

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250053

Location: Golden Lion, Luddesdown Road, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XE

Description: Erection of a rear and side extension and refurbishment of the Golden Lion pub including landscaping, parking and associated works.

Applicant: Mr Gary Smith ,c/o Vineyard Farms Ltd

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form

Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Plan by JW Biodiversity Management
BNG Metric

Landscape and Visual Appraisal by Briarwood Landscape Architecture

Design and Access Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment by Clague Architects

Bat Emergence Survey by Eco assistance ecologists Ltd

Transport Statement by DHA

Noise Assessment by Lustre Consulting

Planning Statement by DHA

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – ESLP – 00 – PD – A - 0001 rev P02 (site location plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EXSL – 00 – PD – A - 0001 rev P02 (existing block plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PRSL – 00 – PD – A - 0001 rev P02 (proposed block plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EX – ZZ – ED – A – 001 rev P02 (existing northwest and southeast elevations)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EX – ZZ – ED – A – 0002 rev P02 (existing southwest and northeast elevations)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EXDM – ZZ – ED – A – 001 rev P02 (existing northwest and southeast elevations – demolitions)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EXDM – ZZ – ED – A – 002 rev P02 (existing southwest and northeast elevations – demolitions)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PR – ZZ – ED – A – 0002 rev P01 (proposed southwest and northeast elevations)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PR – 01 – PD – A – 001 rev P01 (proposed first floor plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EX – GF – PD – A – 0001 rev P01 (existing ground floor plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PRSP – 00 – PD – A – 0001 rev P1 (proposed site plan – ground floor)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PRCP – 00 – PD – A – 0001 rev P01 (proposed site plan – car park layout)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EXDM – 00 – PD – A – 0001 rev P1 (existing site plan – demolition)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EXSP – 00 – PD – A – 0001 rev P01 (existing site plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EX – 01 – PD – A – 0001 rev P01 (existing first floor plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PR – RF – PD – A – 0001 rev P01 (proposed roof plan)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – PR – ZZ – ED – A – 0001 rev P01 (proposed northwest and southeast elevations)

Drawing no. 30694D – CLA – EX – RF – PD – A – 0001 rev P01 (existing roof plan)

Relevant Planning History

19940416	Erection of conservatory on west elevation.	Permitted	23.08.1994
19900471	Erection of single storey side and rear extension to form enlarged kitchen, restaurant, functions room, lobby and toilet accommodation.	Refused	21.08.1990
19820744	Use of land for military training	Refused	19.12.1984
19550198	Alterations and additions	Permitted	03.08.1955
19480145	Sanitary accommodation	Planning permission not required	09.02.1949

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS07 – Economy, Employment and Skills
- CS09 – Culture and Tourism
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principle

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- T1/T4 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
- T5 – Access to the Identified Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

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 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- Design for Gravesham: Design Code (2024);
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Luddesdown Parish Council

Luddesdown Parish Council has read the planning application from Gravesham Borough Council and whilst the parish councillors support the need for the refurbishment of the Golden Lion PH the parish council would like to raise the following concerns

I think there should be a pedestrian access for those accessing the property by foot. The installation of a fence along Luddesdown Road (although needed) will make the road 'narrower', cars often pull off into the car park when meeting an approaching car. In practice with the new site improvements, I would be concerned about the safety of the pedestrians if they had to walk the extra distance to the car access point.

Luddesdown Parish Council has concerns about parking. The Golden Lion car park currently has 19 spaces but will increase to 37 spaces, an increase of 18. 4 of these will be accessible spaces. The transport assessment models the impact of the restaurant, and assumes at full occupancy, assuming 2.5 people per car, that there will be 20 spaces needed. However, this does not take into account people coming for pre dinner drinks, staying in the pub after a meal, or furthermore increased pub clientele which would seem likely as a result of reinvestment. There are also regularly 20-25 cars parked at peak times already. I understand that outside office hours, there may be overflow car parking available next to the farm cottages, but again question the safety of pedestrians walking along the road in the dark. Therefore I am concerned that overflow parking will naturally become on the road/in passing spaces/on our land and would welcome some active mitigation by the pub to ensure this doesn't become an issue in real life.

Luddesdown Parish Council are concerned about increased traffic. The report assumes that on the weekend, assuming 2/3 capacity for breakfast and lunch, and 100% for dinner, that there will be an additional 40 car movements per hour at peak times and 248 additional movements in a 24 hour period. On a higher class road, this may not seem like a lot. However, along the country lanes, this is a significant increase of traffic which is extremely worrying. As a minimum, I would like the premises to consider enticements to visitors who arrive by foot/bike/car share and would imagine this would fit with their sustainability goals I know the site has.

Luddesdown Parish Council would not like to see any extension of the live music licence or hours. The noise survey tests the current operating model but has not tested the noise of live music. The level of events currently is acceptable but I would not like to see an increase as a result of the new development. I have been assured by management that they won't be increasing and hope that this was accurate.

Luddesdown Parish Council is also concerned about the possible light pollution from the car park lighting and the Silverhand signs. Luddesdown has no street lighting and there is little light pollution.

A further response was received on 20 March 2025:

Our Parish council had its regular review meeting with parishioners on Monday evening (17/03/2024) and this letter is a further follow up to an earlier letter that was sent to you by our Clerk – Charles Amis. We are very much registering our concerns over both the short-term developments at The Lion Public House in the village and also need to re-emphasise our absolute opposition to the longer term strategic development plans of the Silverhand group.

We are told by representatives of Silverhand that at this stage it is only the short term plans directly affecting the pub that are subject to planning scrutiny – but even these would appear to show scant regard to certain planning requirements or the nature of the rural environment that Luddesdown is. (Inappropriate external signage lighting / potentially un-approved retail outlet activity / market stall activity etc.) The nature of Luddesdown is that it is a very small rural village serviced by narrow lanes with very little off road parking. The village caters adequately (but no more) for its current number of residents (200 – 220) – I am sure you do not need me to describe the detail of the village any further.

The longer-term strategy of the Silverhand group would appear from their strategic plan to include very significant and large scale site development – including such items as a hotel and conference centre, Spa, Meeting rooms and much more – you will be aware of this detail as they have eventually advised us – their local parish council of their plans as they were included in their strategic planning document a copy of which has already been supplied to your good selves.

