

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20251177

Location: Langton House Meopham Green Meopham Gravesend

Description: Installation of a Domestic Solar PV Array to the front and rear roof slopes.

Applicant: Mr Anthony Sparling

Site Visit Date: 04.12.2026

Preliminary Matters

During the course of the application, Gravesham's Conservation Officer provided comments in relation to the proposed solar panels in the front roof slope, which were initially found to be visually cluttered and unattractive. As such, the agent was contacted to reduce and rearrange the number of panels in the front roof slope. Revised plans were provided, reviewed by the Conservation Officer, and accepted by the Local Planning Authority, with an extension of time agreed. In this instance, full re-consultation was not considered to be necessary.

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Drawing No. 81627/01a – REVISED OS Plan Block Plan Roof Plan Elevations – Existing and Proposed;
Roof Sections;
Supplementary Information – Schedule of Works Installation Guide;
Supplementary Information – Design, Access and Heritage Statement; and
Supplementary Information 500W Solar Panel Datasheet.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing No. 81627/01 – OS Plan Block Plan Roof Plan Elevations – Existing and Proposed;
Supplementary Information – Schedule of Works Installation Guide; and
Supplementary Information – Design, Access and Heritage Statement.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220834	Erection of a replacement swimming pool enclosure roof.	Permitted	16.09.2022
19990826	Erection of single storey extension to poolside outbuildings to form fitness/exercise room.	Permitted	19.01.2000
19990543	Demolition and rebuild of poolside outbuildings with associated repairs.	Permitted	27.09.1999
19770327	Retention of roof over existing swimming pool at side	Permitted	23.06.1977

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 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 12 – Achieving Well-Designed 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)
- Meopham Green Rural Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)

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

Meopham Parish Council

No comments received.

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

GBC Conservation Officer

GBC's Conservation Officer was contacted regarding this application proposal. The initial comments are summarised below:

The proposed PV panels facing The Green are of most concern and the staggered arrangement of 6 panels appears visually cluttered and unattractive; the edge guards (to keep birds & squirrels from nesting under the panels) also need to be considered as the panels will not be flush with the roof tiles. For an acceptable appearance the panels should be arranged 2 over 2, reducing the proposed number from 6 staggered to 4 panels in a squared arrangement. The edge guards should be solid, such as SolaSkirt or similar, to create a neat and tidy appearance.

I believe it would be acceptable if the arrangement for the front PV panels was altered to 4 rather than 6 panels. If the layout was designed as advised above it would reduce the harm caused by the cluttered appearance of the proposed staggered arrangement when combined with the edge treatment. Less concerned with the rear arrangement as it does not face The Green, which could remain with the 6 panels in the staggered layout.

To add - the building is modern and not of historic interest, which offers the opportunity for sensitively designed PV layouts.

Following the comments received from the Conservation Officer, the agent was contacted in order to request revised plans. The Conservation Officer then provided the following comments:

The revised layout now illustrates a more rational and simplified arrangement to the front elevation, which is the most sensitive one facing the conservation area. I note that black powder coated galvanised bird guard mesh is proposed, which if properly installed can look neat and acceptable. As previously mentioned it can be considered that PV installation on modern buildings can look acceptable with a sensitive layout of the panels, which should be arranged in uniform square/rectangular rather than staggered layout with a generous margin (300-500mm) of visible roof tiles/slates.

Dickens Country Protection Society

In addition, the Dickens Country Protection Society have provided comments. Although not formally consulted on the application, the comments are included below:

In the Society's view, in the Meopham Green Conservation Area, photovoltaic panels on roofs directly facing the green should be avoided.

Neighbouring properties

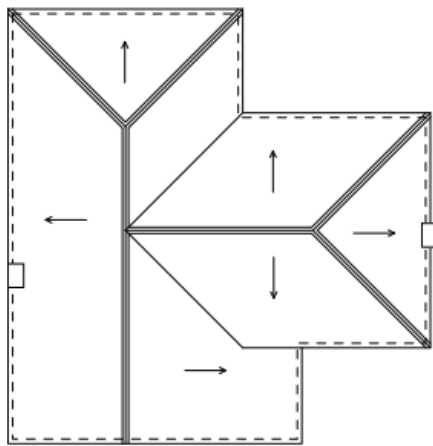
Three surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 04.12.2026 and the application was publicised in the paper. The overall consultation period expired on 26.12.2026 and no comments were received.

