



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20251227

Location: 4 Ashleigh Close Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of a single storey side/rear extension with roof light.

Applicant: Mr S. Murphy

Site Visit Date: 20 January 2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Red line site boundary plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-SITE Rev. B Existing block plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-GROUND Rev. B Existing ground floor layout;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-ELEVATION Rev. B Existing elevations;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-ROOF Rev. B Existing roof plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-SITE Rev. B Proposed block plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-GROUND 1:100 Rev. B Proposed ground floor layout;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-GROUND 1:50 Rev. B Partial proposed ground floor layout;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-ELEVATION Rev. B Proposed elevations;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-ROOF Rev. B Proposed roof plan; and
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/SECTION Rev. B Typical section A-A.

Superseded Documents/Plans

Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-SITE Existing block plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-GROUND Existing ground floor layout;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-ELEVATION Existing elevations;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/EXT-ROOF Existing roof plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-SITE Proposed block plan;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-GROUND 1:100 Proposed ground floor layout;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-GROUND 1:50 Partial proposed ground floor layout;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-ELEVATION Proposed elevations;
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-ROOF Proposed roof plan; and
Drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/SECTION Typical section A-A.

Procedural Issues

Following a request by the case officer to reduce the bulk of the proposal and to improve the residential amenity of future and surrounding occupiers, the design was amended. The revised drawings were subject to a second round of publicity and consultation.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
-----------	-------------	----------	---------------

19570303	Erection of bungalow	Permitted	23.07.1957
19570079	Site for erection of dwelling in connection with smallholding	Permitted	10.07.1957

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 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)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Southern Water

Second response

Rear/side extension build-over/close-to a sewer:

It appears that the developer is intending to build-over/close-to a public foul sewer which is crossing the site. Building over a “public sewer” is not normally permitted by Southern Water. An investigation of the sewer is required to confirm its size and depth, ascertain its condition, number of properties served and potential means of access before any decision can be made as to whether it would be acceptable for Southern Water to allow building-over/close-to the sewer. The length of sewer to be built over under the

terms of Part H of the Building Regulations dictates that the matter is determined by the sewerage undertaker, which in this case is Southern Water. The conditions and application associated with the build-over/close-to a public sewer are available at Southern Water's Get Connected service:

<https://developerservices.southernwater.co.uk>

Condition:

In order to protect drainage apparatus, Southern Water requests that if consent is granted, the following condition is attached to the planning permission; prior to the commencement of development, the developer must advise the local authority, in consultation with Southern Water, of measures which will be undertaken to protect the public sewers.

For further advice, please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX (Tel: 0330 303 0119). Website: southernwater.co.uk or by email at:

SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk

NB the same plan extract was included in the response as is illustrated below.

Initial response

Existing Southern Water Assets:

Please see the attached extract from Southern Water records showing the approximate position of our existing gravity sewer crossing the vicinity of the development site. The exact position of the public assets must be determined on site by the applicant in consultation with Southern Water before the layout of the proposed development is finalised.

To get in contact to confirm the exact position of the asset please visit;

https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/ph4fk3pe/ds-location-of-rising-mains_pb.pdf

For information on required stand off distances from public sewers please refer to:

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/st5orjvm/stand-off-distances.pdf>

Existing Gravity Sewer:

The 150 mm diameter gravity sewer requires a clearance of 3 metres on either side of the gravity sewer to protect it from construction works and to allow for future maintenance access. No development or tree planting should be carried out within 3 metres of the external edge of the public gravity sewer without consent from Southern Water. All existing infrastructure should be protected during the course of construction works. Please refer to:

<https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/st5orjvm/stand-off-distances.pdf>

Tree planting:

We have restrictions on the proposed tree planting adjacent to Southern Water sewers, rising mains or water mains. Reference should be made to Southern Water's publication "A Guide to Tree Planting near water Mains and Sewers" (https://www.southernwater.co.uk/media/pddob0vn/ds-tree-planting-guide-1_nwm.pdf) and the Sewerage Sector Guidance (<https://www.water.org.uk/sewerage-sector-guidance-approved-documents/>) with regards to any landscaping proposals and our restrictions and maintenance of tree planting adjacent to sewers, rising mains and water mains.

Condition: In order to protect public apparatus, Southern Water requests that if consent is granted, the following pre commencement condition is attached to the planning permission; The developer must advise the local authority (in consultation with Southern Water) of the landscaping proposals in proximity of public apparatus in order to protect it in accordance with Southern Water's guidance, prior to the commencement of the development.

