

Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Application No:	20220003
Location:	Burghfield, Wrotham Road, Culverstone, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0RF
Description:	Extension and conversion of existing stables into a 2-bedroom dwelling.
Applicant:	Mr and Mrs Kevin Woodall
Site Visit:	23 rd May 2022

Procedural Matter

The application was submitted with a description that was considered incorrect, and failed to cover the extension to the stable building. The original description was:

“Conversion of existing stables into a 2-bedroom dwelling”

As the plans clearly showed that the building would be extended as part of the proposal, the agent was not contacted regarding the description change. The Local Planning Authority consider the following description suitable:

“Extension and conversion of existing stables into a 2-bedroom dwelling”

The application has been determined in accordance with the submitted documents/plans and Paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) sets out adopting a positive and proactive approach to development proposals. In this case prior to this application being submitted the applicant did not engage with the Local Planning authority for pre-application guidance. <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/planning/pre-application-planning-advice/2>

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application Form - dated 20/03/2022;
- Design and Access Statement - 04/01/2022;
- Ordnance Survey Site Location Plan (scale - 1:1250);
- Site Plan (scale - 1:500);
- Existing Block Plan (scale - 1:500);
- Proposed Block Plan (scale - 1:500);
- Drawing no. 01 - Existing Ground Floor Plan;
- Drawing no. 02 - Existing Roof Plan;
- Drawing no. 03 - Existing Elevations (North and South);
- Drawing no. 04 - Existing Elevations (West and East);

- Drawing no. 05 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan;
- Drawing no. 06 - Proposed Roof Plan;
- Drawing no. 07 - Proposed Elevations (North and South);
- Drawing no. 08 - Proposed Elevations (West and East);
- Drawing no. 09 - Sections A-A and B-B.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20200107	Erection of a first floor rear extension	REFUSED	22.04.2020
20181194	Erection of first floor front and rear extensions.	REFUSED	08.03.2019
20150268	Erection of pre-fabricated tractor and grain shed.	PERMITTED	22.06.2015
20150267	Application for Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of single storey rear extension to form kitchen.	CERTIFICATE GRANTED	18.05.2015
19970017	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged lounge and enlarged kitchen and alterations to the roof of 1st floor rear extension.	REFUSED	29.07.1997
19860128	Erection of front porch single storey rear extension to form enlarged kitchen and enlarged lounge and erection of side porch	PERMITTED	07.04.1986
19840523	Erection of first floor extensions at front and rear and reconstruction of roof to form two bedrooms and bathroom at first floor level and erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged lounge	PERMITTED	06.09.1984
19840291	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged lounge and construction of dormer extensions in the front and rear roof slopes to form bedroom and bathroom	REFUSED	08.06.1984
19830512	Erection of single storey building to form two loose boxes tack room and double garage at the rear	PERMITTED	15.08.1983
19520225	Erection of bungalow	PERMITTED	12.11.1952
19500801	The erection of a bungalow.	PERMITTED	01.01.1950

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 - Sustainable Development
- CS02 - Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 - Transport
- CS12 - Green Infrastructure
- CS14 - Housing Types and Sizes
- CS15 - Housing Density
- CS16 - Affordable Housing
- CS18 - Climate Change
- CS19 - Design & Development Principles

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- C11 - Change of Use of Redundant Buildings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
- Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 - Making effective use of land
- Section 12 - Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural 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 Guidance (SPD) (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

External consultees

KCC - Heritage - I have no comments to make on archaeological matters.

Meopham Parish Council - Objection to this planning application on the grounds it is inappropriate development in the Greenbelt and it would result in a second hereditament on a single residential site.

Local Ward Councillors - No comment received.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 8th April 2022.

In addition, five surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 29th April 2022.

Gravesham Borough Council

Analysis

Site Description

Burghfield is a detached two storey chalet style property in use as a single dwelling. It is situated on a large 3 acre plot with stables, a paddock and prefabricated store to the rear of the site. It is situated within the Green Belt and on the outskirts of the Culverstone Green village. The property is set back from the road by approximately 20 metres with parking to the front for approximately two to three cars. There is a gate to the side of the property that leads to the stable and storage area at the rear, with a larger car parking area.



