

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20251160

Location: Kent Tor Wrotham Road Culverstone Gravesend

Description: Demolition of existing bungalow; erection of a new self build, timber frame bungalow and detached garage with associated works to create a driveway and bin store.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs H Richard

Site Visit Date: Previous Visit

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form
25/189/01 – Existing Survey
25/489/02 – Proposed Plan and Elevation
25/489/03 C – Proposed Site Plan and Bin Store
25/489/04 B – Proposed Garage
Vaillant Arotherm Spec Sheet
PV Arrangement
Planning, Design and Access Statement
Roof Tile Details
Covering Letter

Superseded plans:

~~25/489/03 B – Proposed Site Plan and Bin Store~~
~~25/489/04 A – Proposed Garage~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19740086	Erection of a single storey extensions at side for living accommodation.	Permitted	28.05.1974

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T5 – Access to the Identified Highway Network

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of homes
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

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)
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Meopham Parish Council

No comments received.

KCC Biodiversity

No comments received.

KCC Highways

Thank you for your consultation in relation to the above planning application. I have the following comments to make with respect to highway matters:

Access and visibility:

There is an existing access within the applicant's ownership adjoining the A227 on South Street. Based on the submitted details, I am satisfied that the proposal will not result in an intensification of the existing use.

Vehicle Parking:

The applicant has indicated that the driveway will provide space for three vehicles, including one visitor space. The current plans for the driveway are considered acceptable and in accordance with Kent County Council (KCC) Parking Standards.

However, the submitted plans for the proposed garage do not meet KCC's minimum size requirements for vehicle parking. The garage should have a minimum internal width of 3.6 metres and a minimum internal length of 7.0 metres. The current plans indicate a width of 2.95 metres and a length of 5.85 metres, which may provide insufficient space for a parked car alongside the proposed cycle parking. The applicant is requested to submit a revised plan showing that the proposed garage complies with KCC parking standards.

Conclusion:

Once the applicant has submitted the requested details, I will offer further comment.

Southern Gas

Thank you for your enquiry, there is a high pressure pipeline in the vicinity of your works. Your proposals would require the exact location of this pipeline and other SGN assets to be located before any work commences, either by electronic detection or by hand excavated trial holes as specified in the attached SW/2 document. These works must be supervised by an SGN representative, please contact Kyle Stevens on 07960479287 / kyle.stevens@sgn.co.uk to arrange a pre-works site visit and any future supervision. We would like to reiterate that no works should be carried out within the vicinity of a high pressure pipeline until consultation with an SGN representative has occurred. We thank you for your patience at this time

Please note that no mechanical excavations are permitted within 3m of the pipeline at any time. This pipeline is registered with the Health and Safety Executive as a Major Accident Hazard Pipeline.

SGN High Pressure Gas Pipelines in the vicinity of your works		
Pipeline Number	Pressure Regime	Building Proximity Distance (Zone 1)
GM11	HP	3.0
This table does not include SGN's low medium and intermediate pressure assets, which may be in the vicinity.		

Building Proximity Distance

The building proximity distance (Zone 1) for the pipeline is shown in the table above for all our high pressure gas pipelines in the vicinity of your works. This should not however be confused with the HSE consultation zones 2 & 3 which will be considerably greater, further guidance of the requirements can be found in HSE Document: PADHI: HSE's Land Use Planning Methodology. Zone 1 is a safety factor with reference to habitable buildings as recommended by IGE TD/1. It is calculated from the diameter, material, wall thickness and pressure of the particular pipeline. Under Pipeline Safety Regulations 1996 this distance is declared to the HSE. Any intrusion within this safety zone will not be taken lightly and any intention to proceed should be accompanied by a risk assessment or provision of other supporting evidence, especially in the event of any legal proceedings at a later date.

Vehicle Crossing

Vehicle crossings over the pipeline must be kept to a minimum and must cross at 90 degrees. The crossing will require agreement with SGN and may require design and calculations, as evidence to prove there is minimal added stress to the pipeline. Method statements must be agreed before works commence. The pipeline is of prime importance to the gas supplies of this area. It is essential that you comply with the restrictions detailed below and in the document SGN/WI/SW/2 in order to protect our plant and equipment and for the safety of your own operatives. A SGN representative must be contacted before any works commence. Further guidance / restrictions are detailed below:

1. No mechanical excavation is allowed within 3 metres either side of pipeline.
2. No plant or storage of equipment shall be made within any easement strip.
3. If any metallic pipes or cables are being laid in proximity to gas pipelines then interference testing will be required, the cost of which to be borne by the promoter of the works. A minimum clearance of 600mm is required.

