



Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Application No:	20220364
Location:	1 Meadfield Road, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0PR
Description:	Erection of no.2 bedroom end of terrace house, including formation of new access.
Applicant:	Mr Cubitt
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form - dated 31/03/2022;
Drawing no. 01/07/2021 - Site Location and Proposed Block Plan;
Drawing no. 02/07/2021 - Existing Elevations;
Drawing no. 03/07/2021 - Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 - Sustainable Development
- CS02 - Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS05 - Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area
- CS10 - Physical and Social Infrastructure
- CS11 - Transport
- CS12 - Green Infrastructure
- CS14 - Housing Type and Size
- CS15 - Housing Density
- CS18 - Climate Change
- CS19 - Development and Design Principles
- CS20 - Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 - Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 - Impact of Development on the Highway Network
- T5 - Access to the Identified Highway Network
- TC3 - Development Affecting Conservation Areas

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 4 - Decision-making
- Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 11 - Making effective use of land
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic 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)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Other Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Department for Transport - Manual for Streets (2007)
- Kent County Council - Vehicle Crossing Guidance: Self-Assessment (2018)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

External Consultees

KCC - Heritage - The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, it is considered unlikely that these proposals, immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling, would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact.

Meopham Parish Council - The Parish Council objects to this application on highway grounds. This is a difficult junction where accidents have occurred on a regular basis. Adding an accessway to the road at this point will exacerbate the difficulties faced by drivers and increase the risk of accidents. The Parish Council additionally objects to this application on the ground that the size of proposed development is disproportionate to the size of the plot available and would not provide a suitable sized garden.

Dickens Protection Society - The Society would wish to object to this application on the basis that the proposed dwelling would have an adverse impact on the street scene in Wrotham Road, and would detract from the openness of the junction of Meadfield Road with Wrotham Road.

Internal Consultees

GBC - Highways Officer - This is an interesting design and requires very careful consideration.

1. Wrotham Road where the vehicular access will be is the A227 and Gravesham Supplementary Guidance (PGN6) requires all vehicles entering and leaving the road to do so in forward gear.
2. Vehicle parking standards differ between the highway authority and the planning authority, in that Gravesham (Planning) have maximum provision which is now considered outdated and

Kent County Council (Highway) a minimum requirement of 1.5 spaces per unit, which obviously impossible to achieve for a single dwelling.

3. Gates
4. Visibility Splays

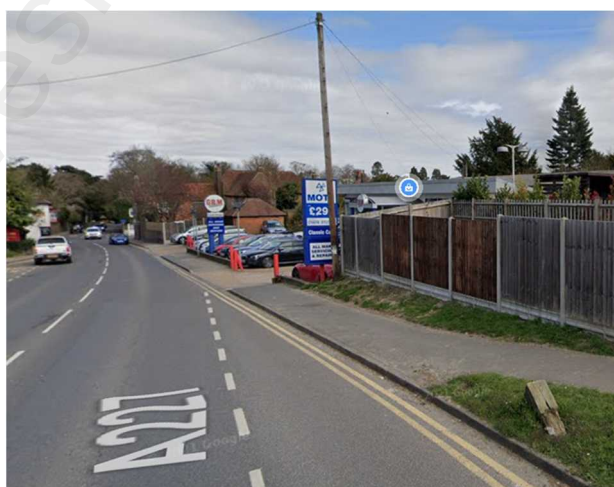
With regards to the car parking provision for a two bedroom dwelling situated next to a bus route with bus stops close by, a single parking space may be adequate and indeed to maintain reasonable amenity space seems the only option. This would mean ideally the second shown parking space should have a dual use, amenity/car turning area subject to confirmation by swept path drawings for a large saloon car.