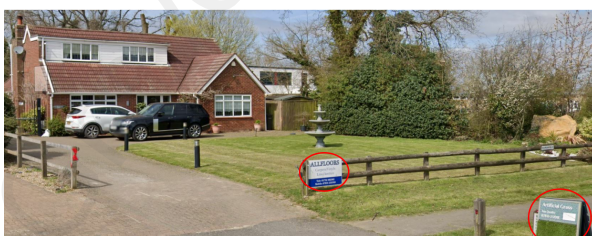
Key:	
Property	
Stables	
Pre-Fabricated Storage Shed	
Shipping Containers	
Corrugated Animal Shelter	

The surrounding properties in this location vary in style and use. To the north of the site is Culverstone Green Primary School and to the south of the site is Wrotham Road Petrol Station and Car Wash. There are three single family dwellings between Burghfield and the petrol station. The land within the ownership of Burghfield runs behind these dwellings.

Note on the 'Pre-Fabricated Tractor and Grain Shed' - permitted 2015 (ref. 20150268)

The pre-fabricated shed was granted permission and conditioned to ensure it is used solely as a store for - *"tractor and horse related paraphernalia for the occupants of Burghfield as a private dwellinghouse and ancillary stables, and for no other purpose or development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, without the prior approval, in writing, of the Local Planning Authority"* (condition 3).

On site the applicant was questioned on the use and stated that it was for paraphernalia relating to the land. However, there are concerns that the store is being used for business purposes due to the advertising at the front of the property and vans branded for 'ALLFLOORS', which is also addressed to Burghfield on Google.



Allfloors & Interiors

Directions

Save

Flooring store in Meopham, England

Service options: In-store shopping · Delivery

Address: Culverstone Green, Wrotham Rd, Burghfield, Meopham,
Culverstone Green Meopham DA13 0RF

Hours: Closes soon · 4PM · Opens 9AM Thu

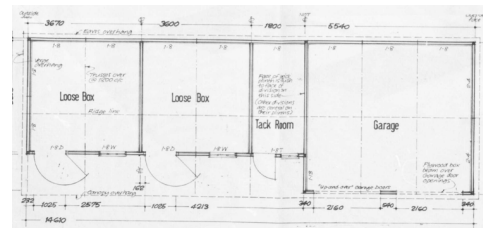
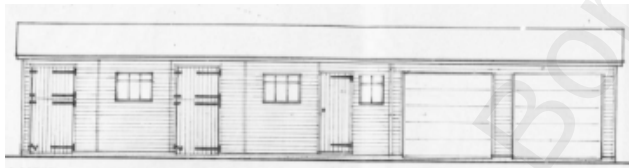
As the development was granted permission in 2015, if the store is operating as a business in breach of the above condition, it could not be lawful and would therefore require planning permission.

Proposed Development

This application is for the extension and conversion of the existing stables into a two bedroom dwelling.



The stable block has five stables of varied sizes, a workshop and a timber store on the side, it was granted permission in 1983 (ref. 19830512). The block has been extended at some point above the original permission, and although there is no planning history for an extension to the stable it is considered that the extension would be lawful through the passage of time.



This application proposes the erection of a front wrap around extension and side extension to the stable block. The building will remain single storey, however the ridge height will be increased by 0.2m, and the eaves increased by 0.22m, as part of the development. The annotated floor plan drawings below demonstrate the proposed extensions to the building.

