



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240753

Location: 46 The Russets Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Conversion of the garage to form bedroom and shower room.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs West

Site Visit Date: 16 October 2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Site location plan received 16 August 2024
Existing block plan received 16 August 2024;
Proposed block plan received 16 August 2024;
Drawing no. MAD-504-01 Existing and proposed layouts and elevations; and
Covering letter dated 12 August 2024.

Procedural issues

The application drawings do not illustrate an existing outbuilding located in the north eastern corner of the rear garden and an existing driveway located in front of the application property. However, as these features have been noted and photographed during the case officer's site visit, there is no need for the submission of additional drawings.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20210098	Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20200863 to allow timber cladding to the front and rear external elevations of the building which will extend down from the soffit/fascia boards to the top of the downstairs windows.	Approved	09.03.2021
20200863	Erection of a double storey side extension.	Permitted	23.10.2020
20050903	Erection of a 1.7 metre high fence and gate at side.	Permitted	01.12.2005
19840842	Land adjoining Huntingfield Estate and Wrotham Road, Hook Green and being erection of 79 dwellings and associated garaging, laying out of estate roads and off site road works, open space provision and erection of 29 replacement garages. These details relate to the siting, design and external appearance of the proposed dwellings, the means of access thereto, garaging and parking arrangements, details of footpath linkages, tree planting	Approved	25.01.1985

	and landscaping, and details of vehicular and pedestrian access to the site.		
19840500	Outline application for residential development including provision of open space and formation of new vehicular access to the site and erection of 29 replacement garages	Permitted	18.07.1984
19810203	Outline application for residential development including provision of open space and formation of new vehicular access to site and erection of 29 replacement garages	Permitted	29.06.1981

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- P5 – Exceptions to the Vehicle Parking Standards – Change of Use of Buildings

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

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

Meopham Parish Council

Due to the nature and content of the proposed change Meopham Parish Council raises no objection to the application.

Dickens' Country Protection Society

The Society notes that the proposed conversion of the detached garage is to accommodate an elderly

relative. The Society would suggest if consent is granted it is time-limited as an annex to the main dwelling. No extensions or alterations should be made without the written consent of the planning authority.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised to six neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received.

Officer's Analysis

Principle of a Residential Annex

Residential annexes are an increasingly common form of development that are normally proposed in order to allow relatives to live with their family but to retain some degree of independence. To remain ancillary accommodation and not be considered as a separate unit of accommodation, the use of annex must be closely tied to the main dwelling.

The proposed development would provide residential accommodation in an existing outbuilding incorporating a bedroom/living room and a shower room. The outbuilding would be occupied by an elderly relative of an existing occupier. Therefore, there would be a familial and functional relationship between the occupier of the outbuilding and the main house.

It is noted that the annex would be located within the same curtilage as the main house, there would be no kitchen facilities and there would be no separate garden or parking area. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would provide a residential annex and would not constitute a separate dwelling.

The comments of the Dickens' Country Protection Society are noted.

Overall, provided that any planning permission granted was conditioned to ensure that the use and ownership of the outbuilding remains linked to the main dwelling and that no separate garden or curtilage area can be created in future, then the proposal would be acceptable in principle.

Notwithstanding the above, the following sections will assess the detail of the proposal.

Design, Character and Appearance

The proposed development comprises of the change of use of an existing outbuilding. External alterations include the insertion of bifold doors and an obscure glazed window and the enlargement of an existing window. The existing garage door would be retained.

The proposed windows would not look out of place and there would be no adverse impact to the character or appearance of the building. As such, the proposal would be appropriate in terms of design and be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

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 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. The Meopham Downs LCA is characterised by a mixture of grazed pasture and arable land, with field shape and size being varied because of the topography of the area. Tree belts and native hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees form distinct boundaries.

The application site is located within a village and the proposed development would be within an existing residential curtilage and only affect the use and fenestration of an existing outbuilding. Therefore, the proposal would not adversely affect the overall landscape character of the surrounding area. As such the proposal would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed development would provide a bedroom/living room that has a floor area in excess of the minimum requirement for a double bedroom in the Nationally Described Space Standards. There would be no alteration to the rear garden area or depth (which exceed the minimum requirements for a dwelling with four or more bedrooms, even when the space taken up by an existing outbuilding is taken into consideration). As such, the living conditions for future occupiers would be acceptable.

In order to prevent a loss of privacy for future occupiers, any proposed bathroom/w.c./en-suite windows should be conditioned to be permanently obscure glazed.

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

Neighbouring Amenity

The closest residential properties to the application site are no. 29 The Pippins (located to the west) and no. 47 The Russets (located to the south). No. 1 The Pippins and nos. 2 and 3 The Russets are located to the north and north east respectively, across the roadway.

Due to the design of the proposed development, to the screening provided by boundary treatments and to the layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surrounding dwellings.

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

Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) requires new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

Saved Policy T1 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) requires consideration of the traffic impact of development on the transport system and environment and seeks to ensure all development is adequately served by the highway network.

Saved Policy P5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) allows for a relaxation of the vehicle parking standards for changes of use of buildings, the sub-division of existing dwellings and minor extensions in certain circumstances and provided that existing on-street parking problems are not unduly exacerbated.

The application property is a four bedroom dwelling. The proposed development would add a bedroom to the property but result in the loss of an existing single garage. There is on site parking for at least two vehicles on an existing driveway located in front of the garage and for at least one vehicle on the site frontage, which would not be altered and which can be retained permanently via a condition attached to any planning permission granted.

It is noted that the application site is located in a relatively sustainable location, close to local shops and services and a bus route. There are no parking restrictions in The Russets and on street parking appears readily available. Therefore, even if the proposed development would result in a small increase in demand for on-street parking in the surrounding area, this would not exacerbate any existing parking issues and would not undermine highway safety.

Overall, the proposed development would cause no adverse highway safety impacts and as such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Saved Policies T1 and T5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The comments of Meopham Parish Council are noted.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Materials to match existing

Obscure glazing to en-suite/w.c. windows

Use as an annex only

No subdivision of curtilage

Retention of existing frontage parking areas

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:	<i>K Joyce</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	17th October 2024	Dated:	18th October 2024