

Planning, Design and Access Statement
2 Church Cottages, Wrotham Road,
Meopham DA13 0AB



March 2023

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of proposal

- 1.1.1 Following the storm in early 2021 and significant damage to the as a result of the scaffold collapse, this is an updated statement in respect of an application seeking planning and listed building consent for a two-storey side extension incorporating those additional works, but with the original foot print and elevations for the remodelling of the modern rear elevation and alterations to no.2 Church Cottages, Wrotham Road, Meopham remaining unchanged.
- 1.1.2 This application is as a result of the scaffold collapse and follows the original granting of planning permission for the original scheme.
- 1.1.3 This further application following some early engagement with the council, is a proposal seeks to overcome the Council's concerns and ensure the additional scope is in sympathy to the building's heritage and the local conservation area requirements.
- 1.1.4 The original proposal included the removal of the front porch and modern two storey rear extension; the erection of a two-storey side extension consistent with that at the adjoining No.1 Church Cottage; reinstatement of a cat-slide roof to the rear; internal refurbishments; minor changes to the plan form; and replacement of modern windows and the restoration of historic fabric.
- 1.1.5 The updated application includes for the removal of modern fabric constructed in the 1970's and proved to be structurally unsound as well as the reconstruction of existing historic fabric catastrophically damaged by the scaffold collapse and reconstructed utilising all the original salvageable historic material.
- 1.1.6 The property is a grade II listed semi-detached dwelling located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, where an extension was accepted in the previous application as an appropriate form of development provided it did not result in *"disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building"*. Accordingly, the original proposal further emphasised why the proposal represented a proportionate extension that falls in accordance with local and national policy requirements and should be noted in that regard as remaining unchanged.
- 1.1.7 The extent and nature of the proposed works has continued to have due regard to the buildings historic significance in order to comply with national policy. It is considered that the proposal would deliver public benefits that would outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' to the listed building and The Street Meopham Conservation Area. This includes the reversal of previous unsympathetic works to the building. The updated application incorporates additional scope covering the further removal of modern fabric consisting of modern joists, concrete blocks and insitu concrete beams.
- 1.1.8 It should also be noted that the applicant has engaged with the Council in order to deliver sensitively planned changes to the heritage asset in line with the objectives of paras 38 to 40 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)..

1.2 Document structure

- 1.2.1 Section 2 of this statement sets out the context of the site and immediate surroundings, including the site history.
- 1.2.2 Sections 3 and 4 have regard to the proposal and planning policy context by which the application will be considered respectively.
- 1.2.3 Sections 5 provides an assessment of the proposal against national and local Green Belt policy.
- 1.2.4 Section 6 considers matters of design and access.
- 1.2.5 Section 7 considers the principle of development and other relevant planning considerations.
- 1.2.6 Section 8 draws conclusions to justify the suitability of the development.

1.3 Supporting documents

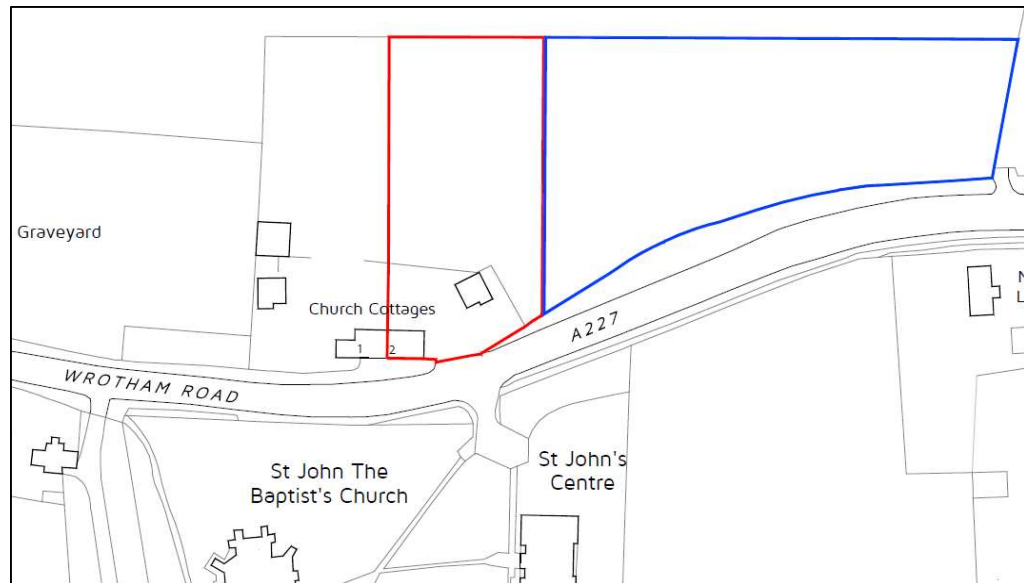
- 1.3.1 This application is supported by the following documents and plans.

