

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250074

Location: 6 The Downage Gravesend Kent DA11 7NB

Description: Erection of a single storey front extension, erection of a two-storey side/rear extension and erection of a first floor rear extension.

Applicant: Mr Dale

Site Visit Date: 13.02.25 and photos provided by agent

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Drawing No. 001 – Site Location Plan and Block Plans – Existing and Proposed;
Drawing No. 002 – Floor Plans – Existing;
Drawing No. 003 – Floor Plans – Proposed;
Drawing No. 004 – Elevations – Existing; and
Drawing No. 005 – Elevations – Proposed.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19930444	Erection of two storey side extension to form utility room with shower room/w.c. and dressing room over.	Permitted	05.10.1993

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

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)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

Five surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 13.02.25 with one response being received, objecting to the proposal. The overall consultation period expired on 07.03.25. The objection is summarised below:

- Concerns over boundary line, which is incorrect and gives no right of entry
- Concerns regarding light levels
- How is access gained to the rear garden if the development is constructed to the boundary line

NOTE: Impact on light levels shall be considered within the neighbouring amenity section of this report, and development in relation to the site boundary shall be assessed within the design section of this report. In relation to the red line boundary, the applicant/agent has submitted the red line boundary plan and have signed certificate A, which declares their ownership of the land. Whilst it is not within the planning remit to resolve boundary disputes and party wall matters, it should be noted that were planning approval to be granted, with the incorrect ownership certificate signed or incorrect red line boundary, this could potentially result in the quashing of a planning permission, were planning approval to be granted. In this instance, planning permission is not being recommended and as such, further clarification regarding this matter has not been sought from the agent.

Site Description

6 The Downage is a two storey, detached property located to the west of the highway.

Site Photo (No.6 is to the right)

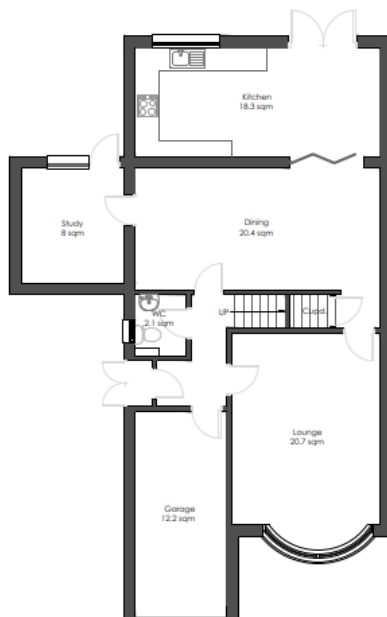


This application proposes the erection of a single storey front extension, erection of a two-storey side/rear extension and erection of a first-floor rear extension.

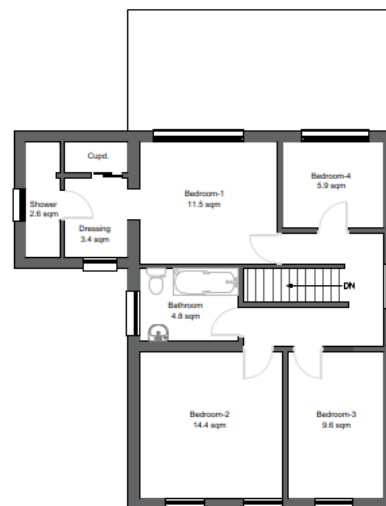
Proposed Development

The development would create space for layout changes at ground floor level, incorporating an enlarged hallway, enlarged WC and a home office. At second floor level, two of the existing bedrooms would be enlarged, with bedroom 1 benefitting from an ensuite bathroom and a walk-in wardrobe.

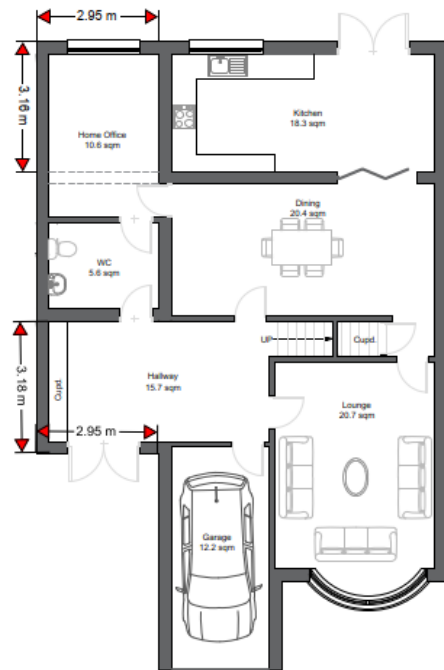
The dimensions are indicated on the plans:



