

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240651

Location: 34 Admers Wood Vigo Gravesend Kent

Description: Demolition of existing front porch. Erection of part single, part two-storey front extension.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Christopher & Malgorzata Allen

Site Visit Date: Photos taken on 30.07.24

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Supplementary Information – Picture of Eaves;
Supplementary Information – Design and Access Statement;
Drawing No. 1053(EX)06 – Section A – Existing;
Drawing No. 1053(EX)07 – Section B – Existing;
Drawing No. 1053(EX)08 – Section C – Existing;
Drawing No. 1053(GA)06 – Section A – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1053(GA)07 – Section B – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1053(GA)08 – Section C – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1053(GA)100 – Parking Plan – Existing and Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(EX)01 – Ground Floor Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 1530(EX)02 – First Floor Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 1530(EX)03 – Attic Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 1530(EX)04 – Roof Plan – Existing;
Drawing No. 1530(EX)05 – Front Elevations – Existing;
Drawing No. 1530(EX)09 – Rear Elevation – Existing;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)01 – Ground Floor Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)02 – First Floor Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)03 – Attic Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)04 – Roof Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)05 – Front Elevations – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)09 – Rear Elevation – Proposed;
Drawing No. 1530(GA)09 – Rear Elevation – Proposed (Duplicate); and
Drawing No. 1530(GA)10 – Massing Perspectives – Existing and Proposed.

Relevant Planning History

No relevant history.

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 (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - 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);
- Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan (2021-2026); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Other Relevant Guidance

- Front Driveway Guidance

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Vigo Parish Council

Thank you for sending us details of the above application.

Vigo Parish Council would respond as follows:

- We are concerned about the cat slide style roof and feel it will result in the upstairs windows appearing / being reduced in size.
- We also feel that this style roof is not in keeping with the neighbouring properties and is not in keeping with the area in general.
- Additionally, we feel that the cat slide roof will change the character of the property.
- Should the proposed changes go ahead, we would ask that the windows are white framed, clear glass,

and that the external finish of the property should match the existing, and that of the neighbouring properties.

- We would also stress that any development should not go in front of the existing building (porch) line.

We would be obliged if you would remind the resident that they should contact the Parish Council to seek covenant approval for any changes they intend to make. Applications can be made to the Clerk via email clerk@vigo-pc.gov.uk

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

KCC Biodiversity

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us, and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that the proposed development has limited potential to result in ecological impacts.

We have taken this view due to photos of the eaves and aerial photography show the roof of the building to be in good condition which is unlikely to support crevice dwelling bats, and the extension is to only impact on a small portion of the front garden. As such, we are satisfied that there is no requirement for an ecological survey to be carried out at this time.

Whilst we have assessed the roof as potentially unlikely to support crevice dwelling bats, there is still the potential that they may be roosting under the tiles. During the works, should a bat be found, all works must cease immediately, and an experienced ecologist be consulted for advice going forward.

No lighting plan has been submitted and, therefore, we assume the proposed development will not include external lighting. If lighting is being proposed, we recommend that it is a maximum of one light over the entrance on a motion sensor, timed to go off, is downward facing and does not directly light any proposed wildlife enhancements (such as bat or bird boxes). If lighting is required, this can be secured via a condition if planning permission is granted.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Ecological Enhancements

Under section 40 of the NERC Act (2006) and paragraph 180 of the NPPF (2023), biodiversity must be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Additionally, in alignment with paragraph 186 of the NPPF (2023), the implementation of measurable net gains for biodiversity (integrated as part of design) should be encouraged.

This application is exempt from delivering statutory biodiversity gains as it is a householder application. However, paragraph 180(d) of the NPPF 2023 states: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity" which is typically taken to mean a measurable 1% gain. As such, even exempt applications are required to deliver biodiversity gains.

No landscaping plans have been submitted with this application. Some loss of the front garden will occur due to the extension. Without a landscape plan, we are unable to determine if the site will attain a measurable net gain as per the NPPF. However, given that much of the site will remain greenspace, there is the potential that the site can achieve a measurable net gain as per the NPPF if suitable, native planting and habitats are proposed on site. To ensure that measurable net gain can be achieved, we advise that the landscaping, establishment, and management plan(s) are secured with a condition if planning permission is granted.

Enhancement features are not considered as part of a measurable net gain; however, we expect enhancement features to also be incorporated into an enhancement plan within the red line boundary. These can include bat and bird durable boxes, log piles, hibernacula, and hedgehog homes and holes in close board fencing.

