



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20230149
Location:	Red Tiles, Pear Tree Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 3JX
Description:	Demolition of the garage, erection of a two storey side/rear extension, internal and external alterations (window and door positions) to the ground and first floor and alterations to the roof to form a bedroom in the loft space. Alterations to the drive and landscaping to the front garden.
Applicant:	Mrs Daniela Baldacci
Site Visit:	25 th November 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application Form - dated 20/02/2023;
- Planning, Design and Access Statement;
- Drawing no. 22/384/01 - Existing Plans and Elevations;
- Drawing no. 22/384/02 - Proposed Plans and Elevations;
- Drawing no. 22/384/03 - Proposed Second Floor Plan;
- Drawing no. 22/384/04 - Site Location and Block Plan.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220554	Erection of single storey rear extension, double storey porch, side extension with conversion of garage and roof alterations to incorporate habitable rooms in the roof.	REFUSED	19.07.2022
19900304	Erection of a conservatory at the rear.	PERMITTED	30.05.1990
19530065	Erection of dwelling house and garage	PERMITTED	06.05.1953
19520339	Site for dwellinghouse and private garage	PERMITTED	10.12.1952

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (September 2014):

- CS01 - Sustainable Development
- CS02 - Scale & Distribution of Development

- CS12 - Green Infrastructure
- CS18 - Climate Change
- CS19 - Design & Development Principles

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (November 1994):

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) 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 (LPFR) (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- 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
- Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance (SPD) (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal consultees

GBC Highways Officer - I have no objections, there is more than adequate space on the driveway to accommodate the car parking requirements of planning guidance. Pear Tree Lane is a 'C' class road and subject to a 30mph speed limit so no on site turning is required.

Local Ward Councillors – No comment received.

External consultees

Shorne Parish Council -The Parish Council has no objection in principle to the house being extended, subject to there not being any valid objections from neighbours, but has the following comments:

- Red tiles is presently a fairly small house (three bedroom, one bathroom) for the size of its plot, on which it is located to one side. It has a structurally detached double garage and a traditional brick with hanging tiles design.

- The presently proposed design is overall an improvement on the previous refused application 20220554. The L-shaped layout reduces the visual impact from the roadway.
- The proposals still involve a considerable increase in floor area.
- The property will become a 5-bedroom house on 3 levels. Only three parking places are shown, one of which is tandem which is not very practical, we would like to see the parking layout improved.
- In view of extent of building proposed, permitted development rights should be withdrawn.

Dickens Protection Society - The Society wishes to register objection to the application. The site is in an area within which Green Belt policies apply and the size of the proposed extension is excessive, almost doubling the footprint of the dwelling in two storeys and accommodation in the roof.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 2nd March 2023.

In addition, five surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 24th March 2023.

Preliminary Matters

This application follows a refused planning application for a similar development (ref. 20220554) for the *“erection of single storey rear extension, double storey porch, side extension with conversion of garage and roof alterations to incorporate habitable rooms in the roof”*. The screenshots below are taken from the previous application:



The Local Planning Authority refused the application on the following grounds:

1. *The proposed development significantly enlarges the property, introduces disproportionate features and is poor design. These additions result in increased bulk and incongruous appearance which is inappropriate development within and harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, and fails to preserve the character or appearance of the host dwelling or the Shorne Woodlands Landscape Character Area. Therefore, the development hereby proposed is contrary to Policies CS02 (Scale & Distribution of Development), CS12 (Green*

Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policy C13 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside) of Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021), as well as Sections 12, 13 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

2. The extension to the driveway and expansion of hard landscaping to the front of the property fails to provide a net gain of biodiversity and is harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, contrary to Sections 13 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

In order to receive a positive decision the development hereby proposed must be considered to overcome the grounds of refusal above.

Analysis

Site Description

Red Tiles is a two storey detached dwelling located on the southern side of Pear Tree Lane. The property benefits from a large attached garage and is on a generous plot. The property has been extended previously, with a conservatory added to the rear in the 1990s.



Proposed Development

This application proposes the erection of two storey front, side and rear extensions, with alterations to the roof to form living accommodation in the loft space. The existing garage is to be demolished and there are alterations proposed to the landscaping and driveway at the front of the dwelling. The dimensions of the extension are as follows:

Two Storey Side:

- Depth - 5.9m
- Width - 5.48m
- Height (max) - 8.65m
- Height (eave) - 5.55m

Two Storey Rear:

- Depth - 5m
- Width - 5.65m
- Height (max) - 8.35m
- Height (eave) - 5.55m

Two Storey Front:

- Depth - 1.5m
- Width - 4.5m
- Height (max) - 7.98m
- Height (eave) - 5.55m

Front Dormer(s):

- Depth - 1.58m
- Width - 1.2m
- Height - 1.58m

Rear Dormer:

- Depth - 1.58m

- Width - 3.95m
- Height - 1.58m

As part of the development the ridge height of the dwelling would be extended upwards by 0.27m. The comparative screenshots below demonstrate the alterations to the dwelling hereby proposed. The extended dwelling would be finished in a more modern material palette with a part rendered finish and matching roof tiles.

Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations



The extensions will create space on ground floor for an open plan living/diner, kitchen, home office and utility room/pantry and large entrance hall. At first floor there will be a large gallery landing, four large double bedrooms, three ensuites and one bathroom. The new second floor will accommodate a double bedroom.

Principle of the Development

The application site is located in the Green Belt and as such Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) is relevant. Development in the urban area is prioritised as the sustainable location for development. In the rural area, Policy CS02 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, i.e. in the Green Belt, will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the LPCS.

There are five principle issues in determining this application;

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?
2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
3. Any very special circumstances?
4. Impact on the Landscape;
5. The effect on the character and appearance of the area; and
6. Other matters.

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the NPPF (2021) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 goes on to say that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within the specified exceptions. The relevant exception to consider for this application is part c of paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021), which states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In determining this proposal account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF (2021), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

In particular Policy C13 places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria ii). It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting (criteria vi). It is considered that these factors are relevant in determining whether the size of an extension is proportionate and as such, these aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the NPPF (2021) and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	110.9m ²	126m ²	11.9%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	145.4m ² (including garage)	265.8m ²	82.8%
Volume	629.49m ³	884.45m ³	40.5%

The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse significantly exceed the one third limit set out in saved policy C13 for internal floorspace increase, but is only

marginally above in terms of volume, and considerably below on external footprint. It is considered that the overall increase in external footprint and volume are offset and reduced by demolishing the attached garage and conservatory. Although the volume exceeds the one third limit it is not grossly above this figure. While it is clear that the floorspace increase is substantial, the roof alterations and two storey extensions create the additional internal floor area over and above the original dwelling, but this is without significantly increasing the footprint which is why it is considered to be less impactful on the Green Belt than a significant increase to the external footprint and volume. Nevertheless, in purely numerical terms, the extensions hereby proposed are contrary to the local plan Green Belt policy, potentially representing a disproportionate increase over the original floor area of the building.

However, the numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It does not provide a figure.

The proposed extensions to the property are large and will increase the scale of the property, but have been well designed and are considered proportionate additions. The two storey front extension is central and is balanced by the two storey elements to each side, with the two storey rear projection being set-down and subservient to the main dwelling. Moreover, the rear extension is set-in from the flank wall of the side extension to create separation and break up the perceived bulk.

The height, scale and bulk of the proposal has been significantly reduced from the refused proposal (ref. 20220554), with the overall width reduced and set-in from the existing garage wall. These alterations improve the design and balance of the property, and create a proportionate appearance. Furthermore, the demolition/removal of the large garage and conservatory reduce the overall built development on the site and form part of the existing visual bulk that will be removed. The conservatory is a poor quality space and its removal and replacement with more attractive well-designed extensions will create a more attractive and well balanced property.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition to the property and as such the proposal would not be inappropriate development, which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is therefore complies with Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

Nevertheless, given the overall increase in built form exceeds the one third limit set out in saved policy C13 (LPFR) it is considered important, in order to safeguard against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, to remove some permitted development rights for the property should planning permission be granted. For instance Class A of Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended, should be removed to ensure that the Local Planning Authority would give written consent to any single storey extension to the property, along with B (further roof alterations), D (porches), E (outbuildings) and F (hard surfaces).

2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF (2021) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also states that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

Any new built form of development is likely to impact on the openness of the Green Belt, however it is important to establish the degree of harm. The development will enlarge the dwelling substantially, by increasing both the width and depth of the dwelling by two storeys, however as aforementioned the subservience of the rear extension and balanced appearance of the dwelling

are good design strategies which would reduce perceived bulk and create a proportionate building. Moreover, as aforementioned the removal of the large garage reduces the overall width of built form and the removal of the conservatory restricts the sprawl of development rearwards on the western edge of the property, both of which are beneficial to the open character of the Green Belt.

Furthermore, the proposed extensions are significant improvement on the previously refused application (ref. 20220554). As demonstrated in the screenshots shown earlier in this report, the previous proposal was excessively bulky with a substantial increase in ridge height and width, which has been scaled back considerably in this proposal. Therefore, the new design with scaled back extensions are a significant improvement, creating a more proportionate and less impactful property.

