



Delegated Report

Application No: 20211080

Location: 1 Providence Cottages, Crutches Lane, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME3 7DL

Description: Demolition of existing single storey rear extension and erection of new single storey rear extension.

Applicant: Ms Jennifer Warnett

Site Visit Date: Desktop assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

The applicant has submitted the following in support of the application:

Application form received 26 August 2021;
Design and Access Statement received 26 August 2021;
Drawing no. 21/W/3 (Existing and Proposed First Floor and Roof Plans) received 26 August 2021;
Drawing no. 21/W/4 (Existing and Proposed Side and Rear Elevations) received 26 August 2021;
Photo received 15 September 2021;
Drawing no. 21/W/2A (Existing and Proposed Ground Floor Plans) received 15 September 2021;
Drawing no. 21/W/1A (Existing Site Plan, Proposed Block Plan and Proposed Cross Section) received 28 September 2021;
Drawing no. 21/W/5 (Existing Block Plan and Front Elevation) received 28 September 2021;
OS Plan received 28 September 2021; and
Cover letter received 28 September 2021.

Relevant Planning History

There is no planning history relating to the property.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

CS01 – Sustainable Development
CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
CS11 – Transport
CS12 – Green Infrastructure
CS19 – Design and Development Principles

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF 2021 sets out that those 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 the review 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 a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan First Review 1994 generally conform with the NPPF 2021, the Council will also seek to replace these saved policies via the emerging Local Plan.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development

Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land

Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)

Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)

SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC - Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. It is considered unlikely, however, that these proposals will have a significant archaeological impact and there are no further comments to make in this case

Higham Parish Council

No response received.

Conservation Officer

No response received.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 4 properties, in the press and on site. The consultation periods expired on 19 and 29 October, and 15 December 2021 respectively.

No letters of representation have been received.

Local Ward Councillors were also consulted and no responses were received.

Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks permission for the demolition of the existing single storey rear extension and the erection of a new single storey rear extension.

The existing single storey rear addition for a kitchen and utility room will be removed to make way for an extension that will project out to the same extent as the previous addition, but across the whole of the back of the house. The proposed extension will be for a kitchen, family room and WC.

There will be a window and door in the side elevation of the extension facing the side access. An existing SVP will be repositioned to the flank wall of the existing house, and two new windows will be installed within the existing flank wall of the house at ground floor level.

The roof over the extension will be hipped to meet the ridge of the adjoining extension at No. 2, and will have rooflights within it. The proposed materials will include a slate roof and facing bricks to match the existing.

There is also border planting proposed along the side of the property.

The access to the side of the terrace is within the ownership of the application property, as shown on the submitted red line plan and as described within the Design and Access Statement.

Principle Issues

The main issues to consider in the determination of this application are as follows:

- the principle of development in the Green Belt;
- the design of the proposed extension and the impact on the character and appearance of the existing property and surrounding area;
- the effect of the proposal on the amenities of existing neighbouring properties, as well as whether the proposed development itself will provide satisfactory living accommodation for future occupiers; and
- its impact on highway safety and parking provision.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

Green Belts are of great importance. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by preserving the open and permanent characteristics of Green Belts (paragraph 137 of the NPPF 2021). Paragraph 147 of the NPPF 2021 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. '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.

Local Planning Authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt (paragraph 149 of the NPPF 2021). However, there are exceptions to this which, as in the case of this proposal, include:

- (c) the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- (g) the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development or would not cause substantial harm to openness and would contribute to meeting an identified affordable

housing need.

Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2014 prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. In the rural area it 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 (which is the case here), will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the Core Strategy 2014.

Saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan 1994 relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside, and generally seeks to maintain the open character of the Green Belt and retain a stock of rural dwellings of modest size. Extensions will be considered on their merits but in particular 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. However, this policy pre-dates the NPPF, and greater weight should be given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 the NPPF 2021.

“Original dwelling” for the purpose of Policy C13 means the building in permanent residential use at 1st July 1948.