4. All precautions stated in publication SGN/WI/SW/2 (Safe Working in the Vicinity of High Pressure Gas Pipelines) shall be fully complied with in all respects. Acceptance of SGN/WI/SW/2 shall be acknowledged by the responsible site person signing and returning the form Appendix A (back page) to the SGN representative contacted in (7).
 5. No thrust boring shall take place within 3 meters of the pipeline.
 6. All planting within the easement strip should comply with 'Notes for Guidance on Tree Proximity'.
 7. Before commencing work on site you must contact our Pipeline Maintenance Section on the number above at least seven days before work commences. A Southern Gas Networks representative will then contact you to arrange to visit site. Details of working near to high-pressure gas pipelines can then be discussed.
 8. Pipeline sections that are planned and agreed by SGN to be permanently covered (i.e. by road surface) will require a coating survey. SGN will repair any indicated coating defects free of charge. The survey costs will be borne by the promoter of the works. Prior to any surface cover cathodic protection coupons and reference cells will require installation at no cost to SGN.
 9. This pipeline is cathodically protected and as such has test cables located in test posts, were these to be lost through this work we would look to you for remedial action at no cost to SGN.
 10. Intrusive construction methods will require an agreed method statement prior to work starting.
 11. Any extended period of SGN site supervision may incur charges to you. These will be charged based on visiting times, materials and occurrences. You will be informed when these come into effect and be invoiced direct.
 12. Any piling or boreholes within 15 metres of the pipeline may require vibration monitoring. No piling or bore holing must take place within 3metres of the pipeline.
- Please ensure these conditions, together with any relevant drawings are forwarded for use by the construction personnel of your works.

Health and Safety Executive (Web App)

The proposed development site which you have identified does not currently lie within the consultation distance (CD) of a major hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline; therefore at present HSE does not need to be consulted on any developments on this site. However, should there be a delay submitting a planning application for the proposed development on this site, you may wish to approach HSE again to ensure that there have been no changes to CDs in this area in the intervening period.

Neighbouring properties

9no. surrounding properties were consulted and 1 comment was received in representation. The final date to submit comments ended on 17.12.25.

Summary of comment:

The Design and Access Statement stated that hedgehog gaps will be provided through the fences. The fences are not all in the ownership of the applicant and neighbours may be reluctant to allow gaps in their fences.

Officer Note: Property and fence ownership is a private legal matter. Planning permission does not override matters related to property ownership nor is property ownership a planning matter for consideration. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure legal matters outside of planning consent are appropriately addressed.

Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

This application is located in an area inset from the Green Belt, where development is generally considered sustainable in principle as per Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development. However, all other relevant matters should be considered.

The principal considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Housing Need
- Density
- Design, Character and Appearance
- Amenity of Future Occupiers
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Parking and Highways
- Biodiversity

Housing Need

In *Hopkins Homes Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2017] 1 W.L.R. 1865, Lord Carnwath reemphasised that the National Planning Policy Framework is only a material consideration in planning decisions and that that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan. Paragraph 12 of the NPPF expressly states that the starting point for decision-making is the development plan. Lord Carnwath as part of the Supreme Court decision stated,

"It is important, however, in assessing the effect of the Framework, not to overstate the scope of this policy-making role. The Framework itself makes clear that as respects the determination of planning applications (by contrast with plan-making in which it has statutory recognition), it is no more than "guidance" and as such a "material consideration" for the purposes of section 70(2) of the 1990 Act... It cannot, and does not purport to, displace the primacy given by the statute and policy to the statutory development plan. It must be exercised consistently with, and not so as to displace or distort, the statutory scheme."

It is a matter of law that all planning applications need to be considered in accordance with the legislation and relevant policy that applies at the point a decision is taken. The Council published a revised 5 year housing land supply statement in March 2023, it demonstrates that based on data up for the period 2022-2027, the Council can only demonstrate a land supply of 2.9 years.

