

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20230845

Location: Rhydda Bank, Dean Lane, Harvel, Gravesend DA13 0BS

Description: Erection of a three bedroom bungalow with attached garage.

Applicant: Mr Frank Pyke

Site Visit Date: 23 August 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Design and Access Statement
Drawing no. PL-1710 (proposed plans)

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS14 – Housing Type and Size
- CS15 – Housing Density
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principle

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

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

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision making
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- 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

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan

As the site lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the adopted Kent Downs AONB Management Plan is also relevant. The policies relevant to the consideration of this enquiry are:

- SD1- The need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB is recognised as the primary purpose of the designation and given the highest level of protection within statutory and other appropriate planning and development strategies and development control decisions.
- SD3 - New development or changes to land use will be opposed where they disregard or run counter to the primary purpose of the Kent Downs AONB.
- SD8 - Proposals which negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.

Other Material Considerations

Supplementary Planning Guidance and other Documents:

The Council has adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents, Development Briefs and Conservation Area Appraisals. These elaborate on saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review and policies in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and are material considerations in determining planning applications.

In addition, the Council has adopted a number of documents that have been produced by Kent County Council also as Supplementary Guidance.

<https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/local-plan-policy/supplementary-planning-guidance>

The following documents are relevant to the consideration of this enquiry:

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020).
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006).
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015);
- Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

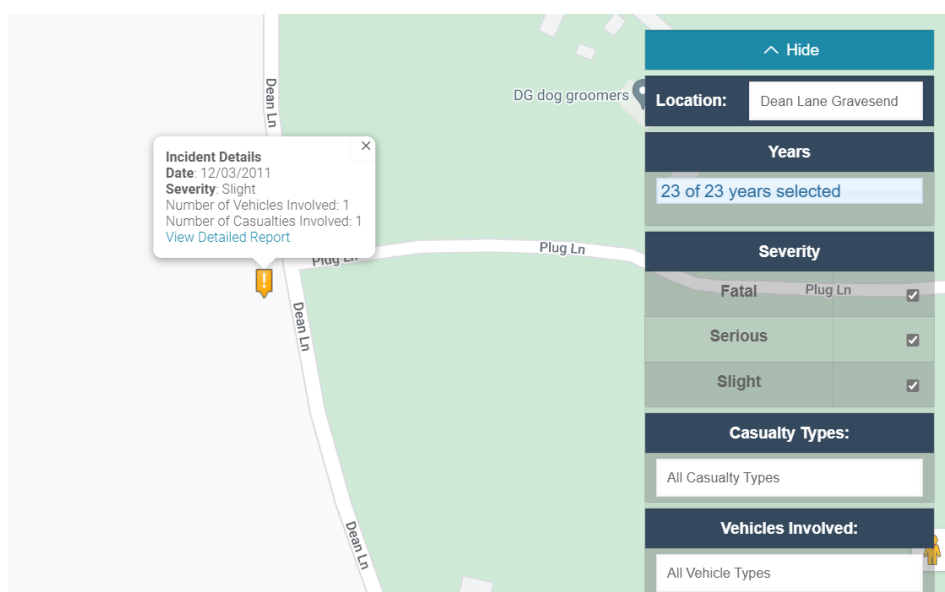
Meopham Parish Council

Objects on the basis of inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Highway Development Management Officer

The proposal requires a new access onto Dean Lane and whilst many of the existing properties may have limited visibility that does not mean improvements should not be sought with any new proposal. In this case by widening the plot and placing the access at the northern end of the site, visibility to the south can be improved as it is on plot whilst to the north it will be across land owned by the applicant (within the Blue Line)

Despite Dean Lane being a single tracked road, only one injury accident has been recorded according to Crashmap and this was in 2011 and only involved a single vehicle and so is not considered to be relevant.



By widening the plot by some two to three metres, it should be possible to provide sight lines of some 18m x 2.4m x 18m which is suitable for a 15 mph target speed. Which whilst not ideal is better than most properties in the road. Ideally it is considered appropriate that 43m x 2.4m x 43m should be provided which is suitable for a 30mph target speed, although without a speed survey it is impossible to determine the exact visibility requirements. But a driver should always drive to the conditions and not the speed limit which in this case is the national speed limit or 60mph. So, providing excessive visibility could be detrimental by encouraging drivers to go faster so a suitable compromise is required.

