



Delegated Report

Householder and Listed Building Consent Applications

Planning Application No: 20240467
20240468

Location: Old Vicarage, Church Street Higham Rochester

Description: 20240467 - Erection of a single-storey rear extension and the conversion of a first-floor room into a Bathroom.

20240468 - Application for Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single-storey rear extension and the conversion of a first-floor room into a Bathroom.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Mathis

Site Visit Date: 22 March 2024 (Previous application refs 20240178 & 20240179)

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 2331 E 001 – Location Plan;
- Drawing no. 2331 E 002 – Block Plan;
- Drawing no. 2331 E 005 – Existing Site Plan;
- Drawing no. 2331 E 010 – Existing Floor Plans;
- Drawing no. 2331 E 020 Rev. A – Existing Elevations;
- Drawing no. 2331 E 025 – Front Elevation In Context;
- Drawing no. 2331 P 100 Rev. A – Proposed Site Plan;
- Drawing no. 2331 P 110 Rev. A – Proposed Floor Plan;
- Drawing no. 2331 P 120 Rev. B – Proposed Elevations;
- Drawing no. 2331 P 125 Rev. A – Proposed Front Elevation in Context; and
- Design & Access Statement & Heritage Impact Assessment Rev. B.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20240179	Erection of a single-storey rear extension and the conversion of a first-floor room into a bathroom.	Refused	07.05.2024
20240178	Application for Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single-storey rear extension and the conversion of a first-floor room into a bathroom.	Refused	07.05.2024
20110592	Erection of a detached garden room.	Withdrawn	10.04.2012
20080357	Erection of replacement single storey rear extension to form bathroom/wc and utility room.	Permitted	12.06.2008
20080356	Application for Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations in connection with the demolition of existing extension and erection of a replacement single	Permitted	12.06.2008

	storey rear extension to form a utility room and bathroom/wc and conversion of first floor storeroom into a wc involving provision of soil stack at the rear.		
19910730	Erection of a detached garage at the rear.	Permitted	10.01.1992
19840200	Application for Listed Building Consent for demolition of single storey rear extension.	Withdrawn	09.08.1984
19840199	Erection of two storey extension at the rear to form kitchen at ground floor level and bedroom over and erection of storm porch at side	Withdrawn	09.08.1984
19830374	Erection of a detached double garage incorporating an oil store	Permitted	19.12.1983

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- 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
- TC2 – Listed Buildings
- TC3 – Conservation Areas
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Gravesham Local Plan Regulation 18 Stage 1 Consultation Part 2: Development Management Policies Document April 2018

The following draft policies are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Proposed Policy DM 6 - Extensions, Replacement Buildings and Ancillary Development in the Green Belt
- Proposed Policy DM 26 - Residential Space Standards
- Proposed Policy DM 28 - Domestic Extensions, Outbuildings and Other Development • Proposed Policy DM 35 - Light Pollution
- Proposed Policy DM 36 - Sunlight and Daylight within New Development
- Proposed Policy DM 42 - Development Involving Heritage Assets
- Proposed Policy DM 43 - Listed Buildings
- Proposed Policy DM 44 - Conservation Areas
- Proposed Policy DM 45 - Archaeology

Other material considerations

The Council has a statutory requirement under Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended, the Council has a statutory duty in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which

affects a listed building or its setting to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as amended, states that with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment • Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Church Street Higham Rural Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document (2017);
- Management Plan Rural Conservation Area Appraisals Supplementary Planning Document (2017);
- Listed Buildings A Guide for owners and occupiers (2020);
- 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);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and • Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Dickens Country Protection Society

The Society notes the existing timber structure replaced an earlier structure in 2008. It is not clear what is being proposed, whilst clad in timber, it does not appear to be a timber structure.

No response from:

- GBC Conservation Officer
- Higham Parish Council

Neighbouring properties

20240467 - 10 surrounding properties were consulted plus site and press notices – overall consultation expiry date was 05.07.2024 – no responses received.

20240468 – Press and site notices – overall consultation expiry date was 05.07.2024 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of a two-storey detached dwelling with detached garage. The property is grade II listed, situated in the Church Street Conservation Area, in an Area of Archaeological Potential, in the Green Belt and in the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area.