Given the Council's current inability to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, and as the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75%) that required by the Housing Delivery Test, the housing delivery element of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) Policy CS02 must be regarded to be out of date, as required by the Paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024). This requires that in regard to housing development, planning permission should be granted unless:

the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

In the Gravesham context, the policies referred to in paragraph 11(d)(i) above are those set out in the NPPF at footnote 7 (rather than those in development plans) relating to any of the following:

Habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

Land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

In determining applications for planning permission involving housing, the Council will therefore apply a weighted balance in favour of granting planning permission in accordance with relevant case law and guidance, having regard to the acceptability or otherwise of the proposals when evaluated against development plan policy, the need to make efficient use of land (paragraph 129(c)) in context, the relative contribution the proposal makes towards the alleviation of any shortfall in housing delivery at that time and

any other considerations material to the proposed development.

The proposed development for a no net increase in residential units would offer no contribution towards meeting this local need and, accordingly, officers considers that this should be accorded appropriate weight in support of the application. However, this has to be balanced against other requirements of the Development Plan and NPPF (2024) which requires new development to be high quality, beautiful and create acceptable living conditions for future occupiers.

Notwithstanding the Council's shortages in housing delivery and the consequent weight to be given in favour of the proposed development it is necessary to assess the proposals against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and established local planning policy taken as a whole.

Density

Development on this site should meet the requirements of Policy CS14 (LPCS), where the Council expects new housing development to provide a range of dwelling types and sizes, taking into account the existing character of the area. Policy CS15 (LPCS) requires that all new housing will be developed at a density, which is consistent with achieving good design and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated. These policies will be considered and assessed against the proposal later in this report.

The site has an area of approximately 1273m². The current density of the site is approx. 7.9 dwellings per hectare. Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy 2014 states that all new housing will be developed at a density that is consistent with achieving good design and does not compromise the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated. Within the urban area, new residential development will be expected to achieve a minimum density of 40 dwellings per hectare. Whilst this is not achieved by the proposed development, this would not be less than the current density. Although the minimum density is not met on this occasion, the development would be like for like in terms of replacing one dwelling with another on this site and so reasonably on balance would comply with the requirements of Policies CS14 and CS15 of the Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Design, Character and Appearance

The site currently contains a detached bungalow. The images below show the front and rear of the dwellinghouse in images taken in April 2025. The site at the time was heavily overgrown and it was apparent that the building had fallen into some disrepair.



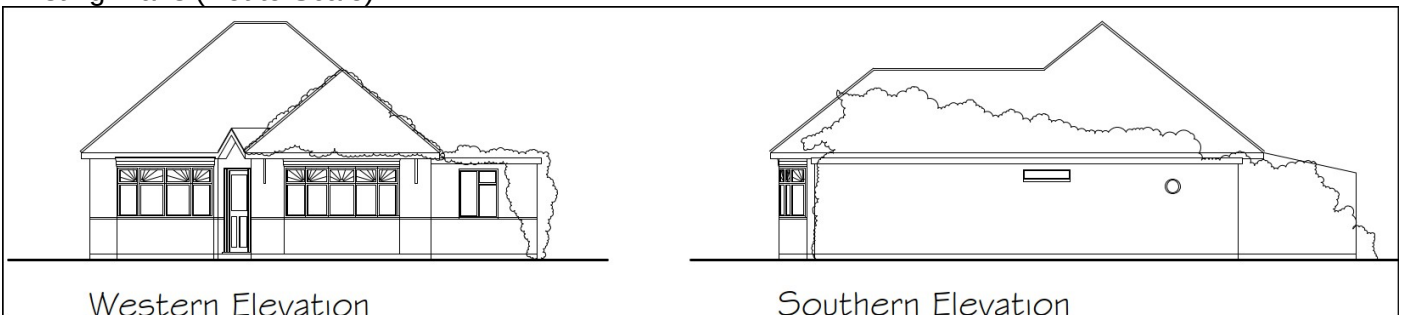
Image taken by Case Officer In April 2025



Image taken by Case Officer In April 2025

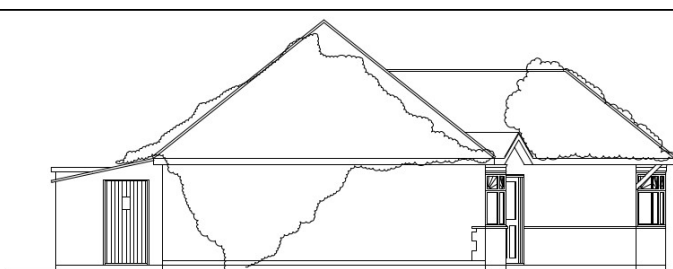
The below shows the existing and proposed elevations for comparative purposed.

