

DEMOLITION OF AN ATTACHED OUTBUILDING AND THE ERECTION OF AN EXTENSION TO AN EXISTING DOUBLE GARAGE,
TOGETHER WITH NEW ROOF, NEW ENTRANCE DOORS, SOLAR PANELS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINT AT,

BELLEVUE, BRIMSTONE LANE, HARVEL, GRAVESEND, DA13 0BW

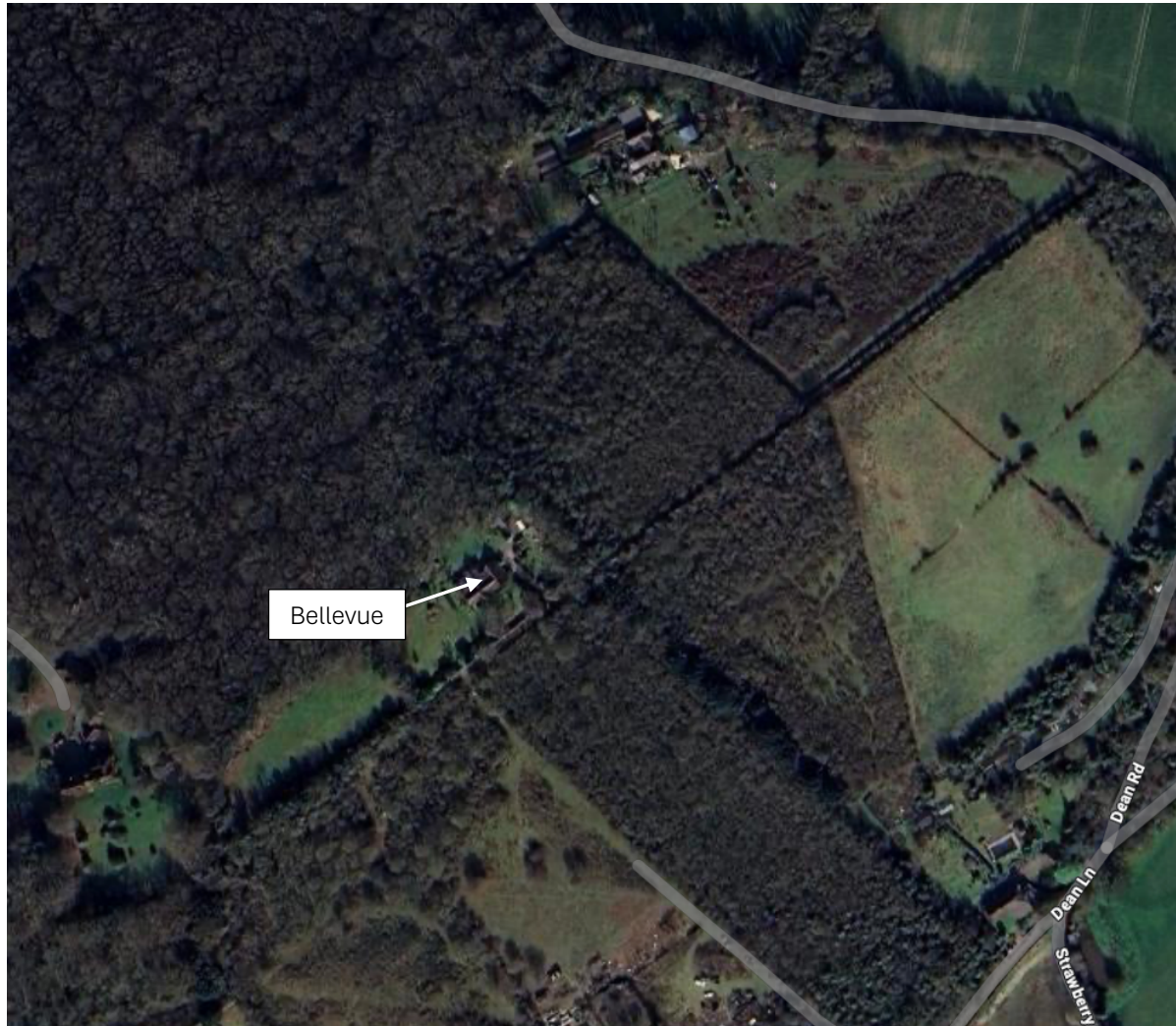
+ DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



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1.0 + INTRODUCTION

This design, access and planning statement has been prepared by Kent Design Studio in support of an application for planning permission for the demolition of an attached building and erection of replacement extension to an existing double garage to the property of Bellevue.



+ Aerial view of Site (*Google Maps*)



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2.0 + SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

Immediate

The application site comprises of a detached dwelling, Bellevue, which is a four-bedroom family home. The site benefits from various outbuildings and generously sized gardens to the north and west of the property (approximately 1 acre).

Surrounding

The site is located within the Green Belt, the Kent Downs National Landscape (formally the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area, a Biodiversity Opportunity Area, an Archaeological Notification Area and Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2.