The proposal is for planning and listed building consent for erection of a single-storey rear extension and the conversion of a first-floor room into a bathroom. The existing single storey rear element on the dwelling would be removed and the proposed single storey rear extension would be constructed in its place to a slightly larger footprint.

There were previous planning and listed building consent applications refs. 20240178 & 20240179 which were refused on the following ground:

- 1. The proposed extension by virtue of its size, siting and design including fenestration would be out of keeping with the scale and character of this sixteenth century timber framed cottage and its rural setting and would therefore cause harm to the significance of this grade II listed building and would not preserve the character or appearance of the Church Street Conservation Area but would cause harm to it. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policies TC2 and TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) and sections 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).*

It therefore needs to be seen whether this re-submitted proposal addresses the grounds of refusal of applications 20240178 & 20240179.

Whether the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt

The application site is located within the Green Belt where inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (Paragraph 152 of the NPPF 2023).

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2023) states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. '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 proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023) states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;

- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

In this case point (c) is relevant. Any extension to the property must not result in disproportionate additions over and above the original building.

Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 states:

Extensions to dwellings will be considered on their merits but the Borough Council will expect the following criteria to be satisfied:-

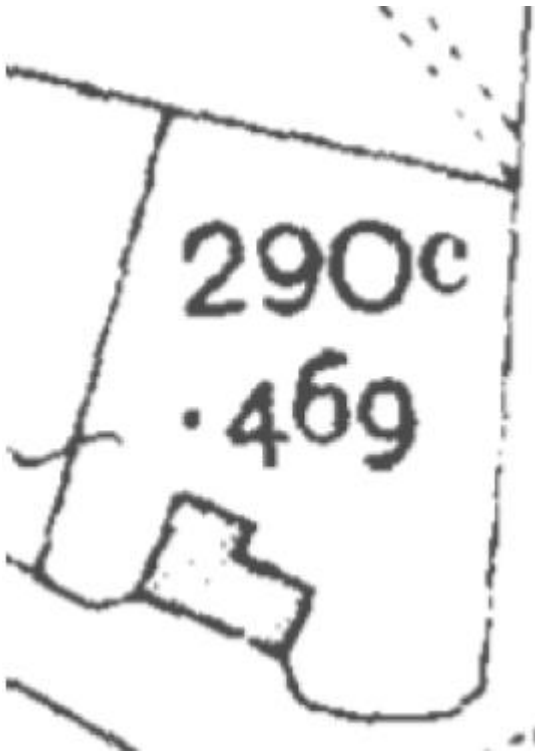
- (i) The existing dwelling must be an “original dwelling”* in permanent use as a dwelling.
- (ii) There will be an overall limit of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally) prior to any later extension or alteration, unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.
- (iii) Those extensions which provide essential basic amenities such as a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, which are currently not available or are clearly inadequate, will normally be permitted.
- (iv) The extension shall not be in a form which would facilitate the future formation of a separate residential curtilage.
- (v) The dwelling to be enlarged must have sufficient curtilage to accommodate the extension without undue visual intrusion into the open countryside.
- (vi) The appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of any extension shall be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting.
- (vii) Proposals for domestic garages and for other outbuildings will be considered on their individual merits but will be required to be well designed, discreetly sited and subservient to the scale of the main dwelling on the plot.

Development Management Policies Document April 2018 (a document that has been subject to consultation but is not adopted) contains Proposed Policy DM 6 which relates to extensions, replacement buildings and ancillary development in the Green Belt. Although the weight that can be attached to this document/policy is limited, it does illustrate the Borough Council’s most recent approach to the type of development proposed at the application site.

With regard to extensions, Proposed Policy DM 6 outlines that the following will be taken into account in determining whether an extension in the Green Belt is proportionate;

- its footprint, floorspace and volume compared to the original building; and whether its scale, mass and height is subservient to the original building.

From the listing description it can be seen that the property is a 16th century cottage and therefore the original dwelling for the purposes of Green Belt assessment will be as it was at 1 July 1948. From an assessment of the Kent Historic Environment Record the map of 1929-1952 (and as a matter of fact all of the previous maps of 1871 – 1890, 1897 – 1900, 1907 – 1923) show the dwelling to be as follows:



As can be seen this is the same as the existing footprint. Therefore, although the existing single storey rear element is clearly an extension to the original 16th cottage, for the purposes of the Green Belt assessment and calculations it will be calculated as part of the original dwelling and not an extension.