Suggested condition wording

Within three months of works commencing, detailed plans showing how the development will enhance and maintain biodiversity, plus an establishment and management plan for native planting, will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. This will include details of native and wildlife-friendly planting, bat and bird durable boxes, log piles, hibernacula, and hedgehog homes and holes in close board fencing. The approved measures will be implemented and retained thereafter.

If you have any queries regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

This response was submitted following consideration of the following documents:

- Eaves photo. 22 July 2024

Neighbouring properties

Three surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 30.07.24. One response was received objecting to the proposal. Five responses were received in support of the proposal (one was a duplicate response).

The objection is summarised below:

- Impact on accessible light
- Block/restrict view and view of the close
- Long term impact
- Loss of value of property
- Detrimental impact on mental wellbeing due to building works including concerns over weekend work
- Appreciate the requirement of the applicant but this should not be to the detriment of neighbours
- The response also offers comments on some of the other properties used as examples for this type of extension in the local vicinity

The response can be separated into material and non-material planning considerations. Non-material planning considerations, such as building works, loss of view and loss of property value would not be considered as part of this assessment (although works of construction information such as working hours would be included within an informative if permission were to be forthcoming). However, impact on light, sense of enclosure, loss of outlook and the design, character and appearance of the proposal shall be considered in the relevant sections of the report below.

The comments in support of the application are summarised below:

- The proposal is unlikely to adversely impact nearby properties.
- The proposal is unlikely to adversely affect the general appearance of the area.
- The existing third bedroom of these properties are too small.
- I have no problem with the extension.
- I think this is a good thing for the house and the family.
- I feel this will add value to the area and be in keeping with the local area.
- Allowing extensions supports families to remain within their homes as families grow.
- It will be a great asset to their lovely home.

The responses can be separated into material and non-material planning considerations. Impact on neighbouring amenity and the design, character and appearance of the proposal are material planning considerations and shall be considered in the relevant sections of the report below. The remaining comments (non-material planning considerations) will not form part of the assessment below.

Site Description

34 Admers Wood is a two storey mid-terraced property located to the east of Admers Wood Road. It lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape (formerly an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), and the Vigo Scarptop Woodlands Landscape Character Area.

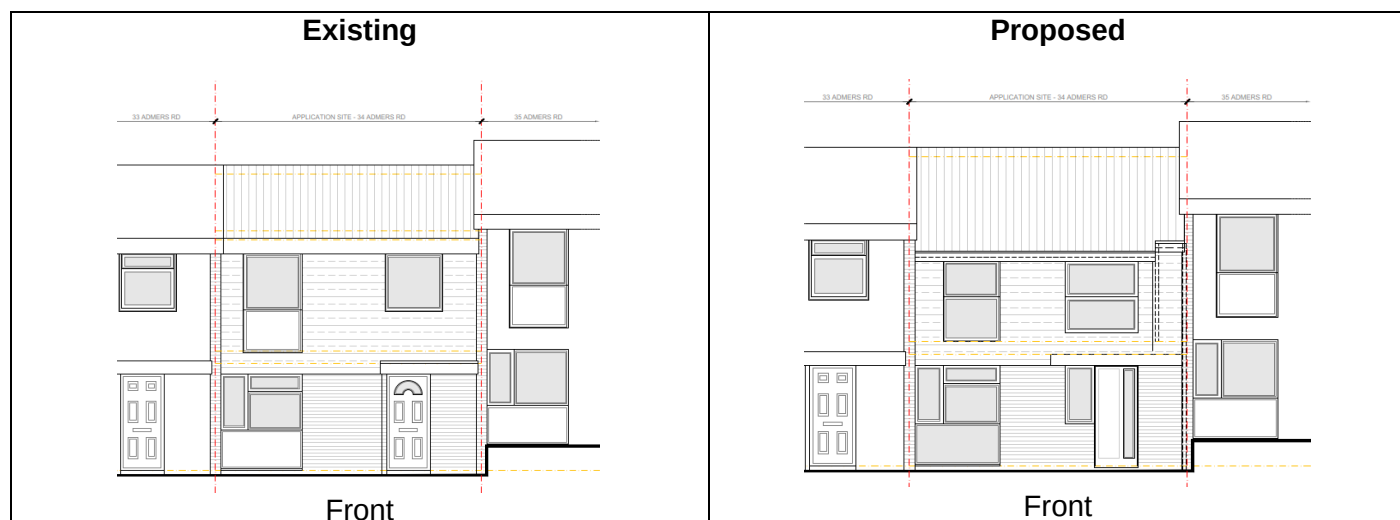
Site Photo



This application proposes the demolition of the existing front porch and the erection of a part single part two storey front extension.