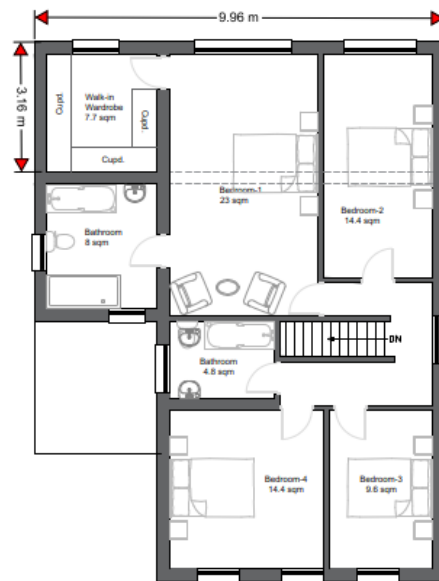
Existing Ground Floor Plan



Existing First Floor Plan



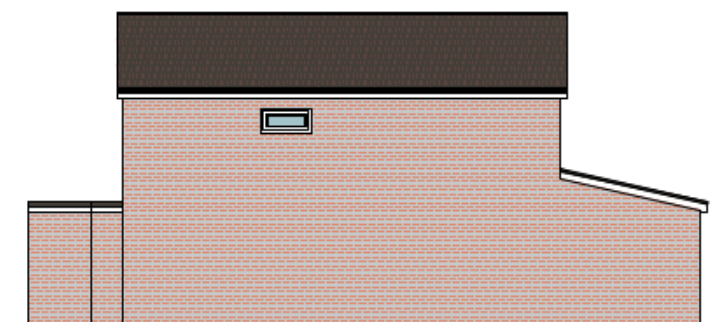
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Existing Front Elevation



Existing Right Elevation



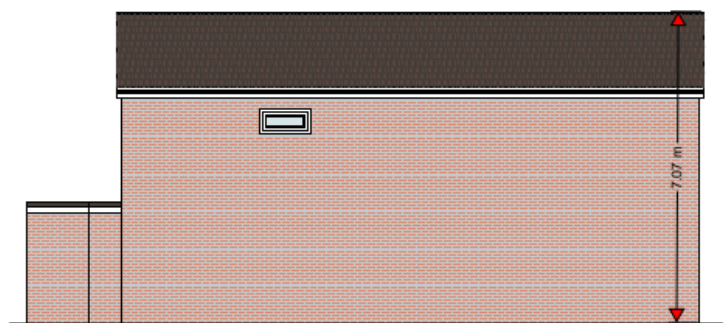
Existing Rear Elevation



Existing Left Elevation



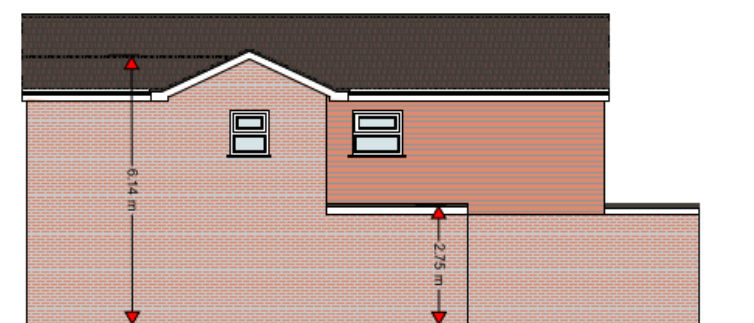
Proposed Front Elevation



Proposed Right Elevation



Proposed Rear Elevation



Proposed Left Elevation

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) (2014) 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 (2024) sets out that the creation of high quality beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It states developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

The Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. Generally, the SPD (2021) highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context.

The Householder Design Guide (2021) sets out the design expectations for the Borough. Key elements that are relevant to this proposal have been included below:

Character and design quality

Any proposed extensions and alterations to a house should respect the original character of the existing dwelling, complement and correspond with the character of neighbouring properties and the local area. It should be noted that this does not always mean an exact replication of the existing character.

9.2 Your proposal should reflect and respect the original character and respond to its features. In order to achieve this as a starting point all residential extensions and alterations should be subordinate to the host property/building, allowing the original building to remain dominant.

