



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20220320
Location:	41 Forge Lane, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7AJ
Description:	Partial demolition and conversion of existing garage, erection of first floor front and side extensions with associated external alterations, and erection of detached double garage with room above and improvements to the driveway access.
Applicant:	Nicola Poole
Site Visit:	25 th April 2022

Procedural Issue

The application was submitted as a householder planning application, but with a description relating to an amendment application to the previous planning permission (ref. 20180437). The original description read as follows:

“Proposed changes to Planning Permission Reference: 20180437, to make a reduction in approved increase in floor area of house, proposed reductions and changes to approved extensions, associated roof changes and new window fenestration style. Changes to house only. All other approved elements to remain including as approved including landscaping, driveway & garage scheme.”

However as the application was submitted as a new householder application and not an amendment, this was not considered appropriate for this application and a change of description was agreed by the agent 24th May 2022. The original 20180437 remains a material planning consideration.

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form - dated 14/03/2022;
- Supporting Document Ref: 400-DA01 - Design and Access Statement;
- Drawing no. 400-P01 - Rev. A - Site Location Plan, with Existing and Proposed Block Plans;
- Drawing no. 400-P02 - Rev. A - Proposed Schematic Plan (scale - 1:200);
- Drawing no. 400-P03 - Existing Floor Plans, Elevations and Indicative Site Section;
- Drawing no. 400-P04 - Proposed Floor Plans, Roof Plan and Elevations;

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20180590	Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 2no. two storey dwellings and 3no. three storey dwellings, with integral garages and parking for 2 cars per dwelling.	REFUSED	14.12.2018

20180437	Proposed side and rear extensions, conversion of roof to create gable ends, removal of existing bay with hipped roof. Partial demolition of garage and addition of 2 car detached garage side extension with room above. Improvements to driveway access and general landscaping.	PERMITTED	29.06.2018
20170511	Demolition of existing outbuildings, partial demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension to west elevation, two storey extension to east elevation, new balcony with dormer extension over to west elevation, two storey bay extension with loft bay over; erection of single storey extension to south elevation. Erection of a loft extension to existing roof with associated dormer windows and doors to all sides.	REFUSED	12.03.2018

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards

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.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

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

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

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

GBC - Highways Officer - I have no objections to this proposal, as there is adequate car parking to comply with adopted guidance.

Higham Parish Council – no comments received.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 7th April 2022.

In addition, twelve surrounding properties were consulted and one representation was received. The representation raised objection to the proposed development and raised material planning considerations relating to loss of privacy/overlooking and noise resulting from use. The consultation period expired 29th April 2022.

The description for the application was changed after the expiration of the consultation period, however as there were no changes to the development it was not considered necessary to re-consult. The neighbour comments received will be discussed later in this report.

Preliminary Matters

On the site visit it was noted that an outbuilding has been constructed within the garden area, which is being utilised as a hairdressing salon. This outbuilding contains two cutting chairs, hairwash facilities and it is assumed to be operating as a business use. The outbuilding is shown on the block plan, however this business use is likely to require planning permission. As such, an informative will be attached to the decision notice to notify the applicant that the outbuilding is not permitted as part of the approved plans and that planning permission should be sought for the outbuilding as a business use.

Officer's Analysis

41 Forge Lane is a detached mid-20th century dwelling that is significantly set back from the highway and accessed by a long driveway. It is a large four bedroom, two storey, brick built dwelling, on a spacious plot, with the application site also containing a tennis court.





The property has not previously been extended but has had a large extension approved in 2018 (ref. 20180437). Although this permission has expired, it remains a material planning consideration.