Specific areas of Concern

1. The shorter-term development plans (specifically for The Lion) will require a major increase in traffic flows to and from the pub and to service its enhanced restaurant and farmers market. These traffic flows will additionally require locally based parking facilities – facilities that arguably are already at times insufficient to cope.
2. The local lanes are not capable of any further increase in traffic flows. The local access roads of Gold Street, Henley Street, Luddesdown Road, Oakenden Road, Dean lane are all essentially single track lanes with very few official passing places.
3. Adverse impact on Luddesdown Rural Character and the Kent Downs National landscape. The proposed urban scale developments significantly undermine the integrity and objectives of The Kent Downs National Landscape designation and threaten its protected status and beauty. The necessary changes to the environment will irreversibly compromise the tranquillity and rural charm and historical character that is valued by residents and visitors alike.
4. The required changes will place a major strain on the Local infrastructure and resources. No viable public transportation exists in the village.
5. Lack of consideration for local residents. Any such changes will further degrade village life through increased traffic and associated commercial activities – HGV deliveries etc.
6. There are also plans to re-route local historic public rights of way and to potentially remove historic walls and gates that currently form part of Luddesdown rural heritage.
7. The Luddesdown village area is a popular attraction to both local residents and the wider community in general for country walks, horse riding and cycling as it is currently an area that can be predicted and is essentially safe.

It is for these reasons and many more that the current Luddesdown should not be changed – it certainly should not be commercialised. There are few enough of such places left in the UK where members of society can visit and relax in the open countryside. Luddesdown parish council is vehemently opposed to any such commercial development and fully expects Gravesham Town council to support its local opinion.

This planning application relates only to the expansion of the Golden Lion and therefore this is the only development that can be considered and dealt with on its own merits. Any subsequent applications for this site or surrounding sites would be subject to a separate application and will also be dealt with on their own merits.

Dickens' Country Protection Society (summarised)

The Golden Lion is a building of some historic interest. The society welcomes the extension and refurbishment but is concerned the character of the pub should be retained and enhanced with the addition of the new modern dining area. Concerns are raised about the loss of the fireplace from the removal of the toilet wall. Walls should be retained to give definition. It is noted that the area now to form the car park was once the site of a row of cottages.

The proposed demolitions appear to remove the more modern additions. The northeast elevation is important regarding initial impressions and this could be improved. The flat roof with the large lantern light suggests the area's previous use. If it had a parapet the lantern would be hidden. A lean to roof with light wells would be more sympathetic.

The new dining area will be dominated by glass. A traditional approach may have been more appropriate however there is no objection to what is proposed.

KCC Biodiversity

SUMMARY: SUFFICIENT INFORMATION

We have reviewed the information submitted by the applicant and advise that the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (JW Biodiversity Management) have given a thorough evaluation of the sites baseline value for biodiversity. Habitats currently present onsite are considered to be of limited value for biodiversity, being dominated by areas of hardstanding, with areas of semi-natural vegetation (modified grassland), are which regularly managed through mowing.

Though the onsite building was determined to be of low suitability for bats, emergence surveys did not record any emergences. The site was determined to be of negligible potential for supporting dormice, badgers, reptiles and amphibians, though some opportunities for nesting birds may be present in buildings and vegetation.

NESTING BIRDS

Vegetation and buildings within the site has been identified as suitable breeding bird habitat and some will be impacted by clearance works, the following is advised, to be secured by condition:

From commencement of works (including site clearance), to avoid impacts to nesting birds, the following precautionary mitigation should be implemented:

- 1. Any hedgerow and trees to be retained, including its roots, will be protected from damage;*
- 2. Any work to vegetation/structures that may provide suitable bird nesting habitats should be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (1st March to 31st August inclusive) to avoid destroying or damaging bird nests in use or being built. If within the breeding bird season a survey by a suitably qualified person needs to be conducted to confirm absence, prior to commencing works.*

We recommend that any works to vegetation are conducted outside the breeding bird season (1st March to 31st Aug) to avoid risk of impacts or if within the breeding bird season, a survey by a suitably qualified person needs to be conducted to confirm absence, prior to commencing works.

LIGHTING

Nocturnal animals (including bats) may use the site and the surrounding area for foraging and commuting and any lighting associated with the proposal may have a negative impact, especially any light spill to hedgerow boundaries and trees on the site. We advise that a condition will be required for the external lighting and will require the following requirements:

- *Plan showing location of lighting and light spill*
- *Downward facing*
- *On a motion sensor (where possible)*

Follow the recommendations within Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night'

ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS

Paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF 2024 states: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs."

The PEA includes a number of biodiversity enhancement recommendations, including the provision of artificial bat boxes/tubes within new buildings and retained trees and the incorporation of bird nest boxes within retained trees and buildings (particularly for house sparrow and starling), in addition to the enhancement of grassland habitat.

All proposed enhancement measures should be clearly visible on elevations plans. A condition wording is suggested below.

Condition

Within three months of works commencement, a detailed plan(s) showing how the development will enhance biodiversity based on the recommendations with the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (JW Biodiversity Management, Aug 24) will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The plan must be implemented as approved.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The submitted BNG metric demonstrates that a net gain in excess of 10% can be achieved onsite, largely through new tree planting and the enhancement of grassland habitats. This net gain is not considered to be significant due to the limited scale of the creation of medium distinctiveness habitats.

If planning permission is granted, local planning authorities are encouraged to use suggested paragraphs for Biodiversity Gain Information on the written decision notice which are available to download here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/663251d969098ded31fca800/BNG_Decision_Notice_Text.odt. The applicant should submit a biodiversity gain plan form¹ along with supporting information once planning permission has been granted to demonstrate in more detail how the proposed biodiversity net gain will be delivered.

The creation and ongoing management of newly created habitats should therefore be secured through the production of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).

