



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20230022
Location:	Blayney, David Street, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0BT
Description:	Replace roof, raise roof height, conversion of loft to habitable rooms with 4no. rooflight windows, and insertion of a new first floor window to rear elevation.
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs Winter
Site Visit:	23 rd January 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application Form - dated 11/01/2023;
 - Design and Access Statement (ref. 2145);
 - Drawing no. 2145.E.001 - Site Location Plan (scale - 1:1250);
 - Drawing no. 2145.E.002 - Rev. A - Existing Block Plan (scale - 1:500);
 - Drawing no. 2145.E.003 - Proposed Block Plan (scale - 1:500);
 - Drawing no. 2145.E.005 - Existing Site Plan (scale - 1:200);
 - Drawing no. 2145.E.010 - Existing Floor Plans;
 - Drawing no. 2145.E.020 - Existing Elevations;
 - Drawing no. 2145.P.100 - Rev. C - Proposed Site Plan (scale - 1:200);
 - Drawing no. 2145.P.110 - Rev. D - Proposed Floor Plans;
 - Drawing no. 2145.P.120 - Rev. E - Proposed Elevations;
 - Drawing no. 2145.P.130 - Rev. D - Proposed Section A;
 - Drawing no. 2145.P.131 - Rev. B - Proposed Section B;
 - Drawing no. 2145.P.132 - Rev. C - Proposed Section C.
-
- ~~Drawing no. 2145.P.120 - Rev. D - Proposed Elevations - SUPERSEDED;~~
 - ~~Drawing no. 2145.P.130 - Rev. C - Proposed Section A - SUPERSEDED;~~
 - ~~Drawing no. 2145.P.110 - Rev. C - Proposed Floor Plans - SUPERSEDED.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20190112	Single storey rear extension with a depth of 8 metres, maximum height of 3.0 metres and eaves height of 3.0 metres.	PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED	12.03.2019

20190110	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a detached garage and erection of a front porch.	CERTIFICATE GRANTED	27.03.2019
----------	--	---------------------	------------

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 - This proposal creates a potentially 5 bedroom dwelling as the home office/study can easily be converted to a bedroom.

However, the car parking requirement for a four or five bedroom property in a rural area is the

same and the car parking revision is unaffected by this proposal. I therefore have no objection, but to comply with the requirements of SPG4 a secure covered cycle parking space should be provided due to the potential dual use of the Study/Office as a bedroom.

Local Ward Councillors - No comment received.

External consultees

Meopham Parish Council - No objection to this planning application providing it meets the requirements of GBC's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 23rd January 2023.

In addition, two surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 17th February 2023.

Preliminary Matters

The original submission proposed a small central window on the front / rear elevations, which was considered to be poor design and add significantly to the perceived bulk of the upward extension. The agent was contacted regarding this and revised plans were submitted with larger, more proportionate windows that addressed the concerns and broke-up the perceived bulk.

Analysis

Site Description

Blaney is a detached bungalow located on the western side of the highway. The property is one of a pair of identical bungalows with a dual gable roof form and a subservient central pitched roof section.



The property has been extended through a front porch, single storey rear extension and a detached garage. It benefits from a driveway and has a landscaped frontage with mature trees and hedges fronting the boundary with the highway.

Proposed Development

This application proposes an upward extension to the main dwelling. The roof of the property will be replaced and raised in height to accommodate rooms within the loft space. The proposed dwelling would have a Dutch Barn (gambrel) roof form at an increased height of 1.55m. The

development would have the following dimensions:

- Depth - 9.08m
- Width - 8.7m
- Height (max) - 5.6m
- Height (eaves) - 3.05m

The screenshots below demonstrate the existing and proposed elevations:



There will be space created within the loft space for a bedroom, bathroom and home office, with four velux windows on the roof slopes to provide natural light and ventilation. To accommodate the new staircase one bedroom will be lost at ground floor and the property will remain four bedrooms. The extension would be constructed using cement board cladding and slate effect tiles, with the existing grey render retained and fenestration to match existing.