Eastern Side Extension

- Depth - 6.05m
- Width - 3.75m
- Height (max) - 4.35m
- Height (eave) - 3m

Front Extension

- Depth - 2.25m
- Width - 9.4m
- Height - 2.9m

Conservatory

- Depth - 4m
- Width - 4m
- Height (max) - 4.05m
- Height (eave) - 2.9m

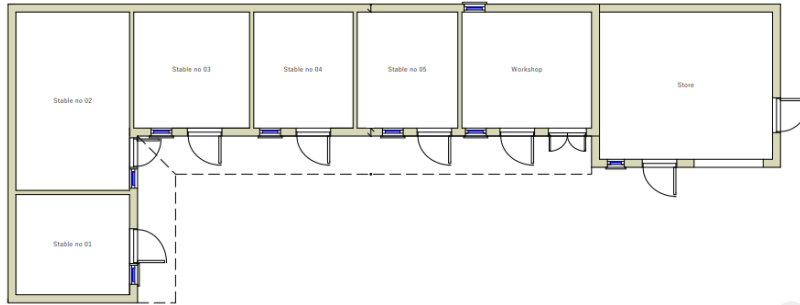
Front Gable Extension

- Depth - 2.25m
- Width - 4.4m
- Height (max) - 4.35m
- Height (eave) - 3m

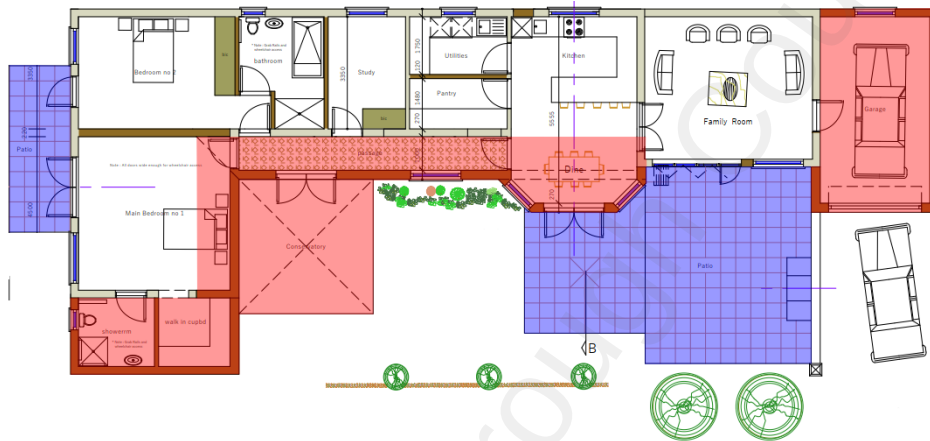
Western Front Extension

- Depth - 2.3m
- Width - 5m
- Height (max) - 4.35m
- Height (eave) - 2.9m

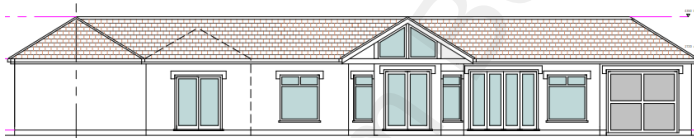
Existing Floor Plan



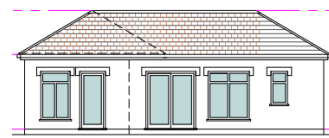
Proposed Floor Plan



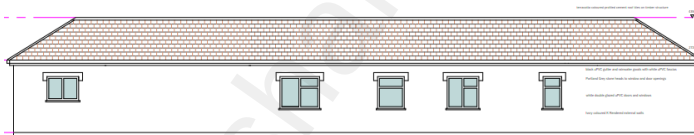
South Elevation



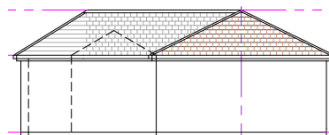
West Elevation



North Elevation



East Elevation



The proposed dwelling will have a total floor area of 181m² (including the attached garage). The schedule of accommodation proposed within the dwelling is as follows:

Room	Floor Space
Family Room (Lounge)	21.1m ²
Kitchen/Diner	20.25m ²
Master Bedroom	20.55m ²
Ensuite	4.6m ²
Bedroom 2	15.2m ²
Ensuite	7.25m ²

Principle Issues

The application site is located in the Green Belt and as such Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) is relevant. Development in the urban area is prioritised as the sustainable location for development. In the rural area, Policy CS02 states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the policies map. Development outside those settlements, i.e. in the Green Belt, will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the LPCS.

