



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260389

Location: Distarti Rhododendron Avenue Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a single-storey detached outbuilding within the rear garden to provide a double garage, workshop, storage and ancillary WC for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwellinghouse.

Applicant: Mr C Martin

Site Visit Date: 30th April 2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form

OB/00 C – Proposed Site and Block Plans

OB/01 C – Proposed Ground Floor Plan Out Building

OB/02 C – Proposed Roof Plan Out Building

OB/03 C – Propose Elevations Out Building

OB/04 – Proposed Elevations Out Building

Planning Statement

Superseded Plans

~~OB/00 – Proposed Site and Block Plans~~

~~OB/00 B – Proposed Site and Block Plans~~

~~OB/01 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan Out Building~~

~~OB/02 – Proposed Roof Plan Out Building~~

~~OB/03 – Propose Elevations Out Building~~

~~OB/04 – Proposed Elevations Out Building~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20250081	Application for variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission reference number 20240001 for Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a new replacement dwelling; to allow change to new dwelling position.	Permitted	26.03.2025
20240001	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a new replacement dwelling.	Permitted	04.03.2024

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)

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
- T4 - Development Outside the Built-Up Area

As set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012 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

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 (2026), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

- Section 5 – Meeting the challenge of climate change
- Section 12 – Making Effective use of land
- Section 12 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 14 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 19 – Conserving and enhancing the natural Environment
- Section 20 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 2 – Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) make it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework sets out that when considering development proposals, relevant policies may be given weight, however, this is subject 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 compliance of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to them).

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 of the Framework, which from 17 August 2026 Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan has reached the Regulation 19 Consultation stage, with the consultation having ended on 18 August 2026. The emerging Local Plan does not form part of the Development Plan.

The Council is aware that third parties have raised objections to the wider emerging Local Plan and specific policies within it. Therefore, at present the Council cannot categorically state that the emerging Local Plan can be considered sound and consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) [as an emerging Local Plan being brought forward under the legacy system, it would be examined under the 2024 Framework]. 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

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

No comments received.

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

GBC Environmental Protection

Whilst there is no objection to this application, due to the history of foul drainage problems associated with this site, details as to how the foul drainage from the WC will be dealt with are needed.

Condition 4 of 20240001 related to foul drainage for the proposed house on the site and a package sewage treatment plant was installed. If the applicant can confirm that the WC is to be connected to this, then that is fine. If not, a condition is advised to ensure that foul drainage from the WC is dealt with appropriately.

Proposed condition if needed;

No development approved by this permission shall be commenced until full details of the proposed means of foul sewerage disposal have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority

KCC Heritage

Thank you for your letter consulting us on the above planning application. In this instance I suggest that no archaeological measures are required.

I hope that the above is helpful and would be pleased to discuss further if required

KCC Public Rights of Way

Access to the property is via Rhododendron Avenue, also known as Public Bridleway NS293, which will remain unaffected by the proposals. I enclose a copy of the Public Rights of Way network maps showing the line of the path for your information.

The granting of planning permission confers no other permission or consent on the applicant. It is therefore important to advise the applicant that no works can be undertaken on a Public Right of Way without the express consent of the Highways Authority. In cases of doubt the applicant should be advised to contact this office before commencing any works that may affect the Public Right of Way. Should any temporary closures be required to ensure public safety then this office will deal on the basis that:

- The applicant pays for the administration costs.
- The duration of the closure is kept to a minimum.
- Alternative routes will be provided for the duration of the closure.
- A minimum of six weeks' notice is required to process any applications for temporary closures.

This means that the Public Right of Way must not be stopped up, diverted, obstructed (this includes any building materials or waste generated during any of the construction phases) or the surface disturbed. There must be no encroachment on the current width, at any time now or in future and no furniture or fixtures may be erected on or across Public Rights of Way without consent.

Neighbouring properties

A site notice was placed near the site and 6no. surrounding properties were consulted. 1 comment was received from a member of the public in representation. Summary of comment:

- Neighbour would like building to be sited further away from the boundary as they consider the new house has already reduced privacy for neighbours.

The overall consultation period expired on 22 May 2026.

Officer's Analysis

Principle of Development

The principal issues in the assessment of the application are as follows:

- Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt including impact on openness
- Design, Character and Appearance including Heritage
- Landscape Character
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Parking and Highways

Green Belt

Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt including impact on openness

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. At the beginning of section 13 of the NPPF (2026) it is stated that the government attaches great importance to Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policies is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open with their essential characteristics being their openness and permanence.

Policy GB2:1 of the NPPF (2026) sets out that the Green Belt has five purposes:

- a. Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;

- b. Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c. Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d. Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e. Assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Policy GB6: 2 of the NPPF (2026) sets out that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt which would be caused, including harm to its openness. It states that 'inappropriate development' is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposed development, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Policy GB7 of the NPPF (2026) states that the following categories of development are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, and therefore should not be regarded as harmful to the Green Belt or be required to demonstrate very special circumstances:

- a. Development which is for agriculture, horticulture and forestry, or which is solely for nature conservation, restoration and/or enhancement;
- b. The reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the original building. In the case of proposals for a replacement building, it should be for the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- c. Limited infilling in villages lying within the Green Belt;
- d. Limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in this Framework or the development plan (for instance, on a rural exception site);
- e. The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt;
- f. Certain other forms of development, provided the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is minimised, and there would not be a significant conflict with the Green Belt purposes. These are:
 - i) Mineral extraction and processing, engineering operations, and transport, electricity network, water and telecommunications infrastructure required in a Green Belt location);
 - ii) Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order;
 - iii) Material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - iv) The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments.
- g. Development where all of the following apply:
 - i. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
 - ii. There is an evidenced unmet need for the type of development proposed⁴¹;

iii. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to policy TR3 of this Framework42; and

iv. In the case of major development involving the provision of housing, the development proposed complies with policy GB8.

h. Residential or mixed-use development which would:

i) Be within reasonable walking distance of a well-connected station (applying the definitions in the glossary at Annex B);

ii) Be physically well-related to the station or the settlement within which the station is located;

iii. Be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure;

iv. Not prejudice any proposals for long-term comprehensive development in the same location; and

v. In the case of proposals for major development, comply with policy GB8.

In the case of this proposal, it would fall under GB7(b). The proposed garage would serve as a domestic adjunct to the dwelling and is therefore considered as an addition to the dwelling for the purposes of Green Belt policy.

Therefore, it is important to first establish the extent of the original property and then consider any additions or extensions. As set out previously, the original dwelling was a small chalet, which was extended without planning consent. An application for a demolition and rebuild was granted planning permission in 2021 (ref. 20210319). Following this, lawful development certificates were submitted seeking to extend the footprint of the property under permitted development; one prior approval was granted for a rear extension and a separate LDC was granted for a detached outbuilding.

The previous report provided the following calculations for the change from the original building and from the replacement of the building at the time.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Dwelling	% increase
Footprint (m ²)	22m ²	140.5m ²	538.6%

	Existing (Approved) Dwelling	Proposed Dwelling	% increase
Footprint (m ²)	111.8m ²	140.5m ²	25.7%

For this purpose, the NPPF defines the original building as the building which existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after that date, as originally built.

The planning history establishes that the original dwelling on the site had a footprint of approximately 22m². The replacement dwelling subsequently permitted has a footprint of approximately 140.5m², representing an increase of approximately 538.6% over the original dwelling. In determining the replacement dwelling, regard was also had to the then approved dwelling footprint of approximately 111.8m², with the replacement representing an increase of approximately 25.7% over that position.

The current proposal is for a detached garage/workshop with a footprint of approximately 65m². When

added to the existing replacement dwelling, this would result in a combined built footprint of approximately 205.5m², equal to an overall increase of approximately 834.1% over the original 22m² dwelling. The garage itself would also represent an increase of approximately 46.3% when compared with the footprint of the existing replacement dwelling.

Accordingly, the proposed building is considered against the extension provisions of Policy GB7(1)(b) as a domestic adjunct, the cumulative increase over the original building would clearly be substantial and could not reasonably be regarded as a proportionate addition.

However, Policy GB7(1)(e) provides a separate exception for the redevelopment of previously developed land, provided that the development would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Previously developed land is defined by the NPPF as land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure, including the curtilage of the developed land, although it should not be assumed that the entirety of a curtilage should be developed.