Reference	Information Provided
Planning Portal	Application form (completed online)
2303107 Access Statement	2020 Planning Statement (Updated)
230314 Heritage Statement	2020 Heritage Statement (Updated)
2020.02.25__SITE LOCATION PLAN	Site Location Plan
2020.02.25_EXISTING SITE LAYOUT PLAN	Existing Site Plan
2020.02.25_EXISTING GROUND FLOOR AND BASEMENT PLAN	Existing Ground Floor and Basement Plan
2020.02.25_EXISTING FIRST FLOOR AND ROOF PLAN Final	Existing First Floor and Roof Plan
2020.02.25_EXISTING ELEVATIONS AND SECTION	Existing Elevations
2020.05.15_PROPOSED ROOF PLAN_REV A	Proposed Roof Plan (Unchanged)
18033 - SK-100 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan	Proposed Ground Floor Plan
18033 - SK-101 - Proposed First Floor Plan	Proposed First Floor Plan
221220 SK001 Proposed Updated Front Elevation	Proposed Updated Front Elevation
221220 SK002 Proposed Updated End Elevation	Proposed Updated End Elevation
221220 SK003 Proposed Rear Elevation	Proposed Rear Elevation Unchanged
12483_16	Proposed Side Elevation and Section
12483_17	Proposed 3D Model, View 1
12483_18	Proposed 3D Model, View 2

2 The application site and surroundings

2.1 The site and surroundings

- 2.1.1 The site is located on Wrotham Road (A227), situated between the settlements of Hook Green and Meopham. It is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, The Street Meopham Conservation Area and the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area.



2 Church Cottages (not to scale)

- 2.1.2 The site consists of 2 Church Cottages, an established semi-detached dwelling.
- 2.1.3 The property is Grade II Listed (Listing Number: 1054716) and was first designated in July 1983. Historic England lists the house as:
- “C17 timber-framed. Ground floor brick faced. First floor rendered. Tiled roof with rear pentice, but recently raised to 2 storeys with flat roof at north end. Original window openings at south end with wood first floor and cast-iron ground floor casements. Modern casements to north end.”
- 2.1.4 Originally the property was a smaller oak framed building associated with St John the Baptist Church, which is located on the opposite side of Wrotham Road. The house has been altered since 1948 with a modern front porch addition and a first-floor rear extension and original windows replaced to their current form.
- 2.1.5 Vehicular access is gained from the north east of the site via the main road. A driveway provides access to a double garage in the north west of the site.
- 2.1.6 The surrounding area is semi-rural in nature, characterised by small clusters and pockets of development. The site bound by residential development to the south (1 Church Cottages) and Saint John the Baptist Church is located on the opposite side of the road. A small row of detached dwellings are sited behind the church accessed via a private loop road along with a modern brick-built church hall.

- 2.1.7 Hook Green and Meopham are easily accessible from the site and provide a range services and amenities, including but not limited to; food stores, pubs/ restaurants and schools. Both settlements also offer a range of leisure opportunities and community uses.
- 2.1.8 The nearest bus stop is within 180m of the site (The George) and offers approximately 4 services an hour during the day. These provide regular services (bus no. 416, 308, 1, VIG01, 305, 308, 416, 695 and 306) into Meopham, Vigo, Sevenoaks, Borough Green and Istead Rise.