1. *Does this proposal make effective use of land?*
2. *Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?*
3. *Impact on the openness of the Green Belt?*
4. *Impact on Landscape and Design*
5. *Sustainability*
6. *Residential Amenity*
7. *Impact on the Highway Network*
8. *Any Other Material Planning Considerations*

Assessment

1. Does this proposal make effective use of land?

The application results in a density of 1.65 dwellings per hectare, which is below the threshold of 30 dwellings per hectare for rural areas as set out in Policy CS15 (LPCS). Therefore, the development could be considered to result in ineffective use of the land that would amount a refusal against Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) as the existing 3 bedroom and proposed 2 bedroom dwelling on site would fall below the threshold of 30 dwellings per hectare and be making inefficient use of the site. However, the lower density might be beneficial to the Green Belt by reducing the impact on the openness through minimising vehicles and vehicular movements as well as the limiting the proliferation of residential activity and garden paraphernalia. This will be assessed later in this report.

Furthermore, given Gravesham's current inability to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply (a 3.27 year supply has most recently been calculated within the statement published here), and as the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75%) that required by the Housing Delivery Test, the housing delivery element of Policy CS02 (LPCS) must be regarded to be out of date, as required by the Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF (2021). This requires that in regard to housing development, planning permission should be granted unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

In the Gravesham context, the policies referred to in paragraph 11(d)(i) above are those set out in the NPPF at footnote 7 (rather than those in development plans) relating to any of the following:

- Habitats sites (and those sites listed in NPPF paragraph 182)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Green Belt,
- Local Green Space,
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Irreplaceable habitats;
- Designated heritage assets (& other heritage assets of archaeological interest, see NPPF footnote 68); and

- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

In determining applications for planning permission involving housing, the Council will therefore apply a weighted balance in favour of granting planning permission in accordance with relevant case law and guidance, having regard to the acceptability or otherwise of the proposals when evaluated against development plan policy, the need to make efficient use of land (paragraph 125(c)) in context, the relative contribution the proposal makes towards the alleviation of any shortfall in housing delivery at that time and any other considerations material to the proposed development.

The proposed development for a net increase of '1' residential units would offer a minimal contribution towards meeting this local need and, accordingly, officers considers that this should be accorded appropriate weight in support of the application. However, this has to be balanced against other requirements of the NPPF (2021) and the impact on the Green Belt.

It is considered that local adopted Policies CS14 (Housing Type and Design), CS15 (Housing Density) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) together provide an assessment framework in line with the guidance provided by paragraph 71 of the NPPF (2021). The proposal shall be assessed against these policies in the following section reviewing the character and appearance of the scheme.

2. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?

As set out in Section 13 of the NPPF (2021), the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts where the fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

There is no information submitted with the application to justify the development against the NPPF (2021), however with the description relating to 'conversion of the stables' it is assumed that the applicant has followed the route of paragraph 150 of the NPPF (2021). Nevertheless, the proposed development goes outside the scope of a conversion as covered by paragraph 146 of the NPPF (2021) for the following reasons:

Although not directly relevant to this application type the government provides clarity on how buildings are deemed suitable for conversion on the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) website (Paragraph: 105 Reference ID: 13-105-20180615) specifically excludes structural strengthening work when explaining national policy supporting the conversion of agricultural buildings to dwellings (Class Q). The PPG states that the installation or replacement of windows, doors, roofs and walls is acceptable, but the construction of new structural elements for the building is not. It is only 'when the existing building is structurally strong enough to take the loading, which comes with the external works to provide for residential use' that the building is seen as suitable for conversion. Therefore, it is only where the existing building is already suitable for conversion to residential use that the building would be considered to have the permitted development right.

