



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260010

Location: 4 Lanes Avenue Northfleet Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of a two storey side and rear extension, loft conversion, porch; and associated internal & external alterations.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Vilciu

Site Visit Date: 03 March 2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Drawing no. 01 Existing layouts, elevations and section, roof and site plan;
Drawing no. 02 Rev. B Proposed layouts, elevations and section, roof and site plan;
Site location plan; and
Design Statement.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. 02 Proposed layouts, elevations and section, roof and site plan.~~

Procedural Issues

Following a request from the case officer, the applicant amended the proposed design and included a new boundary treatment (on the boundary with no. 6 Lanes Avenue). The amended details were subject to a second round of publicity to neighbours.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20250860	Demolition of existing side outbuilding, erection of a two storey side and rear extension, loft conversion, new roof with dormer window in the rear, front porch; and internal alterations.	Refused	30.10.2025
20240620	Application for a lawful development certificate in respect of the proposed hip to gable roof alteration, erection of a dormer extension in the rear roof slope with 3 no. Skylights in the front roof slope and conversion of the loft space into habitable rooms.	Certificate Granted	27.08.2024
20210617	Application for a Lawful Development certificate in respect of the proposed creation of a new driveway/hardstanding.	Certificate Granted	12.07.2021

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

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 Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Paragraph 48 of the Framework makes it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. An emerging Local Plan, does not form part of the Development. The Framework, at Paragraph 49 allows local planning authorities to give weight to relevant policies in emerging Local Plans, according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the Framework, the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to those policies.

West Oxfordshire District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government & Rosconn Strategic Land Ltd [2018] EWHC 3065 (Admin) is a High Court judgement that deals with the

weight to be given to a Regulation 19 Local Plan. In this judgement the Court found that the weight to be given to an emerging Local Plan, was a matter of planning judgement, which had to be reached having fully considered the relevant part (Paragraph 49) of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan, is in the process of being consulted upon (it has reached Regulation 19 stage), the Council is not yet aware of whether third parties will support or object to specific policies within the Plan, or whether they will consider the policies with the emerging Local Plan to be broadly sound and consistent with the NPPF (2024). Taking this into consideration, one can only conclude that at this stage of the process, **limited (i.e. minimal) weight should be afforded to the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan**. This position would only change once the emerging Local Plan has progressed towards submission and examination, with the Council being fully aware of policies that are subject to unresolved objections and with knowledge of policies that have had their soundness and conformity against the Framework challenged.

This approach accords with the approach taken in a separate High Court case, Gladman Developments Ltd v SSHCLG & Corby Borough Council; & Uttlesford DC [2020] EWHC 518 (Admin) and Court of Appeal [2021] EWCA Civ 104, which was also the subject of a Court of Appeal Ruling [2021] EWCA Civ 104.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised on two occasions by a site notice and to three neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received and the overall consultation period expired on 08 May 2026.

Officer's Analysis

Background

In October 2025, planning permission was refused for the demolition of the existing side outbuilding, the erection of a two storey side and rear extension, a loft conversion, a new roof with a dormer window in the rear, a front porch and internal alterations at the application site (reference 20250860). The ground of refusal related to the proposal being an overdevelopment of the application property, which was not subservient to the existing building and which had an unbalancing impact on the terrace.

For the current proposal, the initial design was considered an overdevelopment of the application property, which would not match the design of the existing building and would cause adverse overlooking impacts. Therefore, following a request from the case officer, the proposal was amended to reduce the depth (by one metre) and alter the roof design (from a gable to a hip, with lower eaves) of the rear elevation and a Juliet balcony was omitted from the rear elevation. In addition, there were alterations to the proposed rear windows and a taller boundary treatment was included on the boundary with no. 6 Lanes Avenue.

It should be noted that the following assessment is based on the amended design.

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

In relation to two storey rear extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that they should not dominate the host property in terms of depth (extensions to extensions will not generally be supported); should not be of greater width than the original building; should generally not be built adjoining the side boundaries of the site, should have roof designs that reflect and not overwhelm the main roof and window patterns and proportions that are in keeping with the host building and local character.

In relation to side extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that care is needed when considering the relationship between the proposal and the boundary with the neighbouring property, as the separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of the property and in some locations be part of the character of the area. In addition, side extensions should appear subservient to the original building; be no greater than half the width of the original building; incorporate roof designs to reflect the main roof; and window designs and proportions to reflect those existing and local character.

The rear extension element of the proposed development would not be of greater width than the existing building and would be set away from the side boundary with no. 6 Lanes Avenue by some 1.1 metres (at the closest point) and the roof design and proposed fenestration would match with the existing building. The part single storey and part two storey design would reduce the size and bulk of the rear extension overall.

The side extension element of the proposed development would be set back from the front elevation by one metre, would not extend beyond the rear of the existing building and would have a width that is less than half of the width of the existing dwelling. The roof design and proposed fenestration would match with the existing building and an external rear access would be retained.