The former dwelling was located within the southern part of the residential plot. The proposed garage would not exactly occupy its former footprint but would be positioned immediately adjacent to and in close proximity to that area, within the same established residential curtilage. The proposal would therefore not introduce built development into a wholly separate or previously unrelated part of the Green Belt site. Having regard to the historic development of this part of the plot and its continuing relationship with the dwelling, the proposal is considered to amount to redevelopment of previously developed land under Policy GB7(1)(e).

The proposed garage would inevitably result in some reduction to openness through the introduction of approximately 65m² of built footprint. However, the relevant test under Policy GB7(1)(e) is whether the proposal would cause substantial harm to openness. The building would be single-storey, located on relatively level land and contained within a substantial residential plot. It would be positioned close to the area historically occupied by the former dwelling, and close to the new dwelling so that there is a level of interdependence and would not materially extend the developed part of the site into the wider Green Belt. The site also benefits from established vegetation and landscaping which would assist in limiting the visual prominence of the development.

Whilst the percentage increase when measured against the very small original dwelling is considerable, this does not determine the separate assessment under Policy GB7(1)(e). Having regard to the garage's height, siting, scale, relationship with the existing and former built development, and its containment within the established residential curtilage, it is considered that the proposal would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

The proposal therefore falls within the exception at Policy GB7(1)(e) of the NPPF and does not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Very special circumstances are therefore not required.

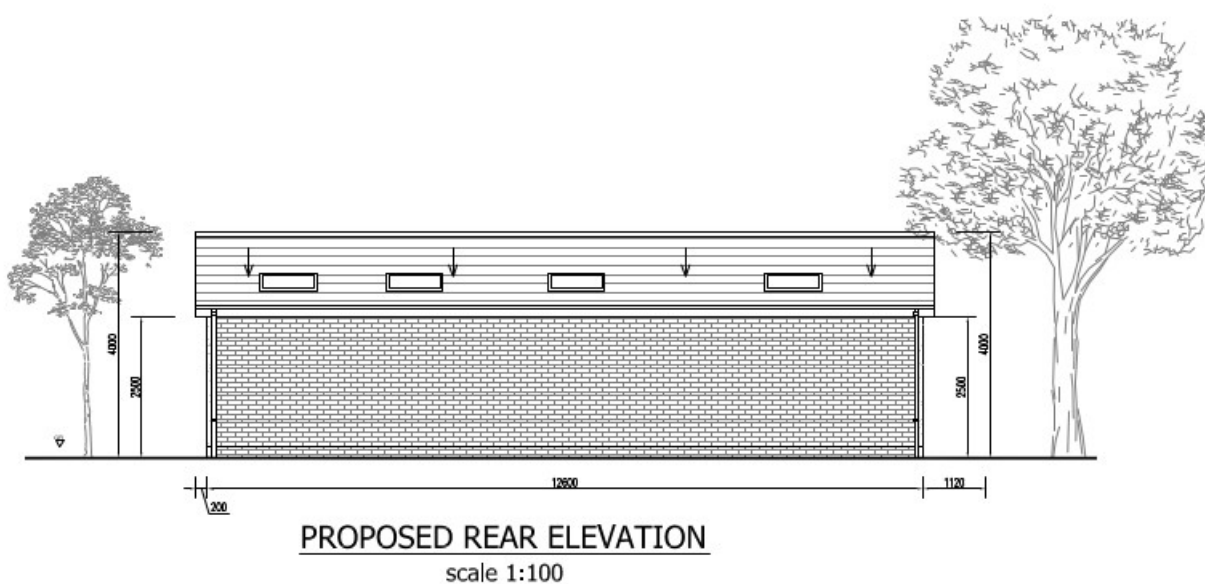
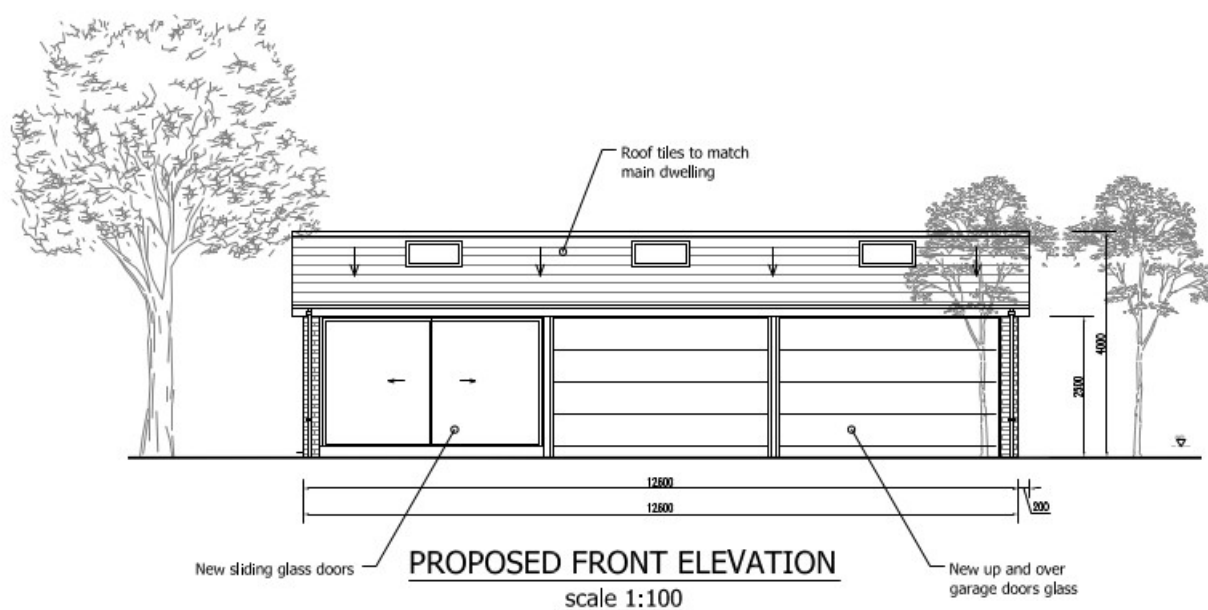
Design, Character and Appearance