The following changes proposed to the building go beyond what is accepted as a conversion for the following reasons:

- Erection of front wrap around and side extensions
- Roof replaced/increased in height

In summary taking on board the proposed changes to the stable and the government advice set out in paragraph 105 of the PPG, the overall changes to the site would go beyond the definition of section D of paragraph 150 of the NPPF (2021) (the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction). Therefore, the proposal should be considered against section G of paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021), which states:

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.*

For the purposes of considering this application, it is considered necessary to determine the proposed development section G of paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021). The first stage of this assessment is to determine whether this site is previously developed land, in line with the definition set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF, which states:

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

The lawful use of the site as a livery dates back to the original approval of 19830512 (Erection of single storey building to form two loose boxes tack room and double garage at the rear). A livery use falls under the definition of previously developed land (as determined by the courts in case [2016] EWHC 595 (Admin) 15 February 2016). Therefore, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it is considered that the site is previously developed land.

However, as stated within section G of paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021), the redevelopment of previously developed land would still be inappropriate development if it would result in, or have, a greater impact on the openness Green Belt, or cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

3. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also states that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. The next stage of the assessment is to consider whether the proposed development and its use for residential purposes has a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing buildings and use as a livery yard.

Any new built form of development is likely to impact on the openness of the Green Belt, however it is important to establish the degree of harm. Openness of the Green Belt has both a spatial and visual aspect.

The proposal, as aforementioned in this report, is not solely a conversion of the stable block, but involves built development that increases the roof height and extends the building. The extensions notably increase the scale of the building, adds bulk and changes the character of the building. The extensions are not subservient to the building, with the new front gable being a large feature constructed up to the new ridge height. These extensions, alongside the existing buildings on the site result in a negative impact to the overall openness of the Green Belt. Moreover, the proliferation of residential activity and increase in garden paraphernalia will have a detrimental impact on the openness.

Paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF informs us that inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Whether the development causes any other harm and whether there are any other relevant considerations to balance the overall planning argument, should now be considered.

Consideration of 'very special circumstances' - The Design and Access Statement states that the development will be utilised by the occupants of Burghfield, who require single level living accommodation following an accident, injury and operation. The new dwelling would provide a suitable unit of living accommodation for elderly. Although this situation is acknowledged, the requirement for ground floor living is not considered to overcome the harm to the openness of the Green Belt. In addition, the existing dwelling is a chalet style bungalow, with a ground floor bedroom as shown on the plans for the refused application (ref. 20200107), and could accommodate single level living. Therefore, the submitted very special circumstances are not considered to tip the balance in favour of development, over the harm to the Green Belt.

Conclusion on Green Belt issues and assessment of harm

Permanent loss of openness - Openness and permanence are the essential characteristics of the Green Belt. The sites current lawful use is as a residential plot and livery, and contains 5 buildings, a dwelling, stable block, prefabricated store, storage containers, and a corrugated animal shelter on site. Under this proposal, the built development on site would increase and therefore the development would have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt over the existing situation. Overall, it is considered that that the proposed redevelopment through principally the conversion and extension of the stable building would have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Encroachment of the countryside - This is a stated national purpose of the Green Belt at paragraph 138 of the NPPF (2021). The application site is located outside the village envelope of Culverstone Green. The extension and conversion of the existing stable building into residential use along with would result in the scheme being a highly prominent building within the Green Belt, which would blur the lines of residential development further beyond the edge of Culverstone Green and out into the surrounding Green Belt.

Safeguarding the countryside by minimising the expansion of the Borough's rural settlements - This is a stated local purpose of the Green Belt as set out at paragraph 4.2.7 of the adopted (LPCS). As noted above, the Local Planning Authority considers the proposal subject of the application would result in encroachment of the countryside and would result in the effective expansion of Culverstone Green into the Green Belt. Although, the distance of approx. 20 metres is maintained from this site to the boundary of Culverstone Green, the conversion of this building will extend residential dwellings into the Green Belt to the west. In addition the proposed patio area to the west will encroach onto the existing paddock and encroach into the Green Belt.