	Original gross external floor area (m²)	Gross external floor area (m²) post-1948 extensions	Current proposed gross external floor area (m²)	Difference in gross external floor area between existing and proposed (m²)
Dwelling	77	0	89	>12
Percentage				>16%

The application property has not been extended before; the proposed extension will increase the size of the dwelling by less than one third of its original size. The current proposal would increase the amount of development on the site. However, the scale of development is not considered to be out of proportion with the existing building, with only a 16% increase in floor area over that of the existing building. This is not considered to be excessive. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, and would therefore amount to appropriate development in the Green Belt.

In addition, the proposal will not affect the openness of the Green Belt. It is within the building line of the original dwelling and other extensions constructed to the rear of the properties along the terrace.

The proposal would therefore comply with paragraph 149 of the NPPF 2021 and saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan 1994.

Design and Character and Appearance of Surrounding Area

Development Plan policy places considerable emphasis on the importance of achieving high quality buildings and places. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The application site comprises a two storey, end of terrace property in use as a single dwelling. The property is on a long, narrow plot and already has a single storey original addition to the rear. Many of these original additions along the terrace have been replaced with single storey rear extensions, as shown in the Google Earth image below:



The most recently granted extension was at No. 7, under application reference 20180336.

The proposed single storey rear extension would comprise a modest increase to the size of the property and will be located at the rear where there is already an existing addition across part of the rear of the house. The depth of the proposed extension will not exceed the depth of the existing single storey addition, and will generally be comparable with the depth of other single storey rear extensions along the terrace. The roof line will reflect that of the existing addition, and the neighbouring addition at No. 2.

The proposed extension would also be constructed of matching materials. It would be important to ensure matching materials to ensure the uniform appearance of the extended property; this should be conditioned.

As such it would not appear disproportionate and will be in keeping with the character and appearance of the application property and neighbouring terrace.

With regard to the impact on the landscape, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 is relevant to this application, relating to green infrastructure. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) 2009 will be taken into account in

determining applications. The site is located within the Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area.

Whilst the proposal would result in additional built development on the site, it would not represent a significant change in the character and appearance of the site, and would not therefore result in any adverse visual impact on landscape character.

Overall, the proposed rear extension is an appropriate addition in terms of its size, scale and appearance, and would maintain the character and appearance of the site and landscape quality of the surrounding rural area. Provided the proposed materials match the existing, the proposal is considered acceptable in design terms, and would comply with the requirements of Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, and paragraphs 130 and 174 of the NPPF 2021.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2021 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 130f). The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria within Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land.

Future Occupiers

It is considered that the proposals comply with the Council's residential layout guidelines and the Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standards in terms of the proposed accommodation and retained garden. There is no conflict with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 in respect of the living conditions for future occupants of the dwelling.

Neighbouring Properties

Due to its single storey nature and position to the rear of the property, the presence of the existing addition, and the existence of similar such extensions along the terrace, the proposal would not be considered to cause any significant loss of light or privacy, nor have any dominant impact on neighbouring properties.

The proposal would comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Parking and Highways

The parking requirements for the property would be unaffected as a result of the proposal. There would therefore be no conflict with Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan 1994 and Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

In relation to the vehicular access to the side of the house that extends around to the end of the rear gardens of the terrace, this is within the ownership of the application property, with rights of way across it for neighbouring properties. As part of this proposal, border planting and window and door openings are proposed onto the access. Planting would be beneficial in terms of softening the appearance of the side of the house, but this could have the potential to unacceptably narrow the access for use by neighbours, particularly where it narrows towards the rear of the house. It is therefore considered appropriate to restrict the line of planting to no further than the main original rear elevation of the house. It is also considered appropriate to prevent any openable windows or doors opening onto this access, so as not to restrict its use. Conditions can be imposed on this basis.

Conclusion

Overall, the proposal is considered to comprise an acceptable addition over and above the size of the original building, and would therefore be considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt, and within the rural landscape context of the Shorne Woodlands Landscape Character Area. The proposal is also considered to be acceptable in terms of the design and impact of the extension on the application building, and with regards to residential amenity and highway matters. The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of Policies CS02, CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994, and paragraphs 126, 130, 137, 138, 149, and 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Recommendation:

Approval with conditions.

See draft Decision.

Case Officer: Katherine Parkin	Team Leader: Faye Hobbs
Signed: K. Parkin	Signed: 
Dated: 15/12/2021	Dated: 16 December 2021