No development will take place (including any ground works, site, or vegetation clearance), until the LEMP has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority addressing:

- 1. Creation and enhancement of habitats in accordance with the recommendations of the PEA/BNG report (JW Biodiversity Management Aug 24)*
- 2. Management of onsite habitats to achieve biodiversity net gain in accordance with the PEA/BNG report (JW Biodiversity Management Aug 24)*
- 3. Biodiversity enhancement measures, including [building-integrated bat boxes, bird nest boxes and native species planting].*

The LEMP will include the following:

- a) Purpose and conservation objectives for the proposed ecological design works.*
- b) Detailed design(s) to achieve stated objectives.*
- c) Extent and location/area of proposed works on appropriate scale maps and plans.*
- d) Type and source of materials to be used where appropriate, e.g. native species of local provenance.*
- e) Timetable for implementation, including the planting of any hedgerows prior to first use of the*

development.

f) Persons responsible for implementing the works.

g) Details of initial aftercare.

h) Aims and objectives of management.

i) Prescriptions for management actions.

j) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period)

k) Habitat monitoring provisions.

l) Details of the individual, body or organisation(s) responsible for implementation of the plan.

The EDS will be implemented in accordance with the approved details and all features shall be retained in that manner thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development delivers the required biodiversity net gain on site

1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-gain-plan>

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 :-

The application is supported by a Transport Statement by DHA dated January 2025 which is considered to address all of the necessary highway issues as a result of this proposal. It is considered to be a robust assessment.

The site is located in a rural unsustainable location which results in all trips to be made using the private car. Whilst this is of concern, it is accepted that this is an existing facility (being extended and enlarged) in a rural location so no alternatives are likely to be economically viable.

Traffic generation to and from the site is not significant, particularly when the existing use is taken into account. Crash records on the local roads is not significant enough to be of concern.

The existing car park is proposed to be enlarged to 37 spaces which has been shown to meet the maximum KCC Parking Standard (SPG4) for the uses proposed. However, the width of the access (which is an improvement on the existing arrangement) is not defined in section 3.2.1 of the TS and should be a minimum of 5.5m wide. Also the size of the parking spaces is not shown and should be a minimum of 5.0m x 2.5m.

I therefore raise no objection on highway grounds to this proposal provided the following conditions are applied to any consent granted:

1 Provision and permanent retention of the vehicle parking spaces shown on the submitted plans prior to the use of the site commencing. Minimum parking bay size should be 5.0m x 2.5m.

2 Provision and permanent retention of secure, covered cycle parking facilities prior to the use of the site commencing in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 Provision and maintenance of 25 metres x 2.4 metres x 25 metres visibility splays at the access with no obstructions over 1.05 metres above carriageway level within the splays, or 0.6 metres where a footway crosses the access, prior to use of the site commencing.

4 Submission of a Construction Management Plan before the commencement of any development on site to include the following:

(a) Routing of construction and delivery vehicles to / from site.

(b) Parking and turning areas for construction and delivery vehicles and site personnel, which may require supporting vehicle tracking/swept paths.

(c) Timing of deliveries, avoiding network and school peaks where possible.

(d) Provision of wheel washing facilities.

- (e) Measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway.
- (f) Temporary traffic management / signage.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-information>

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>. Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

KCC Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and there has been a building at the site since at least the early 19th century. The early 19th century Tithe map records a rectangular building in an area to the east of the present day Golden Lion building. The 1st Ed. OS map of 1862 – 1875 records a building (presumed to be the historic core of the present day public house) having been built adjoining the western end of the first rectangular building. By the time of the 2nd Ed. OS map of 1897 – 1900 the Golden Lion Public House is recorded by name and the rectangular building to its east is recorded as four units in a terrace. The 2nd Ed. OS mapping also illustrates additions to the Golden Lion on the west and southern sides. The row of four units was still extant in the 1940s, as evidenced from RAF aerial photography, but had been demolished at some time before 1990 by which time a car park had been created in that area to the east of the public house.

Groundworks associated with the proposed development may reveal and impact buried archaeological associated with the past use of the site and I recommend that if planning permission is granted the following condition is applied to any forthcoming consent:

To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded during development works:

A) Prior to any development works the applicant (or their agents or successors in title) shall secure an archaeological watching brief so that excavations and other development groundworks are observed and heritage assets with archaeological interest are recorded. The watching brief shall be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority and in accordance with a Specification which has been submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

B) The archaeological watching brief, recording, post excavation assessment, analysis and reporting shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed Specification.

C) Within 6 months of the completion of the watching brief a Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

REASON: To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with local and national planning policy.

Kent Downs National Landscape

Standing response received raising no specific concerns.

GBC Environmental Protection

Noise

The Noise Assessment dated 21/01/2025 by Lustre Consulting (Report Ref: 5173_AC_1.0) has been reviewed. IN terms of plant/equipment, the report advises that the existing kitchen extract equipment is to be relocated and used in the new kitchen/extension. No new plant is proposed. Appropriate noise measurements have been undertaken, including noise with the kitchen extract system operational. These measurements were taken both in the car park and also close to the nearest noise sensitive premises.

Various potential noise sources have been assess including car park noise, existing plant noise, patron noise in the pub garden, additional indoor pub noise breakout and other noise associated with the servicing of the premises. These noise sources are already in existence but may change due to the proposals. The report concludes that with these changes, there is unlikely to be any detrimental impact on the nearby houses. This is agreed with.

In case of any changes to the existing plant or addition of any new plant, a plant noise level has been recommended. This is 10dB below existing background which is in accordance with our usual requirements.

Kitchen Extract

It appears from the application details that the existing kitchen extract system is to be used and relocated to the proposed new kitchen. However, no details have been submitted as to what the system comprises. However, look at the proposed southeast elevation plan, it appears that the extract is to vent horizontally at a low level. A low level flue termination is not usually acceptable – a high level vertical discharge being preferable for good dispersion of fumes. In addition, the level of filtration has not been demonstrated. The Noise Assessment does however confirm that the existing set up is satisfactory in terms of noise levels.

The following conditions are therefore recommended:

Plant Noise

The rating noise from fixed building services/mechanical plant/equipment, including any air systems, associated with the development shall be at least 10dB below the existing LA90 background level at the nearest noise sensitive receptors (i.e. dwellings) when measured and assessed in accordance with BS4142:2014 and the details submitted in the 'Noise Assessment' dated 21/01/2025 by Lustre Consulting (Report Ref: 5173_AC_1.0).

Restaurant Odour

The extraction system must be designed and installed in accordance with the "EMAQ/Defra Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (2018 update)". Full details of proposed extraction system to deal with grease and odour control should include:

- a) Plans and details of all duct work (internal and external) and equipment.
- b) Plans showing the location/position of the external flue/discharge stack, including its position in relation to neighbouring properties and window openings.
- c) Details of all grease filtration and odour control including the manufacturer's specification/data sheets. This includes the canopy.
- d) Details, including manufacturer's specification/data sheets of the fan.
- e) Details of proposed routine cleaning and maintenance of the system, and the service requirements of the installed odour control system, including details of system access panels and confirmation that they will be grease tight.
- f) Details of the type of food to be cooked, the cooking time per day; and the type of cooking appliances to be used.