Floorspace calculations

Original Dwelling

Ground floor original floorspace – 63.9 sq.m

First floor original floorspace – 53.3 sq. m

Total floorspace of original dwelling = 117.2 sq. m

Proposed extension (which would be built on site of existing single storey rear element)

Additional amount over and above existing single storey rear element which is part of the original dwelling for the purposes of the Green Belt calculations = 4.63 sq. m

Total percentage increase of dwelling over original (4.6 divided by 117.2 x 100) = **3.9%**

From the above assessment the proposed extension, taking into account that the existing single storey rear element is part of the original dwelling for Green Belt assessment, the floorspace of the original dwelling would be increased by 3.9% which is much less than the one third (33%) limit set out in saved Policy C13 (LPFR).

Floorspace is just one calculation which can be used to assess whether a development is a disproportionate addition however, other such measures include footprint, volume etc.

The proposed single storey rear extension would be built on the site of the existing single storey rear element which is to be demolished so the actual additional footprint would be 4.63 sq. m. The extension would no longer extend out from the west flank elevation but would be built in line with it, there would be a slight increase in depth compared to the existing single storey element.

In terms of volume, below is the existing and proposed dwelling:

Existing Dwelling:



Proposal:



The proposed extension would result in a slight increase in the depth of the dwelling.

The proposal would therefore add additional floorspace, footprint, volume and increase the depth of the dwelling. The increase in floorspace would be modest and well under the one third limit set in saved Policy CS13 (LPFR). The increase in footprint would be modest as the extension would be mostly built on the footprint of the existing single storey rear element. The volume is considered modest and the extension would be subserviently designed in comparison to the host dwelling. Overall, therefore based on all factors the proposed single storey rear extension is not considered a disproportionate addition.

The proposal would therefore not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the proposal is compliant with Policy CS02 (LPCS), Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) and paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023).

Effect on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

As stated, due to the modest increase in the footprint of the extension and its single storey nature it is considered that the extension would not harm the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore considered to not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

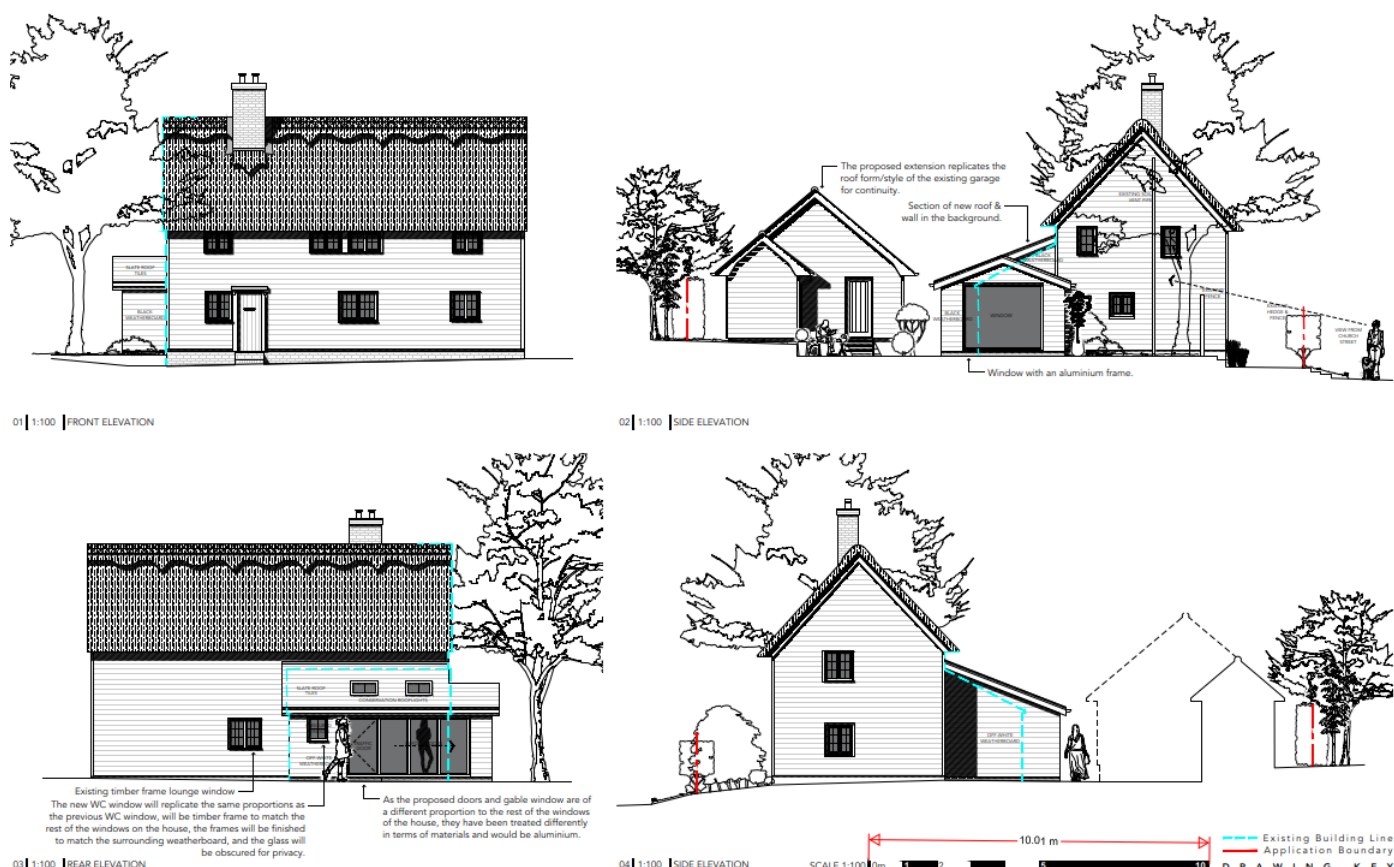
Whether the proposal would protect the architectural and historic interest of this grade II listed building and whether the character and appearance of the Church Street Conservation Area would be preserved