It is also located adjacent to the Strawberry Hill Pasture and Woodland, Meopham Local Wildlife Site (which adjoins the southwestern boundary) and a public footpath (NS227) runs along the front boundary.

3.0 + PROPOSAL

The proposal seeks to provide additional parking and workshop space adjacent to the existing garage which will involve the demolition of the existing attached structures. The existing garage provided two parking spaces, whereas the proposed garage now provides spaces for up to four no. cars as well as maintaining an area for the workshop and log store.

The works include replacing the existing doors to the storeroom, which are only 1.5m in width. We are proposing doors 2.4m in width to provide better access.

The existing roof will be removed entirely, to be replaced with a higher quality tiled roof over the whole block to help unify the building. This also provides a new south facing surface which is suitable for solar panels to be mounted to. In respect of sustainability, an electric vehicle charging point and solar battery storage system will also be provided.



+ Proposed Garage Elevations

4.0 + PLANNING HISTORY

Following a search on Gravesham District Council's website, the following applications were found relating directly to the property of Bellevue:

Ref: 2018/0320

Demolition of the greenhouse and part of the existing outbuilding and erection of a detached single storey outbuilding to form a garage and workshop.

Appeal dismissed (2019/00015/NONDET) 07/10/2019

Ref: 2018/0229

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of an outbuilding to form workshop and games room.

Appeal allowed (2019/00013/NONDET) 07/10/2019

Ref: 2017/0280

Erection of outbuilding incorporating a dormer extension in the rear roof slope to form garage/ workshop and storeroom over.

Refused 09/05/2017

Ref: 2016/0595

Erection of outbuilding incorporating a dormer extension in the rear roof slope to form garage/ workshop with workshop and storeroom over.

Refused 09/08/2016

Ref: 2007/0078

Demolition of rear porch, WC and pantry and erection of a single storey rear extension to form kitchen, dining room, laundry room, WC and porch.

Permitted 17/05/2007

Ref: 1981/0015

Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged bedroom.

Permitted 24/02/1981

Ref: 1977/0664

Erection of front porch.

Permitted 21/09/1977



5.0 + PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

Pre-application advice was sought (ref. PRE/2024/0289) for the “demolition of an attached outbuilding and the erection of an extension to an existing double garage incorporating a new roof over the whole building, new entrance doors, solar panels and an electric vehicle charging point.”

The planning officer gave the following summary, to which we have added comments to below:

- *The proposal would be considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt.*
- *The proposed development would be broadly appropriate in design and would not be detrimental to the character of the appearance of the surrounding landscape.*
- *Careful consideration should be given to the proposed external facing materials, so they are of good quality and match with the existing buildings on the plot.*

The new building looks to respond to the building it is to replace, and therefore carrying through the timber weatherboard and slate roof should be acceptable, and we feel more appropriate for an outbuilding rather than trying to match the external materials of the host dwelling. If this was the case, and we proposed a white render finish, the outbuilding would appear more domestic and would visually compete with the main dwelling rather than being subservient. Please see the material schedule as shown on the drawings for further details on the proposals.

- *The proposal would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of future or surrounding occupiers.*
- *Any future planning application should set out the number of bedrooms in the dwelling at the application site, show all existing and proposed parking spaces (both internal and external) and show that the required number of on-site parking spaces can be provided.*

The dwelling is a four-bedroom home which would require a minimum of three on-site parking spaces. These have been shown on the proposed floor plans, and proposed block plan provided.

- *The proposal has the potential for adverse impacts to protected species and habitats and there is likely to be a need for ecological mitigation and enhancement. Any future application should address these issues via appropriate ecological surveys and mitigation proposals are required.*

Please see the accompanying Scoping Bat Report provided by KB Ecology. It was concluded that the garage and attached outbuilding offered no suitability for roosting bats.

- *The proposal would deliver renewable energy and reduced energy consumption.*
- *Any future planning applications should include all foul and surface water drainage details, ideally incorporating SUDS and ensure that the proposal would have no adverse impacts to groundwater quality or supply.*

Please see the accompanying drawing ref. 4829-12.

- *The proposal would have no adverse impacts on archaeology or the alignment/ use of Public Right of Way NS227.*
- *The drawings submitted with any future planning application should only indicate the curtilage of the dwelling as the application site (shown with a red line boundary), any other land owned by the applicant (shown with a blue line boundary) and should include existing and proposed block plans (at 1:200 or 1:500 scale) showing all built development located at the application site both before and after the proposed development.*

Please see the accompanying drawings ref. 4829-01B and 4829-10B.



6.0 + PLANNING POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Borough Council to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are other material considerations, the development plan should be the starting point, and other material considerations should be taken into account in reaching a decision.

The Development Plan for Gravesham currently comprises:

- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Policies Map, September 2014;
- Saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review, November 1994; and
- The Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013 – 2030, July 2016, revised 2020

The relevant policies for the proposal are as follows:

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principle
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

- C13 – Extensions to dwellings in the Countryside
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

- 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
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Other Material Considerations

Supplementary Planning Guidance and Other Documents

The Council has adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) documents, Development Briefs and Conservation Area Appraisals. These elaborate on saved policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review and policies in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and are material considerations in determining planning applications.