Odour/fume control equipment shall be maintained and operated in compliance with the approved scheme. After installation of the approved plant, no new plant or ducting system shall be used.

Lighting

Artificial lighting can cause a statutory nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It is important that the applicants are not permitted to install external lighting that illuminate anything other than the ground within the curtilage of premises. Lighting in the garden area will need careful consideration.

GBC Commercial Health

No objection in principle. The following comments are made for the information of the applicant.

Health and Safety

In these premises Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) Environmental Health will be the enforcing authority. The applicant must ensure that these premises comply fully with the Health and Safety at Work (etc) Act 1974 and all relevant regulations made there under. For information and advice on health and safety matters check out the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk or contact the Environmental Health team on commercialhealth.admin@gravesham.gov.uk or 01474 337 000.

This workplace will be immediately subject to the requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Particular attention should be made to the following requirements.

- Regulation 6 requires that effective and suitable provision shall be made to ensure that every

enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air.

- Regulation 14 requires that every window or other transparent or translucent surface in a door or gate shall where necessary for reasons of safety be constructed of a safety material or be protected against breakage and also be appropriately marked.
- Regulation 20 requires that suitable and sufficient sanitary conveniences shall be provided at readily accessible places. Where between 6 and 25 persons are employed a minimum of 2 water closets must be provided.

Food Safety Comments

I am unable to fully comment on the structure of the kitchen as the plans do not provide me with a detailed layout. Further detailed plans are therefore required.

It is a requirement under Article 6(2) of Regulation 852/2004 that food business operators must register their establishments with the appropriate competent authority (in this case GBC Environmental Health) at least 28 days before food operations commence. Registration is via the Gravesham Borough Council website www.gravesham.gov.uk/food-safety

The applicant must ensure that the kitchen fully complies with current food safety legislation to the satisfaction of the Regulatory Services Manager. Structural and operational requirements are covered by the legislation notably EC Regulation 852/2004.

All internal structures to the kitchen must be impervious, non-absorbent and washable i.e. easy to clean and maintain in a clean condition.

Where inspection chambers become part of the internal structure of the kitchen they must be closed with a secure, sealed, airtight cover.

Ensure that any waste pipes which become part of the internal structure of the kitchen terminate externally at an appropriate height.

Any floor drains which become part of the internal structure of the kitchen must be fitted with a close-fitting grill which is easy to clean.

The kitchen should be pest proofed as far as possible i.e. gaps and holes to external doors, windows, pipes and drains etc. must be filled or covered with a solid, durable material in order to minimise pest entry points into food preparation and storage areas.

Lavatories must not lead directly into rooms in which food is handled, stored or prepared. There should be an intervening ventilated space between toilets and food rooms. Food should not be stored in that space.

The provision and location of sinks and wash hand basins is an important consideration in the design and planning of a kitchen. A minimum of 1 wash hand basin and a double sink unit must be installed. A dish washer is also recommended.

The layout and scale of the business operation is such that mechanical ventilation, with a balanced air intake and appropriate extract system, is likely to be required. This will need to achieve a minimum of 30 air changes per hour and a maximum ambient temperature of 25C within the working kitchen. I recommend that you contact a specialist contractor in this regard.

For further advice on starting a food business please visit the FSA website <https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance>

GBC Licensing

The following to be considered:

Having had a look at the application it would show that they intend to increase the floor plan, which in turn would increase the capacity for drinking at the premises. Therefore, the applicant will need to submit a full variation application for the premises licence. The details on how to do this are available on the website, however, should they require any specific assistance they can email licensing@gravesham.gov.uk

GBC Conservation Officer

A condition should be imposed that samples of all external materials are submitted.

The car park area should contain more soft landscaping i.e. a hedge. The post and rail fencing should be 'estate' fencing (simple flat metal rail with vertical bars) with a hedge behind.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by site notice and individual letters to four neighbouring properties and 13 letters of representation have been received.

Two letters of support:

- The application more than adequately addresses planning, environmental, traffic management, and other neighbourhood concerns.
- The proposed restaurant will be an asset to the area. In addition, it will further revive the Lion pub which, since Silverhand Estate's management, has become a thriving local gathering place.
- The objections put forth have been driven, not by any real concerns, but as a result of a political conflict within Meopham Parish Council, as backlash by certain councillors there who have been the subject of a formal grievance procedure (resulting in a damning report by an independent body), several reports to the Monitoring Officer, and a recent Vote of No Confidence.
- As a long-term customer of the Golden Lion, or the Lion, as it is now called, I am excited for the opportunity for an upgrade to the eating and drinking in the area. I play for the local cricket team and so did my father before me.
- The Cock Inn focusses on real ale with no children and no food. It makes sense to have a family friendly pub in the village
- Having a high-end food offering alongside English wine is a good opportunity

11 letters of objection (multiple from same addresses) have been received raising the following:

1. Increased vehicle traffic congestion on Henley St (HS) Longer opening hours throughout the week, at Golden Lion (GL) it will increase the traffic volume and congestion on HS. The impact on "neighbours" will be significant. HS is a narrow single trackway, edged with steep banks with trees and hedged verges. Vehicles cannot pass side by side, causing congestion. Hence vehicles use private open gateways and driveways, mount verges/banks, causing erosion and trees to fall into road & overhead power lines.

2. Insufficient evidence proving the proposed main routeways will be used instead of Henley St from M20 corridor via Foxendown Lane (FL), and from A2 via Cobhambury Hill (CH) & Luddesdown Rd (LR). As no traffic counts were taken on these roads, it is not proven that most vehicles currently use them and will continue to use them to access the renovated GL. Currently most vehicles use Henley Street to access the GL although this is not proven due to the absence of counts on main routes (FL and CH) described above. The reason for not currently using them to access GL, is due to the unsuitability of FL and LR. Both are narrow single trackways, without designated passing places, unlit and winding. On FL there are blind bends & long distances between bank-eroded passing places. LR is prone to flooding, downhill from the junction with Buckland Rd and in the close vicinity of Cutter Ridge and LR. Vehicles will continue to use HS as it is the easiest and safest route to the GL, adversely impacting most of Luddesdown residents, ie those living on HS.