Final balancing exercise on Green Belt issues - The application site lies within the Green Belt and meets the criteria of section G of paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021), and constitutes previously development land, but is harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and is ineffective use of land contrary to Policy CS15 (LPCS). The stable building in question is a permanent and substantial construction, however this will be substantially extended which would, along with the other permanent building on the site, have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing use on site.

Furthermore, the way in which the proposed extension and conversion of the stable is designed is not sympathetic to the rural character of the area (this will be expanded further in the following

section).

4. The effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and the landscape

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (LPCS) 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.

The proposed dwelling will have change the appearance of the building significantly by introducing a large amount of glazing and a modern palate of materials. The modern appearance and extent of glazing are out of keeping with the rural character and fail to integrate well with the surrounding area. While it is noted that the existing stable block is a light render, the proposed dwelling will have an ivory render finish with terracotta roof tiles and white upvc windows and doors, which are considered to be out of character with its rural context.



Gravesham's newly published Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. This SPD highlights the importance of extensions being subordinate to the host building, that compliment and correspond with the character of the dwelling and wider context. The SPD breaks down key considerations for different types of extensions to residential properties.

According to the design guidance, extensions to buildings should be subordinate and allow the original building to remain dominant. The extensions are not subservient or subordinate to the original building, with the glazed front gable emphasising the failure to be subordinate through its construction up to the ridge, but also serves to reinforce the failure to conserve the rural character of the area. The design guidance also states that extensions to extensions are not generally supported and in this case, the original livery building was significantly smaller than the existing building. This suggests that the building has been extended in the past, and the proposed development will extend these extensions significantly increasing the scale of the building disproportionately above the original.

Overall, the extensions considerably enlarge the scale of the building, are disproportionate to the scale of the original block and are not subordinate or subservient. The proposed dwelling fails to respond to the rural context, by introducing a modern appearance that both fails to conserve, enhance or integrate with the character of the area. As such, the proposed development is contrary to Gravesham's design guidance SPD (2021), Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by gently undulating topography with a mix of arable and pasture farmland, three large settlements located along the A227 and traditional architecture surrounding village greens providing local vernacular.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states at

5.7.26 the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

Similarly, to the design considerations above, the modern appearance of the dwelling would be out of character with the traditional architecture of the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. Therefore the new dwelling would fail to conserve, restore or enhance the rural character of the surroundings and is harmful to the landscape character area, contrary to Policy CS12 (LPCS).

5. Sustainability

The NPPF (2021), taken as a whole, represent the Government's view of what constitutes sustainable development. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF (2021) provides specific advice on sustainable development in rural areas and seeks to avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances, which are listed as follows:

- a) *There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
- b) *The development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
- c) *The development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*
- d) *The development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling;*
- e) *The design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
 - *is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - *would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.*

The application is not for a new build within the countryside but seeks to redevelop an existing building on the site. This application site is located outside the settlement boundary of Culverstone Green along the eastern side of Wrotham Road and is approximately 20 metres from the settlement boundary. An inspector considered (APP/K2230/W/16/3161653) a new dwelling outside the settlement boundary of Culverstone Green and the Inspector stated:

"The appeal site is at the edge of the settlement of Culverstone Green. From my assessment it is within walking distance of a number of its facilities which include shops and a school. Whilst I note that the village does not boast a large range of facilities, I do not consider that the location of the site would place an unreasonable reliance of the private car for access to services and facilities."

The future occupiers of the dwelling proposed have the use of a pedestrian footway along the western side of Wrotham Road, would be within walking distance of Culverstone Green facilities and close to bus stops providing regular services to a number of locations including Sevenoaks/Borough Green and Gravesend. Therefore, taking into account the sites location and the above relevant appeal decision it is considered that this proposal will not result in a development which would be heavily reliant on car to access services and facilities and is deemed to be sustainable location for dwellings.

