



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20211069
Location:	Valley View, Wrangling Lane, Luddesdown, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0XF
Description:	Hip to gable roof extension to south west and north east elevations, erection of a chimney and two additional dormer windows to front, two new dormer windows to rear, enlarged windows to south west elevation, Juliette balcony to north east elevation, insertion of sliding doors and basement floor windows to front elevation, enlargement and conversion of basement area to home gym and games room and enlargement of terrace on south east side.
Applicant:	Dr Shirin Lakhani
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment with Agent Photographs

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

Application Form - dated 25/08/2021;
Planning Design and Access Statement (ref: PR3259/SC);
Drawing no. 01 - Site Location Plan and Existing Block Plan;
Drawing no. 02 - Existing Ground Floor Plan;
Drawing no. 03 - Existing First Floor Plan;
Drawing no. 04 - Existing Cellar Floor Plan;
Drawing no. 05 - Existing Elevations;
Drawing no. 06 - Proposed Block Plan;
Drawing no. 07 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan;
Drawing no. 08 - Proposed First Floor Plan;
Drawing no. 09 - Proposed Basement Plan;
Drawing no. 10 - Proposed Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

Application No.	Description	Status	Decision
20210707	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a garden room/gym.	CERTIFICATE GRANTED	26.07.2021
20150329	Construction of a dormer window in the side (north eastern) roof slope to ensuite bathroom.	PERMITTED	16.06.2015

20100332	Erection of single storey rear extensions to form a garden room and an enlarged utility room.	PERMITTED	15.06.2010
20090978	Application for Lawful Development Certificate for the proposed erection of single storey rear extensions to form a garden room and an enlarged utility room.	CERTIFICATE GRANTED	29.01.2010
20080956	Erection of two storey side/rear extension to provide a granny annexe comprising living room at ground floor level with bedroom and ensuite bathroom/wc at first floor level.	REFUSED	18.12.2008
20070026	Construction of dormer window in north eastern roof slope to replace existing rooflights.	PERMITTED	28.02.2007
20060255	Construction of dormer window to replace two velux windows in south west roof slope.	PERMITTED	05.05.2006
20040978	Erection of a block of two stables.	PERMITTED	24.12.2004
20030379	Erection of two storey rear extension to form enlarged kitchen, and covered area with bedroom and balcony over; construction of 2 mini- dormer windows in the south-west side roof slope, a dormer window in the north-east side roof slope and two dormer windows in the front roof slope with velux windows on the existing north east and south west roof slope and conversion of roof space into three bedrooms, bathroom and en-suite bathroom and erection of an open-fronted porch on the south-west side elevation.	PERMITTED	23.06.2003

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 - Sustainable Development
- CS02 - Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 - Green Infrastructure
- CS18 - Climate Change
- CS19 - Design & Development Principles

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

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- 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;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);
- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2021-2026)
- Supplementary Planning Document - Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal consultees

Ward Councillors - No comments received.

External consultees

Natural England - Natural England has not assessed this application for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published Standing Advice, which you can use to assess impacts on protected species, or you may wish to consult your own ecology services for advice.

Natural England advises that the proposals as presented have the potential to adversely affect woodland classified on the ancient Woodland Inventory. Natural England refers you to our Standing Advice on ancient woodland <https://www.gov.uk/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences>.

For householder applications within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) we recommend you seek the advice of the Kent Downs AONB.

The lack of comment from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment, but only that the application is not likely to result in significant impacts on statutory designated nature conservation sites or landscapes. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether or not this application is consistent with national and local policies on the natural environment.

Other bodies and individuals may be able to provide information and advice on the environmental value of this site and the impacts of the proposal to assist the decision making process. We advise LPAs to obtain specialist ecological or other environmental advice when determining the environmental impacts of development.

We recommend referring to our SSSI Impact Risk Zones (available on Magic and as a downloadable dataset) prior to consultation with Natural England. Further guidance on when to consult Natural England on planning and development proposals is available on gov.uk at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-planning-authorities-get-environmental-advice>

Luddesdown Parish Council - No comment received.

Kent County Council Public Rights of Way - No objection, subject to an informative being attached to the decision notice to ensure that the Public Right of Way is not stopped up, diverted or obstructed.