2.2 Planning history

- 2.2.1 According to the online records held by Gravesham Borough Council, 2 Church Cottages has been subject to a small number of planning applications. These include the front porch addition, the remodelled rear extension and works associated with the detached garage.
- 2.2.2 On 10th June 2020, the Council granted planning and listed building consent for extension and alteration to the property under planning reference 20200295 and 20200296 respectively.
- 2.2.3 It should also be noted that a certificate of lawfulness was issued at appeal APP/K2230/X/19/3233340 that certified that an enlarged area of surrounding land is lawful as garden. The application site area reflects this now regularised and recognised planning unit.

2.3 Pre-application advice

- 2.3.1 Paragraph 39 of the NPPF highlights the importance of pre-application advice and front-loading, stating that early engagement has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system for all parties. Paragraph 41 goes on to suggest that the more issues that can be resolved at the pre-application stage, including the need for improvements, the greater the benefits.
- 2.3.2 With the above in mind and early engagement meeting was held with Gravesham Council Planning and Conservation officers to discuss the rectification works as a result of the scaffold collapse and the replacement of the poorly constructed modern materials. The consensus of approach by the homeowner was accepted by the council as appropriate and sympathetic to both the building's heritage and conservation statuses. It was agreed a Homeowner Application would be filed.

3 The development

3.1 Summary of proposal (Incorporating proposed amendments from previous planning Consent)

3.1.1 Further Planning and listed building consent is sought for the following works to no.2 Church Cottages over those previously granted in June 2020:

- *Previously agreed Removal of front porch and replacement, but with an unenclosed oak framed porch on brick buttress dwarf walls with inlaid flint panels.*
- *Previously agreed Removal of the modern rear two storey extension and remodelling of the first floor by continuing the established catslide roof with less prominent and redesigned dormer windows;*
- *Previously agreed Erection of a reduced scale two storey side extension with smaller gable projection and reduced upper floorspace;*
- *Previously agreed Removal of the existing life expired roof and replacement with a new oak beamed roof;*
- *Previously agreed Replacement of modern windows and restoration of original materials and detailing;*
- *Previously agreed Internal refurbishment of the building including changes to plan form, the removal of faux beams.*
- *Removal of poorly constructed modern internal concrete blocks and insitu concrete beam and restoration of original detailing with internal green oak frame;*
- *Removal of tiled scaffold board under fire place and clean an repoint brickwork.*
- *Reconstruction of the existing gable end chimney due to collapse of scaffold rendering the gable end wall unsafe. Note wall/chimney to be reconstructed reutilising all salvageable bricks.*
- *Reconstruction of the partially demolished existing shared front chimney due to collapse of scaffold. Note wall/chimney to be reconstructed reutilising all salvageable bricks.*
- *Previously agreed removal of modern brick frontage and replacement with previously agreed brick type in a solid English Bond construct. And*
- *Previously agreed Planting of a new Yew hedge along the eastern boundary.*

3.1.2 In summary this planning application, whilst for the sake of record identifies the previous scope of works consented to, further seeks for permission to remove the newly uncovered modern material additions to the property, that have accrued over several years, over that of the original application. These materials will be

removed and replaced with a green oak frame. It should also be noted this application is for the replacement of materials only and the original application, dwelling footprint for the reconfiguration to increase usable floor space remains unchanged in size.

- 3.1.3 The previously consented planning application proposed changes remain unchanged and still allow the ground floor of the extension to be used as a spacious living room with Crittall patio doors to the rear of the property. The new first floor will still be used as a master bedroom with windows facing out to the rear, side and front.
- 3.1.4 It was previously accepted that the works to remove the earlier modern works will deliver significant public benefits that outweigh what is judged to be less than substantial harm to the building. It should be noted the changes do not change the original proposal beyond covering the replacement of poorly constructed modern material and the reinstatement of structure due to the scaffold collapse. Refer to the photographic addendum forming part of this submission.
- 3.1.5 For additional detail in respect of the proposed changes and their impact on heritage significance, please refer to chapter 5 of the Heritage Statement submitted with this application.

4 Green Belt Assessment

- 4.1.1 The following section provided a detailed assessment under the original application for the proposal against national and local Green Belt policies. It clearly demonstrated that the proposal is a proportionate addition to the building and thus constitutes an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt and the application was consented to in June 2020
- 4.1.2 The current application is for modern internal material replacement only and therefore the Green Belt Assessment is not of relevance to this application.