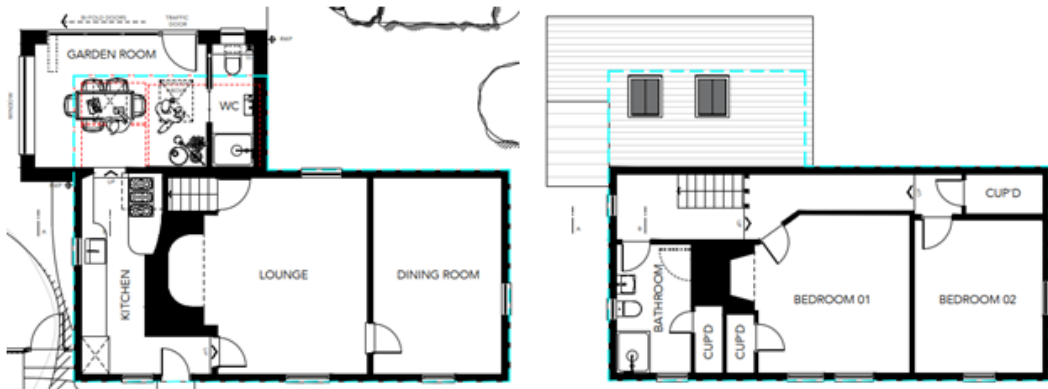
Proposed Extension

This matter related to the ground of refusal of application refs. 20240178 & 20140179.

For ease of reference the refused and proposed elevations and floor plans are as follows:

Refused application refs. 20240178 & 20240179:





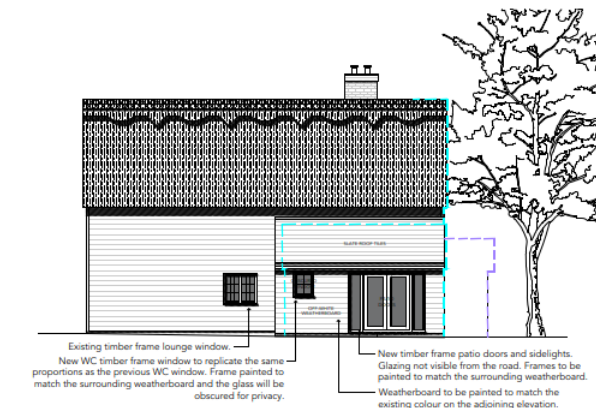
Current proposal (application refs. 20240467 & 20240468):