3. Impact of Increased Trading Hours on the Local Environment & Well Being . As stated above, increased traffic volume and congestion caused by longer trading hours at the GL will have a negative impact on the environment by degrading air quality in the locality and especially HS. Motor exhaust fumes emitted from all vehicles, especially those congested vehicles (with engines running) while waiting to pass, will increase air pollution This will occur throughout Luddesdown but especially in HS, which is a relatively straight road and considered the easiest and safest route for vehicles travelling to/from the GL.

The road users who walk, cycle and horse ride along HS are many and varied, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Student groups hiking in school holidays; runners individuals and groups, including the North Downs Race runners who cross HS via the stile by the Old Post Office on HS . Compared with other areas in the vicinity, HS is relatively traffic-free at many times of the day and “feels safe and unthreatening”, this makes it appealing to lone users, especially unaccompanied females who walk, run and ride. Unlike open public spaces elsewhere in Gravesham, HS and it’s adjoining track and pathways enables people “to get away from it all” because it is a very tranquil area. Visitors will park at the Cock Inn on HS, or arrive on foot, or train/bus from Sole Street, and by horse, and use HS “as the gateway to Luddesdown”. The development will impact this tranquillity, it will attract pub visitors at all times of the day especially during the daylight hours and at weekends. This coincides with the times when many non-vehicle users enjoy HS and surrounding area to help boost their sense of wellbeing; since the Pandemic this aspect of our lives is now acknowledged to be vital, Luddesdown is one of few local areas that contributes to wellbeing.

4. Henley Street and the Clash & with Weekend Family Restaurant Dining. The Transport Strategy (TS) Section 5.2.5 notes that on a busy Saturday, the new restaurant may generate a maximum of 248 vehicle trips over the day, averaging 40 trips in the 19.30 to 20.30 peak time. This number of trips in a single day will create adverse conditions for the varied mix of road of users of HS. This will be keenly felt at weekend lunch times and early evenings which are also the most popular times for “family restaurant dining”. The Saturday Trip Profile shown in TS Section 5.2.4. Table -1 will be impacted as the peak time will start earlier and be longer in duration than those shown. To accommodate families with young children, the family lunch time is likely to start around 12.00 and end by 15.00, and evening dinner would start earlier from around 17.00. This would seriously clash with the times that those road users not using vehicles, would be on the same roads around the pub, especially on HS. This will increase the risk of accidents on busier roads and containing a diverse range of motorised and non-motor users.

5.Impact of overflow parking on the road network around the Golden Lion The “Call for Employment Sites Initiative” by Gravesham Council (Planning Statement Section 3.1.1) is presented as a validation for the planning application. However, the redevelopment will do more harm than good to the locality. Although it will create more employment in hospitality, the issue of overspill parking on and around the site, will have a significant detrimental effect on road safety. Overflow parking from the GL and the Cellar Door Shop will make the HS and Luddesdown Road junction more hazardous than it is already. Cars unable to park in the carpark, will instead use the roadsides along Cutter Ridge and Luddesdown Road. The application uses the number of restaurant covers, to determine the likely customer turnover and carpark requirements at different times. As there is no public transport in Luddesdown, diners are expected to use mainly private vehicles, with 2.5 persons per vehicle. There appears to be some confusion on the actual number of covers in the new restaurant . The Planning Statement specifies 40 (Section 3.2.1) and Transport Statement (Section 5.2.3) specifies 48 covers. Whichever number of covers apply, overspill car parking will be an issue and is not adequately addressed in the application: excepting the arrangements made for staff parking to be accommodated in non-public areas.

The Transport Statement (TP) (Section 4.8.2), acknowledges the parking capacity is 7 spaces short of the maximum requirement for the restaurant and WC. This is mitigated by ensuring a faster turnover of diners (TP Section 5.2.3). The effect this is likely to have on overspill parking is doubtful; to impose limited dwelling times on diners may be difficult to employ, it may have a negative effect on repeat business, so may not be sustained.

6.Luddesdown lies within the Kent North Downs Landscape Area. Designated as a National Landscape Area, the entire Parish is contained within the Kent North Downs Landscape Area. It is an acknowledgement that Luddesdown landscape is exceptional on account of it’s beauty and tranquillity, so

much so, that it is of national importance. It is therefore, the duty of all residents, visitors and the civic authorities, to protect the area against any detrimental manmade changes to the quality and tranquillity of the area. The landscape, wildlife, flora and fauna must be allowed to flourish alongside human existence and the lifestyles of the day. The Planning Application for the extension and refurbishment of the Golden Lion should be rejected as it fails to meet this brief, and the preceding five concerns stated above.

This application should be turned down flatly as there hasn't been significant changes to the surrounding lanes since the unsuccessful application in 1990. This means the same, if not greater, risks to the existing road users and wild life. The area formerly known as AONB still enjoys protection from such large scale developments. An increase in noise, light and air pollution is inevitable due to even more Silverhand traffic. Finally, as with the wine factory in Luddesdown, a minimal number of jobs will be created for residents as the new staff will invariably drive into the area.

The access roads have not been properly surveyed since Silverhand started full production.

Traffic from HGVs as well as employees of the vineyard.

Luddesdown is a quiet village and never meant to be the hub of a large commercial enterprise.

The pub site is already overdeveloped and there appears to be a retail pop-up shop and farmers market and high Silverhand Estate sign.

Risk to pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists etc. from traffic and erosion of tranquillity.

The application should be subject to further scrutiny.

Failure to account for Silverhand Estate's Unlawful development (*this is an enforcement issue and not a material planning consideration*).

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a rear and side extension and refurbishment of the Golden Lion pub including landscaping, parking and associated works.

The proposals include:

- Demolition of the existing rear extension(s) including the existing pub kitchen and construction of a new single-storey rear extension to provide a new kitchen and space for up to 40 restaurant covers;
- Demolition of existing conservatory to be replaced with new W.C. facilities;
- Remodelling of the eastern elevation to create an enhanced legible entrance;
- Internal works to upgrade the existing bar area;
- Installation of a new flint boundary wall that fronts onto Luddesdown Road;
- A new ramp providing access to the adjacent wine shop;
- Re-organising and enhancing the existing car park including landscaping; and
- Enhancements to the existing access to the car park from Luddesdown Road.