Proposed Development

The development would create space for internal layout changes to facilitate an enlarged kitchen, living and dining area and new lobby/boot room at ground floor level, along with enlarged bedrooms at first floor level.





The extension would have the following (maximum) dimensions:

- Height 5.12m (as per section B)
- Depth 1.80m
- Width 5.60m

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance and Impact on the Landscape

The site is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). Relevant Policy considerations include paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2023, which aims for development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Policy SD2 of the Management Plan 2021-2026 recognises the need to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities, distinctiveness of the AONB and Policy SD8 states that proposals which negatively impact on the distinctive

landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.

As well as being within the Kent Downs National Landscape, the site lies within the Vigo Scartop Woodlands Landscape Character Area. The area is characterised by a relatively level topography, large areas of uninterrupted dense native coppice woodland and a complex network of uniform housing located within woodland to the North West. The views are limited due to dense housing and woodland. 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. At 5.7.19, CS12 states; *the Council's strategy is to conserve and enhance the landscape character and valued landscapes of the Borough, giving greatest weight to conserving and enhancing the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting.*

In situ, the development is not considered to detrimentally impact the Landscape Character Area or the Kent Downs National Landscape, due to its location within the residential area and the smaller scale of the development (i.e. not a new house). However, within the National Landscape, development is expected to be of high quality to reflect the character of the area.

In terms of design, 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. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well- designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF (2023) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

The Design For Gravesham Design Code (2024) is a strategic document that sets out Gravesham's vision and expectation for quality place-making. Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for development within the Borough. Generally, the SPD highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context. In this case, the rural character of the site and surrounding area should be considered.

The Design and Access statement included with this application makes reference to relevant planning history of other properties. However, all of the applications except 20240027 – 17 Churchside (*Erection of a two storey front extension and insertion of roof light in the front elevation*) are dated prior to the adoption of the current Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014). Furthermore, with regards to the 20240027 application, this bears no resemblance or relevance to this proposal, is not within the immediate vicinity, and each application is assessed on its own merits. As such these applications are not justification for the works proposed.

The proposed external materials for the development would match the existing, which is desirable, and can be secured by condition to ensure a satisfactory visual relationship between the existing dwelling and new development.

Gravesham's Householder Design Guide sets out the design expectations for front extensions and porches on page 19:

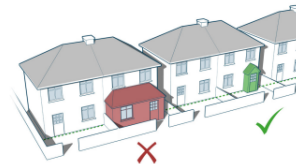
Front Extensions & Porches

10.7 Front extensions can change the character of the original building and where poorly designed have a negative impact on the appearance of the street; due to their visibility these kind of extensions are most likely to have an impact on the wider street scene and are generally discouraged. It is therefore important to invest a high level of design quality in such proposals following the guidance below:

- **Design:** Front extensions must be designed to respond to and enhance the character of the existing dwelling and street.
- **Scale:** The scale and design of new porches should respond to the existing dwelling.
- **Existing Features:** Care should be taken to preserve the appearance of existing features, such as bay windows, and avoid porches that would impact these by subsuming their form or erasing their prominence. Existing porches that are open to the street, and are an original feature that form part of a local pattern of development, should generally not be enclosed.
- **Car Parking:** Extensions or porches should not result in the retention of front parking spaces of inadequate depth.

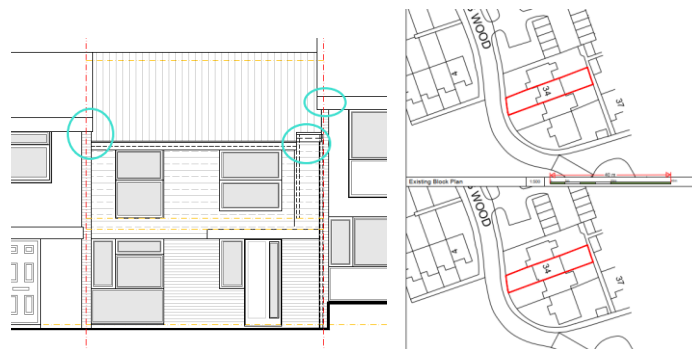


The scale and design of a new porches should respond to the existing dwelling.