Extension to Dwelling

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. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
5. Impact on the Landscape; 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	Existing Dwelling	Proposed Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	82m ²	146m ²	146m ²	78%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	71m ²	131m ²	183m ²	158%
Volume	-	-	-	-

The calculations demonstrate that the previous additions to the original dwellinghouse exceed the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. Therefore, in purely numerical terms, the property has already failed the one third limit of policy C13, however the proposed development does not increase the existing footprint of the property above its current levels. However, in numerical form the dwelling is contrary to saved policy C13 and would be inappropriate development. The volume calculations of the extensions, over the original dwelling, have not been calculated in this application and will instead be visually assessed.

Nevertheless, 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 is does not provide a figure.

The extension hereby proposed is not excessive in size or scale, by following the dimensions of the original property and not extending above the single storey rear projection. However, does increase the visual bulk of the dwelling by extending upwards. The extension will not substantially increase the height of dwelling and the bulk is somewhat reduced by the design of the extension and its gambrel roof form, which follows the character of a Dutch style barn.

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) to paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

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 extension will enlarge the property by increasing the height by 1.55m, however has been designed with a gambrel roof which breaks up its bulk. While this would have an impact on the openness of the Green Belt, the overall bulk and massing of the extension are significantly reduced by the design strategy adopted and the lack of increase in the eave height of the property. Moreover, the development does not involve an increase in the footprint of the property above its existing scale with the upward extension only being above the original footprint of the dwelling, which limits further harm to the open character of the Green Belt.

Overall, although the extensions hereby proposed will cause some harm to the openness, this development is not considered to significantly harm the open permanence of the Green Belt. However, a condition relating to hard and soft landscaping will be attached to the decision notice to ensure that the openness of the Green Belt is not compromised by hardstanding and the development results in a biodiversity net gain, in accordance with Section 15 of the NPPF (2021).

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'.

4. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. This area is by varied topography, ancient wood and haphazard

mosaic resident plots and small holdings.

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 extension would have the characteristics of a Dutch barn with the gambrel roof design. This is similar to some other properties within the surrounding area and would be appropriate for the rural context. As such, the proposal would not have any detrimental effect on the landscape and is therefore in accordance with Policy CS12 (LPCS).

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 extension will alter the character of the dwelling, which forms one of a pair of identical bungalows. The bungalow has a dual gable appearance that would be removed and replaced by the gambrel Dutch style roof form. This would therefore be in conflict with the good design strategies set out in Gravesham's design SPD, which seeks to ensure that new development compliments and corresponds to the existing character and wider context. However, the wider context of the immediate area on David St is made up of other chalet style bungalows that are varied in character and appearance, and on this basis the upward extension would not impact on the character of the street scene. The extended dwelling would retain a rural character through its Dutch barn gambrel roof and will be constructing with matching materials to the existing dwelling. Therefore, on balance the proposed extensions are considered to be in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

6. Other matters

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires that all development should be 'fit for purpose' and be 'adaptable to allow changes to meet the need of users' and that 'the design and layout of new residential development, including conversion, will accord with the adopted Residential Layout Guidelines' (RLG) (2020).

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 of the NPPF (2021).

Neighbouring

Policy CS19 (LPCS) seeks to protect amenity and ensure acceptable future living conditions.

Section 16 of the NPPF (2021) also assists and seeks to ensure developments will function well, do not undermine quality of life and create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit and seeks to “secure high-quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”.

There will be no impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of loss of light, overlooking, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. As such the proposal 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

The property benefits from a large driveway and a detached garage. It was noted on site that the garage is located behind a fence, which would restrict vehicular access for parking. However, the proposal does not increase the number of bedrooms within the property and as such the existing parking arrangement is considered appropriate. Gravesham’s highways officer has raised no objection to the development, but expressed concern with the study’s use as a bedroom. While this is a consideration, the additional bedroom is not considered to result in a parking deficit that would be contrary to adopted parking standards SPG4 (2006). Therefore, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of parking and highways.

Conclusion:

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

The proposed extension is a proportionate addition with limited bulk and a rural character which is befitting of its location and wider context. The property is located on a section of David St with chalet style bungalows of varied characteristics and appearance, where the Dutch gambrel roof would not be out of character and is considered an appropriate design to reduce perceived bulk. The extension would be constructed using matching materials and provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers as well as safeguard the amenity of surrounding residents and maintain the character of the Meopham Downs.

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:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	23 rd March 2023	Dated:	27th March 2023