01 | 1:100 | FRONT ELEVATION



02 | 1:100 | SIDE ELEVATION



03 | 1:100 | REAR ELEVATION



04 | 1:100 | SIDE ELEVATION

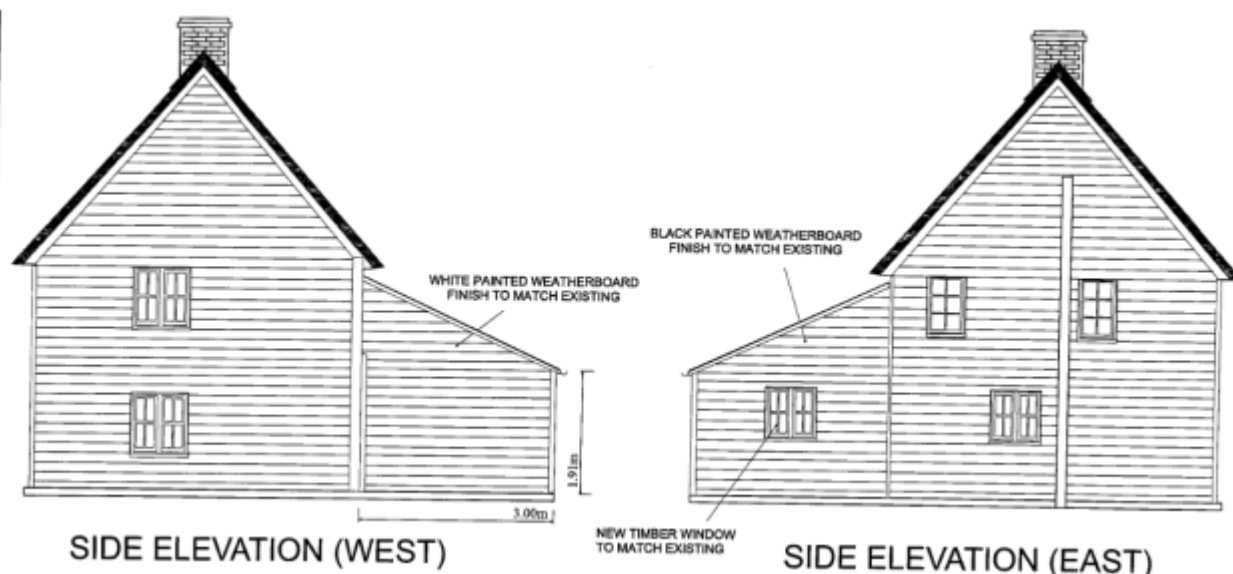
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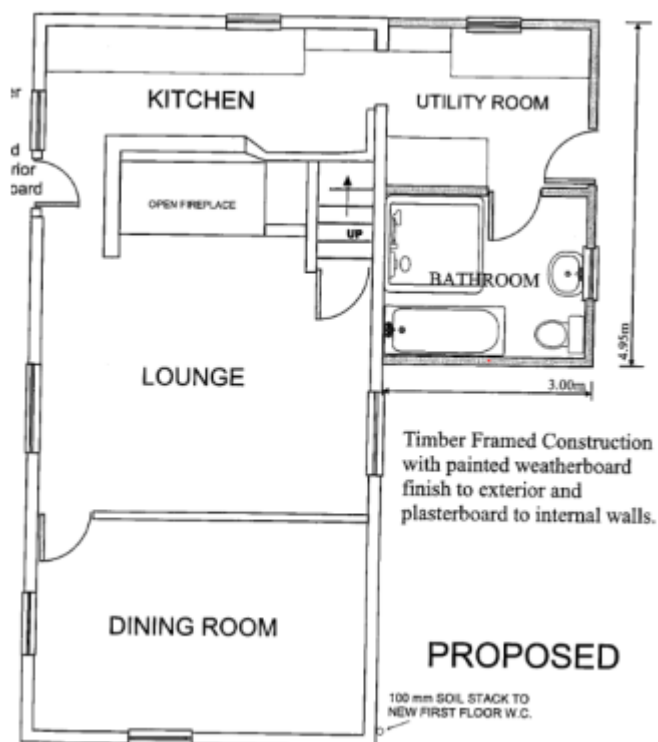
— Outline of Previous Submission (20240178)
 --- Existing Building Line
 --- Application Boundary