5 Design and Access

5.1 Legal requirement

- 5.1.1 In June 2013 changes were introduced under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2013, which altered requirements relating to Design & Access Statements.
- 5.1.2 As a result of this change such statements are only required for major development proposals, Listed Building applications and applications within a Conservation Areas where the application relates to the provision of one or more dwelling houses, or the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space created by the development is 100 square metres or more.
- 5.1.3 Design and access statements are required to:
- a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;
 - b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;
 - c) explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;
 - d) state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and
 - e) explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.
- 5.1.4 As the proposal is for works to a listed building, a Design and Access Statement is required for this application. The following section therefore addresses the legal requirement for such information.

5.2 Design concepts

- 5.2.1 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) Will function and add to the overall quality of an area;
 - b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting;
 - d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place;

- e) Optimise the potential of sites to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development; and
 - f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupants.
- 5.2.2 As discussed in the previously accepted application and the earlier section of the planning statement, 2 Church Cottages is grade II listed dwelling located within The Street Meopham Conservation Area. It is also judged to affect the setting of the grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist, located on the opposite side of Wrotham Road. Accordingly, the accepted design approach paid full regard to the significance of these designated heritage assets to ensure national heritage policy is met. The property is also located in the Metropolitan Green Belt and therefore to be an 'appropriate' and form of development it must be proportionate to the original dwelling.
- 5.2.3 Having regard to the above, with the previous assistance of a heritage consultant, the design ethos had been to deliver improvements to the grade II listed building with positive changes to its external appearance by removing modern additions, replacing modern material and reinstatement features of historic interest. The previously accepted proposal also sought consent for a two-storey side extension, which had been designed to be subservient to the existing building in terms of scale, bulk and massing whilst falling within the Green Belt development parameters stipulated by policy CP13.
- 5.2.4 The external changes include the removal of the front porch and reinstatement of a green oak open porch on dwarf walls with flint panel inlays, the removal of rear dormers at the first floor and re-modelling of the first floor.

5.3 Amount of development and layout

- 5.3.1 The accepted two storey extension increased the floorspace of the dwelling within the 33% permitted allowance utilising the Council's previously promoted figures. This area remains unchanged as part of the updated application.

5.4 Appearance

- 5.4.1 The design of the accepted alterations and extensions have focussed on improving and reinstating features of historic and aesthetic interest, resulting in an overall improvement to the appearance of the listed building.
- 5.4.2 The design for the modern material replacement, beyond that identified in the original accepted application, forming part of this application seeks to continue reinstating features of historic and aesthetic interest, resulting in an overall improvement to the appearance of the listed building.
- 5.4.3 The form of the extension has been informed by the neighbouring property (no. 1 Church Cottages), which is subservient to the host dwelling and assimilates in terms of materiality and features.

- 5.4.4 With respect to materiality, all modern material is to be removed and the historic material restored. This includes restored brick and flint work at the ground floor, and a new green oak frame. Moreover, appropriately detailed black metal framed windows would be introduced to all elevations, which would be slim line double glazed to improve the energy efficiency of the building. Larger casement windows would be introduced to the rear elevation, in order to retain consistency with No.1 Church Cottage. Those in the front and side elevations will have an oak subframe as agreed with the conservation officer.
- 5.4.5 The previously accepted scheme had the extension dormer windows rescaled to read more subservient and address the conservation officers' comments, whilst making the upper floor useable. The remaining dormers had been generally sized to match that of No1 Church Cottages. It is worth noting other options were considered, including the removal of some of the upper dormer windows in lieu of a flat roof, sloping tiled projection to achieve the required headroom. However, this option was discounted on heritage grounds as it would detract from the visual benefits of a fully reinstated cat slide roof.

5.5 Access and parking

- 5.5.1 A vehicle access exists from Wrotham Road leading onto an area of hardstanding to the north of the dwelling. This will be retained and unaltered.
- 5.5.2 The proposal does not seek any changes to the parking arrangements.