For further advice, please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Yeoman Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN13 3NX (Tel: 0330 303 0119) Website: southernwater.co.uk or by email at:

SouthernWaterPlanning@southernwater.co.uk



Control Valve		Flow Control		Inlet-Outfall	
Wastewater Pipe		Wastewater Use		Developer Services	

Extracts from Southern Water map response

Meopham Parish Council

No response received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised on two occasions to six neighbouring properties by letter. One representation has been received and is summarised as follows;

- Due to its close proximity, the proposed extension could cause damage to the foundations of the bungalow at no. 5 Ashleigh Close and to an underground public sewer.

Officer's Analysis

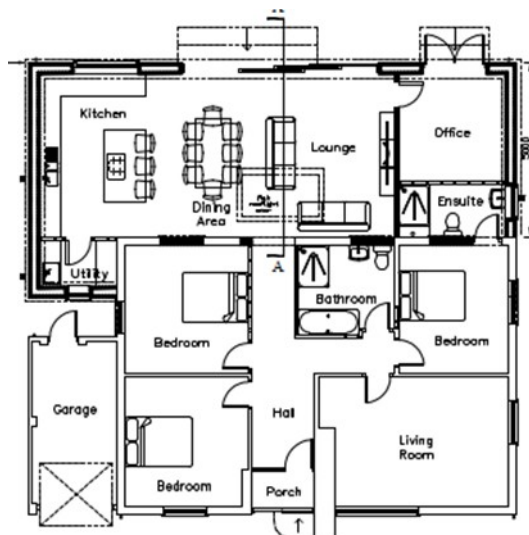
Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings.

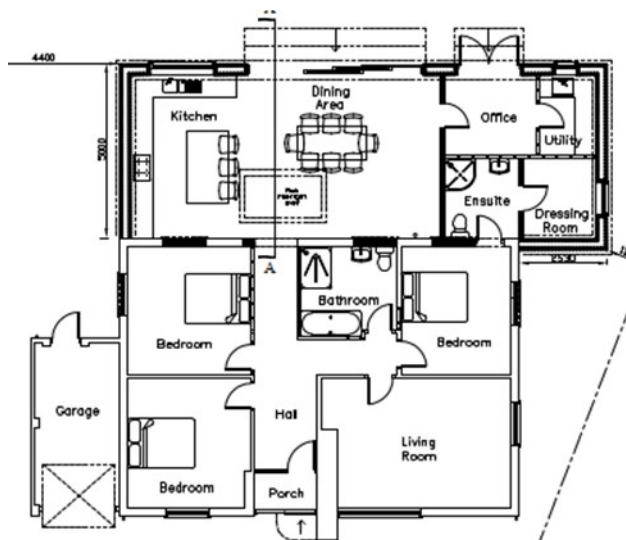
In relation to single storey rear extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that they should not dominate the original property in terms of depth (extensions to extensions will not generally be supported); they should not rise above the window cill level of any first floor windows; they should not be excessive in height, especially where they are greater than three metres in depth; or excessive in width (no greater than the original building). Flats roofs can be acceptable where they are not widely visible and pitched roof designs should reflect the main roof.

The application site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 is also relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications.

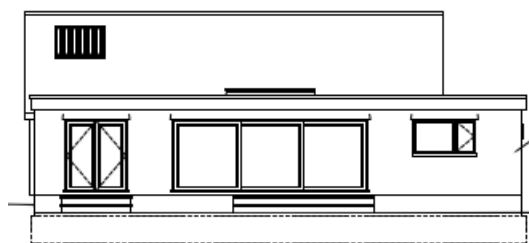
It should be noted that the proposed development has been amended since the original submission. There has been a small reduction in the floor area and the extension no longer wraps around the side of the building. The following illustrates the original and amended layouts and rear elevations;



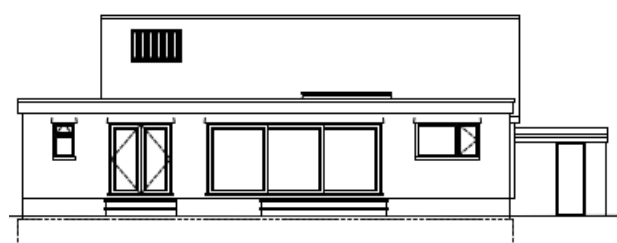
Original layout



Amended layout



Original rear elevation



Amended rear elevation

The proposed development would have a large floor area but would result in the removal of an existing conservatory and side projection. Despite its size, the extension would be just about subservient to the existing dwelling. Although the proposed eaves would be higher than those of the existing dwelling and the extension would project beyond the side wall of the building, these features would not be widely visible, the eaves height would be needed for headroom purposes and an existing side projection (on the side where the extension would project) would be removed.

