

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250235

Location: 13 Walnut Tree Way Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Demolition of existing garage and conservatory. Erection of two storey side extension. Erection of single storey rear/side extension with roof lantern and replacement of front porch.

Applicant: Mr Nathan Allgood

Site Visit Date: 22 April 2025

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Drawing no. ALL-0225-01 Rev. A Sheet 1 of 3 Existing and proposed layouts;
Drawing no. ALL-0225-01 Rev. A Sheet 2 of 3 Existing and proposed elevations, block plans and roof plans, section and site location plan; and
Drawing no. ALL-0225-01 Rev. A Sheet 3 of 3 Proposed 3D views.

Procedural Issues

Following a request from the case officer, the applicant has confirmed that the proposed home office would be for personal use by the owners of the application property only.

It is noted that the existing block plan is inaccurate in its illustration of the existing vehicle parking on the site frontage. However, this inaccuracy has not undermined the determination of this application because the case officer has viewed the existing situation during the site visit.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19631456	Erection of 27 houses with private garages	Permitted	22.10.1964
19630456	the erection of dwellings	Permitted	28.05.1964

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)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2023)
- Gravesham Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)
- Gravesham Front Driveway Design Guidance (Informal Guidance) (2023)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Meopham Parish Council

No response received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised to seven neighbouring properties by letter. Four representations have been received and are summarised as follows;

- Loss of existing garage would result in insufficient on-site parking, leading to additional parking on a narrow unclassified road.
- Existing on-street parking blocks access to driveways and for emergency vehicles, which will be exacerbated by this proposal.
- Loss of light to the side, front and rear elevations of no. 15 Walnut Tree Way.
- Overdevelopment of the site, which is out of keeping with its surroundings.
- Additional development would occur using permitted development rights.
- The proposal would stop no. 15 Walnut Tree Way from building a similar extension.
- Frontage parking would be detrimental to the surrounding environment.
- A single storey extension would be more appropriate.

Officer's Analysis

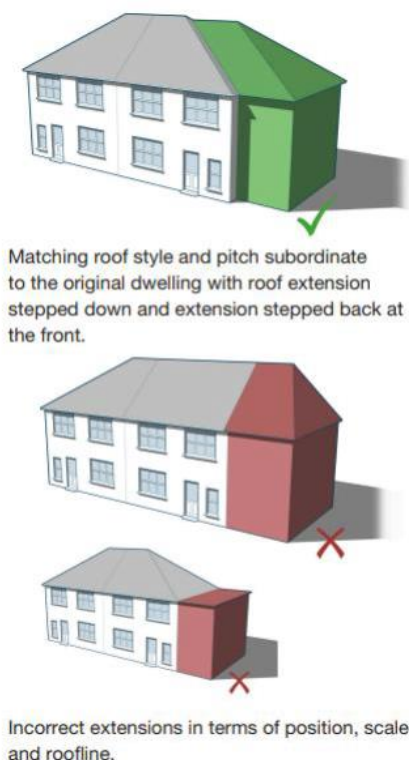
Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF 2024) sets out various design requirements and includes the need for the development to add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF 2024 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 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.

The proposed development would involve the erection of a side and rear extension. In relation to single storey rear extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that they should not dominate the original property in terms of depth (extensions to extensions will not generally be supported); they should not rise above the window cill level of any first floor windows; they should not be excessive in height, especially where they are greater than three metres in depth; or excessive in width (no greater than the original building). Flats roofs can be acceptable where they are not widely visible and pitched roof designs should reflect the main roof.

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 following is an illustration from the document;



It is noted that a local resident has raised concerns that the proposal would be an overdevelopment of the

site, that is out of character with the surroundings and that any frontage parking would be detrimental to the surrounding environment.