Large extensions which break the building line and do not respect the scale of the house will be rejected.

The Design Guidance highlights the negative impact a single storey porch/front extension can have. The extension proposed within this application would be full width, mostly two storey and part single storey and as such is considered to have an even greater impact. The plans show the development would result in a large front extension. The continuation of the roof slope would result in a disruption to the eaves of the existing dwelling, be at odds with the eaves of No.34 and the eaves would be significantly lower than the eaves of No.35. In addition, the fenestration alignment at first floor level would be inconsistent with both neighbouring properties, which impacts the symmetry. Furthermore, the extension would erode the character of the original building, disrupt the main building line and the established set back of the property from No.33:



Overall, the development is not considered to be a sympathetic or subservient addition to the existing dwelling, it would be an incongruous addition, and it would not conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area or be of a design to reflect the high quality character of the National Landscape. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Gravesham's Residential layout guidelines (RLG) amended June 2020 sets out minimum private garden area and depth. The private garden area is not impacted by the development and as such has not been

calculated. Lobby/boot room sizes are not specified within the guidance, however, it is considered the proposal provides more than sufficient living space for future occupiers.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2023).

Neighbouring Amenity

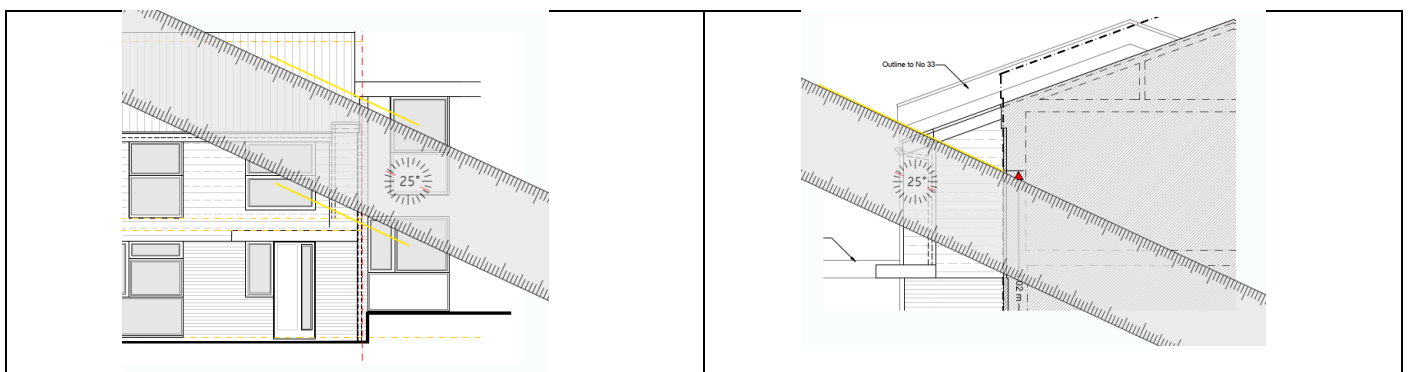
As aforementioned above, one neighbour response was received, objecting to the proposal, and five responses were received in support of the proposal. Neighbouring amenity is considered below in terms of loss of light, privacy, outlook or development causing a sense of enclosure.