Existing Plans (Not to Scale)



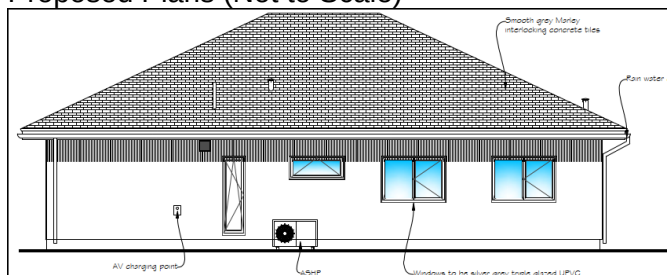


Eastern Elevation

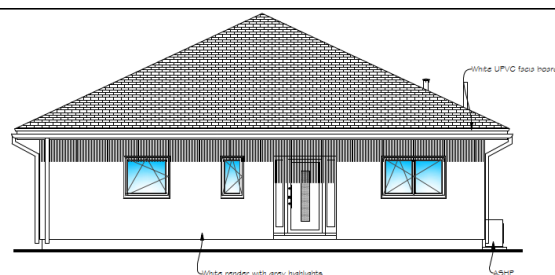


Northern Elevation

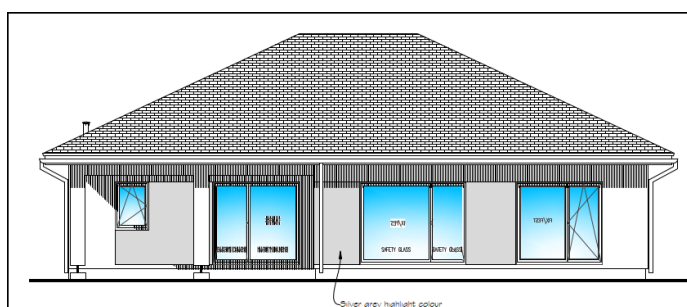
Proposed Plans (Not to Scale)



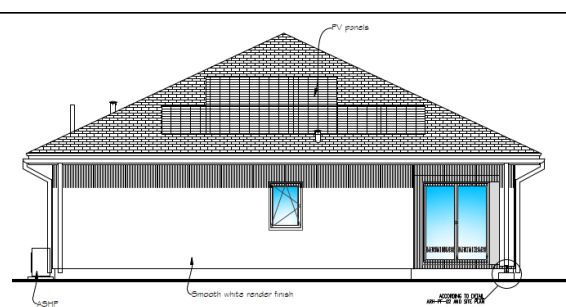
Western Elevation



Northern Elevation



Eastern Elevation



Southern Elevation

The proposed building would increase the footprint from to 136m² to 220m². So evidently there would be an increase in bulk. However, this would not be significantly large comparatively to the buildings in the area. It would retain its single storey nature and keep a similar roof design to the existing dwellinghouse. The proposed openings are appropriate in number and size. Overall, the dwellinghouse proposed would be low in height, with limited bulk and scale increase, reflective of the character of the area in its design, appropriately positioned and spaced within the site.

The materials proposed in the application form and Design and Access Statement include smooth white rendered walls, concrete roof tiles and UPVC windows.

On balance, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The NPPF (2024) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that 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. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

Room Type	Proposed Internal Floor Area (m ²)	Minimum Space Standard (m ²)
Double Bedroom	Bedroom 1: 11.3 Bedroom 2: 11.4 Bedroom 3: 15.6	11.2
Lounge/Dining Room	27.5	18.0
Bathroom and WC	4.2	3.6
Kitchen	15.8	7.2

Garden Measurement	Proposed Garden Space	Minimum Space Standard
Area	611m ²	60m ²
Depth	21.5m	10m

As the above tables show, the site complies with the required internal and external space requirements as per the Residential Layout Guidance (2020).

As such the proposal would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in compliance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) as well as Section 12 of the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, 0 comments from members of the public were received.