DRAWING KEY



The existing single storey rear extension has been there for some time as evident from a review of the historic map regression. In 2008 planning and listed building consent were granted for removal of this existing single storey element and erection of a single storey rear extension (refs. 20080356 & 20080357) although these permissions were not implemented in respect of the extension:





The proposal in the previously refused application refs. 20240178 & 20240179 was for removal of the existing single storey element and erection of a replacement single storey rear extension. There were some changes compared to the 2008 permission which were not acceptable. However in the 2008 permitted scheme the extension would have been built in line with the west flank wall of the dwelling, only 3m in depth and with sympathetic fenestration, whereas in the proposal under refs. 20240178 & 20240179 the extension would have projected out from the west flank elevation of the building, been 300mm greater in depth, rooflights proposed in rear roofslope and the fenestration would have also been different as it was proposed to have aluminium bi-fold doors and a timber window in the rear elevation and a large aluminium window in the west elevation. The 2008 approval was a traditional timber window and door in the rear elevation and a traditional timber window in the west flank elevation.

The application building is a 16th century cottage which is grade II listed and situated in the Church Street Conservation Area. The Conservation Officer advised on application refs. 20240178 & 20240179 that the proposal was unacceptable relating to matters of scale, design, character and materials. The Conservation Officer noted how the existing single storey rear extension is modestly sized and in proportion with the main house and is a simple lean-to structure which does not project beyond the flank wall of the main house and is in character with the vernacular of the host building and its rural setting adjacent to the listed church (St Mary's to the north). The Conservation Officer advised however, that the extension that was proposed in application refs. 20240178 & 20240179 was over-sized for the main house, projecting out and closing the space between the house and garage which is critical to the visual separation of detached garage which is in close proximity to the house. Also, that the extension extending beyond the flank wall of the dwelling would detract from the listed building. Further matters of objection related to the roof pitch and the amount and style of glazing including the rooflights which the Conservation Officer advised all lead to a proposal that would be more suited to a modern suburban building rather than a listed vernacular timber framed building. The Conservation Officer advised that the proposal did not preserve or enhance the listed building or the conservation area and would result in harm.

In the case of the current applications (refs. 20240567 & 20240468) there have been amendments to the proposed single storey rear extension. The extension proposed has been reduced in depth from the 3.3m previously proposed and would now be 3m in depth which is the same depth as the 2008 permitted

scheme. The extension would now also not extend out from the flank wall of the dwelling but would be built in line with the west flank wall of the dwelling same as the 2008 permitted scheme did. The previous harm identified of the extension extending beyond the flank wall of the dwelling and bringing it closer to the detached garage than the 2008 permission have therefore been removed entirely. Due to the reduction in size, the extension is also now much more modestly sized and in proportion with the main dwelling and the roof pitch is also now more in line with the 2008 approval. In respect of the amount and style of glazing, the rooflights are no longer proposed and the large glazed window in the west flank elevation has been removed and would now be a small timber framed window; those elements have therefore been resolved. The large expanse of aluminium bi-fold doors proposed in the rear elevation have been replaced with a smaller set of patio doors which would consist of a set of double doors with a glazed panel either side. Whilst patio doors are not an authentic style of opening for a building of this age or character, in themselves they are considered to now be a more modest opening than the previous bifold doors and being situated in a modern single storey rear extension would not be entirely inappropriate (as would be the case if they were to be situated in the original part of the listed building). They are proposed to be timber and subject to details which could be secured by condition it is considered on balance they would be acceptable.

The extension would be faced with 'slate roof tiles' for the roof and off-white weatherboarding on the rear and east flank elevations and black weatherboarding on the west flank elevation to match the existing corresponding elevations on the main building. This is considered acceptable but a sample of the slate would be required which could be conditioned should permission be forthcoming. A condition would also be necessary to state the weatherboarding would need to match the weatherboarding on the existing elevations as shown on the submitted drawing. The patio doors and the windows in the east and west flank elevations would be timber. Further details would need to be conditioned should permission be forthcoming. The extension would house a wc. should permission be forthcoming further details would need to be conditioned of vents and pipework to ensure they would be sympathetically located.