Site Description and Proposed Development

Langton House fronts the eastern side of Meopham Green. It is situated within the Meopham Green Conservation Area and the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area.



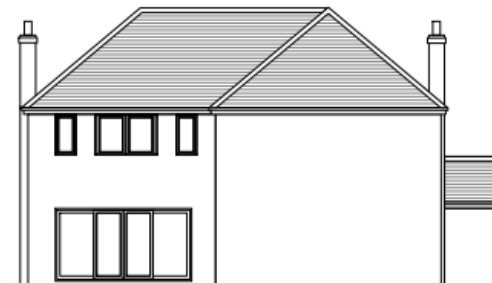
Site Photo



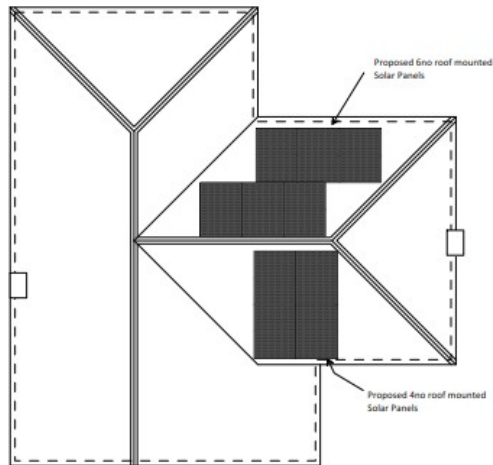
EXISTING ROOF PLAN



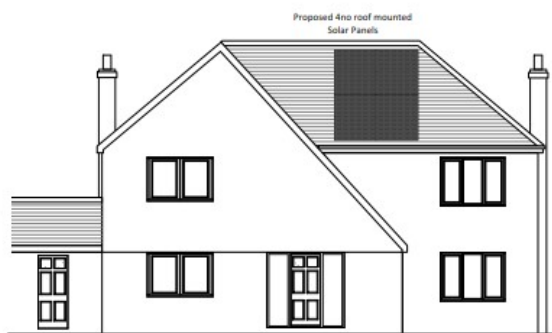
EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION



EXISTING REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED ROOF PLAN



PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

General



Image Above: Proposed location - Front Roof.



Image Above: Proposed location - Rear Roof.

Officer's Analysis

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

The site is located within the Meopham Green 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) (2024). 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 Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. Relevant Policy considerations include paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024, 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 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 places) of the NPPF (2024) 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.

The proposed development is for the installation of a domestic solar PV array to the front and rear roof slopes. There would be six staggered panels in the rear roof slope, and four panels in a square arrangement in the front roof slope. The panels in the rear roof slope do not raise concern in terms of design and impact on the Conservation Area; they are not proposed to go across the entirety of the rear roof slopes and shall not be visible from the street scene. In this sense, the character of the Conservation Area is preserved. The solar panels in the front roof slope are visible from the street scene, and some parts of the Green itself, and solar panels do have the potential to cause harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. As such, each application needs to be considered very carefully, on its own merits. It may be the case that solar panels that may be acceptable for one property, would not be acceptable for another. In this instance, the application property is modern and is not of historic interest. In addition, the solar panels would be set back from the front elevation, behind the front gable projection of the dwelling, which does mean that the solar panels would be less prominent within the street scene and not visible from all angles from the perspective of the Green. In addition, the panels would be set in sufficiently from the roof edges. Furthermore, following the aforementioned initial comments from GBC's Conservation Officer, the solar panel arrangement on this front roof slope has been altered from a staggered untidy arrangement, to a neat squared arrangement, with the Conservation Officer finding the black powder coated galvanised bird guard mesh neat and acceptable when properly installed.

Taking all the above into account, in situ, the proposed development is not considered to detrimentally harm the landscape, design character and appearance of the existing dwelling, street scene or 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) (2024). 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 (2024).

Amenity

This proposal does not result in a detrimental impact to the amenity of future occupiers or the amenity of neighbouring properties. Therefore, this proposal complies with 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) (2024).

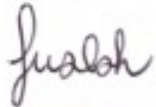
Conclusion

Overall, the works would not result in a detrimental impact on the existing dwelling, surrounding area or the conservation area itself. Furthermore, the development would have no adverse impact on the Landscape Character Area. Moreover, the development does not harm the amenity of future users and neighbouring properties.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	
Dated:	29th January 2026	Dated:	30 January 2026