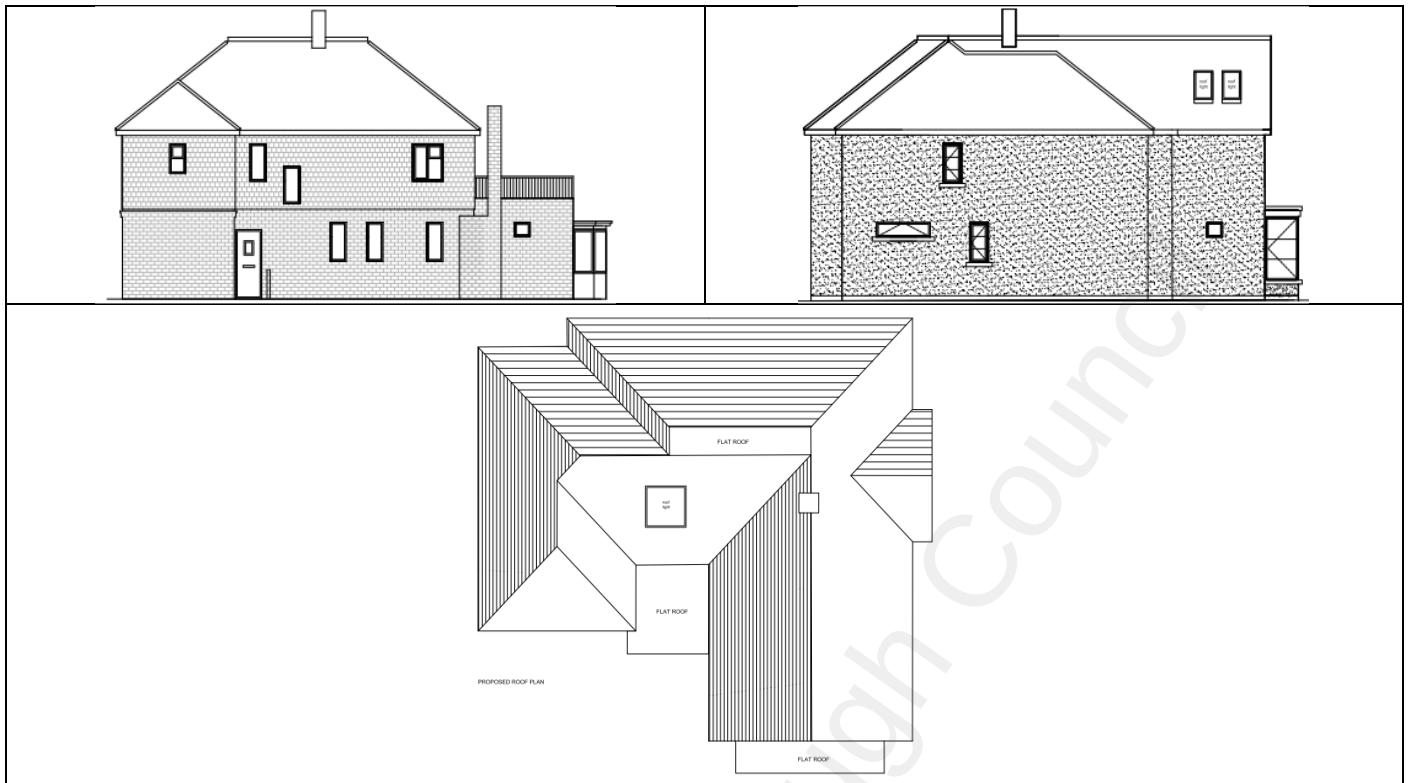
Description of the Proposal

This application proposes the erection of first floor front and the erection of a part first floor and part two storey side extensions to the property. The development also includes the construction of a two storey detached double garage to the front of the curtilage and improvements to the driveway access.

The front extension will be constructed over the existing roof terrace with a depth of 3.15m, it will match the height of the dwelling and have a gable end. The side extension will be constructed above the single storey side projection. It will extend beyond the existing flank wall position by 0.3m, have a maximum height of 8.3m, which connects with the main roof of the dwelling, and will have a front projection with a hipped roof at a height of 5.6m. The eaves will match the existing height.

The extensions will also involve the introduction of two storey flat roof sections at the front (above the porch) and at the rear.

Existing Elevations	Proposed Elevations
	
	
	



The garage matches the previously approved structure (ref. 20180437). It will have a width of 7.4m, a depth of 6m, a maximum height of 5.8m and an eave height of 3.15m. There will be two pitched roof dormer windows on the front elevation, facing the dwelling, a window on the front and a window and access door on the side elevation.



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 extensions will increase the bulk and massing of the property, but will not notably increase its original footprint. As aforementioned in this report, the extensions have been significantly reduced from the previously approved development (ref. 20180437). The extensions are not considered to be out of character with the original dwelling, with the front extension remaining the main feature of the extended property and the side extension being subordinate and set-back. As such, the scale and massing of the extended dwelling are considered acceptable.