Considering the turntable, these come in a variety of sizes, but to ensure the turntable is suitable for all cars it needs to accommodate a large car and as such requires a minimum diameter of 4.5 metres. They also need I understand to be installed on level ground and the applicant needs to demonstrate that a suitable access and car parking layout can be installed, either by lowering the turntable and access to footway height or providing long sections that demonstrate a vehicle can access the turntable without grounding, maximum gradient would be 10%, but ground clearance differs on different vehicles and as the vehicle is not known a low ground clearance should be used. These are details which should be resolvable by condition if this option is chosen and the turntable would need to be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The applicant also needs to clarify if a car can remain parked on the turntable or if it has to be unloaded when not in use.

Gates on a classified road even automatic ones are not considered appropriate unless they can be set back at least 6 metres from the highway to ensure traffic is not obstructed by the rear of the vehicle overhanging the highway which is dangerous and can obstruct the free movement of traffic particularly pedestrians. Any gradient on the drive may also encourage the applicant to hang the gates so they open towards the highway, to maximise the depth of the gate which would aggravate the overhanging issue and obstruct visibility splays.

Vehicular visibility splays for a 30 mph road are 43m x 2.4m x 43m and whilst this should be achievable the applicant needs to demonstrate this with drawings given the signage at the adjacent garage which may obstruct the visibility requirement.

In terms of pedestrian visibility splays, the applicant correctly identifies the requirement as 2m x 2m but then fails to deliver them. They are measured 2 metres back from the rear edge of the footway along each side of the drive and 2m along the back edge of footway either side of the drive. Again the sign at the adjacent garage may obstruct the sight line to the north as may the adjacent telegraph pole, this may require the access to be moved slightly south.



As presented, there is insufficient information to make a judgement regarding a vehicle turning on site and there is inadequate information regarding sight lines. Whilst the issue of onsite turning may be controlled by suitable conditions, the issue regarding sight lines cannot and needs to be resolved now or the application

refused on highway safety grounds.

Neighbouring properties

Four surrounding properties were consulted and three representations were received, all objecting to the proposed development. The representations raised both material and non-material planning considerations, listed below:

Please note: only the material planning considerations are relevant within the decision making process.

Material Planning Considerations:

- Out of Keeping
- Interfere with the Established Building Line
- New access onto busy A227 - hazard, dangerous, poor sightlines
- Noise - generated from use of the turntable

Non-Material Planning Considerations:

- Private Issues between Neighbours - damage to property (subsidence)
- Matters controlled under Building Regulations - drainage issues and details

The consultation period expired 3rd May 2022.

Officer's Analysis

Site Description

1 Meadfield Road is an end of terrace property located on the northern side of the highway close to the junction with Wrotham Road. The property is set-back from the highway and has a detached garage located on Cheyne Walk. It is on a relatively generous plot compared to other nearby properties, with a side garden area fronting Wrotham Road.

The curtilage of the property has been annotated onto a google maps satellite image. The property has close board fencing along the boundary and has a lawn frontage. There is a G&M Motors garage adjoining to the rear.

The surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of two storey terraced properties, which are uniform in terms of design, scale and form, and two storey detached/semi-detached properties of varied design, scale and form.



Development Proposal

This application proposes the erection of an attached two storey, two bedroom dwelling in the side garden of 1 Meadfield Road. The proposed dwelling will have a footprint of approximately 45m² and has associated parking at the rear, accessed from Wrotham Road. The garden will be subdivided with the host property (no.1 Meadfield Road) retaining approximately 66m² of garden space.

The screenshots below demonstrate the proposed dwelling:



It will have an internal floor area of 70.5m² and will have the following dimensions:

Main Dwelling

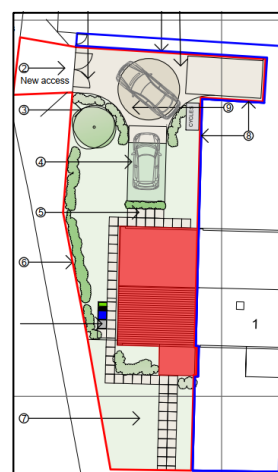
- Depth - 7.85m
- Width - 5m
- Height (max) - 7.5m
- Height (eave) - 5.05m