The proposed external facing materials (white painted render) would not match with the existing building (red brick and white UPVC cladding) but because the whole building would be finished with white painted render, they would not look out of place. It is noted that the dwellings in Ashleigh Close have a variety of materials including yellow brick, red brick and at nos. 3 and 6, white render.

The application site is located in a village and the proposed development would be within an existing residential curtilage. The proposal would result in an increase in the amount of built development but would not adversely affect the overall landscape character of the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design and would not have an adverse impact on the character of the Meopham Downs LCA. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and be broadly in line with the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would retain sufficient rear garden area and depth (over 15 metres depth and over 450 square metres area) and the proposed bedroom would significantly exceed the minimum floor area for a single bedroom but be just below that required for a double (at 11.4 square metres). As such the proposal would be in line with the Nationally Described Space Standards and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines.

The proposed window for the bedroom facing the boundary with no. 5 Ashleigh Close would have limited outlook (facing a two walls), which would result in relatively poor living conditions for future occupiers. However, the detriment to residential amenity would not be so significant as to warrant a refusal of planning permission for the proposed development.

The proposal would result in the loss of existing rear windows to two bedrooms and a bathroom but because the proposed bedrooms would have alternative side windows and because the bathroom is a non-habitable room, then it is considered that sufficient natural light would be provided.

Overall, the proposed development would improve the living conditions for future occupiers and would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of future occupiers. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows to the application property. These include bedroom and dressing room windows in the side elevation that faces no. 5 Ashleigh Close and a bedroom window in the side elevation that faces no. 3 Ashleigh Close.

On the boundary with no. 3 Ashleigh Close is a fence with a height of some 1.5 metres (with a relatively open trellis for the top section). That property has bathroom and study windows and a utility room glazed door that face the proposed bedroom window and is located on slightly lower ground than the application site. In order to mitigate any adverse overlooking impacts, the proposed development would provide a two metre close boarded fence on the site boundary (which can be secured by a planning condition).

Whilst there is no boundary treatment adjacent to the proposed windows facing no. 5 Ashleigh Close, only the side wall of that property faces the application site. There are no windows in this side wall and it is already visible from the garden of the application site. As such, there would be no adverse overlooking impacts.

Furthermore, due to the design of the proposed development and to the design, layout and orientation of surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overshadowing or overbearing impacts to any of the surrounding residential occupiers.

Overall, the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014).

Parking and Highways

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a three bedroom dwelling should have two vehicle parking spaces.

The proposed development would result in the dwelling increasing from two bedrooms to three and there would be no alteration to the existing parking or access arrangements. The existing frontage parking area can accommodate two vehicles and there is also a sub-standard sized garage.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would make sufficient provision for the parking of cars within the site in accordance with the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Ecology and Biodiversity

The proposed development would result in the loss of two trees (a silver birch and conifer) from the rear garden of the application site. However there would no significant loss of biodiversity and the proposal would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3. However, as the proposed development is within the confines of an existing residential garden and only a relatively small amount of groundworks would occur, then it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to groundwater or archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

The application site contains a public sewer, located in the rear garden, close to the proposed extension. Southern Water has raised concerns regarding the close proximity of the development to the public sewer and requested that a pre-commencement condition be attached to any planning permission granted, to protect the public sewer.

Furthermore, a local resident has raised concerns that due to its close proximity, the proposed extension could cause damage to the foundations of the bungalow at no. 5 Ashleigh Close and to an underground public sewer. However, any potential structural and drainage/sewer impacts would be addressed as part of the Building Regulations process and therefore, this planning assessment should not duplicate this. As such, the condition suggested by Southern Water would not be appropriate. Instead, Southern Water's comments can be brought to the attention of the applicant, by an informative attached to any planning permission granted.

Southern Water has also requested that a pre-commencement condition be attached to any planning permission granted, to ensure that any proposed tree planting protects the public sewer. The proposed development does not include any tree planting but it is possible that the required landscaping scheme will do so. Because the landscaping scheme must be submitted to the Borough Council for approval, prior to it being undertaken, Southern Water can be given an opportunity to comment on the scheme, which will ensure that there are no adverse impacts to the public sewer.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Prior to first occupation, the fence alteration shown on drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-SITE Rev. B shall be completed and retained permanently

Materials as shown on application form and drawing no. HD/DA13 0TS/PROP-ELEVATION Rev. B

No further openings in flank elevation facing no. 3 Ashleigh Close

Conclusion

The proposal would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

Recommendation

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	11 March 2026	Dated:	11th March 2026