5.6 Landscaping

- 5.6.1 The proposal includes the planting of a Yew Hedge along the eastern boundary of the site.

6 Planning Considerations

6.1 The principle of development

- 6.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.1.2 For the purpose of this application, the key aspect of the development plan is policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), which outlines the criteria against which extensions to dwellings in the countryside will be assessed. The Councils published position is that extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt will be considered appropriate development provided they do not exceed 33% of the floor space of the original dwelling.
- 6.1.3 A thorough Green Belt assessment was previously provided under the 2020 consented application, refer to Section 4 of this planning statement and demonstrated that the proposed two storey side extension is within the 33% Green Belt policy tolerances.
- 6.1.4 In respect of wider considerations, the previously accepted two storey extension had been designed to respond positively to the host dwelling by remaining subservient in terms of scale, bulk and massing. It would be constructed in a scale and to a palette of materials that are sympathetic to the existing dwelling and the adjacent property (1no. Church Cottages). The extension would reinstate a symmetrical appearance to match the side extension erected at no. 1 Church Cottages.
- 6.1.5 Moreover, it was previously accepted that the removal of modern additions/material, reconfiguration of the external elevations and reinstatement of the original cat-slide roof are all positive enhancements to the listed building and its setting. Furthermore, the rescaling of the dormer windows and reducing the proposed floorspace has further responded to the earlier concerns.
- 6.1.6 The proceeding section of this planning statement (7.2) addresses the heritage considerations in greater detail, including the impact of the proposed works 2 Church Cottages and The Street Meopham Conservation Area.

6.2 Heritage considerations

- 6.2.1 A detailed Heritage Statement had been produced to assist with the determination of the previous application, with its purpose being to inform the decision taker on the effects of the proposed development on the historic built environment.
- 6.2.2 It assessed the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the Grade II listed 2 Church Cottages, the character and appearance of The Street Meopham Conservation Area and the setting of the Grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist. The report also set out how the proposal complies with the guidance and policy of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 and local planning policy.

- 6.2.3 The original Heritage Statement should be read in full; however, it concludes that whilst the proposal has the potential to result in a limited level of harm to the significance of the listed building, this would be a low level of less than substantial harm.
- 6.2.4 As part of this application and following both opening works identifying poorly constructed material and a scaffold collapse, an annotated photographic addendum to the report has been produced in support of this application as agreed with GBC.
- 6.2.5 Moreover, it is an understood concept that conservation is the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. In this case the most significant aspects of the building, its architectural interest, surviving historic fabric and illustrative historic interest, will be retained.
- 6.2.6 In addition, the original heritage statement states comprehensive heritage benefits to both the listed building and conservation area that would be secured resulting from the proposed development. These were summarised as:
- *"Replacement of the existing detracting rear extension with a carefully and traditionally detailed catslide rear addition which reflects that present to no.1, provides an enhanced sense of consistency across the rear of the cottages, better reveals the significance of the cottages and result in an aesthetic enhancement within an important view of the grade I listed church."*
 - *"The removal of surface applied faux distressed timber frame from the interior of the building thus reinstating a more authentic interior aesthetic, allowing the building's remaining historic features to take prominence and better revealing the structure's historic and architectural interest."*
 - *"The conservation and restoration of the front elevation, including the replacement of the concrete render for lime render better caring for the historic timber framing, removal of modern brick slips and reinstatement of a canopy porch as per the arrangement in a 20th century photograph. These works result in an enhancement to the significance of the building and conservation area and a modest enhancement to the significance of the grade I listed church."*
 - *"Bringing the building up to modern standards as a family dwelling in the 21st century while being sensitive to the significance of the building."*
- 6.2.7 In summary, owing to the nature and scale of the beneficial works (identified above) and accepted in the 2020 planning application, this updated planning application supports the significance of the grade II listed building and results in an additional enhancement significance of the conservation area and grade I listed church over that of the accepted 2020 application. It should be noted in regard to the accepted application, the works result in less than substantial harm that would be outweighed by comprehensive benefits to the character and appearance of the listed building.

- 6.2.8 As such, the original accepted development would be in accordance with the requirements of Section 16 of the NPPF and relevant local planning policy. There would also be preservation for the purposes of the decision maker's duty under Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act.