Front Projection

- Depth - 1.9m
- Width - 1.45m
- Height - 2.5m

The property will be finished in materials that match the existing terrace, which are facing brickwork, grey boarding at first floor on the front and rear, and the tiles on the roof. The proposed dwelling will have an open plan living/diner at the rear, with a kitchen and w.c. to the front on the ground floor. At first floor there will be two bedrooms and a family bathroom at first floor. The sizes of each room and the proposed garden area are as follows:

Room	Area
Kitchen	9m ²
Living/Diner	16m ²
W.C. (ground)	1.6m ²
Bedroom 1 (master)	13.25m ²
Bedroom 2 (single)	9.1m ²
Bathroom	4.8m ²
Garden	66.7m ²



Housing Need

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 Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) Policy CS02 must be regarded to be out of date, as required by the Paragraph 11(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021). This requires that in regard to housing development, planning permission should be granted unless:

- 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 but important 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) which requires new development to contribute positively to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and create acceptable amenity for future occupiers.

Principle of Development

The site is located within the rural boundary of the Borough, in the rural settlement of Meopham. Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy prioritises development in the urban area, but would support development within the rural settlements inset from the Green Belt. As such, given the sites location within the rural settlement the broad principle of residential development is acceptable under Policy CS02, subject to it meeting the detailed requirements of government and development plan policy.

The principle considerations in the assessment of this application are:

- Design, Character and Appearance
- Amenity of Future Occupiers
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Parking and Highways
- Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Design, Character and Appearance

As aforementioned in this report, the surrounding area is characterised by two storey terraced properties, which are of similar scale, design and features. The proposed dwelling will be attached the end of the existing terrace, its design has incorporated similar features and will be finished using materials to match the adjoining properties and grey cladding to match no.1 Meadfield Road.



Gravesham's 'design guide (SPD) (2021)' sets out the key principles for new development and states that proposals should reflect, respect and respond to the original character, however subservience and set-back from the building line are preferred. Furthermore, the SPD states that extensions to corner plots are highly visible and should respect established building lines and not dominate the street corner.

The proposed dwelling will develop a corner plot, which is an established and planned area of open space within the street scene. These planned open areas on corner plots are reflected in the wider estate and the building lines are established in a manner to reflect these open corner plots.



Adjacent to 7 Meadfield Road



Adjacent to 9 Warwick Gardens



Adjacent to 1 Warwick Gardens

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be inappropriate development on a corner plot which disrupts an established building line, develops a planning open area within the street scene which is a characteristic of the surrounding estate. Moreover, the proposed dwelling will dominate the corner by virtue of its elevated position and the raised ground levels.

Overall, the proposed dwelling is considered to be inappropriate development that is harmful to the street

scene by developing an established and planned open area which is a characteristic within the locality. Moreover, the proposed dwelling is constructed beyond the established building line into the side garden, and the harmful impact will be exacerbated by its elevated position creating a dominant development on the corner plot. As such, the proposal is contrary to guidance within Gravesham's design SPD (2021), Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) of the NPPF.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

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.

The Nationally Described Space Standards (2015) require a two storey dwelling, with different floor areas depending on the number of occupants. For a three person dwelling the floor area should have a minimum 70m², with built in storage space of 2m². Given that the gross internal floor area of the proposed dwelling is 70.5m², and there will be storage space within the loft, it is considered to accord with the recommendations within the Nationally Described Space Standards (2015).

Notwithstanding this, Gravesham's RLG breaks down the measurements further, recommending minimum floor areas for specific rooms as shown in the table below. These recommended minimum floor areas have been compared to the proposed room sizes within the property for comparison.