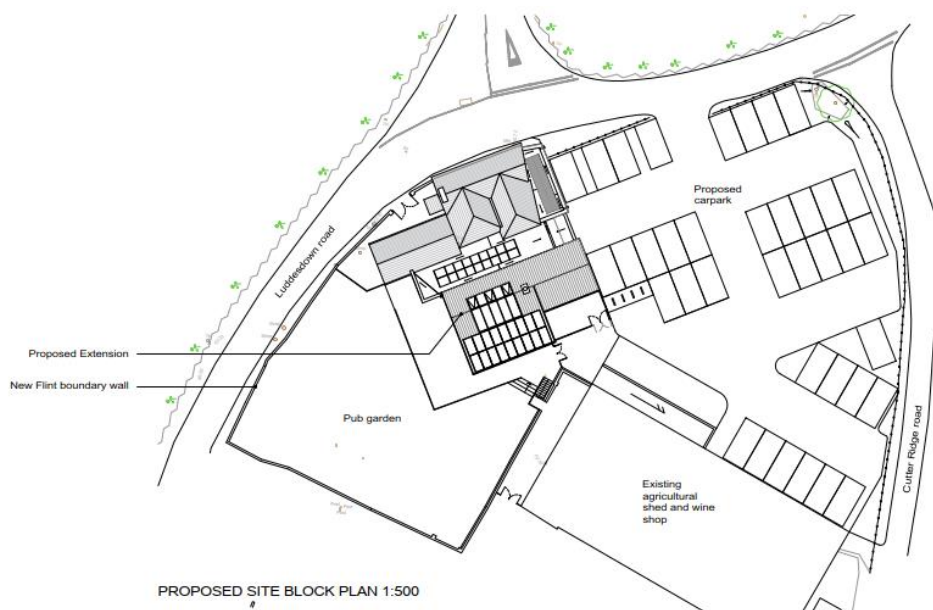
In detail, the proposed extensions include:

- A single-story side extension to the south-west elevation of the existing pub. This addition measures 9m in width and a depth of c.4.8m and eaves height of c.2m and a total height of c.3.4m. This addition will provide toilet facilities for the pub.
- A single-storey rear extension comprising flat and dual pitch roof element. This element of the proposal has a maximum depth of c.13m, a ridge height of 4.4m, a total height of 5m (measured to the top of the proposed chimney) and a maximum width of 18.4m. This element will provide seating areas for the pub's proposed restaurant, the pub kitchen and service and bin area.
- The single-story side addition to the north-west elevation will provide a new main entrance to the building and additional seating for the bar area. The addition comprises a width of 2.2m, a depth of 8.4m and has an eaves height of 2.8m and a total height of 3.3m.

The block plan below shows the existing situation:



The block plan below shows the proposed changes:



The car park will be laid out formerly, with cycle parking, and will contain some soft landscaping in the form of grassed areas and will be bounded by a chestnut post and rail fence. The exiting tree on the car park will be retained. The pub garden boundary fence along Luddesdown Road will be replaced by a flint faced masonry wall and three new trees.

Site Description

The application site is a public house that has been located on this site since at least 1869. Historically a terrace of cottages were attached to the building however these were demolished in the 1960. Brookers Farmhouse is located to the east of the site and is Grade II listed. There are residential properties to the north and south and other buildings owned by the applicant to the east and south used as a shop and for wine making. Much of the surrounding land is used for growing grapes.

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, National Landscape and Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area.

Principle of Development

Green Belt

Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2014 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, including proposals to maintain and diversify the rural economy (which is the case here), will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the Core Strategy 2014.

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. 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 their permanence.

Paragraph 143 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 states that the Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless certain exceptions apply. In this case two of the exceptions could apply:

- c) 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; and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

Exception (c) is unlikely to be applicable as the original building is considerably smaller than what currently exists. The plan below shows the situation in 1948:



It would appear that the footprint would have been around 125sqm at this time. The proposed footprint is approx. 342sqm which is 173% larger than the footprint in 1948. The plans show the demolition of various elements however the exception is worded to consider the 'original' building, not the 'existing' building. Therefore the proposed development is not an exception under paragraph 154c.

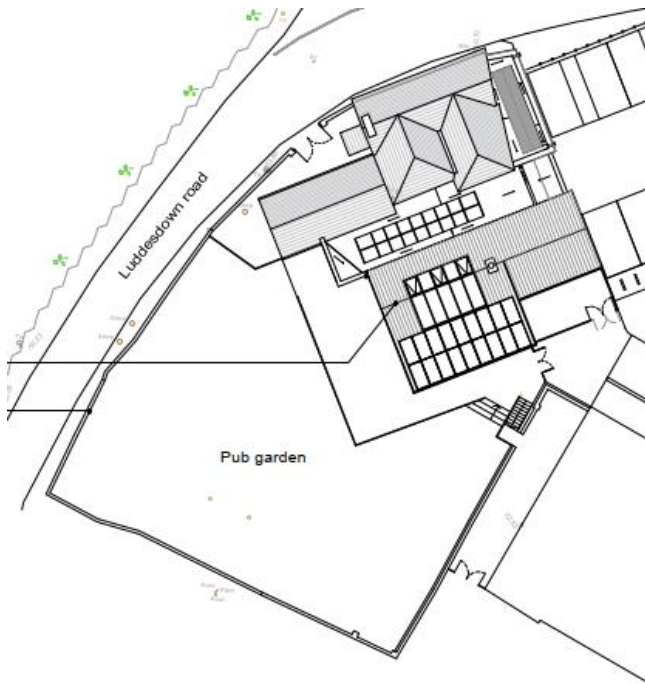
Exception (g) allows for the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed

Previously developed land is defined in annexe 2 of the NPPF as

The site has been lawfully developed and is occupied by a permanent structure and therefore is considered to fall within the definition of previously developed land.

[illegible]

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The various additions and outbuildings are now shown amalgamated into the main building therefore reducing the sprawl on the site. The applicants have confirmed that the proposed extensions to the existing pub represent a 26.35% increase in floor area compared to the developed area of the site.

In terms of the spatial and visual aspects the proposed development will not have a significant impact on openness compared to the existing situation and therefore accords with exception 154(g) and is not considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Given that the proposed development is considered an exception it is not necessary to consider very special circumstances.