The proposed porch would be a subservient feature of the front elevation and whilst a hipped roof would be preferable, the design approach would not look out of place in the surrounding street scene. It is noted that the porch would be broadly in line with permitted development (PD) criteria, except for having a slightly greater height.

The proposed facing materials and overall design approach would match existing and although the proposal would add significant floor area to the building, it would appear subservient to the existing building overall. Therefore, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design and would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of existing building or the surrounding area. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants. In this regard, the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The proposed bedrooms would exceed the minimum floor area requirements for double and single bedrooms in the NDSS (2015). According to the proposed block plan, the proposed garden area and length (some 117 square metres and +10 metres respectively) would exceed the requirement for a dwelling with four or more bedrooms in the RLG.

The proposed development would include new ground floor rear windows located in very close proximity to the boundary with no. 6 Lanes Avenue. As illustrated below, at this point, the side boundary to no. 6 is a low wall;



Photographs taken 16 October 2025

In order to protect the privacy of the future occupiers, the application details include the provision of timber fencing on top of this wall (increasing the overall height to 1.8 metres), for a length of 3.1 metres. Provided that this new fence is subject to a planning condition requiring it to be erected and retained permanently, then there would be no adverse overlooking impacts to the proposed ground floor windows.

The proposed development would provide cycle storage and bin storage and would retain an external access to the rear garden, which would be positive features in terms of residential amenity.

Overall, the proposed development would provide good living conditions for future occupiers, would not be detrimental to residential amenity and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), the NDSS and the RLG.

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of neighbouring occupiers. In this regard, the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows to the application property. The RLG set out that privacy distances between facing windows should be met, in order to prevent overlooking. A privacy distance of 21 metres is required for facing windows where there is no private garden area in between and a privacy distance of 26 metres is required where a private garden is within the field of view.

The closest residential properties to the application site are nos. 2 and 6 Lanes Avenue (adjoining to the west and south east respectively). Nos. 9 and 10 Alders Court are located to the south across a rear access. Various properties on Lawrence Square are located across Haynes Road, some 46 metres to the north.

Due to a privacy distance of some 36 metres to no. 10 Alders Court and at least 46 metres to the properties on Lawrence Square, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts from any proposed front or rear windows to the occupiers of those properties.

Due to the proposed increased height of an existing low boundary treatment (on the boundary with no. 6 Lanes Avenue) and because screening would be provided by other existing boundary treatments/built development, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts from any proposed ground floor, rear windows to any surrounding occupiers.

There would be some adverse overlooking impacts from the proposed first floor, rear windows to the garden of no. 6 Lanes Avenue. However, because the private garden area of no. 6 would be largely unaffected, because an existing boundary treatment would be increased in height and because the proposed overlooking would be oblique in nature, then the adverse overlooking impact would not be so

significant as to warrant a refusal of planning permission. The first floor flank elevation serves the landing.

Due to their low position in the side roof slopes, the proposed rear rooflights would cause adverse overlooking impacts to the windows/gardens of nos. 2 and 6 Lanes Avenue. However, any loss of privacy could be mitigated by the rooflights being obscure glazed. This can be secured by an appropriate planning condition.

In order to prevent any future loss of privacy or adverse noise/odour impacts to neighbours, any planning permission granted should be conditioned to preclude the insertion of any windows or openings (including flues) in any of the side elevations of the proposed development.

The proposal would result in increased built form, located in close proximity to the boundaries with nos. 2 and 6 Lanes Avenue. However, due to the design of the proposal (including the first floor element of the rear extension being set away from the boundary with no. 2) and the separation and orientation of the dwellings, there would be no significant adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts.

Overall, subject to the provision of the raised height boundary treatment shown on the submitted plans, the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Parking and Highways

Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) require new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards (SPG4), a four or more bedroom dwelling should have three vehicle parking spaces and cycle parking should be provided at a minimum of one space per bedroom.

The application property has two bedrooms and on-site parking for three vehicles. The proposed development would result in the dwelling increasing to at least five bedrooms and there would be no alteration to the existing parking or access arrangements. The existing frontage parking area could accommodate three vehicles (which could be subject to a planning condition requiring its permanent retention) and a cycle store is proposed in the rear garden that could accommodate six cycles (the details of which could be conditioned to be approved and then retained permanently).

Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would make sufficient provision for the parking of cars and cycles within the site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2. However, as the proposed development is within the confines of an existing residential garden and only a relatively small amount of groundworks would occur, then it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to groundwater or archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

The application site is located in a smoke control area. As such, advice regarding smokeless fuels/appliances can be given to the applicant in an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans
 Materials to match existing
 No further openings in any flank elevation
 Obscure glazing to rooflights in rear extension
 Submission and approval of details of bicycle storage prior to first occupation
 Provision and permanent retention of boundary fence prior to first occupation
 Retention of existing frontage parking

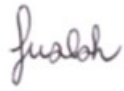
Conclusion

The proposal would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

Recommendation

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	13 May 2026	Dated:	15 May 2026