	RLG (minimum floor area)	Proposed Room Size
		Dwelling 1 (north)
Living/Diner	18m ²	16m ²
Kitchen	7.2m ²	9m ²
WC	1.3m ²	1.6m ²
Double Bedroom	11.2m ²	13.25m ²
Single Bedroom	6.5m ²	9.1m ²
Bathroom	3.6m ²	4.8m ²

The table demonstrates that the majority of rooms provided within the dwellings are in accordance with the RLG, with the exception of the living/diner at the rear. The living/diner is undersized by 2m² and is contrary to minimum RLG guidance. Gravesham's RLG states that applications for new dwellings must comply with the guidance, with the caveat that it is demonstrated that rooms can physically accommodate furniture a fittings associated with their use. In this case, the floor plans demonstrates that the kitchen/diner could accommodate two armchairs, one small sofa along with a dining table and chairs. It is therefore considered that the room, although undersized and contrary to guidance, would be a usable space and as such, on balance, is considered to provide acceptable amenity for future occupiers.

Further to the room sizes, the RLG states that new developments should provide acceptable private amenity space. The garden area for the proposed dwellings include cycle store, which reduce the size of the private amenity space. The RLG states that a garden area for a two bedroom property should have a minimum depth of 7.6m and a minimum area of 37.2m. The garden within the proposed development has an area of 66.7m² (excluding car parking) and a depth of 6.7m. The inclusion of the parking space within the garden reduces the depth below the recommendation of the RLG, and creates a cramped feel to the amenity space, with a minimal patio area at a depth of 1.25m from the back of the property to the parking space. Although the garden area complies with the RLG recommendation, the space is cramped and awkward by virtue of encroachment of vehicle and cycle parking, which is reflected in the substandard depth. Therefore, the proposed dwelling is considered to be overdevelopment, where the provision of off-street parking directly affects the usable amenity space that future occupiers should expect to enjoy.

In addition, the new property will not be overlooked or overshadowed, and all habitable rooms will receive adequate levels of natural light.

The proposed dwelling will provide a cramped and awkward private garden area, where the provision of off-street parking directly affects the usable amenity space that future occupiers should expect to enjoy, and is considered overdevelopment. As such, the development is not considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers and is contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenity

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 and paragraph 127 of the NPPF (2021) requires development to have a high standard of amenity for existing users (in this case surrounding properties).

The erection of the new dwelling in this location is not considered to cause material harm to the amenity of any adjoining property in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy, outlook or sense of enclosure. The walls of the property will not extend beyond any elevation of the adjoining neighbour and therefore will not result in any overshadowing, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. In addition, the new dwelling will not impact on the privacy of any adjoining property over and above existing levels of overlooking.

The representations received from neighbouring properties raised a number of material planning considerations:

- Out of Keeping
- Interfere with the Established Building Line
- New access onto busy A227 - hazard, dangerous, poor sightlines
- Noise - generated from use of the turntable

Many of these concerns have been addressed in the design considerations earlier in this report. The highway and traffic issues relating to the A227 will be discussed in later sections of the report.

In terms of noise generating from use of the turntable, all representations expressed concern with nuisance from the use of the vehicle turntable. The turntable is located within the garden of the new property, and as a mechanical device, which can generate noise through friction of moving parts. However, the noise generated is unlikely to be constant and given the proximity of the car garage, as well as the busy Wrotham Road, is unlikely to be adequate for the Local Planning Authority to refuse the application. However, if minded to grant permission, a condition will be attached to ensure that details of the turntable are provided to enable research into the potential noise disturbance.

Overall, the proposed development will safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Parking and Highways

The proposed development involves the creation of a new access onto Wrotham Road, which is a classified Schedule 1 highway. Gravesham's Planning Guidance Note 6 (2009) requires all vehicles to enter and exit the highway to do so in forward gear. The proposal provides two off-street parking spaces within the garden of the new dwelling, with a turntable to enable the vehicles to enter and exit the property in forward gear. There is gate proposed across the access.

Gravesham's Highways Officer has expressed concerns with the application and recommended that the application is refused. The concerns relate to inadequate turning area, substandard sightlines and gates. Firstly, the turntable should have a minimum diameter of 4.5m to accommodate a large car. The turntable proposed has a width of 4.1m, which is inadequate and restricts the turning of larger vehicles.

