

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Mulberry Cottage is a single storey detached property on the south eastern side of Beechwood Drive. It is located on a corner plot with the main road at the front and Beechwood Gardens on the left side and at the back.



The existing property consists of two bedrooms, living room, kitchen and bathroom. It has not been previously extended so it has kept its original footprint over the years. *Please refer to Appendix 1.*

There is a detached single garage which is located to the north-west of the property. Its construction was permitted under the original planning application in 1991. The garage is a solid built with single brick walls over concrete slab foundation under tiled pitched roof. It is aligned with the front wall of the property and it extends next to the boundary line with the neighbouring property Scotts House, 73 Beechwood Drive. *Please refer to Appendix 2.*

Due to the lack of sufficient living space within the existing property and adequate storage to meet the needs of a four-person family, the detached garage has not served its initial purpose but it has been used as a storage area for over 5 years. In other words, it has been built as a garage during the construction phase in 1991 but it has been used as an outbuilding for storage in the recent years.

The existing dwelling has two bedrooms, living room, one bathroom and a small kitchen so it could not meet the needs of a young family with two small children with different genders. An extra bedroom is required so each child could have his/her own bedroom and personal space. The current kitchen is not adequate for use as a family kitchen due to its size and lack of sufficient cupboard storage. Having a single toilet within the bathroom space also creates issues on daily basis, especially with the children being male and female.

This application proposes the demolition of the detached garage with footprint 21m² to the side of the property and the erection of a single storey side extension to create two bedrooms and a bathroom. This will allow space for a bigger kitchen and a separate cloakroom in the original building. The proposed dwelling will consist of three bedrooms, living room, kitchen, one bathroom and a cloakroom. *Please refer to the architect's plans included in this application.*

We understand that developments in the Green Belt will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the LPGS. The relevant section to consider of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) for this application is part C of paragraph 145 of the NPPF 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. Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (November 1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside will also be taken into account. In particular Policy C13 places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling. It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting. As this policy pre-dates the NPPF, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 145 of the NPPF.

While keeping the above in mind, we would like to submit our planning application to extend the external footprint of 111.56m² (house 90.56m² and garage 21 m², both built during the construction phase under the same planning application in 1991) with 27.06m². Hence the proposed extension increases the overall footprint to approximately 138.62m² which is equal to 24.25% increase above the original footprint.

If the proposed increase is accepted to be 24.25%, it falls under the one third limit placed by Save Policy 13. If the original dwelling footprint is considered to exclude the garage footprint, the proposed extension increases the footprint from 90.56m² to approximately 138.62m² which is equal to 53% increase above the original dwelling footprint. However, the proposal includes the demolition of a detached garage on the side with footprint 21m² used for storage which reduces the built form on the site and mitigates the impact of this extension on the Green Belt.

Furthermore, there are 3 recent cases of properties on Beechwood Drive which have been granted permissions to extend and increase their footprint with significantly higher percentages above their original footprints.

1. Scotts House, 73 Beechwood Drive (the neighbouring property) has been given permission to extend its original footprint with 134% (permission granted on 29/06/2021).

2. 29 Beechwood Drive (in close proximity) has received a permission to extend the original print with 106% (permission granted on 08/07/2021).
3. Rosebud at Beechwood Drive has also been allowed to extend with 83% (decision notice on 17/09/2018).

Clearly, our application to increase the original footprint with 53% (if garage footprint is excluded) is above the one third limit under Saved Policy C13 but the proposed increase is significantly lower in comparison with the 3 precedents listed above.

We believe the proposed extension to be acceptable as it will not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building and it is not excessive in size, bulk or mass. Therefore, it complies with Paragraph 145 of the NPPF.

The extension is well-designed, matches the appearance of the original building and keeps the building visually attractive and locally distinctive.

We are aware there are five principal issues in determining this application:

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

We firmly believe that our proposed side extension to create 3 bedroom 1 reception dwelling from the existing and original 2 bedroom 1 reception property should be considered an appropriate development bearing in mind that there are 5 properties with 4 bedrooms and 2 receptions, 7 properties with 4 bedrooms and 1 reception, 8 properties with 3 bedrooms and 2 receptions, 12 properties with 3 bedrooms and 1 reception on Beechwood Drive and all of these properties have been considered to be appropriate developments in the Green Belt. *Please refer to Appendix 3.*

Following its proposed side extension, our property will become an average size dwelling and it will remain with considerably smaller footprint in comparison with other properties on the street and in the area.

The proposed side extension is located on the side of the dwelling under a section of pitched roof with rectangular prism shape connected to the existing main dwelling roof. The new roof section has simple design so it can match with the existing roof without creating strange and complicated structures of multiple sections, slopes and pitches. The materials to be used are to match existing as closely as possible so new and old could nicely incorporate.