Reference back to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF (2021) informs us that inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Whether the development causes any other harm and whether there are any other relevant considerations to balance the overall planning argument, should now be considered.

3. Very special circumstances

No specific arguments have been put forward by the applicant in relation to the assessment of 'very special circumstances'. However considerations have been made in the planning statement of a permitted development fallback position. The GPDO allows a detached dwelling to extend at single storey by up to 8m and has other allowances for side extensions. Although there are no lawful development certificates for extensions to the dwelling, this fallback position should be considered and the potential uplift in footprint as a result would have a negative impact on the Green Belt. Nevertheless, these lawful development extensions could be constructed without the removal of the existing garage which would increase the harm to the Green Belt.

Therefore, the permitted development fallback position is a material consideration and is a justification for the increase in built form hereby proposed.

4. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by an undulating topography, chestnut coppice woodland and a strong sense of enclosure. The developments are often located around traditional village greens, are buildings have varying styles and ages with chequered brickwork and ornamental brickwork.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states at 5.7.26 the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

The proposed extensions are not considered to cause any detrimental harm to the character of the Shorne Woodlands, due to the location of the property on a relatively developed area and the retention of an appropriate material palette.

5. The effect on the character and appearance of the area

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section

12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2021) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

Gravesham's newly published Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for developments. Generally, the SPD highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context. In this case, the rural character of the area and other surrounding dwellings should be considered.

The proposed extensions will alter the external appearance of the property, with the gable front extension and the removal of the catslide roof element. Although altering the character, the extensions proposed are well designed, are subservient and well proportioned, creating a balanced appearance. The extensions will be constructed using brickwork and tiles that match the existing dwelling, with a rendered upper section. The layout and proportion of fenestration on the proposed dwelling is considered acceptable.

The surrounding context is made up of large properties, many of which have individual characteristics and design (as demonstrated in the satellite images below):



Therefore, given the surrounding context and character, the proposed extensions would not be out of keeping with the area. Although the proposal would have a modern material palette, by virtue of the mixture of brick and render, this is also not considered to be out of character with the variety within the street scene.

Overall, the proposed dwelling is well proportioned and will not alter the character of the street scene. The extensions will be constructed using a modern material palette, with bricks that are not dissimilar from the existing property, the front gable and rear extension are subservient, the dormer windows are proportionate and will not dominate the property. Therefore the proposal is in accordance with Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

6. Other matters

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers. The garden is large and will not be significantly reduced as part of this development. The rooms proposed are in accordance with Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and will receive sufficient natural light.

Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 the NPPF (2021).

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding properties in terms of loss of light, sense of enclosure or outlook. However, the proposed rear extension would introduce a flank window facing toward the neighbouring property (Shimran). This window would be approx. 13.6m from the boundary and would face flank bedroom windows of the neighbour. Given that the proposed window is a secondary window in the bedroom, a condition will be attached to the decision notice to ensure that the window is obscure glazed and top hung to maintain privacy.

Therefore, subject to planning conditions, the proposed development is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Parking and Highways

There are no parking or highway issues related to this proposal. Pear Tree Lane is a schedule 2 highway, with a 30mph speed limit and does not require on-site turning. The alterations to the driveway would introduce space to the side of the dwelling for vehicles to turn, whilst retaining adequate space for parking in accordance with Gravesham's adopted parking standards SPG4 (2006).

Nevertheless, the on-site turning is considered to be beneficial for residents and to improve safety for vehicles egressing from the driveway, which was observed on the site visit to have limited visibility northward on Pear Tree Lane. Therefore, the proposed development is acceptable and in accordance with highway policy and guidance.

Impact on Biodiversity

Any development should result in a net gain of biodiversity to accord with Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) and the previous application (ref. 20220554) was refused due to a loss of biodiversity contrary to the NPPF (2021). As part of this development the extent of hardstanding would be increased by approx. 30m² to provide space for parking and on site turning, however this is off-set by additional planting and hedging in the front garden. The new planting is considered to provide better quality biodiversity compared to the lawn that will be replaced by hardstanding, and therefore the proposal is in accordance with Section 15 of the NPPF (2021).

Conclusion:

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

The proposed extensions enlarge the property above the one third limit set out in saved policy C13 (LPFR) but involve the demolition of the large attached double garage and conservatory, and have been carefully designed to reduce perceived bulk and be proportionate. These strategies, along with the permitted development fall-back position, are considered to mitigate harm to the Green Belt and the extensions are not inappropriate development. The development is well designed in accordance with Gravesham's Design SPD (2021), will not impact the amenity of future occupiers or surrounding residents, is acceptable in parking and highway terms, and will preserve the Shorne Woodlands Landscape.

As such, it is recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	17 th April 2023	Dated:	17 April 2023