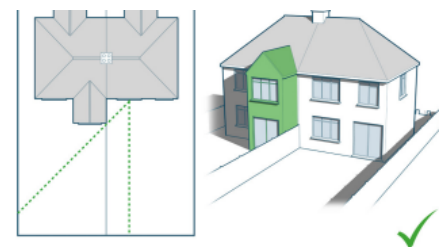
Materials

9.9 Extensions should normally be constructed using matching materials to the main dwelling. Matching bricks or render should be used along with similar coursing and pointing detailing and colours. Roof tiles or materials should match the existing in terms of materials, texture, colour and size. Where appropriate, extensions may be constructed of an alternative material if this is consistent with other development in the area and where the extension would still be clearly subordinate to the main dwelling.

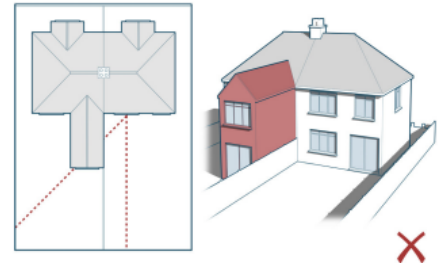
Two Storey and First Floor Rear Extensions

10.3 Two-storey rear extensions are often desirable as they create more space within a home, however they are not appropriate in all circumstances e.g. mid-terraced properties, and need to be carefully designed to avoid negatively impacting neighbouring properties. Proposals for two-storey rear extensions should consider the surrounding context, and ensure that:

- Depth: The extension does not dominate the original property. This can cause the site to appear overdeveloped, and cause long dark internal spaces to be formed. Extensions to extensions will generally not be supported.
- Height: two storey extensions can have very significant impact on neighbouring amenity, so should generally not be built up to site boundaries with neighbouring gardens / properties.
- Width: Extensions should not be of greater width than the original building.
- Design: Taller extensions are of greater visibility, and should incorporate roof designs to reflect, tie in with and not overwhelm the main property's roof. Patterns and proportions of windows should reflect the host building and local character.
- Materials: Using matching external materials and window / door frames is especially relevant for two storey extensions.
- Overlooking: Extensions should avoid inserting any flank windows, or involve raised platforms where they would allow new, or increased overlooking views into neighbouring gardens / properties.
- Light / Outlook: The 45 / 25 degree rule will be used to assess the impact of the extension on neighbouring light / outlook.
- Garden Space: Adequate garden area for the enlarged house should be retained following development.

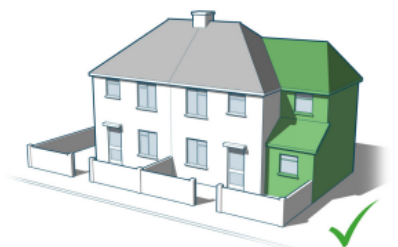


A two storey extension should comply with the 45 degree rule. (See Appendix 1).



Two Storey Side

10.5 Two storey extensions can have a more significant impact on the appearance of the street. Care is also needed when considering the relationship between any proposed extension and the boundary with neighbouring properties as the separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of the property and in some locations are part of the character of the area. Depending on the orientation of the neighbouring property, side extensions also have the potential to impact their amenity. To ensure these potential issues are resolved, two storey side extensions should be designed in accordance with the guidance below.



Ground floor set back 0.5m

- **Footprint:** Extensions should generally aim to appear subservient to the host building by lying behind the main front building line, though where designed well or having regard to positive local character, other approaches can be supported. See advice of extensions to corner properties in the following section.
- **Height:** Extensions should not exceed the eaves height of the host building.
- **Width:** Extensions should generally be no greater than half the width of the host building. The existing rhythm of the street, including for example characteristic gaps between properties, the symmetry of pairs of semi-detached homes or groups of terraced houses, should not be unreasonably interrupted. A minimum gap of 1 metre should be retained between the extension and the flank boundary.
- **Design:** Extensions are of greater visibility, and should incorporate roof designs to reflect and generally be subservient to the main property's roof. The use of flat or false pitched roofs visible from the street should be avoided. Patterns of windows should reflect the host building and local character. Walls to extensions should not form the site boundary with the public highway, as these can be oppressive and encourage antisocial activities.
- **Materials:** Matching external materials and window / door frames should be used.
- **Overlooking:** Extensions should avoid inserting any flank windows where they would allow new, or significantly increased overlooking views into neighbouring gardens / properties.
- **Light / Outlook:** The 45 / 25 degree rule will be used to assess the impact of the extension on neighbouring light / outlook.