My suggestion would therefore be to provide 2.4m x 43 metre visibility to the north which is within the applicants control, whilst to the south with an access some 18 metres north of the southern boundary, nothing over 850mm in height above carriageway should be permitted within 2.4 metres of the carriageway, this then gives the neighbouring property the opportunity to adjust their boundary treatment if they wish to benefit both dwellings. This does however require the widening of the plot.

I note the applicant states foul sewage will be dealt with by connecting to a mains sewer, however in a rural area such as this, a mains sewer may not be available, and another method will be required which will require vehicle access which must be demonstrated to ensure whatever system is used can be serviced without obstructing the highway. A copy of the local public sewer records is requested to demonstrate a sewer is available.

The garage as proposed does not conform to the preferred width in KCC SPG4 of 3.6m x 5.5m which gives

space to open vehicle doors and permit some storage, although it would be adequate for a car and electric vehicle charging point. Some form of additional storage is required for garden tools, possibly garden furniture during inclement weather and secure storage of cycles, three spaces being required to conform to the requirements of KCC SPG4 of one cycle space per bedroom,

As presented, I would recommend refusal of the application.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by site notice and individual letters to two neighbouring properties. No letters of representation have been received.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for erection of a three bedroom bungalow with attached garage.

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) (2023). This requires that in regard to housing development, planning permission should be granted unless:

- i. 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
- ii. 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 NPPF paragraph 182)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Green Belt
- Local Green Space
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Irreplaceable habitats
- Designated heritage assets (& other heritage assets of archaeological interest, see NPPF footnote 68)
- 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 125(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 net increase of '1' no. dwelling would offer a minimal contribution towards meeting this local need and, accordingly, officers considers that this should be accorded minimal weight in support of the application. However, this has to be balanced against other requirements of the NPPF (2023) and in particular paragraph 130 and 134 - of the NPPF (2023) which requires development to be add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and create acceptable amenity for future occupiers. The proposed development is considered acceptable as discussed below.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

Green Belt

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. In the rural area, development will be supported within those rural settlement inset from the Green Belt and defined on the Policies Map. Development outside those settlements, including affordable housing and proposals to maintain and diversify the rural economy, will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the local plan. This site lies outside the confines of any rural settlements inset from the Green Belt.

Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 deals with development in the Green Belt. 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.

Para. 147 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Para 148 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. '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.

Para. 149 states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- 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;

- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

The proposal for a new dwelling does not meet exceptions a-d. The location is not within a village and therefore exception (e) also does not apply.

The dwelling is not proposed to be affordable housing for local community needs (as defined by the NPPF) and therefore (f) does not apply.

In terms of point (g) it has to be considered whether the proposal constitutes 'limited' and 'infilling'. As the proposal comprises one detached dwelling it can be considered to be 'limited'. The NPPF nor the development plan define 'infilling' however it is accepted the generally agreed definition of infilling is as follows:

The development of a small gap in an otherwise continuous built-up frontage, or the small-scale redevelopment of existing properties within such a frontage

As the site forms a plot between properties it is considered that it could be defined as "infilling".

The land appears to be used as garden land. In the rural area garden land is defined as previously developed land:

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Therefore, the application needs to be assessed with regards to whether the limited infilling would 'not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development'.

Impact on open character of the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF refers to the open character of Green Belts:

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.

The site is currently undeveloped and has a sense of spaciousness and openness. The proposed new dwelling would be sizeable in terms of footprint and volume. The introduction of this scale of built development on this site would diminish the openness of the Green Belt. Additionally, the resulting hardstanding areas and domestic paraphernalia associated with the residential use of the site would further harm the open character of the Green Belt in this location. This would conflict with the fundamental aim of

Green Belt policy which is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

The principle of a new dwelling in this location is therefore inappropriate development within the Green Belt where no special circumstances exist as discussed below.

The applicant did mention a few other developments close by however their proposals differ from this case:

Suva: 20201210 Erection of a two storey rear extension

Darcha: 20150741 Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of new dwelling

Priestwood: There are two sites by this name, Priestwood Cottage and Priestwood Farm. Neither have an application approved for an additional dwelling.

Photos of other developments are also provided in the Design and Access Statement but no details of addresses have been provided.

Design, Character and Appearance

The application site is a detached bungalow with conservatory and detached garages. The plot is large and slopes down to the northwest. The development in this location is sporadic and generally the landscape is open. Dean Lane itself is narrow road and the site is over 2.8km away from Vigo centre 2km from Meopham centre. The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt, the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area, Biodiversity Opportunity Area and adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site.