6. Residential Amenity

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires that all development should be 'fit for purpose' and be 'adaptable to allow changes to meet the need of users' and that 'the design and layout of new residential

development, including conversion, will accord with the adopted Residential Layout Guidelines' (RLG) (2020). Moreover, on 25 March 2015 the Government issued a written ministerial statement, which introduced new technical housing standards in England and set out how these would be applied through planning policy. These standards came into effect on 1 October 2015.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed dwelling will have an internal floor space of 127.8m² (excluding the garage). The National Housing Standard Guidance provides minimum gross floor areas for single storey dwellings, breaking down the number of bedrooms and bed spaces (persons). The figure for one storey two bedroom, four person dwelling should have a floorspace of 70m² with built in storage of 2m². Therefore in terms of floor area the development would safeguard the amenity of future occupiers.

However, Gravesham's RLG breaks down the Council's individual requirements for certain rooms, these have been formulated into a table to compare with the floor area of rooms within the three proposed flats.

	Gravesham RLG (2020)	Flat 1 (ground floor)
Living room	13.2m ²	21.1m ²
Kitchen and Diner	20.4m ²	20.25m ²
Bedroom (double)	11.2m ²	20.55m ²
Bathroom & w.c. (ensuite)	3.5m ²	15.2m ²
		4.6m ²
		7.6m ²

Table 2 has been colour coded to show which rooms within the dwelling meet the guidance within the RLG. The table demonstrates that all rooms are in accordance with recommendations and will provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers, which corresponds with the conclusions from the National Housing Standard assessment.

The proposed block plan shows a garden area around the new dwelling with an area of 110m² and a maximum depth of 8.5m. The RLG states that the minimum garden space for a two bedroom property should be 37.2m² and a depth of 7.6m. As such, the future occupiers of the new dwelling would have sufficient garden space that accords with the RLG.

Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Neighbouring Amenity

In determining any development proposal, it is important to ensure that it does not cause harm to the amenity of any existing residents or property such that it will materially harm their living conditions. Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires new development to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land. In addition, paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2021) also seeks to ensure developments will function well, do not undermine quality of life and create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit and seeks to "secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings".

The development will not impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy, overshadowing, outlook or sense of enclosure. The new dwelling is located 30m from Burghfield, which is the nearest dwelling, and there are no windows facing the property.

Moreover, as the dwelling would be single storey there will be no loss of privacy for other surrounding properties. The single storey building and distance to neighbours means that the new dwelling would not result in overshadowing, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. As such, the development is in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

7. Impact on the Highway Network

There are no parking or highway issues related to this proposal. The proposed dwelling will have a garage and parking space which accord with the parking standards set out in SPG 4 (2006). In addition, there is sufficient parking for Burghfield to accord with guidance. As such, the proposal is acceptable in terms of highway policy.

8. Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Drainage and Refuse Arrangements

The application has failed to provide details of drainage and run off from the site as required by Policy CS18 (LPCS). Moreover, there are no details of refuse arrangements as required by Policy CS19 (LPCS). Although this information is important, these elements could be addressed via planning conditions.

Affordable housing

The proposed development is below the threshold and therefore no request for affordable housing is required under Policy CS16 (LPCS).

Conclusion

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

The extension and conversion of the stable block will be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and is ineffective use of land contrary to Policy CS15 (LPCS). The stable building would be substantially extended which would, along with the other permanent buildings on the site, result in a permanent loss of openness, encroach into the countryside and expand the rural settlement contrary to Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Section 13 of the NPPF (2021). The extensions considerably enlarge the scale of the building, are disproportionate to the scale of the original block and are not subordinate or subservient, they do not respond to the rural context, by introducing a modern appearance that both fails to conserve, enhance or integrate with the character of the area. As such, the proposed development is contrary to Gravesham's design guidance SPD (2021), Policies CS12 and CS19 (LPCS) as well as Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission is refused.

Recommendation:

Refusal

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

Case Officer:	Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>Ethan Bonthron</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	26 th May 2022	Dated:	26th May 2022

Gravesham Borough Council