The application property is a semi-detached, two storey dwelling with an attached garage, which appears very symmetrical in design with its attached neighbour. The application site is on the right in the following image;



Google Street View 2016

The proposed development would result in a large and bulky, two storey side extension, which although set back 0.3 metres from the front building line, would have a roof which is a continuation of the existing (with no set back or set down). In addition, the proposed extension would have a width of 3.6 metres on a property that is 6 metres wide (half width 3 metres). The proposal would not appear subservient to the size of the existing dwelling, would have an unbalancing impact on the semi-detached building of which it is a part and would be an overdevelopment of the application site. Furthermore, the proposed porch would be bulky and prominent in the surrounding street scene.

The positive features of the proposal are that the roof and window design and external facing materials would match with those existing and that the extension would be set some 1.4 metres away from the side boundary of the application site. However, these positive features do not outweigh the significant negative aspects of the proposal.

The proposed development would also involve the formation of a widened vehicle parking area on the site frontage. No details of the proposed surfacing materials or landscaping have been provided. In the absence of these details, it is difficult to fully assess the visual impacts of the proposal. However, it would appear that sufficient space would be available to soften the proposed parking area with planting. As such, this aspect of the proposal would not be detrimental to the visual amenities of the surrounding area. A condition should be attached to any planning permission granted to require the submission and approval of the hard and soft landscaping scheme for the site frontage.

Whilst it is noted that planning permission was granted for a two storey side extension at no. 15 Walnut Tree Way (reference 20070657 granted in September 2007), this decision was prior to the adoption of the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) and most notably, it included a set back of 0.9 metres at first floor level.

The application site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 is also relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications. The Meopham Downs LCA is characterised by a mixture of grazed pasture and arable land, with field shape and size being varied because of the topography of the area. Tree belts and native hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees form distinct boundaries.

The application site is located in a village and the proposed development would be within an existing residential curtilage. The proposal would result in an increase in the amount of built development but would not adversely affect the overall landscape character of the surrounding area. As such, it would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Overall, by virtue of its size, bulk and design, the proposed development would not be subservient to the existing dwelling and would have an unbalancing impact. As such, the proposal would be an overdevelopment of the site, which would be out of character with the existing building, detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), to paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 and to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 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 bedroom would exceed the minimum floor area requirement for a double bedroom in the Nationally Described Space Standard (2015) and would be acceptable.

The proposed development would result in a reduction in the size of the rear garden at the application site but sufficient rear garden area and depth would be retained. As such, the proposal would be in line with the Residential Layout Guidelines (June 2020).

It is noted that the proposal would result in the loss of a first floor hallway window but due to the room being non-habitable, the loss of natural light would not be significantly detrimental to living conditions at the dwelling.

In order to prevent a loss of privacy for future occupiers, any proposed bathroom/w.c./en-suite windows should be conditioned to be permanently obscure glazed.

The proposed development would not be detrimental to the amenity of future occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 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 RLG are relevant.

The closest residential properties to the application site are nos. 11 and 15 Walnut Tree Way (located to the east and west respectively). Nos. 15 to 19 Denesway are located to the south and nos. 10 to 14 Walnut Tree Way are located to the north, across the roadway.

It is noted that a local resident has raised concerns regarding adverse overshadowing and overbearing impacts to the occupiers of no. 15 Walnut Tree Way.

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.

For the proposed front windows, a privacy distance of at least 29 metres would be available to nos. 10 to 14 Walnut Tree Way. The proposed first floor en-suite bathroom window would be obscure glazed. No windows are proposed in the eastern side elevation of the proposed development and windows and a door

to a utility room and shower room would be located in the western side elevation. Any adverse overlooking impacts from the proposed ground floor, rear windows would be screened by existing boundary treatments and the proposed side windows could be conditioned to be obscure glazed, so as to mitigate any adverse overlooking. Therefore overall, the proposal would not cause any adverse overlooking impacts to any surrounding occupiers.

In order to prevent any future loss of privacy to neighbours, any planning permission granted should be conditioned to preclude the insertion of any additional windows or openings in the side elevations of the proposed development.