At a national level good design is one of the central requirements of the NPPF:

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. (Paragraph 126)

The aims set out in paragraph 126 of the NPPF are reflected in Policy CS19 of the Council's Core Strategy. This requires new development to be "visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive" and to "conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment". It also requires new development to "integrate well with the surrounding local area". In addition, Policy CS19 requires the following:

"...the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. Account will be taken of the scale, height, building lines, layout, materials and other architectural features of adjoining buildings."

Properties along Dean Lane are mixed in terms of their architectural style and appearance. The proposed dwelling is single storey and to be finished in a larch cladding with a sedum roof. The appearance is uninspiring but has presumably been chosen to blend into the landscape. Given the lack of uniformity, there is no broad objection to the design of the new dwelling per se however this does not overcome the fundamental concerns relating to the Green Belt.

In terms of site layout, the rear garden is small compared to other rear gardens in the vicinity and compared to the amount of space given to the front of the property. This results in a cramped form of development out of character with the surrounding area.

Landscape Character and AONB

Section 15 of the NPPF highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. Policy CS12 of the Core

Strategy states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes within the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that proposals will take account of the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment.

The site is located within the Harvel Wooded Downs landscape character area and the North Downs AONB. It is considered that the construction of a dwelling on an undeveloped site will have an adverse impact on the landscape character of this area. In addition, it should be noted that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment requires the key landscape elements characteristic of the Harvel Wooded Downs character area to be conserved and create. This includes conserving and managing woodland, and conserving and maintaining characteristic narrow lanes. It is not clear if the hedges to the front would be removed but clearly some if it would need to be in order to provide access from Dean Lane. This, together with additional built form and additional residential paraphernalia for a new dwelling including parking, outbuildings, sheds will all have an adverse impact on this character area. In these respects, the proposal would conflict with Section 15 of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy and policies SD1, SD3 and SD8 of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.

Sustainability of site location

A further consideration relates to whether the site is within a sustainable location. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is “to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development” (paragraph 7). At the heart of the NPPF is a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

Paragraph 105 of the NPPF requires that development should be focused on locations that are sustainable:

Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health.

In addition, paragraph 112 of the NPPF requires that applications for development should, inter alia:

give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

The NPPF states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives). These are defined in paragraph 8 of the NPPF as follows:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

A recent appeal decision at a site known as Rosalie near Culverstone was found to be located within an unsustainable location (appendix 1). The Inspector concluded as follows:

12. Given the proximity of adjoining development the proposal would not be physically isolated and the somewhat limited facilities and services at Culverstone Green are technically within walking distance. Whilst the number of trips would be short, access would be along a narrow, potholed, unlit lane. It is unlikely that pedestrians would see this as an attractive route particularly in inclement weather. In my view, future residents are likely to use private vehicles to access the closest services and facilities in Culvertstone Green and further afield.

13. I am mindful that the Framework advises that all aspects of sustainability should be considered in planning decisions, that local circumstances should be taken into account, and that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. However, the proposal would not promote a choice in alternative forms of transport and would be heavily reliant on private motor vehicles as opposed to more sustainable modes of transport given somewhat irregular local bus services. To my mind, this would not entirely accord with the accessibility objectives of local and national planning policy and the dwelling would be functionally isolated and there is nothing meaningful to suggest that it would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

14. For these reasons, the proposal would not be a suitable site for housing in terms of its proximity of services and reliance on car based journeys. It would conflict with Policy CS02 of the CS and would fail to fulfil the environmental dimension of sustainable development as set out in the Framework. Given the proposal is for a single dwelling I attach moderate weight to this.

Given that Rydda Bank is over 2km from the local centre at Meopham and approx. 2.8km from the local centre at Vigo, these conclusions are equally applicable to this proposal, if not more so. The proposal therefore comprises residential development in the countryside, being within an unsustainable location and contrary to Policies CS01 and CS02 of Gravesham Core Strategy and paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Very special circumstances

As set out above, the proposed dwelling is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

In accordance with paragraph 147 of the NPPF such development “should not be approved except in very special circumstances”. Paragraph 148 advises that 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”.

A case of very special circumstances has not been submitted.

For reasons set out above under the heading “five year housing land supply”, the lack of a five year housing supply by the Council would not constitute a case of very special circumstances required to enable the development to be supported. As such, it is considered that the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, would not be outweighed by other considerations.