Front Extensions & Porches

10.7 Front extensions can change the character of the original building and where poorly designed have a negative impact on the appearance of the street; due to their visibility these kind of extensions are most likely to have an impact on the wider street scene and are generally discouraged. It is therefore important to invest a high level of design quality in such proposals following the guidance below:

- **Design:** Front extensions must be designed to respond to and enhance the character of the existing dwelling and street.
- **Scale:** The scale and design of new porches should respond to the existing dwelling.
- **Existing Features:** Care should be taken to preserve the appearance of existing features, such as bay windows, and avoid porches that would impact these by subsuming their form or erasing their prominence. Existing porches that are open to the street, and are an original feature that form part of a local pattern of development, should generally not be enclosed.
- **Car Parking:** Extensions or porches should not result in the retention of front parking spaces of inadequate depth.



The scale and design of a new porches should respond to the existing dwelling.



Large extensions which break the building line and do not respect the scale of the house will be rejected.

The proposed external materials would match the existing, which is desirable to ensure a good visual relationship between the existing dwelling and proposed development. This could be secured by condition if permission were to be forthcoming.

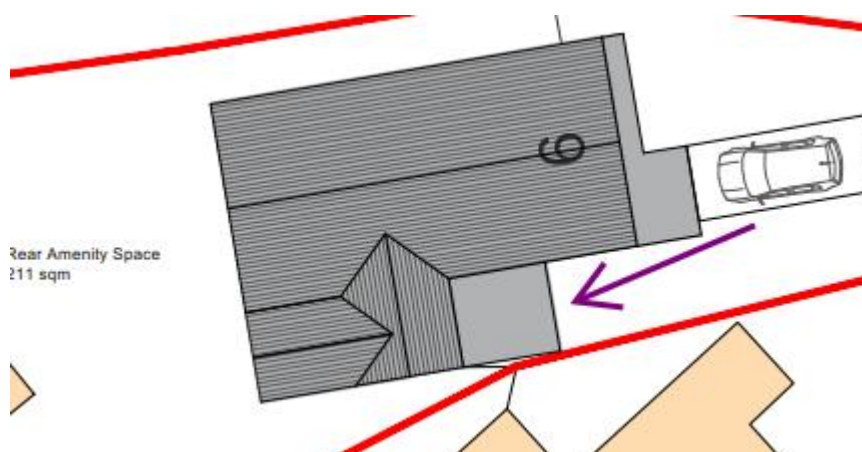
In terms of the character and appearance of the area, properties along this part of The Downage have largely remained true to the original character of the dwellings. Conversely, No.5 The Downage, along with the application property have both constructed two storey side extensions along with a single storey rear extension (or conservatory in the case of No. 5). Although set back from the front elevation, the two storey side extensions, which were approved prior to the adoption of Gravesham's current Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and recent Design Guidance (Householder (2021) and Design for Gravesham (2024), are prominent within the street scene and are considered to detract from the character of the original properties and the wider street scene.

Site Photo



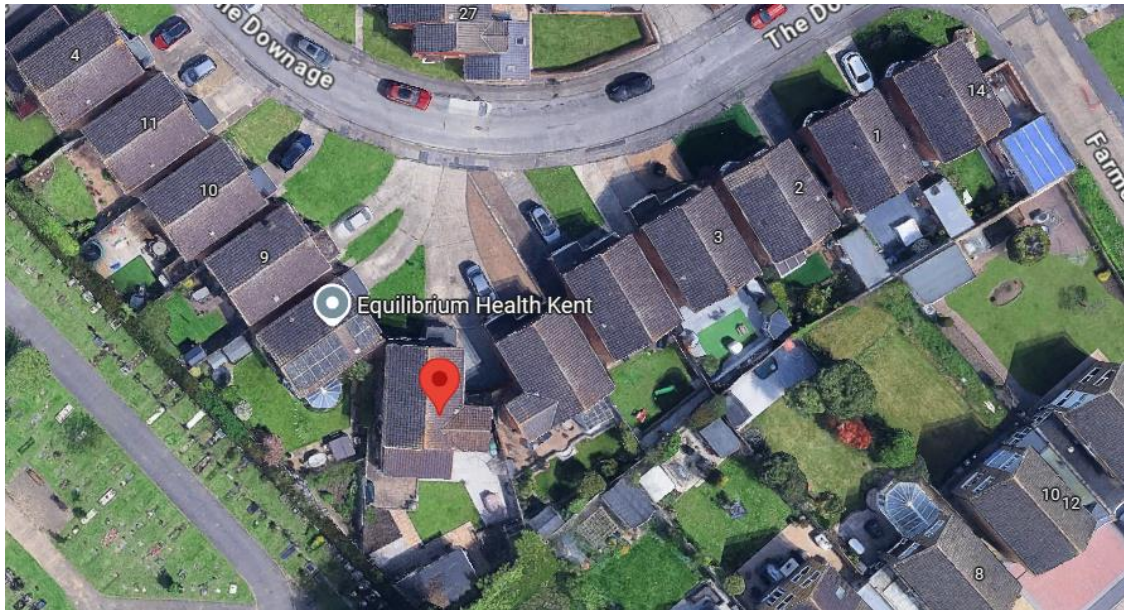
As the existing development already impacts the dwelling and street scene, it is considered prudent to first assess the proposed single storey front extension.