Secondly, the vehicular and pedestrian visibility splays have not been mapped onto the plans. Manual for Streets (2007) states that for a 30mph road, the vehicle visibility should be 43m x 2.4m x 43m. Although there is a set-back from the carriageway edge, the visibility northward will be impeded by the signage for the garage and the telegraph pole, and without correct mapping on the plans there is potential for the obstructions to visibility to result in the increase the potential for collisions. In addition, the pedestrian visibility splays of 2m x 2m have not been plotted and would likely be impeded by the signage and visibility splays, which is a safety concern for pedestrians.

Lastly, the provision of gates across an access on a classified highway is not acceptable unless they can be set-back from the edge of the highway by a minimum of 6m, to ensure that vehicles do not obstruct the flow of traffic or pedestrians. The proposed gates are X m from the edge of the highway and would therefore result in vehicles waiting to enter the property; either obstructing traffic on the highway or overhanging the edge of the carriageway, which is dangerous and increases the potential for collision. Moreover, with the gradient of the land the gates may be required to open towards the highway, which would further impede visibility splays.

The neighbour representations expressed concerns with the provision of a new access onto Wrotham Road, these concerns have been discussed above and it is concluded that the development, as submitted, would present a risk to highway safety contrary to guidance. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy CS11 (Transport), saved Policies P3 and T5 of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994), SPG 6: Planning Policy for Vehicular Accesses to Classified Highways (2009), Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007) and Kent County Council vehicle crossing guidance (2018).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Refuse - Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires new development to incorporate appropriate facilities for the storage and recycling of waste.

The plans show a refuse area for bins to the side of the property. Although no details have been given regarding a waste strategy, the future occupiers would be required to place their refuse containers out towards the highways on collection day, and return them to the property following collection. This is the same strategy for other properties within the surrounding area. As such there is no objection to the developments refuse arrangement.

Impact on the Landscape - the site is located within 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.

The proposed development is located within the rural settlement and has been designed to match the other properties within the terrace. As such, the proposed dwelling will not impact on the character of the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area and is in accordance with Policy CS12 (LPCS).

Impact on Biodiversity - The new dwelling will result in a loss of biodiversity, by virtue of introducing built form of development in the side garden on 1 Meadfield Road. Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) states that development should result in a biodiversity net gain, which is not the case with this proposal. However, it is noted that additional soft landscaping will be introduced as part of the development in the form of shrubs and trees. This is considered to be an improvement to biodiversity on the site, which as existing is a lawn. Therefore, although the development would result in a loss of landscaping, the introduction of more varied planting is a positive for biodiversity in accordance with Section 15 of the NPPF and Section 12 (LPCS).

Conclusion

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

The new dwelling is inappropriate development on a corner plot which disrupts an established building line and develops a planned open area within the street scene which is a characteristic of the surrounding estate. The harmful impact will be exacerbated by its elevated position creating a dominant development on the corner plot. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

The proposal fails to safeguard the private adequate private amenity space by virtue of providing a cramped and awkward private garden area, where the provision of off-street parking directly affects the usable amenity space that future occupiers should expect to enjoy. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020), Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving Well-Designed Places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

The proposed development would present a risk to highway and pedestrian safety by virtue of providing obstructed visibility splays and gates that increase the potential for collisions and accidents. Moreover, the turntable is substandard and would be unable to accommodate a large vehicle, failing to enable vehicles entering and exiting the property in forward gear. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policy CS11 (Transport), saved Policies P3 and T5 of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994), SPG 6: Planning Policy for Vehicular Accesses to Classified Highways (2009), Department for Transport's Manual for Streets (2007) and Kent County Council vehicle crossing guidance (2018).

As such, it is recommended that planning permission is refused.

Recommendation

Refusal

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

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	20 th July 2022	Dated:	20 July 2022