The proposal is for a detached single-storey garage/workshop positioned within the residential curtilage. During the course of the application, amendments were secured to improve the appearance of the building and ensure that it responds more appropriately to the rural character of the site and its relationship with the existing dwelling.



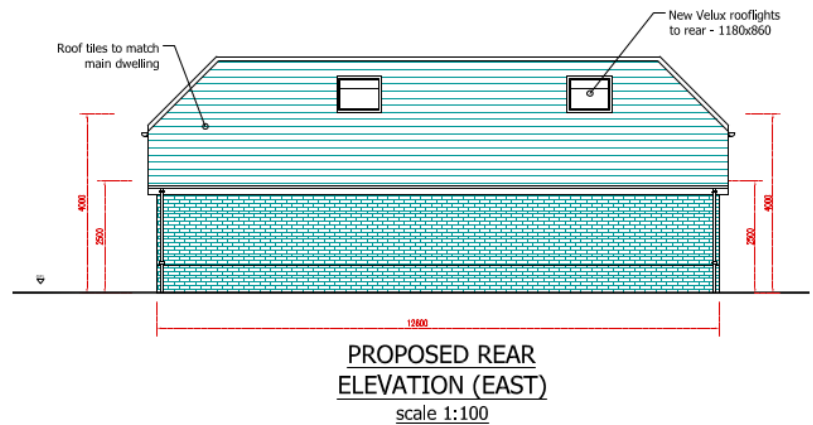
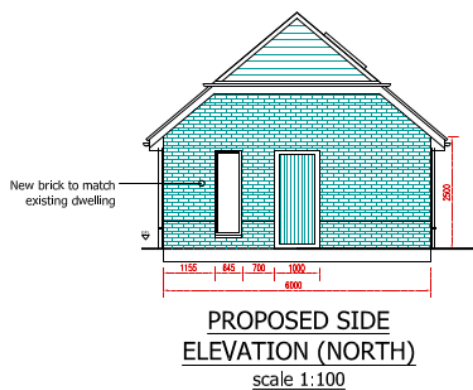
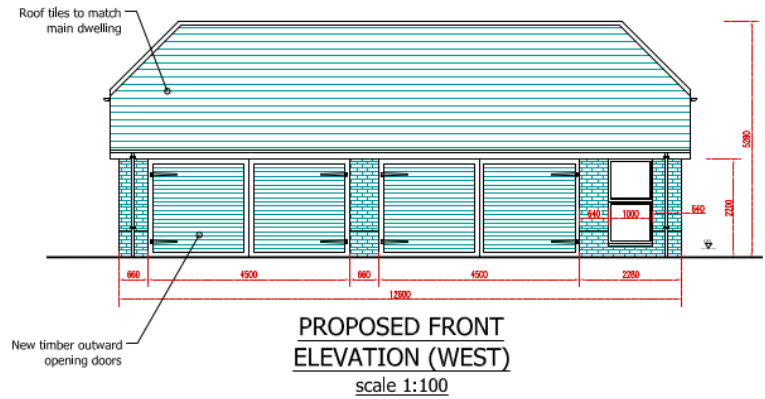
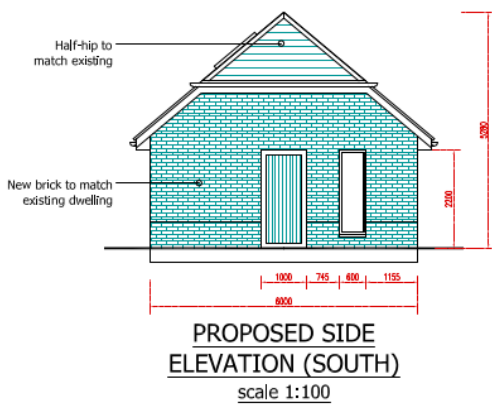
Image taken during site visit of the area where the garage would be built