The single storey front extension would have a flat roof and would be attached to the existing two storey side extension. It would be constructed right up to the shared boundary with No.5 The Downage and would further disrupt the established pattern of the street scene, resulting in a further reduction of the space in and around numbers 5 and 6 The Downage, which is undesirable. This can be clearly seen on the proposed block plan:



In addition, the fenestration, which would be quite prominent from the street scene is more suited to the rear garden of a property. Overall, the proposed front extension, albeit single storey, is considered to be an incongruous addition which would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host dwelling and wider street scene. Given the existing two storey side extension, the remaining proposed development would not be readily visible from the street scene. As such, the remaining development, along with any cumulative impact shall now be considered.

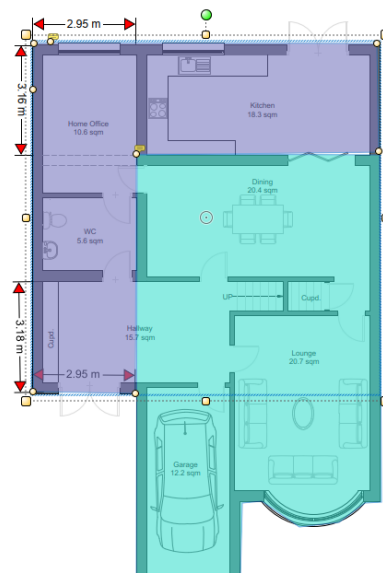
The pattern of development within the immediate area can be seen from the google aerial image below:



As evidenced by the above image, the application property has already been significantly extended. Given that No.5 also has a two storey side extension, which faces towards the application property, the spaces in and around the dwellings have been significantly reduced, and the application site already appears cramped, which is unfortunate. The proposed development within this application is considered to worsen the existing situation. The overall impact shall now be considered.

Bulk/Massing/Subservience

As submitted, the proposed development would result in an incongruous and dominant dwelling of substantial mass and scale. The footprint of the dwelling would be significantly increased following the cumulative extensions, as indicated in turquoise (original footprint) and purple (additional footprint) below:



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

In addition, the development would be constructed within close proximity to the shared site boundaries, particularly the boundary shared with No.5 The Downage.

The extensions are excessive in overall bulk, mass and scale, and the cumulative impact of development of the site is considered to represent severe overdevelopment of the site, resulting in a cramped form of development that would cause harm to the appearance of the host dwelling, street scene and character of

this part of The Downage. In addition, the spaces in and around the dwelling would be reduced significantly, which is undesirable, as highlighted within the design guidance. Therefore, the extensions proposed are not subservient or sympathetic to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or wider street scene and would result in the dwelling having an incongruous, bulky and overdeveloped appearance.

Overall, the proposal is considered to represent overdevelopment of the site by virtue of disproportionate additions, that would result in an incongruous, dominant and unsympathetic development, to the detriment of the appearance of the existing dwelling and immediate locality. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Gravesham's SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) (2020) sets out expected room sizes and garden space post development. Although home offices and walk in wardrobes are not specified within the guidance, it is considered that the proposal provides more than sufficient space and accords with the room area requirements. In addition, the resultant garden area and depth accords with the guidance.

As such, the proposal would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers, in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

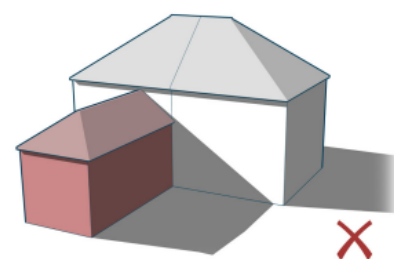
Neighbouring Amenity

As aforementioned above one representation, objecting to the proposal, was received as a result of the consultation carried out for this application. Neighbouring amenity is considered in terms of whether development would cause a sense of enclosure, loss of light, loss of privacy or loss of outlook.