Hill Croft

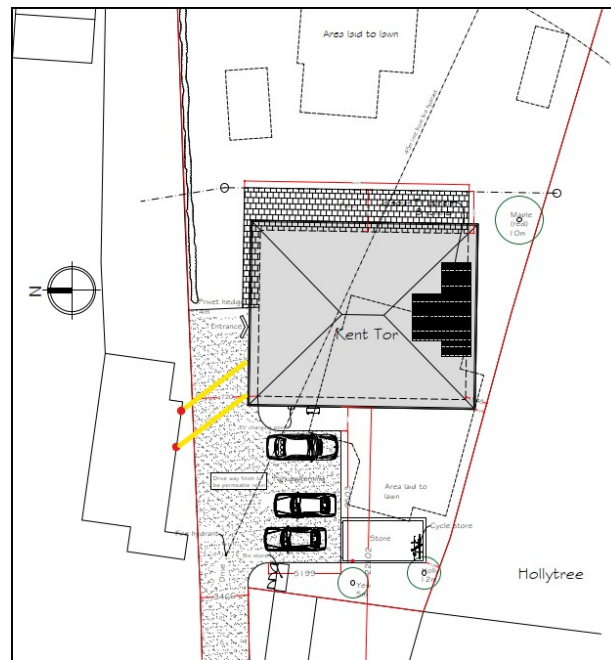
This neighbouring property is located to the north. As shown in the below image it sits close to the boundary.



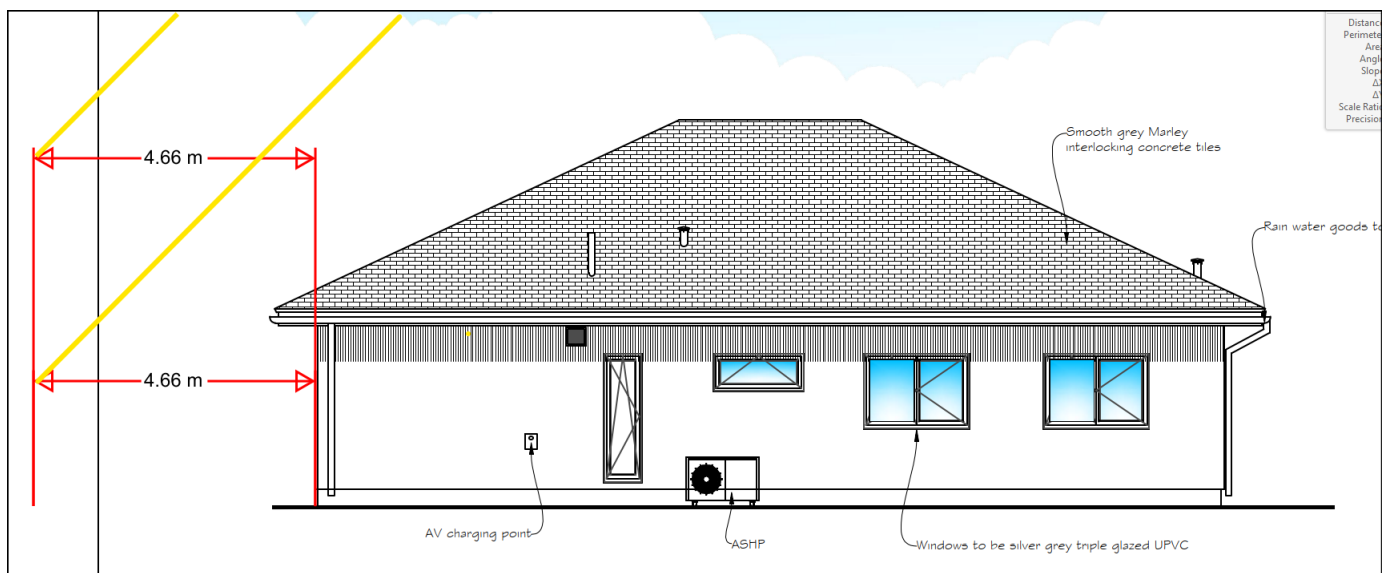
Image taken by Case Officer In April 2025

The distance between the current building is 9.4m. The dwellinghouse as proposed would be 4.5m. The proposed building would be set further to the rear within the site than the existing dwellinghouse. Given the set back nature of the dwellinghouse, its side openings would not be overlooked. Given its single storey nature and the existing boundary treatment evident, it would not overlook this neighbours windows either.