Impact on the landscape

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well-designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024 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. The site lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape (formerly AONB), within the West Kent Downs Landscape Character Area of the Kent Downs Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) Update 2020, and within the Luddesdown Sub Area. Reflective of paragraph 189 of the NPPF 2024, Policy SD2 of the Management Plan 2021-2026 recognises the need to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities, distinctiveness and natural resources of the National Landscape. Principle SD8 seeks to ensure that proposals do not negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the National Landscape.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 imposed a new statutory Duty on the Council such that the Council **must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape in carrying out its functions**, including as a Planning Authority. In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority is meeting this Duty by considering the impact of the development on the National Landscape below:

The proposed extensions are confined to within the curtilage of the existing property and reduce the existing sprawling development on the site due to the demolition of various extensions and structures. They therefore will not impact the wider landscape and are considered to conserve the local character, qualities, distinctiveness and natural resources of the National Landscape in accordance with policy SD2 of the Management Plan. Likewise, the reduction in sprawl of development and its containment within the curtilage will ensure that the development does not impact negatively on the distinctive landforms, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the National Landscape in accordance with policy SD8 of the Management Plan.

The application has been accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal which concludes that the potential effects on the character and appearance of the local landscape associated with the proposed extension to The Golden Lion pub would primarily be localised. No notable landscape features will be removed and the design of the proposed extensions, though contemporary, would reflect the local vernacular in respect of the choice of materials and would be in keeping with the area's character. The visual appraisal undertaken for the proposed development demonstrates that the area within the host landscape from where the proposals might be seen is limited. The site has a limited and well contained zone of visual influence, due to the proximity of large blocks of woodland and the surrounding undulating topography. Also given the pubs comparatively isolated location, the number of potential visual receptors is very limited.

Policy LLC1 sets out to protect, conserve and enhance of special characteristics and qualities, natural beauty and landscape character of the Kent Downs AONB will be supported and pursued. Policy FL5 seeks to promote appropriate farm diversification. It sets out that farm diversification activities will be supported if they help achieve the vision, aims and principles of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan. The proposed development, for the reasons stated above accord with the objectives of these policies.

Section 11 of the Management Plan relates to the quality of life and vibrant communities within the National Landscape. It sets out that the secondary purpose of the National Landscape designations is to take account of the needs of land based and rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. The proposed development will protect the future of the public house and therefore contributes to the quality of life of the community. In addition to this no objection has been received from the Kent Downs National Landscape Unit.

The application site is also located in the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area within the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment and as such, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 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 LCA will be taken into account in determining applications. The LCA states the area is defined by very undulating topography with arable farmland and pasture, irregular field patterns, fields divided by native hedgerows and areas of native woodland that all contribute to the rural character of the area. The condition of the landscape is generally good, its sensitivity high. The guidelines for the area focus on conserving the distinctive features that are found in the area to protect and maintain its character and quality, including conserving hedgerows.

The proposals include enhanced boundary treatments to the site frontage and around the car park, which forms the most open aspect of the site. The car park itself would be reconfigured to provide 37no. spaces and extend onto the current grassed area to the south of the existing hardstanding. These proposals would be in line with the current development on the site and would have the potential to improve the current car park elevation in particular, which appears neglected and unattractive. There are opportunities to further improve the appearance of the car park through the use of 'estate fencing' and native hedgerows and therefore a condition is recommended to ensure landscaping and boundary treatments are submitted prior to these works being undertaken. Subject to conditions the proposals are acceptable in terms of impact on the landscape.

To the rear and side of the pub are the existing farm buildings and site access that form part of the adjacent farm. Beyond the farm access are two farm cottages. With the exception of the open car park aspect, the site is largely surrounded by existing built development. Given this setting, it is considered that the

proposals to extend the pub would not significantly impact on the wider landscape and scenic beauty of the National Landscape and Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area.

Diversification of the Rural Economy

Policy CS07 Economy, Employment and Skills States that:

'The Council will support proposals that promote the appropriate expansion and diversification of the rural area economy'.

Paragraph 88 of the NPPF 'supporting a prosperous rural economy' states that planning policies and decisions should enable:

- the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings;
- the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;
- the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

Paragraph 98(d) seeks to ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise and are retained for the benefit of the community.

The proposed extension to the pub will enhance the visitors' experience and food offer for the pub. It will also provide a functional link between the adjacent wine shop and wider wine making estate and surrounding vineyards as well as providing employment and ensuring the future of the business. The proposal therefore accords with local and national policies in this regard.

Design, Character and Appearance

Development Plan policy places considerable emphasis on the importance of achieving high quality buildings and places. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF 2024 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The new entrance to the pub as proposed on the car park elevation would be a welcome improvement to the site. In terms of the scale and proportion, the proposals are designed in a way to appear as obvious additions to the building. The roof heights vary which adds interest to the development and there is a clear distinction between the original building and the additions. The use of materials is mixed but takes reference from surrounding agricultural buildings as well as residential properties. Whilst the proposed materials are indicated on the plans, a condition is recommended that full details or samples are submitted for approval prior to above ground works. The removal of the boundary fence and its replacement with a flint wall is welcomed however, where there is original brick wall remaining this should be kept. This can be controlled by condition.

Internally the existing bar is to remain and is not dominated by the dining area and therefore respects the original building and the use as an important community asset.

The proposed extensions therefore accord with policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Amenity

Neighbouring Amenity

The NPPF 2024 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 135f). The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria within Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, 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; and avoid adverse environmental impacts from pollution.

As the location of the proposed extensions would be some distance from the nearest residential property, there would not be any concerns with regard to their impact on neighbouring privacy, light or outlook.

A noise assessment has been submitted with the application. This identified various potential noise sources including car park noise, existing plant noise, patron noise, indoor pub noise breakout and other noise associated with the servicing of the premises. The report concludes that any changes due to the proposals are unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the nearby houses and no objection is raised however a condition is recommended relating to plant noise.

In terms of odour a condition is recommended that full details of the extraction system must be designed and installed in accordance with the "EMAQ/Defra Control of Odour and Noise from Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems (2018 update)".

A condition is also recommended to ensure full details of any lighting installed is submitted to the Council before installation.

It is noted that concerns have been raised with regards to live music however this is dealt with under licensing legislation.