The Local Planning Authority do not generally support flat roof extensions above single storey. This development will introduce two flat roof sections, with a combined area of 12.75m². Gravesham's Householder Design Guidance SPD (2021) states that flat roofs that are clearly visible from the street will not be supported, unless the original roof is flat. In this case, while there are no existing flat roofs on the property above single storey level, these sections will not be visible from any public vantage point or the street scene. As such, although introducing two storey flat roof sections, the proposed development is in accordance with the guidance as these are not visible from the street and they are not excessive in area.

Due to the properties position, away from the highway, it is not visible from any public vantage point and will have no impact on the street scene. Moreover, the local context is varied with an array of properties with different scales and design. Therefore, the extended dwelling would not be out of character with the surrounding context, and would be considered to integrate well within the area.

The development will be finished using light painted render, with a grey tiled roof and black aluminium windows. These materials do not match or respond to the original external finish of the property, and will notably modernise the appearance of the property. However, it is acknowledged that within the street scene other properties have adopted a modern finish such as no.31 Forge Lane (Greenacre), which are much more visible than the application site. Nevertheless, there is some concern with the modern material palate and vagueness of the 'light painted render', and therefore a condition will be attached to the decision notice to ensure that details of the materials are submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

The garage will remain the same scale as previously approved. Although large it is located within a generous plot and will be set forward of the building close to the front boundary. It is proposed that the garage will be finished in materials that match the main dwelling. Similarly, this will be conditioned to ensure that materials are approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Moreover, due to the garage being two storey, a condition will be attached to restrict the use of the garage.

Overall, the proposed extensions to the dwelling are considered acceptable. The development is significantly reduced from the previously approved extension. It will retain some characteristics of the original dwelling through the dominant front gable projection and subordinate side projection. There will be no impact on the street scene and the proposed materials will modernise the dwelling, albeit not matching the original finish. The garage is considered acceptable. As such, the development hereby proposed is appropriate in design terms and in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers. The garden is large and will not be significantly reduced as part of this development. The rooms proposed are in accordance with Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and will receive sufficient natural light. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Neighbouring Amenity

The development will not impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of loss of light, overshadowing, outlook or sense of enclosure. A comment was received from a neighbouring property expressing concern with overlooking and loss of privacy. It is noted that the extension will introduce more glazing and fenestration around the property, however due to the layout of the surrounding dwellings there is not considered to be any overlooking impact. Gravesham's RLG states that the minimum window-to-window distance, over a private garden area, should be 26m and in this case the minimum distance is 35m to the nearest property (no.39 Forge Lane).

The comment from the neighbour also included concern with noise, arising from parties and other gatherings at the property. Although noise resulting from use of a development is a material planning

consideration, the extended property will remain as a single-family dwellinghouse. Therefore, the noise resulting from use will not significantly change and the potential for parties is not sufficient grounds to refuse the application.

As such, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Parking and Highways

There are no parking or highway issues related to this proposed. The plans demonstrate that there is sufficient space for vehicular parking, post-development, that would accord with the adopted parking standards (SPG 4) (2006). The driveway access will be altered as part of this application, and will be the same as previously approved in 2018 (ref. 20180437). However, the details are limited regarding the materials and drainage, and therefore a condition will be attached to approve hard landscaping.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on the Landscape - the site is located within the Highway Arable Downs Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by very gently undulating topography of open arable farmland with pockets of orchards and garden nurseries. The developments spread from the original Saxon settlement of Lower Higham in the North, with more contemporary developments in the South around main road networks.

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.

The proposed development is not considered to cause any detrimental harm to the character of the Higham Arable Farmlands, however the modern material palate could be harmful to the more traditional context within the wider landscape. As such, planning conditions will be attached to ensure that the harm is limited through agreement of materials prior to the commencement of above ground works.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

The proposed extensions are acceptable in terms of design, will adopt similar characteristics to the existing dwelling through maintaining a dominant main gable projection. The development is not excessive in size or bulk and will not harm the character of the street scene, however there are concerns with the modern materiality which will be conditioned and agreed by the Local Planning Authority. The garage is considered acceptable. The amenity of future occupiers and neighbouring properties will be safeguarded, there are no parking or highway issues and subject to agreement of materials there should be no harm to the landscape character area.

As such it is recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
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Signed:	<i>Ethan Bonthron,</i>	Signed:	<i>[Signature]</i>
Dated:	26 th May 2022	Dated:	26 May 2022

Gravesham Borough Council