Neighbouring properties

An advert was published in the Kent Online and a notice was displayed on site 2nd September 2021.

In addition, three surrounding properties were consulted and one representation was received. The neighbour registered support for the development, but did not provide any comment. The consultation period expired 1st October 2021.

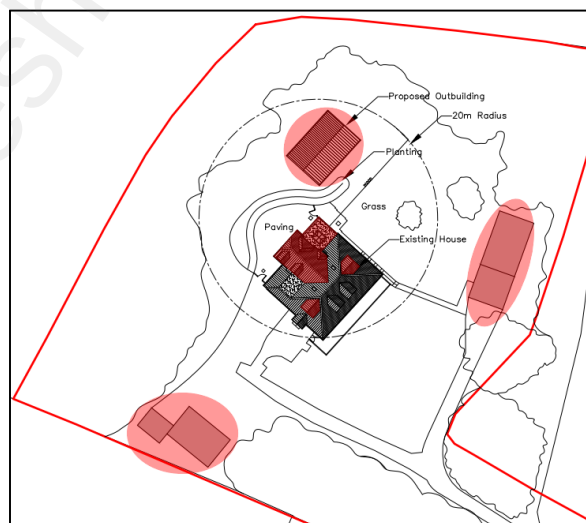
Analysis

The Site

Valley View (formally known as Ladera) is a large detached chalet style bungalow located at the end of Wrangling Lane. The property has a generous curtilage, which includes a paddock, and is positioned on the slope of the valley.



The property has been extended significantly under previous applications (see Relevant Planning History above). In addition, a number of outbuildings have been constructed (including a triple garage and stable) or a yet to be implemented (including a gym/garden room). These extensions are shown in the annotated plan below:

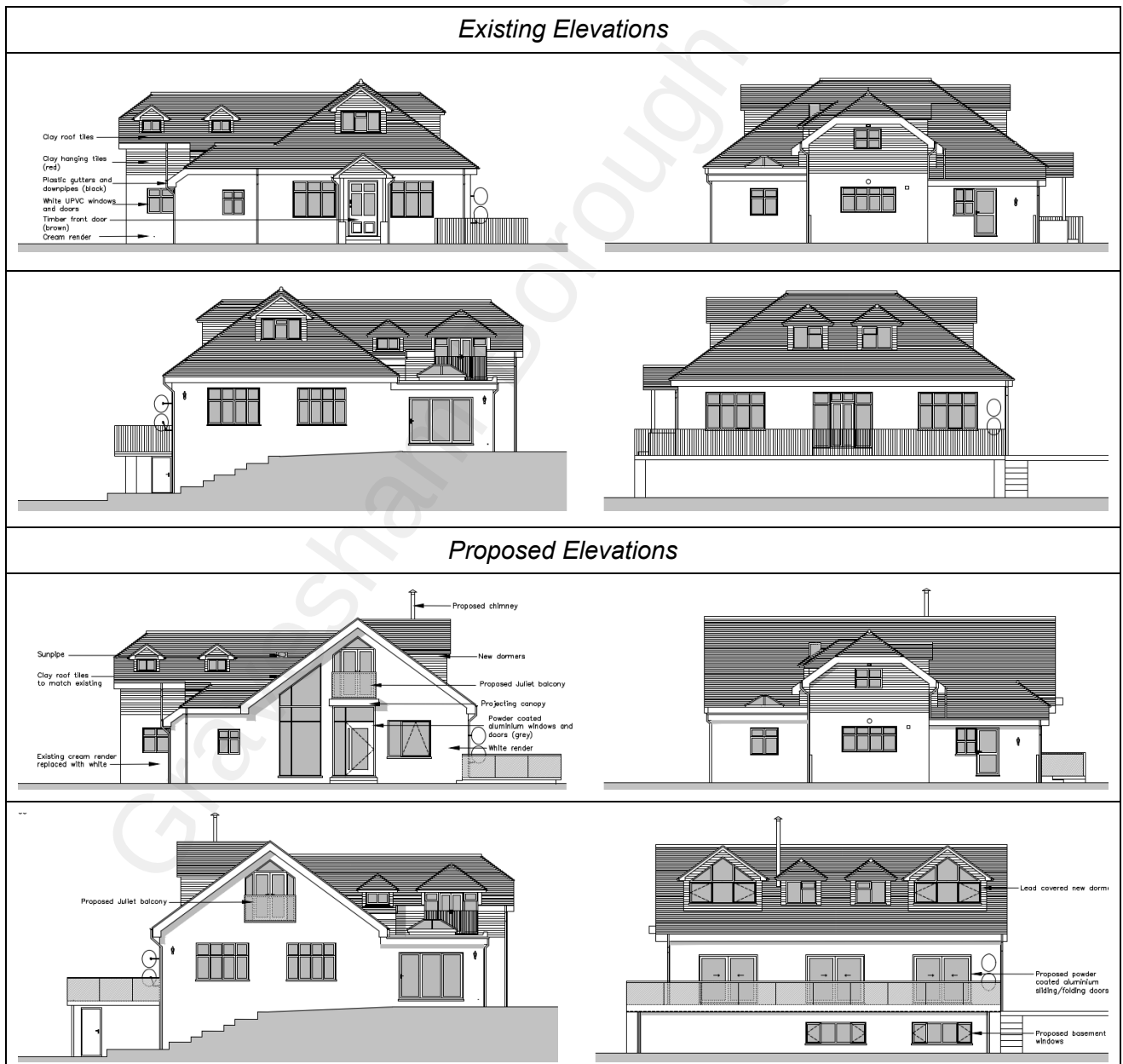


The Proposal

This application proposes numerous changes to the property, which are listed below:

- Hip to gable roof extension to south west and north east elevations;
- Erection of a chimney;
- Two new dormer windows to front;
- Two new dormer windows to rear;
- Enlarged windows to south west elevation;
- Juliette balcony to north east elevation;
- Insertion of sliding doors and basement floor windows to front elevation;
- Enlargement and conversion of basement area to home gym and games room; and
- Enlargement of terrace on south east side.

The comparative elevation screenshots below visually demonstrate most of the changes proposed:



Extension to Dwelling

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.

There are five principle issues in determining this application;

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?
2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
3. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
4. Other matters; and
5. Any very special circumstances?
6. Impact on the Landscape.

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

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 goes on to say that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within the specified exceptions. The relevant exception to consider for this application is part c of paragraph 149 of the NPPF which states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In determining this proposal account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

In particular Policy C13 places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria ii). It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting (criteria vi). It is considered that these factors are relevant in determining whether the size of an extension is proportionate and as such, these aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the NPPF and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	133.15m ² (20030379)	264.48m ² (incl. extended terrace)	98%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	167.6m ²	403.74m ²	140%
Volume (m³)	-	-	-

The cumulative additions to the property have overtime exceeded the one-third limit set out in saved policy C13. In the first application (20030279) the addition was close to, but did not exceed the one-third limit, however the subsequent extensions and those hereby proposed significantly exceed the one-third. Therefore, in purely numerical terms, the extension is contrary to the local plan Green Belt policy, potentially representing a disproportionate increase over the original floor area of the building.

It is acknowledged that the volume additions have not been calculated as part of this proposal, instead this will be visually assessed. The numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It does not provide a figure.

The proposed alterations to the property are considered disproportionate to the original chalet style bungalow, by virtue of adding substantial bulk and notably changing the character of the property. Specifically the hip-gable extension and proliferation of dormer windows contributes to the increased perceived bulk, but also adds massing to the roof of the property.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would result in a disproportionate addition to the property and as such the proposal would be inappropriate development which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is therefore contrary to Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and to paragraph 149 of the NPPF 2021.

Moreover, there are a number of constructed and approved outbuildings within the properties curtilage which also are a consideration relating to additions to the main dwelling.

2. *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.

Having established that the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt in terms of visual and numerical additions it is important to establish whether the extensions will be harmful to openness. Any built form of development can be considered harmful to the openness of the Green Belt; however, the degree of harm should be established.