6.3 Impact on residential amenity

- 6.3.1 Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy states that new development will be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land.
- 6.3.2 The original accepted application included the erection of a two-storey side extension and the reconfiguration of the first floor. It was considered that these are aspects of the proposal with potential to affect residential amenity.
- 6.3.3 The two-storey side extension extends away from any neighbouring dwellings and would not have a material impact. The removal of the rear dormers and reconfiguration of the first floor would also not impact on the existing living conditions of neighbours in any materially increased way given the garden areas are already overlooked.
- 6.3.4 Having regard to the above, the proposal would not impact on the privacy or amenity of neighbouring properties.

6.4 Environmental impact

Flood risk

- 6.4.1 Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere, and only consider development appropriate in areas at risk of flooding when informed by a site-specific flood risk assessment.
- 6.4.2 Having regard to the Environment Agency Flood Risk Map for planning the site falls within Flood Zone 1 which has the lowest risk of flooding. Accordingly, a Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment is not required to support this application.

Overall sustainability

- 6.4.3 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay.
- 6.4.4 The original accepted application for the development noted it would also allow for investment in the new built fabric and contribute to local construction employment, would offer improved accommodation to its future occupants and would not involve the loss of land that is of high agricultural or ecological value nor is it within a flood risk area. To the contrary, it will improve the local environment with enhancements to a Grade II Listed Building. It therefore falls in line with all aspects of sustainable development. The current application does not impact on this statement

6.5 Planning contributions

6.5.1 In accordance with paragraph 56 of the NPPF, planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

6.5.2 National Planning Practice Guidance also advises that there are specific circumstances where contributions for affordable housing and tariff style planning obligations (section 106 planning obligations) should not be sought from small scale and self-build development.

6.5.3 These circumstances are that;

- a) contributions should not be sought from developments of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of no more than 1000sqm;*
- b) in designated rural areas, local planning authorities may choose to apply a lower threshold of 5-units or less. No affordable housing or tariff-style contributions should then be sought from these developments. In addition, in a rural area where the lower 5-unit or less threshold is applied, affordable housing and tariff style contributions should be sought from developments of between 6 and 10-units in the form of cash payments, which are commuted until after completion of units within the development. This applies to rural areas described under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985, which includes National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;*
- c) affordable housing and tariff-style contributions should not be sought from any development consisting only of the construction of a residential annex or extension to an existing home.*

6.5.4 As the development falls within the definition of c), no contributions should be sought in this instance.

7 Summary and conclusions

7.1 Summary

- 7.1.1 This statement is prepared in respect of a further amended application seeking planning and listed building consent from the 2020 consent for the removal and replacement of further poorly constructed material dating from the 1970's and the installation of a full green oak frame in accordance with the submitted drawings attached as part of the application.
- 7.1.2 The original consented proposal from 2020 includes; the removal of the front porch and two storey rear extension; the erection of a two-storey side extension of a scale and form consistent with the adjoining No1 Church Cottage; reinstatement of a cat-slide roof to the rear; internal refurbishments; minor changes to the plan form; and replacement of modern windows. The updated application does not change the principle or footprint or volume of the original application.
- 7.1.3 The property is an established Grade II listed semi-detached dwelling located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The updated application does not change the information submitted in this regard as part of the original application and is therefore not required in support of the minor additional internal material changes.
- 7.1.4 An original heritage statement was submitted in support of the 2020 planning and listed building consent application, which assesses the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of; the grade II listed dwelling (no.2 Church Cottages), The Street Meopham Conservation Area and the setting of the grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist. The report also sets out how the proposal complied with the guidance and policy of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 and local planning policy. An addendum is supplied as part of this application.
- 7.1.5 In summary, the original consented works would result in less than substantial harm that would be outweighed by the comprehensive benefits to the appearance of the listed building. Moreover, the proposal is considered proportionate and, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant policies contained within section 16 of the NPPF and local planning policy and guidance. This application seeks to cover the permissions required to remove modern post 1970 construction materials with a green oak frame in support of the building's heritage and conservation status.
- 7.1.6 Taking all the above into account, we respectfully request that planning permission be granted.