Potential overshadowing should be considered given the close relationship between these properties. Whilst the below 45 degree test shows potential for the windows on the neighbouring property to be overshadowed. The elevational 45 degree test which follows shows that overshadowing would be unlikely for both this neighbours ground floor and first floor windows.



45 degree test



45 degree test

The proposed development due to its single storey nature, positioning, layout, scale and boundary treatment would not result in any significant harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.

L'abri

L'abri, is located to the south and is shown from inside the the site in the image below on the right hand side.



Image taken by Case Officer In April 2025

The current dwellinghouse is 17.3m from the subject dwellinghouse. This distance would be unchanged at its closest point. However, the proposed replacement dwellinghouse would be re-orientated and as such, given the angled nature of the boundary the bulk towards the rear of the property would consecutively increase the distance. Essentially, the distance would be closer to the front of the property, with an increasing gap towards the rear. Given the significant distance between the dwellinghouses and the existing fencing at the boundary as described in the Design and Access statement, the potential for overlooking, overshadowing, or overbearing bulk, would be limited. As such, the impact of the proposed development on this neighbours property would be limited.

The Former Post Office

This neighbour is located to the south. The existing dwellinghouse is 14.6m from this property. The proposed dwellinghouse would be set further to the north within the site, increasing the distance between these buildings to 21.7m.



Image taken by Case Officer In April 2025

Given the increased distance between the properties as proposed, the single storey nature of the bungalow and the existing boundary treatment, the proposed development would not likely result in any adverse impact on this neighbouring property, in terms of overlooking, overshadowing or bulk and scale.

Parking and Highways

For a 3-bedroom property KCC Parking Standards (2006) required 2 parking spaces per dwelling. The proposed drive would provide adequate spacing for 3 vehicles, as confirmed by KCC Highways in their comments. Originally, a garage was proposed but KCC Highways considered this garage to be below the required internal space standards. The plans were amended and this building has become a store, and includes spacing for cycles.

Given that there is sufficient vehicle parking spacing on the drive, and the storey proposed would provide adequate cycle spacing, the scheme is considered to provide adequate spacing for parking of vehicles. The access to be used is existing and so would be acceptable.

Adequate vehicle and cycle parking provision is therefore not available, but the sustainable location of the sight weighs in favour of the application. The proposal would be in accordance with paragraphs 109 to 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 subject to further details of cycle parking provision.

Biodiversity

Net Gain

Under the Environment Act 2021 and supporting Statutory Instruments Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is now mandatory for most development. The legislation requires a minimum 10% gain in biodiversity from

applicable development either onsite, offsite or a combination of both.

BNG provided under the mandatory requirements offsite and significant BNG onsite must be secured by a legal agreement for 30 years under an approved Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP)

There are strict legal requirements in terms of what an application must contain in relation to BNG before it can be accepted as valid. This is set out in Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and requires the completed metric calculation tool showing the calculations of the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the date of application and other information.

However, certain applications are exempt from the BNG regulations (the Biodiversity Gain Requirements Exemptions) Regulations 2024) including householder applications and include:

- Householder development as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
- Development granted planning permission by a development order under section 59. This includes permitted development rights.
- Development subject to the de minimis exemption - development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than 25 square metres (e.g. 5m by 5m) of habitat, or 5 metres of linear habitats such as hedgerows.
- Self-build and custom build development - development which:
 - consists of no more than 9 dwellings, and
 - is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.5 hectares, and
 - consists exclusively of dwellings which are self-build or custom housebuilding as defined in section 1(A1) of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015

The application form states that this would be a self-build home and therefore there is no requirement for a statutory biodiversity metric to be carried out in this instance.

Enhancement

No ecological details have been submitted with the application. However, ecological enhancement features must be incorporated into the site. This requirement can be addressed by a condition for an ecological enhancement plan.

Conclusion

The proposed development complies with all relevant national and local planning policies. The proposed dwellinghouse would be in a sustainable location, with no net increase in dwellings on this plot. The scheme would be appropriate in design, with limited impact on neighbouring amenity. It would provide adequate space standards for future occupiers and adequate vehicle and cycle parking spaces. The scheme would also comply with Biodiversity enhancement legislation, subject to planning condition. Pre-commencement conditions have been agreed with the planning agent.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to approve.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
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Signed:		Signed:	R Hart
Dated:	9 th January 2026	Dated:	9 th January 2026