The Gravesham Householder Design Guidance (2021) provides key considerations in terms of neighbouring amenity:

Overshadowing

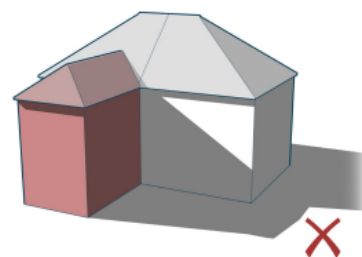
9.5 Depending upon the orientation and position of neighbouring windows and private amenity areas, problems of overshadowing can occur from an extension. This is particularly so if the neighbouring property is to the north of the proposed extension. Extensions should not create an unreasonable amount of overshadowing of neighbouring properties. Account should be taken of the orientation and position of neighbouring properties, and in particular any impact that the extension will have on neighbouring windows and private gardens. Where an extension would result in a significant reduction in light, or cause excessive overshadowing, planning permission may not be granted. In particular, care should be given when proposing extensions on the boundary with neighbouring properties that are either single-storey with a long projection, or are two-storeys in height. When considering overshadowing the Council will have regard to the 45 / 25 degree rule (see Appendix 1), as well as the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) Average Daylight Factor (ADF) and the Annual Probable Sunlight Hours (APSH) methods where necessary. See the BREEAM guidance for detailed information on these.



Where a an extension would result in a significant reduction in light or cause overshadowing planning permission may not be granted.

Privacy

9.6 It is important that new development sustains the privacy of neighbouring dwellings. Windows, balconies and raised decking can result in the loss of privacy to neighbouring properties from overlooking of their private amenity areas, or from direct close views into windows. To ensure adequate privacy levels are retained, there should be no direct overlooking into neighbouring habitable rooms or private amenity spaces of neighbouring gardens. There may be a requirement for privacy screens to the end of raised decks or balconies. Careful consideration should be given to window positions to ensure no windows on the boundary with neighbouring properties cause harmful overlooking and to ensure that windows above the ground floor retain adequate privacy distances. It may be possible, in some cases, to use high level and obscure / translucent glazing.



Overbearing and Outlook

9.7 An extension close to a neighbouring properties window, or a large extension on the boundary, can cause a loss of amenity by appearing overbearing and creating a sense of enclosure and

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Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD

dominance. Careful consideration will therefore need to be given to the relationship to existing neighbouring windows and to the size and design of an extension that may change the outlook from a neighbouring property.

As requested, the agent provided photos of the rear of the application property:





As aforementioned in the design section of this report, the proposed development is excessive in scale, bulk and massing and would result in significant development being within close proximity to the shared neighbouring boundaries. Given the orientation of the site and the development proposed, this would result in an unacceptable overbearing development, likely to cause a sense of enclosure, detrimental to neighbouring amenity. In addition, the layout of the proposed extensions is likely to result in a detrimental impact on outlook. There are no concerns regarding privacy, as no new windows are proposed in the flank elevations of the development. In terms of light impact, the plans fail to show how the development would avoid detrimentally impacting light levels to neighbouring properties. Notwithstanding this, as evidenced by the below google images, overshadowing already occurs between the application property and the neighbouring properties:



As such, it is likely that neighbouring properties would incur an unacceptable loss of light as a result of the development.

Overall the proposal fails to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties, contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Parking and Highways

No additional bedrooms are proposed and there would be no alteration to the existing parking situation. As such, there are no concerns in terms of highways and parking.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Groundwater Protection Zone

The site is located within a Groundwater Protection Zone 3 area, however, the proposal would be unlikely to be impacted by this constraint.

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is contrary to local and national planning policy.

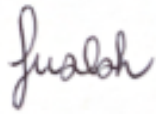
The proposal is considered to represent overdevelopment of the site by virtue of disproportionate additions, that would result in an incongruous, dominant and unsympathetic development, to the detriment of the appearance of the existing dwelling and immediate locality. As such, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS19 of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

The proposal would fail to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in terms of the overbearing development representing an unneighbourly form of development, resulting in a sense of enclosure, loss of outlook and impact on light, contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2024).

Recommendation

Refusal

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	
Dated:	27th March 2025	Dated:	27 March 2025