In terms of overshadowing and overbearing impacts, it is noted that the proposal would result in a much wider and bulkier dwelling, with a first floor extension on the western side. No. 15 Walnut Tree Way is set forward in front of the application property on the western side and has various windows in its side elevation (to hallways). Whilst some adverse overshadowing and overbearing impacts to these windows would occur, the separation between the properties, their orientation and the fact that the affected windows are to non-habitable rooms, would mean that these impacts would not be so significant as to warrant a refusal of planning permission.

Due to the to the design of the proposed development and to the layout of the properties, there would be no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of no. 11 Walnut Tree Way.

Overall, 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 (September 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, a four or more bedroom dwelling should have three vehicle parking spaces and according to the KCC Dropped Kerb Guidance and Self-Assessment (2023) document, parking spaces located perpendicular to the roadway should be a minimum of 2.4 metres (width) by 4.8 or 6 metres (depth). Six metres depth would be required if the space is in front of an access door or garage. However, it is noted that Kent Highways & Transportation have provided more recent guidance (as yet unadopted) that requires a minimum of two spaces to be provided for a four or more bedroom property in a village location.

Local residents have raised parking and highway safety concerns. In particular, that that there would be insufficient on-site parking, leading to additional parking on Walnut Tree Way and that, existing on-street parking blocks access to driveways and for emergency vehicles, the impacts of which would be exacerbated.

The application property has three bedrooms and on-site parking for two vehicles (one space on the site frontage and one in a small garage). The proposed development would result in the dwelling increasing to four bedrooms whilst the garage would be lost. It is noted that the existing garage does not meet the minimum standards for a single garage in the adopted Vehicle Parking Standards.

The proposal would result in three vehicle parking spaces being provided on the site frontage, which would meet the adopted parking standards. A condition should be attached to any planning permission granted to ensure that the proposed parking is formed and retained permanently.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and there would be no adverse impacts to highway safety. As such, the proposed development 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 also located in close proximity to a gas pipeline (along the site frontage). However, as any works on the site frontage would be relatively minor and would be located within the confines of an existing residential garden, it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to any gas infrastructure. The applicant should be made aware of the gas pipeline via an informative on any planning permission granted.

Local residents have raised a number of concerns, the majority of which have been covered in the above discussion. The outstanding issues are summarised (in italics) and commented on as follows;

- *Additional development would occur using permitted development (PD) rights* – The application property has no restrictions on its PD. It is noted that such works are generally considered appropriate in a domestic setting and as the proposed dwelling would have sufficient garden space and parking for a larger property, then PD works would be unlikely to result in any adverse impacts.
- *The proposal would stop no. 15 Walnut Tree Way from building a similar extension* – Any future planning application at no. 15 would be considered on its own merits.
- *A single storey extension would be more appropriate* – the proposed development must be determined as submitted and as such, the appropriateness or otherwise of a single storey extension is not a relevant consideration in this decision.

Conclusion

The proposed development would match with the roof and window design and external facing materials of the existing building and would have no adverse overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts to surrounding residential occupiers. Furthermore, it would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of future occupiers or highway safety. All of which weigh in support of the proposal. However, the design of the proposed development would lead to a bulky extension that would not be subservient to the existing building, would have an unbalancing impact and would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the existing building and the street scene.

Overall, it is considered that the adverse impacts of the proposed development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits and therefore planning permission should be refused on design grounds.

Recommendation

That planning permission be refused on the following ground;

1. By virtue of its size, bulk and design, the proposed development would not be subservient to the existing dwelling and would have an unbalancing impact. As such, the proposal would be an overdevelopment of the site, which would be out of character with the building, detrimental to the visual amenities of the street scene and contrary to Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), to paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and to the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021).

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	K Joyce	Signed:	f Walsh
Dated:	24th April 2025	Dated:	01 May 2025