



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20230257
Location:	Three Links, White Post Lane, Cobham, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 9AX
Description:	Erection of a single storey rear/side extension and garage conversion.
Applicant:	Mrs Natasha Hulls
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application Form - dated 16/03/2023;
- Drawing no. 001 - Existing Site Location Plan, Block Plan, Floor Plan and Elevations;
- Drawing no. 002 - Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19980157	Construction of new roof over existing kitchen and garage and formation of open entrance canopy.	PERMITTED	26.05.1998
19930220	Erection of single storey side extension incorporating a dormer window in the front roof slope to form garage with playroom in the proposed roof space and conversion of the existing attached garage into a dining room.	REFUSED	26.07.1993
19530089	Erection of five bungalows	PERMITTED	08.07.1953
19520230	Erection of four bungalows	PERMITTED	01.05.1953

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (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 (LPFR) (1994)

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

Paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (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 (LPFR) (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (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
- Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance (SPD) (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal consultees

Local Ward Councillors - No comment received.

External consultees

Cobham Parish Council - No comment received.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site.

In addition, three surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 21st April 2023.

Analysis

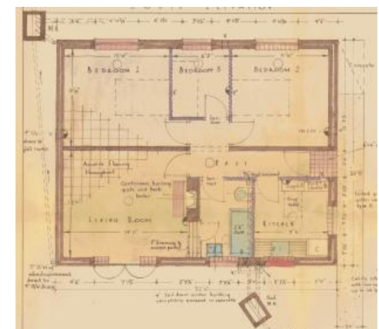
Site Description

Three Links is a detached chalet style bungalow located on the northern side of White Post Lane. The property is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt.



Original Dwelling

The application property forms one of 5 bungalows granted permission by the Gravesham Council in 1953 (ref. 19530089). The original plans show that the bungalow was a single storey rectangular building.



This is supported by a satellite image from December 1960.



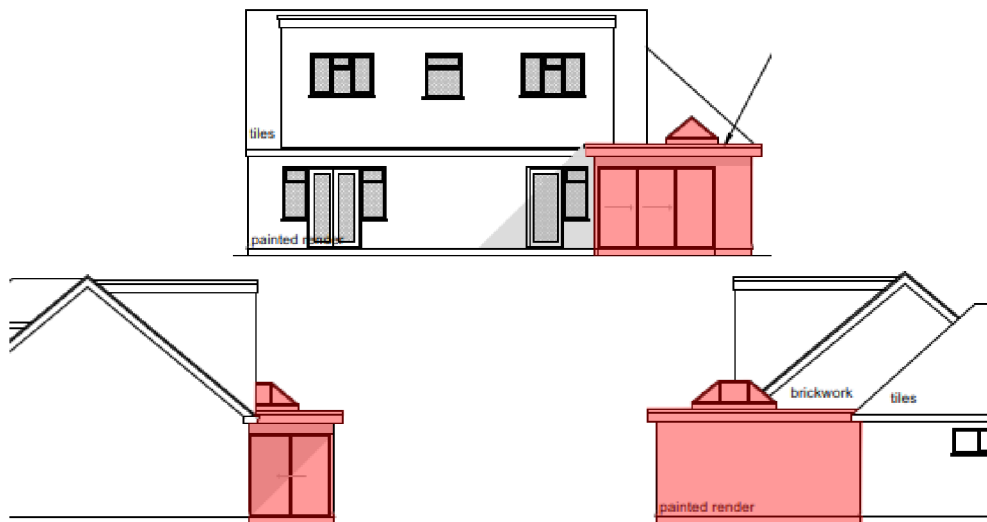
Therefore, the original dwelling is considered to be as shown in the images above and although there is no planning history relating to the front and side extensions, there are additions to the

original dwelling.

Proposed Development

This application proposes the erection of a single storey rear extension to the existing side projection. The extension would have a flat roof with a roof lanterns. It would have the following dimensions:

- Depth - 4.8m
- Width - 3.8m
- Height - 2.7m



As part of the development the existing garage would be converted into habitable rooms. The extension would create space for an enlarged kitchen/diner and the converted garage would be used as a pantry, utility room and wc.

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. Any very special circumstances?
4. Impact on the Landscape;
5. The effect on the character and appearance of the area; and
6. Other matters.

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

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the NPPF

(2021) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 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 (2021), 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 (2021), 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 (2021).

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 (2021) and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	74m ²	125.4m ²	69.5%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	64.9m ²	110.9m ²	70.9%
Volume	-	-	-

The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse exceed the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. 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.

The volume calculations of the extensions, over the original dwelling, have not been calculated in this application and will instead be visually assessed.

However the numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) 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 is does not provide a figure.

The proposed extension is essentially an infill, with a minimal projection beyond the rear wall of 1.95m. It is not excessive in size or scale, by following the width of the existing side projection and having a lower level flat roof. As such, the extension is considered to be visually proportionate to the dwelling and appropriate to the dwelling in terms of bulk and massing.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition to the property and as such the proposal would not be inappropriate development which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is therefore complies to Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and to paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

Nevertheless, given the overall increase in built form exceeds the one third limit set out in saved policy C13 (LPFR) it is considered important, in order to safeguard against inappropriate development within the Green Belt, to remove some permitted development rights through planning conditions. As such, a condition will be attached to the decision notice to remove Class A of Schedule 2, Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended, to ensure that the Local Planning Authority would give written consent to any extension to the property.

2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF (2021) 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.

Any new built form of development is likely to impact on the openness of the Green Belt, however it is important to establish the degree of harm.

The single storey extension to the rear of the property is set-down from the maximum height of the existing side extension and would only project beyond the rear wall of the dwelling by 1.95m. It is noted that the overall depth is 4.8m, however it is essentially an infill extension and would therefore have a limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt. As such, although introducing additional built form of development into the Green Belt, the extension has been designed to be subordinate to the garage structure and is therefore not considered to result in any significant harm to the openness.

The conversion of the existing garage would not have any impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Reference back to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF (2021) 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. Very special circumstances

No specific arguments have been put forward by the applicant in relation to the assessment of 'very special circumstances' and are not considered necessary.

4. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, 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 erection of a single storey rear extension and conversion of the garage are not considered to have any detrimental impact on the landscape.

5. *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. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2021) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

Gravesham's newly published Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for developments. 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 area and other surrounding dwellings should be considered. The SPD continues to address single storey rear extensions, stating that care should be taken to their depth and scale to avoid dominating the property, their width should not exceed that of the original property, and their height should be carefully considered when they abut neighbouring properties boundaries.

The extension is not excessive in size or height, it is proportionate to and does not dominate the original property. It is considered acceptable design and will be finished in matching materials to the main dwelling. Similarly, the conversion of the garage would be constructed using matching materials, with two windows replacing the garage door, which is at 90° to the highway and not directly visible. Therefore, the development would not impact the character of the property or the street scene.

The extension will be constructed using matching materials and is located to the rear, not visible from any public vantage point and will have no impact on the street scene. As such, the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable in design terms and in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

6. *Other matters*

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).

The extensions is not excessive in size and would not impact the existing garden space. Moreover, the extended kitchen/diner accords with Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020). Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Neighbouring

Policy CS19 (LPCS) seeks to protect amenity and ensure acceptable future living conditions. Section 16 of the NPPF (2021) also assists and seeks to ensure developments will function well, do not undermine quality of life and create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit and seeks to "secure high-quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings".

There will be no impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of loss of light, overlooking, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. No neighbour representations have been received. As such the proposal is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Parking and Highways

There are no parking or highway issues related to this proposal.

Conclusion:

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

The proposed extension is appropriately designed, and is both subservient and subordinate to the host building. The extension only projects beyond the rear wall of the dwelling by 1.95m and is essentially an infill extension, which further reduces the perceived bulk and massing of the development, lessens the impact on the open character of the Green Belt. The extension and garage conversion will be finished in matching materials, are not directly visible from any public vantage points and will have no impact on the street scene. There will be no impact on the amenity of future occupiers or neighbouring properties, there is sufficient space available for off-street parking and there will be no harm caused to the character of the landscape.

As such it is recommended that planning permission is granted, subject to conditions.

Recommendation:

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	10 th May 2023	Dated:	12 May 2023