Subject to conditions, the proposed development would accord with policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135f of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Archaeology and Heritage

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and there has been a building at the site since at least the early 19th century. The early 19th century Tithe map records a rectangular building in an area to the east of the present day Golden Lion building. The 1st Ed. OS map of 1862 – 1875 records a building (presumed to be the historic core of the present day public house) having been built adjoining the western end of the first rectangular building. By the time of the 2nd Ed. OS map of 1897 – 1900 the Golden Lion Public House is recorded by name and the rectangular building to its east is recorded as four units in a terrace. The 2nd Ed. OS mapping also illustrates additions to the Golden Lion on the west and southern sides. The row of four units was still extant in the 1940s, as evidenced from RAF aerial photography, but had been demolished at some time before 1990 by which time a car park had been created in that area to the east of the public house.

Groundworks associated with the proposed development may reveal and impact buried archaeological associated with the past use of the site and therefore a condition is recommended to require an archaeological watching brief to be submitted prior to the commencement of development.

Heritage

Policy CS20 states that the Council will accord a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource, central to the regeneration of the area and the reinforcement of sense of place. Proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and

enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough.

The application site is a non-designated heritage asset and to the east is a Grade II listed building. Proposed development therefore needs to respect the heritage of these buildings. As stated above the proposed extensions have been designed to take aspects from surrounding rural buildings but also have modern elements that provide a clear distinction between old and new. This is an approach that is generally encouraged by Historic England provided the new element does not dominate the original and no objection is raised to this.

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 216 deals with applications affecting non designated heritage assets and that the impact needs to be weighed in the planning judgement having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The proposed development is not considered to cause harm to this heritage asset or Brookers Farmhouse to the east and therefore accords with this paragraph. The proposals will improve the car parking area to the pub which is to the front of Brookers Farm and therefore will enhance the appearance of both this listed building and the pub itself.

The proposed extensions therefore accord with policies CS20 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Flood and Drainage

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is not at risk of fluvial flooding and a flood risk assessment is not required to support the planning application. The proposed extension will connect to the existing drainage. The car park will be re-surfaced with a permeable paving solution and this can be controlled by condition.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (JW Biodiversity Management) have given a thorough evaluation of the sites baseline value for biodiversity. Habitats currently present onsite are considered to be of limited value for biodiversity, being dominated by areas of hardstanding, with areas of semi-natural vegetation (modified grassland), are which regularly managed through mowing.

Though the onsite building was determined to be of low suitability for bats, emergence surveys did not record any emergences. The site was determined to be of negligible potential for supporting dormice, badgers, reptiles and amphibians, though some opportunities for nesting birds may be present in buildings and vegetation.

Vegetation and buildings within the site has been identified as suitable breeding bird habitat and some will be impacted by clearance works; a condition is recommended to ensure limited impact.

Any works to vegetation should be conducted outside the breeding bird season (1st March to 31st Aug) to avoid risk of impacts or if within the breeding bird season, a survey by a suitably qualified person needs to be conducted to confirm absence, prior to commencing works.

Nocturnal animals (including bats) may use the site and the surrounding area for foraging and commuting and any lighting associated with the proposal may have a negative impact, especially any light spill to hedgerow boundaries and trees on the site and therefore a condition is recommended for external lighting.

Paragraph 187(d) of the NPPF 2024 states: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs."

The PEA includes a number of biodiversity enhancement recommendations, including the provision of artificial bat boxes/tubes within new buildings and retained trees and the incorporation of bird nest boxes within retained trees and buildings (particularly for house sparrow and starling), in addition to the enhancement of grassland habitat.

All proposed enhancement measures should be clearly visible on elevations plans and condition is recommended.

Biodiversity Net Gain

The NPPF 2024 in paragraph 187 states that development should contribute to and enhance the local and natural environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity value, and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects this stance and states that sites designated for their biodiversity value will be protected. There will be no net loss of biodiversity in the Borough.

The submitted BNG metric demonstrates that a net gain in excess of 10% can be achieved onsite, largely through new tree planting and the enhancement of grassland habitats. This net gain is not considered to be significant due to the limited scale of the creation of medium distinctiveness habitats.

The creation and ongoing management of newly created habitats should therefore be secured through the production of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and a condition is recommended.

Parking and Highways

The application has been supported by a Transport Statement by DHA. The site is located in a rural unsustainable location which results in all trips to be made using the private car. Whilst this is of concern it is accepted that this is an existing facility in a rural location so no alternatives are likely to be economically viable.

Traffic generation to and from the site is not significant, particularly when the existing use is taken into account. Crash records on the local roads is not significant enough to be of concern.

The existing car park is proposed to be enlarged to 37 spaces which has been shown to meet the maximum KCC Parking Standard (SPG4) for the uses proposed. However, the width of the access (which is an improvement on the existing arrangement) is not defined in section 3.2.1 of the TS and should be a minimum of 5.5m wide. Also the size of the parking spaces is not shown and should be a minimum of 5.0m x 2.5m.

No objection is therefore raised on highways grounds however conditions are recommended relating to the provision of and retention of parking spaces measuring 5m x 2.5m; provision of secure, covered cycle parking facilities; provision and maintenance of visibility splays of 25m x 2.4m x 25m at the access with no obstruction over 1.05m in height or 0.6m where a footway crosses the access; and the submission of a construction management plan before works commence to include:

- (a) Routing of construction and delivery vehicles to / from site.
- (b) Parking and turning areas for construction and delivery vehicles and site personnel, which may require supporting vehicle tracking/swept paths.
- (c) Timing of deliveries, avoiding network and school peaks where possible.
- (d) Provision of wheel washing facilities.

- (e) Measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway.
- (f) Temporary traffic management / signage.

Whilst it is noted that concerns have been raised by residents and the Parish Council, the submitted information is acceptable to the Highways Authority and no concerns relating to highway safety or car parking are raised in relation to the expansion of the public house. Subject to the above conditions the proposal accords with policy CS11 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014, T1, T4, T5 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Conclusion

The proposed extensions are not considered to be inappropriate in the Green Belt, will have no detrimental impact on the character of the street scene, landscape, amenities, parking or highways safety and therefore accord with the abovementioned policies and are recommended for approval.

Recommendation:

Permit

(For detailed conditions / reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	24 March 2025	Dated:	31 March 2025