In addition, the Council has adopted a number of documents that have been produced by Kent County Council also as Supplementary Guidance.

The following documents are relevant to this proposal:

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidance 2020
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards 2006
- Householder Extensions/ Alterations Design Guide 2021
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code 2024
- Landscape Character Assessment 2009

Other documents:

- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2021-2026

7.0 + PLANNING ANALYSIS

This section of the report sets out an assessment of the proposed development against the relevant planning policy, material considerations and guidance. A topic-based approach is taken in respect of the prevailing planning considerations, with due regard to the planning policies at national and local level.

Green Belt Location

As the application site is located in the Green Belt, paragraphs 142 and 143 and 152-156 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 and Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 are most relevant.

The overriding policy approach in the Green Belt is that new built development is strictly controlled, in order to protect the openness of the land. Paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF 2023 set out circumstances in which new built development can be considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt. In this instance paragraph 154(c) is relevant and sets out that:

“154(c) 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.”

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.

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 2024, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with that document.

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 2024 and should be afforded some limited weight.

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 was acknowledged in the pre-application advice 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 this instance, the proposed development would comprise of the extension/alteration of an existing building, which would not result in a disproportionate addition above the size of the original building and as such, the proposal would be considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the proposal would be in line with paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF 2024, Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

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 Luddesdown 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 highlights the importance of 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 Luddesdown Downs LCA is characterised by very undulating topography with arable and pasture farmland, native woodland, narrow winding lanes with properties and farmsteads located along them. The overall condition of the landscape is good and it has high sensitivity. The document recommends conserving its distinctive landscape features in order to maintain its character and quality, including conserving woodlands and hedgerows, narrow lanes, and ensuring development maintains the sparse and distinctive character of built development.

There would be no significant loss of vegetation, and 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 existing outbuilding, which would consolidate and extend the level of built development on the plot and in the wider area. However, the extension/alterations would not be excessive or harmful to overall landscape quality. Therefore, 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 new building looks to respond to the building it is to replace, therefore carrying through the timber weatherboard and slate roof, which is appropriate for an outbuilding rather than trying to match the external materials of the host dwelling. If this was the case, a white render finish was proposed, the outbuilding would appear more domestic and would visually compete with the main dwelling rather than being subservient.

Amenity

The proposed development would improve the living conditions for future occupiers and sufficient rear garden area and depth would be retained. As such, the proposal would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of future occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy.

Due to the separation distances between the application site and the nearest neighbouring dwellings, there would be no adverse impacts to the residential amenity of any surrounding occupiers and the proposal would be in line with Policy CS19 of Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy.

Highways & Parking

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.

According to the Borough Council's adopted Vehicle Parking Standards, a four-bedroom dwelling should have three vehicle parking spaces. The document also sets out that the minimum internal dimensions for a single domestic garage are 5.5 metres (length) by 3.6 metres (width) with a double garage having the same length but with a width of 6 metres. These standards have been adhered to within the proposed design, with the allocated parking spaces shown on the proposed floor plan and block plan.

Overall, the proposed development would not be likely to be detrimental to highway safety and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994).

Biodiversity

The application site is located in a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) and adjacent to the Strawberry Hill Pasture and Woodland, Meopham Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which adjoins southwestern boundary. As such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 is 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.

Due to the proximity of the LWS and the application site's BOA location, KB Ecology was appointed to provide a Scoping Bat Report which found that no bats or signs of bats were found during the internal/ external inspection of the garage, and the existing garage/ outbuilding was judged to offer no suitability for roosting bats.

Overall, the proposed development would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).



Climate Change and Drainage

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.

Policy CS18 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 seeks to ensure that the run off from new development has, as a minimum, no greater adverse effect than the existing situation and requires the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) where feasible. Please see the accompanying SUDs diagram which provides this information.

The proposal includes solar panels and an electric vehicle charging point and the extension/alterations to the outbuilding would utilise modern building techniques, which would deliver renewable energy and reduced energy consumption.

Impacts on the Public Right of Way

The application site is located adjacent to the NS227 Public Right of Way (a footpath that runs along the site frontage). However, as the proposal constitutes an extension to an existing building, that is located towards the rear of the application site, it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to the alignment or to the use of the Public Right of Way.

Other Material Considerations

The application site is located within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. 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 archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

9.0 + CONCLUSION

In light of the above, we consider the proposed development accords with the provisions of the NPPF as to constitute sustainable development and the currently adopted local plan. The scheme for the replacement garage extension would not result in any adverse or negative environmental impacts such as significant harm to the landscape, or the surrounding properties, and would represent an appropriate re-design of the existing building.

The development would not cause harm to neighbouring amenity, highway safety, or to the surrounding landscape character and deliver an enhancement.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable in the balance of items discussed within this statement, and there are not considered to be any other material considerations which would indicate a refusal of planning permission.

Given the above, it is politely requested that the proposed scheme should be positively viewed in the context of the material considerations, the NPPF and the emerging local plan and that planning permission should be granted.