

Planning Statement



EXISTING REAR GARDEN

Address: 24a Willow Walk Culverstone Green Meopham DA13 0QS

Client: Mrs. J. Finch

Proposal: Detached outbuilding for use as a 'Granny Annexe'.

Prepared on behalf of:

Westleigh Design

5 June 2025

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mrs J. Finch in support of this planning application to Gravesham Borough Council for the erection of a detached building to provide a residential granny annexe incidental to the main accommodation at 24a Willow Walk Culverstone Green Kent DA13 0QS.

1.2 In addition to the application form and certificates the following documents are submitted;

Application plans:

- Drawing No. 010625/1of5 (Foundation Plan)
- Drawing No. 010625/2of5 (Proposed Floor Plan)
- Drawing No. 010625/3of5 (Proposed Roof Plan}
- Drawing No. 010625/4of5 (Proposed Elevations)
- Drawing No. 010625/5of5 (Sections)
- Block Plan 1:200

Documents:

- Planning Statement

2.0 Site Surroundings and Proposal

2.1 The site is a spacious detached dwelling located on the western side of Willow Walk approximately 250m south of its junction with Wrotham Road (A227). The property sits in its own spacious residential garden that is located immediately to the west of the dwelling and is similar in size to adjacent dwellings many of which have outbuildings. The adjoining dwelling to the north has a large summerhouse similar in size to the proposed annexe. The host dwelling has a good sized forecourt area that has been laid to hardstanding and provides off-street parking for 3 vehicles.

2.2 The garden abuts the extensive rear gardens of the properties fronting Willow Wood Road many of which have outbuildings. Further to the south is a large area of mature woodland

2.3 The proposal seeks to erect a rectangular building with side projection to the south of a light weight construction with rendered finish. It is intended as an annexe for an elderly parent who can no longer manage stairs and need ground floor accommodation but still wish to retain their own independence but within the security of the family.

2.4 It is not intended that the annexe be regarded as a separate dwelling and can be conditioned that it cannot be sold away from the host dwelling and shall only be used ancillary to it.

Planning History:

2.5 Little is known about the planning history of the site but does not appear to have been extended or altered in any way.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

3.1 Section 70 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, requires that, when making a determination under the Planning Acts, the determination shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Article 35 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, requires that, when issuing a decision, councils must also include a statement explaining, whether, and if so how, in dealing with the application, the local planning authority have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner based on seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with a planning application.

National Planning Policy

3.2 National planning policy is enshrined within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) issued in December 2024 and its accompanying

revised the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). The PPG seeks to set out how to implement the strategic vision contained within the NPPF.

3.3 With regards to decision-taking, the revised NPPF advises that local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development and should look for solutions rather than problems. Decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

3.4 Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that, “the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”. It goes on at paragraph 8, that there are three dimensions of sustainable development as: economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states that a “presumption in favour of sustainable development’ which is at the heart of the Framework to ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way. Issued in December 2024 the overarching principle is contained within Paragraph 11 which states that there is a ‘**presumption in favour of sustainable development**’. Para.12 goes on that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the status of the development plan and states that where a development that is contrary to an up to date development plan that permission should not be granted.

3.5 Paragraph 131 says that the Government attaches great importance to the creation of high quality and sustainable buildings and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, which creates better places in which to live and work. This is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Paragraph 135 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:-

- will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.
- Are sympathetic to local character and history Including surrounding built environment and landscaped setting
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

- create places that are safe, which promote health and wellbeing with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Local Development Plan

3.6 The relevant Development Plan is the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and the saved policies of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994. The following policies were taken into consideration in the determination of this application and are the main concerns within this statement:

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS14 – Housing Type and Size
- CS19 – Design and Development Principle

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact on the Highway Network

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015);

4.0 Planning Considerations

4.1 We have taken on-board the policies laid down in the revised NPPF (December 2024) and accompanying PPG together with the Councils Local Plan policies and London Plan 2020. We are satisfied that our proposal is in accord with these in terms of its setting, character and appearance of the street scene and locality generally. We do not believe that it has any impact on the living conditions of its immediate neighbours or that any amenities would be adversely affected.

4.2 We are satisfied that the scheme is broadly acceptable in terms of its design, layout, general sustainability and has no adverse impact on the street scene. It would be a timber framed and clad building typical of summerhouses often found in urban gardens. It would be similar in appearance to other similar outbuildings in the area. It is our contention that the main considerations of the

proposal are its impact on the appearance and character of the area, its impact on residential amenity of neighbouring properties and any traffic implications.