Therefore, the proposed single storey rear extension would be a great improvement on the extension proposed in previously refused application refs. 20240178 & 20240179. The extension would now be a subservient addition which would respect the plan form and proportions of this listed building. It would be in keeping with the scale and character of this sixteenth century timber framed cottage and its rural setting and would protect the significance of this grade II listed building and would preserve the character and appearance of the Church Street Conservation Area.

Conversion of existing study at first floor level into bathroom

Previous application ref. 20080356 included conversion of a first floor storeroom into a wc involving provision of a soil stack at the rear. Although the 2008 permissions were not implemented in respect of the extension they were in respect of the wc. as can be seen from the existing plans submitted with this application. It is now also proposed to convert the existing study at first floor level to a bathroom. The study is located in the front corner of the dwelling when viewed from the street. In previous application refs. 20240178 & 20240179 the Conservation Officer advised that it may be that pipes can be internally located and ventilation could be under the eaves but it needs a section drawing to show the construction and see if it's possible.

A note on the drawing states that the proposed bathroom will connect to the existing external SVP and that if possible the new MEV is to be positioned underneath the eaves to minimise visibility. It is considered that if permission is forthcoming then further details of the vents and pipework for the bathroom would need to be conditioned in order to ensure they would be discreetly and sympathetically located with no harm caused to the significance of this listed building. Subject to conditioning as such it is considered the proposal for conversion of the study to a bathroom would be acceptable.

In summary, on the basis of the current proposal where the proposed extension has now been reduced in size and design, it is considered that element of the proposal would be acceptable subject to conditions. The conversion of the study to a bathroom is also subject to conditions, considered acceptable. The proposal would protect the architectural and historic interest of this listed building and the character and appearance of the Lower Higham Conservation Area. As such in respect of heritage matters the proposal

subject to conditions is considered compliant with Policies CS19 & CS20 (LPCS), saved Policies TC2 & TC3 (LPFR), sections 12 & 16 of the NPPF (2023) and the ground of refusal of application ref 20240178 & 20240179 have been resolved.

Landscape Character

The application site is located in the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area.

The area the site is located is rural in character but with some more sporadic development along this part of Church Street. There is St Mary's church to the north, farmland to the east and a row of houses to the south. The proposal would result in a slight increase in the footprint of the dwelling over and above the existing single storey rear extension but it is considered it would not result in an increased prominence of the existing dwelling in the wider landscape. It is therefore considered that the proposal would protect the local landscape character and as such in respect of this matter the proposal is compliant with Policies CS12 and CS19 (LPCS) and section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

Amenity of Occupiers

The dwelling would remain a two bedroom dwelling and the proposed replacement extension would be of a slight increase in footprint than the existing however, the dwelling would still maintain a garden area and rear garden depth that would far exceed the minimum standards as set out in SPG2 (2020) for a two bedroom dwelling. As such in respect of the amenity of occupiers the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the siting of the extension and its distance from the nearest neighbouring property to the west no. 4 Church Cottages, there would be no harmful impact on the amenity or privacy of no. 4. As such in respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal is compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS). No neighbour representations have been received.

Parking and Highway Safety

The proposal would not increase the number of bedrooms at the property which would remain at two, therefore no impact on parking demand and there would be alteration of the existing parking situation where there is space for a number of vehicles. In respect of parking and highway safety the proposal would therefore be compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Archaeology

The site is located in an area of Archaeological Potential but given that the proposed replacement extension would be built on the site of the existing extension it is considered that the proposals are unlikely to have a significant below-ground archaeological impact. A watching brief condition is suggested should permission be forthcoming. In respect of archaeology the proposal is therefore considered compliant with saved Policy TC7 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is now, subject to conditions, considered acceptable in respect of protecting the architectural and historic interest of this listed building and the character and appearance of the Lower Higham Conservation Area which would be preserved and in this respect the ground of refusal for application refs. 20240178 & 20240179 has been resolved. The proposal is also acceptable as before in respect that it

would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would not impact on the openness of the Green Belt, would not impact on occupier or neighbouring amenity and would be acceptable in respect of parking and highway safety and archaeology.

Recommendation:

20240467 - Permission

20240468 - Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	18th July 2024	Dated:	18 July 2024