Although the development will not increase the height of the property, the hip-gable extensions will erode physical openness. Moreover, this extension will also increase the perceived bulk and massing of the property that is equally harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. As such, the proposed extensions to the property will both physically and visually erode the openness of the Green Belt.

Reference back to 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.

3. *The effect on the character and appearance of the area*

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.

This application comprises of numerous changes to the property notably the hip-gable extension, erection of new dormer windows, a new chimney, a basement extension and changes to fenestration.

- The hip to gable extension is a significant change, which changes the character and design of the dwelling and adds considerable bulk.
- The two large front dormers are large and grossly out of proportion with the existing front dormers, they dominate the front roof slope and are the scale of the windows exacerbate the disproportion. In addition, the two large dormers are not evenly spaced from the edges of the roof slope, which adds to the incongruous appearance.
- The chimney pipe is in a prevalent position on the front of the property and extends significantly above the ridge of the property.
- The basement extension will increase the depth by 1.5m. There are two front windows proposed on the front of the basement, which are low level and appear odd.
- The new fenestration on the south-west elevation is not considered to be an issue, but would appear at odds with the existing windows on the property. Moreover, the extent of glazing is considered excessive, for instance the three sliding doors, two basement windows and differing dormers appear incongruous and poorly designed.

The extensions will not create space for any new rooms within the main property, but will enlarge some bedrooms through the hip-gable and new dormers. The main change will be through the basement extension and will create space for a cinema room, games room, gym and w.c./shower, but also enlarge the existing terrace above.

The application proposes changing the colour of the render from cream to white; there is no objection to this change. However, the extent of changes to the property will considerably change the character of the dwelling, create an unbalanced appearance and cumulatively appear incongruous. Overall, the proposed changes to the property are contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS), Gravesham's Householder Design SPD and Section 12 of the NPPF.

4. *Other matters*

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development provides acceptable living conditions that safeguard the amenity of existing and future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Neighbouring

The proposed garage is not considered to materially impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of outlook, light, privacy or sense of enclosure. As such, it is considered to safeguard their amenity in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and Highways

There are no issues relating to parking or highways related to this application.

5. Very special circumstances

The applicant has put forward some considerations for 'very special circumstance'.

The Design and Access Statement does reference the outbuilding granted a lawful development certificate (26/07/2021) as a fall-back position for this proposed development. Whilst it is acknowledged that the outbuilding is large in footprint, located further up the valley and would be harmful to the Green Belt by virtue of being a new built form of development, it is not considered as harmful to the Green Belt as the extensions and additions hereby proposed (as discussed throughout this report). Therefore, in the balance of harm

In addition, the Design and Access Statement introduces a 'practical note' relating to the proposed development allow for more effective use of bedrooms and enhanced accommodation. It is acknowledged that a hip-gable extension would allow for increase head height compared to dormer windows, however the bedrooms as existing comfortably comply with local and national guidance with a floor space of 16.69m² (including cupboards).

In summary Very Special Circumstances have not been demonstrated by the applicant to outweigh the harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

6. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by very undulating topography with a mix of arable and pasture farmland, there are areas of native woodland, narrow winding lanes that follow the contours with small settlements and farmsteads located along lanes.

The site is also in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Policy CS12 states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced with the greatest weight being given the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting.

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.

Valley View is an established property within the Luddesdown Downs and AONB landscape, however the changes to the property will have an impact on the appearance of these landscapes. Similar to the way that the proposal is considered to impact on the Green Belt, these changes are considered to have a detrimental impact on the landscape by virtue of disproportionate and bulky additions, finished in white render and with excessive glazing. Therefore, the proposal is considered contrary to Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Sections 13 and 15 of the NPPF.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and it is recommended that planning permission is refused.

The proposed development significantly alters the character and appearance of the dwelling, create an unbalanced appearance, introduce disproportionate features and poor design. These additions result in increased bulk and incongruous appearance which is inappropriate development and harmful to the openness of the Green Belt, but also the AONB and Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area. Therefore the development hereby proposed is contrary to Policies CS02 (Scale & Distribution of Development), CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved Policy C13 (Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside) of Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) as well as Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

Recommendation:

Refusal

See draft Decision

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	21 st October 2021	Dated:	22 October 2021