As originally submitted, the building incorporated a very shallow roof form together with extensive areas of glazing to the principal elevation, including glazed garage doors and sliding doors. This gave the building a comparatively urban appearance which was considered less characteristic of its rural setting.



Superseded Elevations original proposed (Not to Scale)

The amended scheme introduces a more traditional roof form incorporating half-hipped ends, together with roof tiles and facing brickwork to match the existing dwelling. The principal elevation has also been simplified through the introduction of conventional timber outward-opening garage doors, substantially reducing the amount of glazing and giving the building a more rural appearance. Openings to the remaining elevations are limited and proportionate, with the overall detailing kept simple.



Proposed Elevations (Not to Scale)

Although the building has a relatively large footprint, its single-storey form, traditional roof profile and limited architectural detailing help to reduce its perceived scale and reinforce its appearance as a subservient residential outbuilding rather than a separate dwelling. Its materials and roof form would also provide a clear visual relationship with the main dwelling.

Overall, the amended design represents a clear improvement over the scheme originally submitted and would provide a suitably simple and traditional form of ancillary development which is considered appropriate to the rural character of the site.

The resulting development would respond appropriately to the character and features of the site and its surroundings, whilst allowing for an appropriate degree of change, in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Policy DP3 of the NPPF (2026).

Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, 0 comments from members of the public were received.

The proposed building is a single storey element. It is located to the southeastern corner of the site, which is a discreet location set away from nearby neighbours. It is 13m away from the nearest neighbouring building (Amankila) to the south. Given its nature, scale and distance it would not impact the neighbouring amenity of any nearby residences.

The development is therefore considered to safeguard neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), the relevant principles of the Council's

Householder Extensions/Alterations Guidance, and national decision-making Policies L2, DP3 and P3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026).

Parking and Highways

The proposed outbuilding would provide spaces for two vehicles together with ancillary workshop and a WC. Vehicular access to the site would remain as existing, with the garage served from the existing driveway within the residential curtilage. The site provides sufficient space for vehicles to access the proposed garage and manoeuvre within the curtilage, allowing vehicles to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

Having regard to the continued use of the existing access and the amount of space available within the site for parking and manoeuvring, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable impact upon highway safety or parking provision.

Adequate vehicle parking provision is therefore available, and the sustainable location of the site weighs in favour of the application. The proposal would be in accordance with policies TR3 and TR4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 subject to further details of cycle parking provision.

Conclusion

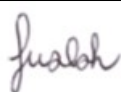
Having established that the proposal would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt, Policy S5(5) of the NPPF is also applicable. There are no adverse effects arising from the proposal which would substantially outweigh its benefits, and the development is therefore acceptable in principle.

The proposed development complies with all relevant national and local planning policies.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to approve the application.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	17 th September 2026	Dated:	17 September 2026