposed development will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such, Policies CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Saved Policy TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 are relevant, as well as Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023). These policies place a high priority on the preservation, protection and enhancement of the heritage and historic environment.

In addition, the property is situated within the Kent Downs National Landscape, and the Ashenbank and Cobham Parkland Landscape Character Area. Relevant Policy considerations include paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2023, which 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. Policy SD2 of the Management Plan 2021-2026 recognises the need to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities, distinctiveness of the AONB and Policy SD8 states that proposals which negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated. Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014) seeks to protect the green infrastructure within the Borough and states at 5.7.26 the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

Furthermore, Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF (2023) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

In addition to the above, the Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance (SPD) (2021) states *it is important to ensure that any extensions or alterations to a home are well designed, well-built and sympathetic to their surroundings. By doing so we can ensure that there are no adverse effects on the original house, immediate neighbours, the local view of the street, as well as the character and appearance of the local area.*

The proposed extension is considered to be subservient to the host dwelling. It would not be excessive in scale, the roof would be set down from the main roof ridge and the double pitched roof to the rear of the dwelling would be hipped back. In addition, the eaves of the two storey element would compliment the existing, and a parapet wall would be featured around the single storey element of the extension. All external materials would match the existing which could be secured by condition if planning permission were to be forthcoming, to ensure a satisfactory visual relationship between the existing and new development. Whilst it is unfortunate that the proposal would include uPVC fenestration, this would match the existing and would not directly face the highway.

In terms of impact on the landscape, the proposal would be a subservient addition, largely constructed on the existing patio area (as evidenced by the photos included with this application). Overall, it is considered that the proposal, in situ, would not detrimentally increase the prominence of the dwelling and would not cause harm to the Kent Downs National Landscape or the Ashenbank and Cobham Parkland Landscape

Character Area. In this respect, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS) (2014).

The Cobham Conservation Area Appraisal identifies positive features of the conservation area. This includes, amongst other things, the enclosure of the village in trees, hedges and open spaces, and the quality and spatial importance of much private roadside and hedge planting.

Ashdown is largely screened by planting/trees/hedges as indicated below:

2022 Google Street View of Property



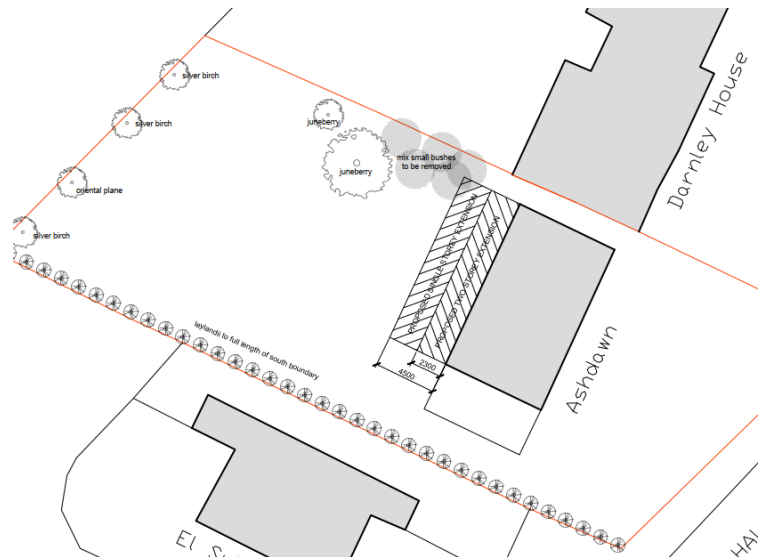
Plans and photos provided with this application



FRONT ELEVATION S EXISTING



REAR ELEVATION AS EXISTING



In addition, the proposed development is located to the rear of the property, and has been designed in accordance with policy and guidance. As such, the proposed extension would have no harmful impact on the streetscene or host dwelling in design terms. Taking the above into account, it is considered the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Overall, in terms of design, the proposed development is considered to accord with Policies CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014), along with Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023). Furthermore, the development is in accordance with statutory test 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Policy CS20 (Heritage and the Historic Environment) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policy TC3 (Development Affecting Conservation Areas) of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review (1994) as well as Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Gravesham's SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) (2020) sets out expected room sizes and garden space post development. The plans demonstrate the garden would have sufficient garden area and depth post development, in accordance with the RLG (2020). In addition, sufficient room area is provided, as part of this proposal.

Therefore, the proposed development would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2023).

Neighbouring Amenity

No neighbour responses were received as a result of the consultation carried out for the application.

The closest neighbouring property to Ashdown is Darnley House. In situ, the development is not considered to detrimentally impact neighbouring amenity in terms of causing a sense of enclosure, loss of privacy, loss of outlook or loss of light. There is sufficient space between the two properties, and no first floor windows are proposed in the flank elevation of Ashdown, facing Darnley House. In addition, the plans do not indicate the roof of the single storey extension would be used as a balcony/terrace area.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to safeguard neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2023).

Highways and Parking

There are no highways or parking concerns that arise as a result of this proposal.

Biodiversity

KCC Biodiversity have advised that sufficient information has been provided with the application, with regards to biodiversity considerations. However, they have advised that if planning permission were to be granted, conditions securing ecological avoidance, mitigation measures and the implementation of ecological enhancements are attached. The suggested conditions are included below:

Prior to any demolition/construction works, a precautionary bat mitigation strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

To ensure no harm occurs to bats during the demolition/construction works, the precautionary strategy shall include :

- A 1FD Schwegler bat box should be placed in a tree nearby prior to the start of works and it must be detailed within the site and landscape plans;*
- A toolbox talk will be undertaken to contractors involved in the demolition;*
- A licenced bat ecologist will search for evidence of bat activity around the building (i.e. bat droppings, stains);*
- Once any features for bats have been searched for or dismantled to the level required, and no bats found, the works may continue without further restriction.*

KCC Biodiversity also advise that works are carried out in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's *Guidance Note 8 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK* and that this should be secured by condition. This is because Artificial lighting has been proven to significantly impact on the behaviour of insects, birds, bats, and other nocturnal mammals, including those which will potentially benefit from any proposed landscaping and enhancements.

Furthermore, the team advise that a condition relating to ecological enhancements should be applied to a grant of planning permission:

Within 3 months of planning permission being granted, details of how the development will enhance biodiversity will be included within the final site plan and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details will be implemented and thereafter retained.

It is considered that the above condition is not required but an informative relating to bats will be included.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Groundwater Protection Zone

The site is located within a Groundwater Protection Zone 3 area, however, the proposal would be unlikely to be impacted by this constraint.

Conclusion

The development is considered subservient to the existing dwelling and acceptable external materials would be used to complement the existing dwelling. The decision notice can include appropriate conditions to secure proposed external materials, along with an informative to ensure the developer is aware to protect ecological interest. The works would not result in a detrimental impact on the street scene or the conservation area itself. Furthermore, the development would have no adverse impact on the Kent Downs National Landscape or the Landscape Character Area. Moreover, the development protects the amenity of future occupiers and neighbouring properties.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	12th November 2024	Dated:	12th November 2024