Impact on the Character of the area:

4.3 The building would be typical of many summerhouse buildings found in the locality and urban areas generally. Its design is completely in keeping with the general design criteria within this urban area and copies the fenestration detail of the host building. We are satisfied that its design is innovative, and functional and would provide the accommodation that the applicant requires for his elderly parents. As such we do not believe that it can be considered to be visually obtrusive. We are satisfied that the detail provided clearly shows that the site is capable of accommodating the proposed development without having any detrimental effect on existing residential amenity or being detrimental to the street scene.

4.4 When the proposal is considered against the elements of the Council's Local Plan Policies we are of the opinion that there is no conflict. We are satisfied that all the criteria they encompass has been met. The annexe will be used ancillary to the main dwelling, which is within the confines of the urban locality, and that has all the usual community facilities, such as shops and public transport modes in close proximity to the site.

4.5 The area is characterised by spacious detached dwellings within their own spacious grounds. There is a mix of designs in the area with outbuildings with a similar fenestration treatment and consequently the proposal would not be out of keeping with the street scene and character of the area generally. The proposal annexe would have its own patio to the lounge and entrance porch with its own open space with easy access to the host dwelling.

4.6 We do not see any reason why the Council should consider the development to cause harm to the local character and would result in the significant improvement in the visual amenity of the site. There is nothing in the Council's adopted development plan, or indeed at national level, to require that all new development must be of an identical scale and appearance to its

surroundings or the pattern of development and character of the area. The proposal is for an 'annexe building' and takes into account its surroundings.

Impact on Residential Amenity

4.7 The prospective layout shows that the proposed annexe extension would not result in any overlooking or loss of residential amenity. Whilst the design shows a large window in the flank elevation facing the common boundary with the property to the SE, this window would be set in 1.5m and would directly onto an existing 1.8m close boarded fence with screening tree growth. We do not feel that the height, design or external appearance would be obtrusive or have any adverse effect on the amenities of existing residents. The separation distances are such that the proposal could utilise the site without prejudicing the privacy and amenity of its immediate neighbours. The proposed development would be orientated so as to have its principle elevation towards the garden area of the host dwelling.

4.8 The building have been designed to be a lightweight structure sitting on an oversite concrete slab with its main elevations to be in white rendered finish. We are satisfied that the application and its fenestration treatment would be in keeping with outbuildings in neighbouring properties and cannot be considered to conflict with the character and appearance of the area and would not be in conflict with NPPF or Council policy. It is considered that there will be no material loss of amenity by way of overlooking over and above that which would normally be expected in an urban setting. Furthermore, given its setting, it is considered there will be no material loss of light to the occupiers of any of the neighbouring dwellings.

4.9 The layout of the annexe accommodation meets the standards set by the NDSS (64sq.m) and would provide a satisfactory unit of accommodation for the applicant's elderly parents who wish to have a separate independence from their immediate relatives in the host dwelling. Although having a small single bedroom this would be for their guests. We are satisfied that the proposal would provide a satisfactory level of annexe accommodation and amenity area and would not be prejudicial to the amenity of future occupiers of the main dwelling.

The proposal would be annexe ancillary to the main dwelling and would not be separated from it.

4.10 The bulk and massing of the proposed building will not have any significant visual impact on the area with low pitched roof and will appear as part of the existing built development. It is well screened from the highway and neighbouring properties and will be constructed of materials to match the existing built development and can be controlled by way of condition

4.11 When considered in the light of both national and local policies there is nothing to suggest that the proposal would be inappropriate or contrary to the aims of national policy to provide further housing, albeit for elderly relatives. We are satisfied that the proposed development is acceptable in that it complies with policies relating to space standards, privacy and amenity.

Access & Parking

4.12 The site currently provides off- street parking for 3 vehicles and the application would not seek to change this in any way and would not have any adverse impact on the local community. On-street parking is limited due to the narrowness of the road. The annexe will be used ancillary to the main dwelling and additional parking provision is not deemed to be necessary although a separate space could be provided if required.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 The application has taken on board all the Council's and National policies to provide a sustainable solution to the provide annexe accommodation ancillary to the main dwelling for occupation by immediate family. It is our assertion that the site is sustainable in terms of its location within the main confines of Culverstone Green and provides a satisfactory level of internal space for elderly relatives.

James Barron BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI