



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240567

Location: Ashlea Horns Oak Road Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of new pitched roof to replace existing flat roof on western side; Alterations to existing front and rear dormers and front porch; internal and fenestration alterations; and formation of driveway at front.

Applicant: Mrs Harleen Mattu

Site Visit Date: 15 August 2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Application for Planning Permission form;
Drawing no. 3445 – 016 Rev. E Existing and proposed layouts, elevations, roof plans and block plans, site location plan and proposed section;
Letter from the agent dated 13 June 2024; and
Email from the agent received 01 July 2024.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. 3445 – 016 Rev. C Existing and proposed layouts, elevations, roof plans and block plans.~~

Procedural Issues

Following a request from the case officer, the proposed external facing materials were amended to match with those existing. As the change was minor, no additional publicity or consultation was undertaken.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20240257	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and removal of original conservatory.	Certificate Granted	17.05.2024
20231334	Demolition of existing garden room, carport and enclosed porch; erection of new pitched roof incorporating front and rear gable features to replace existing dormers, pitched roof to replace existing flat roof on western side and rear balcony; erection of single storey rear extension; enlargement of first floor habitable area; alterations to internal layout; and formation of car parking and turning area at front.	Refused	01.03.2024

20230659	Erection of a single storey rear extension.	Certificate Refused	03.08.2023
20230365	Erection of part single storey and part two storey rear extension; erection of new pitched roof incorporating two gables in the rear roof slope and two dormers and a gable in the front roof slope; erection of single storey front extension; demolition of rear outbuilding and formation of two vehicle parking spaces in the front garden.	Refused	01.06.2023
19800181	Erection of single storey rear extension to form utility room and enlarged kitchen erection of front porch	Permitted	12.05.1980
19760385	Formation of bathroom and bedroom extension in existing roof space and erection of extension at first floor level to form two additional bedrooms	Permitted	13.08.1976
19550165	Erection of a detached bungalow (TH/6/55/143A) Details relating to outline permission	Permitted	08.08.1956
19550164	Erection of a detached bungalow (TH/6/55/143) Outline permission	Permitted	24.08.1955

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 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
- C13 – Extensions to dwellings in the countryside
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

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 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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)
- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2021-2026
- Regulation 18 (Stage 2) Development Management Policies Document (2020)

Other Relevant Guidance

- Kent County Council Vehicle Crossing: - Guidance and Self-Assessment (2018)
- Driveway Dropped Kerb Guidance
- Front Driveway Guidance

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

KCC Biodiversity Officer

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us (including aerial photos and biological records) and the information submitted, we advise that we are satisfied that there is no requirement for an ecological survey to be carried out.

We have taken this view because Google Street View shows that the building to be converted is in good condition limiting opportunities for gaps/cracks to be present which would support roosting bats. There will be little change to the building footprint which already exists on hardstanding and holds a low ecological value. We are satisfied from the small-scale works proposed that the nearby local wildlife sites will not be impacted.

Bat lighting:

Lighting can negatively impact nocturnal species, like bats, that could be foraging and commuting on site and in the surrounding habitat. Currently there is no lighting plan or information submitted. Therefore, if bats are present foraging/commuting within the area, there is a risk that any lighting may have a negative impact.

To mitigate against potential adverse effects on bats, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2023, we suggest that the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at night' is consulted in the lighting design of the development. We advise that the incorporation of sensitive lighting design for bats is submitted to the local planning authority and secured via an attached condition with any planning permission.

Lighting - Suggested Wording:

Prior to occupation, a lighting plan demonstrating it has been designed to avoid impacts on roosting, foraging, and commuting bats will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The lighting will be designed to follow the recommendations within the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting at night' and the plan will confirm the type and locations of external lighting. All external lighting will be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the plan and will be maintained thereafter.

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.

We note that the site has a hedgerow consisting of large trees on the eastern side of the boundary that have the potential for breeding birds to be nesting in. From a previous application (planning reference 20231334), the Design and Access statement says that there are already native wildflowers to the rear of

the garden to benefit birds and other species on the applicant's land. We recommend that enhancements for (nesting) birds are incorporated into the site, such as bird boxes to support the local populations, along with integrated bat bricks/boxes into the proposed development itself. We advise that this should be conditioned if planning permission is granted.

Ecological Enhancement Condition – Suggested Wording:

Within six months of works commencement a plan detailing how the development will enhance biodiversity will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. This will include the installation of bat and bird bricks/boxes. The approved measures will be implemented and retained thereafter.

Kent Downs National Landscape Unit

On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales were renamed 'National Landscapes' (NLs). Accordingly, the Kent Downs AONB is now the Kent Downs National Landscape. Its legal designation and policy status remain the same.

Also of note is the changes introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which came into force on 26/December 2023. The Act amends the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, which is the primary legislation relating to AONBs and replaces the previous Duty of Regard to AONBs set out at S85 with a new, strengthened requirement that:

'In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty'. (Part 12 - Miscellaneous; Section 245. Protected Landscapes; paras (5) - (10).

This places a much stronger duty on relevant authorities, which includes local authorities, to ensure that their actions and decisions seek to conserve and enhance AONBs, marking a significant change to the legal context of AONB policy.

The Kent Downs National Landscape Team has seen a recent uplift in the number of consultations on planning applications. In accordance with the agreed Kent Downs Planning Protocol, which sets out that the Kent Downs Landscape Team will only have a limited land use planning role and will prioritise its involvement in planning to planning policy matters, we will not normally provide bespoke comments on more minor applications such as this. This does not imply support for, or objection to, the proposal. If our input would be particularly valued in this instance, please get in touch and we endeavour to provide informal advice where our current planning capacity allows.

In determining the application, the local planning authority has a new statutory duty, as set out above, to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape. Further advice on the new duty is provided in Appendix 2 of this letter and in our Interim Advice Note for Local Planning Authorities. The Kent Downs National Landscape Team recommends that to help fulfill the new statutory duty, the Local Planning Authority should ensure that the decision is consistent with relevant national and local planning policy and takes into account the aims, objectives and principles set out in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and its associated guidance documents.

Meopham Parish Council

The application in scope and size appears acceptable given the overall footprint of the plot, whilst the planned changes should not adversely impact the street scene or have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties. Subject to suitable and acceptable materials being used in the finish I cannot see any reason to object subject to any Green Belt restrictions.

We therefore have no objection to this proposal.

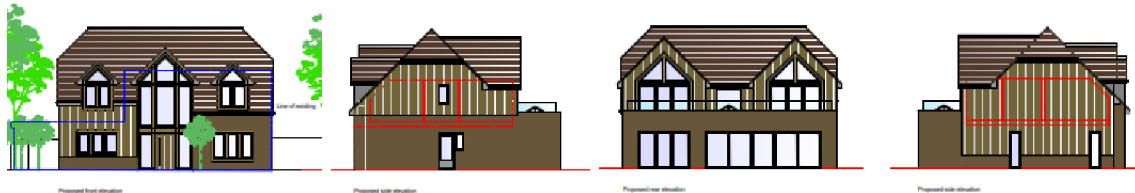
Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice and to two neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received. The overall consultation period expired on 02 August 2024.

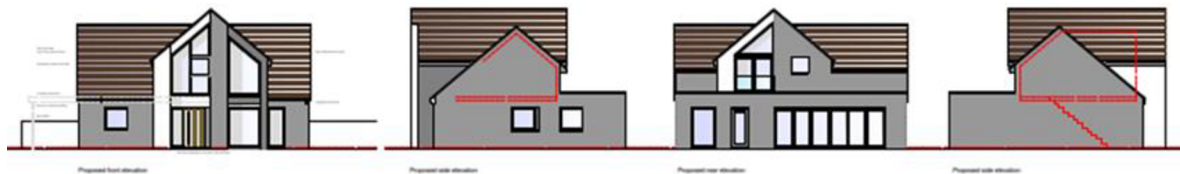
Officer's Analysis

Background

In June 2023, planning permission was refused for the erection of a part single storey and a part two storey rear extension; the erection of a new pitched roof incorporating two gables in the rear roof slope and two dormers and a gable in the front roof slope; the erection of a single storey front extension; the demolition of a rear outbuilding and the formation of two vehicle parking spaces in the front garden at the application site (reference 20230365). The refused elevations were as follows;



In March 2024, planning permission was refused for the demolition of an existing garden room, carport and enclosed porch; the erection of a new pitched roof incorporating front and rear gable features to replace existing dormers, a pitched roof to replace an existing flat roof on the western side and a rear balcony; the erection of a single storey rear extension; the enlargement of the first floor habitable area; alterations to the internal layout; and the formation of car parking and turning area at front at the application site (reference 20231334). The refused elevations were as follows;



The ground of refusal for both applications was;

1. The proposal, by virtue of its proposed size, scale, massing and form, would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as it would result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling and harm the openness of the Green Belt. In the absence of any very special circumstances to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt, the proposal would be contrary to Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014, Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review and to Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

In May 2024, a Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) was granted for the proposed erection of a single storey rear extension and the removal of the original conservatory at the application site (reference 20240257). The approved layout was as follows;



Green Belt

The application site lies within the Green Belt. Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. In the rural area it 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 (which is the case here), will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the Local Plan Core Strategy.

Paragraph 142 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF 2023) sets out that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence and paragraph 143 lists the five purposes that the Green Belt serves. At the application site, the Green Belt assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Paragraph 152 of the NPPF 2023 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF 2023 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt but it lists certain exceptions. These exceptions are set out in sub-paragraphs 154(a) to 154(g). Sub-paragraph 154(c) identifies the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) 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 2023, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 154 of the NPPF 2023.

In particular, Saved 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 2023 and should be afforded weight.

A recent appeal decision at no. 42 Beechwood Drive (reference APP/K2230/D/23/3326603 dated 13 February 2024), is relevant. Here, the Inspector stated that;

“The GLPFR pre-dates the Framework’s publication and, through applying restraint upon development in the Green Belt, Saved Policy C13 appears broadly consistent with the Framework and thus should be afforded considerable weight.”

Regard should also be had to an emerging policy in the Regulation 18 (Stage 2) Development Management Policies Document (2020), Proposed Policy GB 5 Extensions, Replacement Buildings and Ancillary Development in the Green Belt. In relation to extensions, this policy reads as follows;

Proposed Policy GB 5 Extensions, Replacement Buildings and Ancillary Development in the Green Belt

Extensions

- 3.6.12. Proposals for the extension of an original buildingⁱ in the Green Belt will only be permitted where the extension will not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building unless justified by very special circumstances that clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt and any other harm. The following will be taken into account in determining whether the proposal is proportionate:
- its footprint, floorspaceⁱⁱ and volume compared to the original building;ⁱ and
 - whether its scale, mass and height is subservient to the original building;ⁱ
- 3.6.13. In addition to the above, Core Strategy Policy CS19 will be applied to determine whether the design of any proposed extension is appropriate, having regard to the presence of any existing extensions and outbuildings, prominence and visual impact of the proposal.

It is noted that as an emerging policy, the weight attached to it is very limited but it does illustrate the Borough Council's intended approach to the assessment of green belt extensions.

The original building, for the purposes of assessing whether the proposed development is a disproportionate addition or not, was granted outline planning permission in September 1955 (TH/6/55/143) and the details were approved in August 1956 (TH/6/55/143A). The original building had a floor area of 60 square metres, a height of 5.7 metres and was a modest bungalow with a simple pitched and gable ended roof and a rectangular footprint.

Although planning permissions were granted at the application site in 1976 and 1980, these do not appear to have been implemented. However, the submitted plans for 19760385 show that sometime before their submission, the building had been extended to provide a lounge, conservatory, porch, car port (front/side open area under canopy) and with front and rear dormers.

The additions to the original building have provided 95 square metres of new floor space and represent a 158% increase above the size of the original building. It should be noted that, as the car port area is open, it does not provide habitable floor space and as such, it has not been included in the 95 square metre floor space figure. It has however, increased the footprint and bulk of the building.

The current dwelling has a total floor area of 155 square metres and a height of 5.7 metres. It is a bungalow with habitable accommodation in the roof space, with ground floor extensions to the rear and side and an open, car port structure also to the side. The main roof is pitched with gable ends and has front and rear dormers. There are large areas of flat roof on the rear and side of the building. The current dwelling represents a significant enlargement of the original bungalow, which has increased the floor area, footprint and the volume of the original building.

The proposed development would add a pitched roof over an existing flat roofed area on the western side of the building and include alterations to the existing front and rear dormers and front porch. The proposal would result in the building having a floor area of 126 square metres and a height of 5.7 metres. There would be no increase in floor area above the existing building because the new roof space would be used for storage (and would have insufficient head room for habitable accommodation) and due to the removal of the car port, the building footprint would decrease. The height of the building would remain the same.

The increase in floor area above the original building would be 66 square metres or 110%. But there would be an overall reduction in floor area compared to the existing building (due to the removal of the existing

rear conservatory) and there would be a reduction in the building footprint (due to the removal of the car port).

As a general rule (and in line with Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)), the Borough Council considers that extensions which exceed the overall floor area of an original building by one third (33%) or more, are likely to be disproportionate additions. However, it is acknowledged that floorspace is only one measure of such impact and in coming to a conclusion on this issue, the Council has regard to a range of other factors including footprint, floorspace, volume, scale, mass and height (in line with Proposed Policy GB 5 of the Regulation 18 (Stage 2) Development Management Policies Document (2020)).

The increase in floor area above original that is proposed would be in excess of the one third limit set out in Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994. However, it is noted that due to the removal of the existing conservatory at the rear, there would actually be a reduction in floor area compared to the existing building. The proposed development would increase the bulk and massing of the roof by replacing a flat roof with a pitched roof but this alteration would not add significant additional volume to the building. It is noted that the alterations to the existing dormers and porch would not result in any increase to the size or bulk of the building and that the removal of the existing car port would reduce the amount of built form at ground floor level.

It should be noted that under the LDC reference 20240257, a rear extension of 33 square metres floor area could be built, which would add floor space to the dwelling. Therefore, if these LDC works are undertaken, then the removal of the existing conservatory would not actually result in a reduction in built form. However, this permitted development project has not yet been implemented and is separate to the current proposal.

It should also be noted that a new car parking and turning area would be formed at the front of the application site. The existing driveway is largely unsurfaced and provides space for three vehicles to park on the site frontage without turning.

The proposed hardstanding would be surfaced with tarmac or permeable block paving and provide two parking spaces with a turning area. Whilst it would be preferable, in terms of openness and visually in this rural location, for the proposed hardstanding to be surfaced in an alternative material (e.g. gravel or grasscrete) it is considered that because the extent of the hard surface would not be excessive and because the front garden has large areas of grass and vegetation, which would soften the built form, then the proposed hardstanding would cause no significant adverse impacts to the Green Belt.

It is acknowledged that the proposed alterations to the dwelling, by their nature as new built form, would erode openness and therefore would be detrimental to the Green Belt in spatial terms. However, due to their location in a plot that is surrounded by mature trees and vegetation, the proposed development would not be widely visible from any public vantage points. Therefore, the visual detriment to the openness of the Green Belt would be limited.

In order to ensure that there are no further adverse impacts on the Green Belt in the future and in light of the fact that the original dwelling at the application site has already been subject to significant enlargement, it would be reasonable and necessary to remove permitted development rights for further enlarging the building and erecting outbuildings.

Overall, the proposal would be appropriate development in the Green Belt and in line with Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014, Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review and paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF 2023.

Design, Character and Appearance

The application site is located in the Kent Downs National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Local Plan Core Strategy is relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Kent Downs AONB

Management Plan (now known as the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan) and the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications.

The Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan is essentially about conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape (page 16). It sets out that the local character, qualities, distinctiveness and natural resources of the Kent Downs National Landscape will be conserved and enhanced in the design, scale, siting, landscaping and materials of new development (Principle SD2). That development should conserve and enhance the character and qualities of the Kent Downs National Landscape rather than detracting from it (Principle SD3). That new proposals should conserve and enhance tranquillity and where possible dark night skies (Principle SD7). Furthermore, the Plan will ensure that proposals do not negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the Kent Downs National Landscape (Principle SD8).

According to the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment, the Harvel Wooded Downs LCA is characterised by varied topography with steep valley sides and plateaux. Ancient woodland, chestnut coppice and small paddocks and pastures can be found. Views both within and out of the character area are limited because of the combined effect of topography and the heavily wooded character of the landscape.

It is noted that there would be no loss of vegetation and that the residential nature of the application site would be retained. The proposed development would result in an increase in the size and bulk of the application property, which would consolidate and extend the level of built development on the plot and in the wider area. However, the alterations would not be harmful to overall landscape quality. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to landscape character.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding local area. In particular, the design of new development should be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.

The area surrounding the application site has a variety of dwellings in different types and styles. Located immediately to the west, is a two storey dwelling and immediately to the east, is a bungalow with habitable accommodation in the roof. Surrounding properties have been subject to numerous extensions and alterations. The existing building has a mixture of external facing materials and has been extended in a piecemeal fashion, which has resulted in a dwelling with an uninspiring appearance.

The design of the proposed development would be in keeping with the existing building and the proposed external facing materials would match with those existing. The proposal would not look out of place in its surroundings, as it would have the same height as existing and the design approach would result in a more consolidated and regular building shape.

The proposed development would result in a significant increase in the size and bulk of the application property. However, the changed appearance of the dwelling would not be harmful to the character of the street scene.

The proposed hardstanding would be surfaced with tarmac or permeable block paving. However, it would be preferable, in this rural location, for the proposed hardstanding to be surfaced in an alternative material, such as gravel or grasscrete. Out of the two proposed surfaces, permeable block paving would be more appropriate visually.

In order to ensure the details of the proposal are satisfactory, a condition can be attached to any planning permission granted, to require the submission and approval of the proposed surfacing for the hardstanding.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the character or

appearance of the surrounding street scene or landscape and would be in line with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014), the Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan and the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants. In this regard, the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The proposed development would provide good living conditions for future occupiers (with bedroom sizes that comply with the NDSS and sufficient garden would be retained to comply with the Borough Council's RLG).

Overall, the proposal would not be detrimental to residential amenity and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014, the Nationally Described Space Standards 2015 and the Residential Layout Guidelines 2020.

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of neighbouring occupiers. In this regard, the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The closest residential properties to the application site are Parsley Cottage, Horns Oak Road (located to the west) and Beam End, Horns Oak Road (located to the east). Agricultural land is located to the north and south. No neighbour representations have been received.

The proposed development would introduce a number of new windows to the application property, including a ground floor family room window and first floor bedroom window in the side elevations facing Beam End. Whilst mature vegetation and the existing boundary treatment would screen any overlooking from the proposed ground floor window, the first floor window would face an existing first floor window at Beam End. However, it is noted that the existing front dormer side elevation contains a similarly positioned first floor window, therefore any adverse overlooking impacts would be no greater than existing.

Due to the design of the proposed development and the location, layout and orientation of the surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts to the occupiers of the surroundings dwellings.

In order to prevent any future loss of privacy to neighbours, any planning permission granted should be conditioned to preclude the insertion of any windows or openings at first floor level in the side elevations of the proposed development.

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 September 2014 and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 require new development to mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks and to provide sufficient parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

The application property has four bedrooms and on-site parking for three/four vehicles (in a car port and frontage parking area). The proposed development would reduce the number of bedrooms to three and would remove the car port and provide an amended frontage parking layout.

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a three bedroom dwelling should have two vehicle parking spaces. Therefore, the proposal would provide sufficient parking and if planning permission is granted, then a condition should be attached to require the parking to be provided in accordance with the submitted drawings and thereafter retained permanently.

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.

Biodiversity

The application site is located in a Biodiversity Opportunity Area and as such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 is especially relevant. It states that there will be no net loss of biodiversity in Gravesham and that opportunities to enhance, restore, recreate and maintain habitats will be sought, particularly within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

The KCC Biodiversity Officer has highlighted the potential for adverse light impacts to bats and the need for ecological enhancement at the application site. Two planning conditions have been suggested that would cover these issues.

Overall, provided that the above mentioned planning conditions are attached to any planning permission granted, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to biodiversity and would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Climate change

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 requires new development to take advantage of opportunities to build in resilience to the effects of climate change.

No details of any specific proposals to reduce the impacts of climate change have been provided. Nonetheless, it is noted that the new building would remove historical extensions and alterations to the building and would utilise modern building techniques, which should result in reduced energy consumption.

Therefore, the proposed development would be in line with Policy CS19 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 comments of Meopham Parish Council and the Kent Downs National Landscape Unit have been taken into consideration in the determination of this application.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

- Development in accordance with the approved plans
- Submission and approval of ecological enhancements
- Submission and approval of external lighting details
- Submission and approval of surfacing for hardstanding
- Materials to match existing
- Provision and retention of frontage parking
- No further openings in flank elevations at first floor level

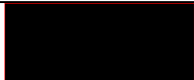
Removal of PD rights for any enlargement of the dwelling and outbuildings

Conclusion & Recommendation

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

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	23rd August 2024	Dated:	23 August 2024