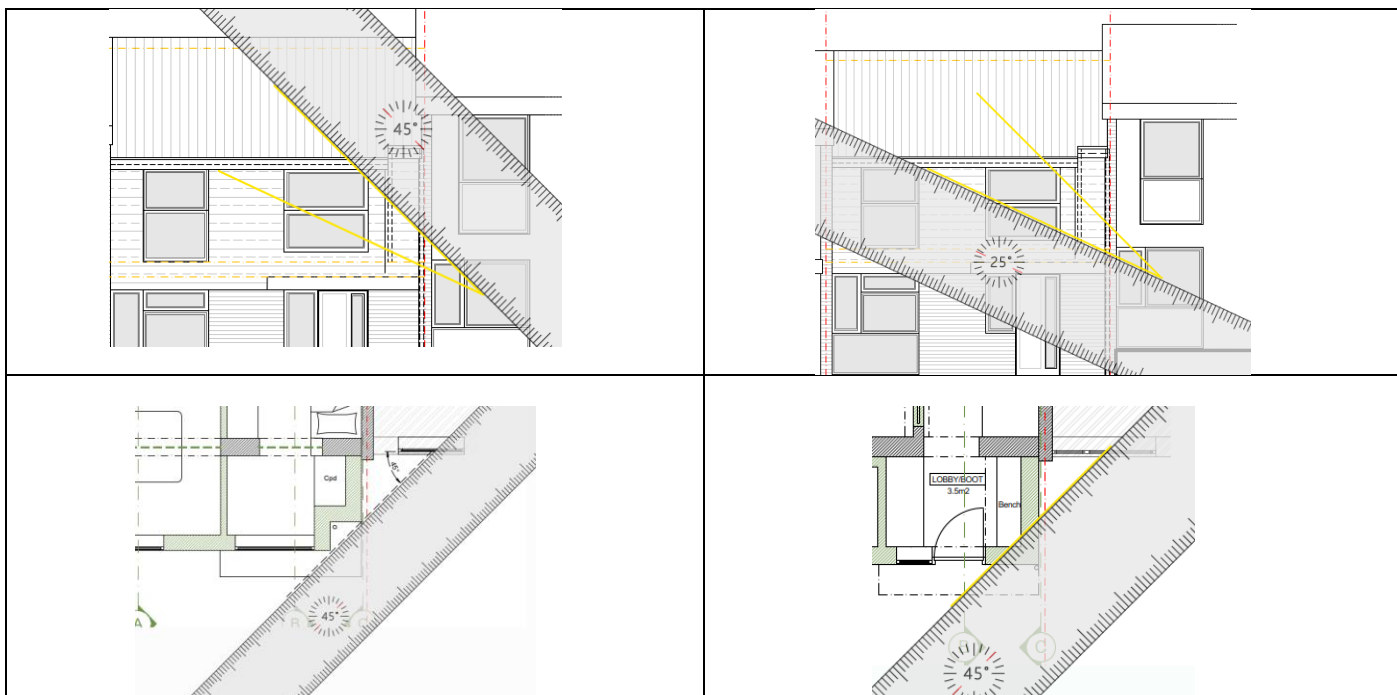
In situ, the development would not detrimentally impact the amenity of No. 33, as the front elevation would be at a similar depth to the main wall at No.33. However, there could be some impact to No.35, which shall be assessed below.

No windows are proposed in the flank elevation of the development, and the windows in the front elevation do not raise any privacy concerns. As such, it is considered there are no privacy issues that arise as a result of the development. However, there would be some impact on the outlook of No.35, as the majority of the extension would be two storey, and full width. In addition, the extension can be considered to cause a sense of enclosure, given that there is an existing porch at No.35, and the works would be (mostly) two storey:



Furthermore, there could be some impact on light as highlighted below:





However, the path of the sun from east to west on its southerly route means that the development would be unlikely to cause overshadowing to the dwelling to the south of the application property. Therefore, it is not considered to cause a detrimental impact on light.

Overall, the development is considered to detrimentally impact neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of outlook and causing a sense of enclosure. Therefore, the development fails to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2023).

Highways and Parking

No additional bedrooms are proposed as part of this application. Although the proposal would reduce space in the front garden, the parking situation remains unchanged. As such, there are no concerns in terms of highways and parking that arise as a result of this development.

Biodiversity

KCC Biodiversity Team have provided comments in relation to biodiversity:

This application is exempt from delivering statutory biodiversity gains as it is a householder application. However, paragraph 180(d) of the NPPF 2023 states: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by ... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity" which is typically taken to mean a measurable 1% gain. As such, even exempt applications are required to deliver biodiversity gains.

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Suggested condition wording

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As such, it is considered that concerns regarding biodiversity could be managed by condition, if planning permission were to be forthcoming.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Conclusion

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

Overall, the development is not considered to be a sympathetic or subservient addition to the existing dwelling, it would be an incongruous addition, and it would not conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area or be of a design to reflect the high quality character of the National Landscape. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy CS19 Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

In addition, the development is considered to detrimentally impact neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of outlook and causing a sense of enclosure. Therefore, the development fails to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties contrary to CS19 Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023).

Recommendation

Refusal.

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	L Hankin	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	3 rd September 2024	Dated:	3 rd September 2024