Amenity

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF requires planning decisions to, inter alia, provide “a high standard of amenity for existing and future users”. In addition, Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to “safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land”.

Future Occupiers

The internal floor area is approx. 130sqm which is sufficient for a three bedroom, five person dwelling. Each of the habitable rooms are shown to contain sufficient outlook and daylight. The rear garden measures approx. 115sqm and is shown to be approx. 7m deep. Whilst the garden area meets the adopted standards, the depth of the garden falls short by 7m.

Neighbouring Amenity

'Rydd Bank' is located to the north of the application site. This property is over 29m away from the proposed dwelling and therefore will suffer no detrimental impact in terms of loss of amenity.

'Nemora' is located to the south of the application site and will be approx. 8m from the new dwelling. Given that the proposed dwelling is single storey and no habitable windows are to face this neighbour, no concerns are raised with regards to loss of outlook, privacy, sunlight or daylight.

The proposed new dwelling conforms with the objectives of Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and para. 130f of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF relates to habitats and biodiversity and sets out the principles that local planning authorities should apply when determining planning applications.

At a local level Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy states the following:

There will be no net loss of biodiversity in the Borough, and opportunities to enhance, restore, re-create and maintain habitats will be sought, in particular within the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas shown on the Strategic Green Infrastructure Network map and within new development.

The site is located within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area and adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site. To the north is a BAP Priority Habitat.

In light of the requirements of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy, the applicant was advised that any planning application should be accompanied by a biodiversity report which demonstrates that the requirements of the NPPF and Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy would be satisfied. This has not been provided. As the site is currently garden area for Rhydda Bank, the construction of a dwelling and associated driveway will undoubtedly result in the loss of ecology and biodiversity and, without mitigation, the proposal fails to comply with the requirements of Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and para. 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Parking and Highways

The proposal requires a new access onto Dean Lane and whilst many of the existing properties may have limited visibility that does not mean improvements should not be sought with any new proposal.

The plans do not show sufficient visibility and sight lines and therefore fail to comply with Policies T1 and T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and C11 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014.

It is noted that the submitted application form states that foul sewerage will be dealt with by connecting to a mains sewer, however other properties in Dean Lane are not connected and therefore a mains sewer may not be available. If the property is not served by a mains sewer then provision needs to be made on site for a large vehicle to turn and, as the plans currently stand, there is insufficient space.

The garage as proposed does not conform to the preferred width in KCC SPG4 of 3.6m x 5.5m which gives space to open vehicle doors and permit some storage, although it would be adequate for a car and electric vehicle charging point. Some form of additional storage is required for garden tools, possibly garden furniture during inclement weather and secure storage of cycles, three spaces being required to conform to

the requirements of KCC SPG4 of one cycle space per bedroom.

The proposed development will result in insufficient sightlines, visibility spays and fails to demonstrate the space needed for foul sewerage removal and therefore raises concerns regarding highway safety contrary to Policies T1 and T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014.

Conclusion

The site is within the approved Metropolitan Green Belt. Within the Green Belt there is a strong presumption against permitting new development outside of the present defined extent of urban areas and the present extent of any village. National Planning Policy Framework Section 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land) indicates that the most important attribute of Green Belts is their openness. The proposed development is inappropriate development and would cause harm to the Green Belt, and to the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal is considered to be contrary to the advice in Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023, and Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014.

The site lies in the designated countryside outside the confines of the urban areas and rural settlements. The proposal comprises of residential development in the countryside, being within an unsustainable location and contrary to Policies CS01 and CS02 of Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

The proposed development will result in loss of biodiversity to the site with no details of how this could be mitigated and is therefore contrary to Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

The proposed detached dwelling by virtue of its small rear garden, large area of hardstanding to the front, will result in an incongruous and cramped form of development out of character with the surrounding properties contrary to policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and para. 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

The site is within the Harvel Wooded Downs designated landscape character area and North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where new residential development and its associated residential paraphernalia will result in visual harm by suburbanising the site contrary to Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014, SC1, SD3 and SD8 of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 which seek to give long term protection of these areas.

The proposed development will result in insufficient sightlines, visibility spays and fails to demonstrate the space needed for foul sewerage removal and therefore raises concerns regarding highway safety contrary to Policies T1 and T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014.

Recommendation:

(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:	20 September 2023	Dated:	28th September 2023

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