Similar roofing structures with gables at the front are common for this street and the area. Some examples are 4, 33, 37, 39, 41, 45, 50, 51, 54, 57, 58, 59 and 73 Beechwood Drive. There are photos of two properties with unknown numbers. *Please refer to appendix 4.*

We think that our proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition to the property and it would not be inappropriate development which is harmful to the Green Belt.

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

We believe that the proposed extension to our property could not be considered to have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt. It is of appropriate scale to the existing building, the neighbouring property, the other dwellings on the street and in the area and it will not cause physical disruption to the openness of the Green Belt.

Furthermore, the proposed extension will be built over the footprint of a garage due for demolition and a section of the existing paved patio area so the size of both front and rear gardens will remain intact so the openness will not be affected in our opinion.

The existing garage is very close to the boundary line with the neighbouring property Scotts House, 73 Beechwood Drive and close to the neighbours' new side extension which creates a 'terraced effect'. *Please refer to Appendix 2 and 4.* Once the garage is demolished and the proposed extension is built away from the boundary line, the overall look will improve and there might be a positive effect on the general openness.

We believe that the proposed development is not to have an impact on the character of the landscape as the property by virtue is being in a relatively well-developed part of the Harvel Wooded Downs.

3. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;

The proposed side extension will match the appearance of the existing building to conserve and enhance its character by making it more visually attractive and locally distinctive. The existing two round bay sections will be mirrored by another identical round bay section in order to preserve the appearance and style of the original building as opposed to adding a rectangular box on the side which will look like an odd and out of place attachment to the building. The proposed front elevation takes into consideration and keeps the features of the existing dwelling without drastic changes to the building's integrity and overall look so the new and existing could be linked and matched to create final appearance which will be well balanced and appropriate for the surroundings.

In addition, having two ground level windows under a gable section at what looks the same height as the main roof could be found when looking at the

neighbouring property 73 Beechwood Drive, as well as 39, 41, 58, 59 Beechwood Drive. *Please refer to Appendix 4.*

The property will integrate well in the surrounding area and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment. Overall, the extension is appropriately designed and will be constructed using materials that match the host dwelling. Where possible, materials in good condition from the demolition of existing garage will be recycled and reused.

4. Other matters;

We wish to provide acceptable living conditions for our family. We have two children with different gender so we need to extend our property from 2 bedroom to 3-bedroom dwelling to create separate bedrooms for our son and daughter. For their well-being, health and personal space, they need their own rooms as well as the convenience of an additional toilet in the property.

While keeping the property as a single storey dwelling with its own distinctive features, we would like to create a family home for our young children which provides sufficient space and adequate amenities.

Extending the existing property will provide better amenities for future occupants as well.

We think that the proposed extension will not cause any detrimental impact on the amenity of the neighbour in terms of overlooking, loss of light, sense of enclosure or outlook. We intend to demolish the garage which is next to the boundary line with Scotts House, 73 Beechwood Drive, to erect the new extension away from the border and to put timber fencing with height 1.8m by the boundary line. The only window on this side will be a ground floor frosted bathroom window to ensure privacy in the bathroom area with a top opener only for the purpose of ventilation.

5. Any very special circumstances?

We are not aware of very special circumstance in relation to our planning application for side extension following the demolition of existing detached garage.

It has been brought to our attention, that Gravesham Borough Council had issued Householder Extension/Alterations Design Guide which came into force in January 2021 so the design guidance must be taken into account.

The guidance states that all residential extensions and alterations should be subordinate to the host property, allowing the original to remain dominant. However, the guide presents examples of two-storey semi-detached properties, terraced and identical built properties in urban areas.

Our property is located in a village area where all surrounding properties are different in design and style, have their own character, unique appearance and distinctive features, so it does not actually match the stereotypes in this design guidance.

In our particular case, having a subordinate rectangular section with low level pitched roof on the side will look like an odd addition rather than being a well-integrated extension that fits in and matches the overall building design. While allowing the original building to remain dominant works well in the majority of cases, our property has distinctive features and different approach is needed to preserve its unique appearance and to complement its design while providing visually attractive and balanced look.

The proposed side extension actually replaces an existing solid brick structure with pitched roof which is aligned with the front of the property. The extension falls within the existing footprint of the garage without projecting over the front line.

We think that our proposed side extension respects the original character of the existing dwelling while corresponding with the character of neighbouring properties and the local area. The design reflects and complements the original architectural features by replicating the two existing round bay windows at the front to the side as well. It creates a uniform and balanced look by having all three front windows in the same type, size and style. The combinations of red and yellow bricks in specific patterns and positions to create distinctive decorative elements are copied both at the front and back of the new extension so these features can be preserved. The existing double-glazed windows and doors could not be matched due to a very unique lead patterns so all windows and doors are replaced with new plain double glazing. In addition, the proposed design fits well within the wide variety of eclectic architecture at Beechwood Drive and in close proximity.

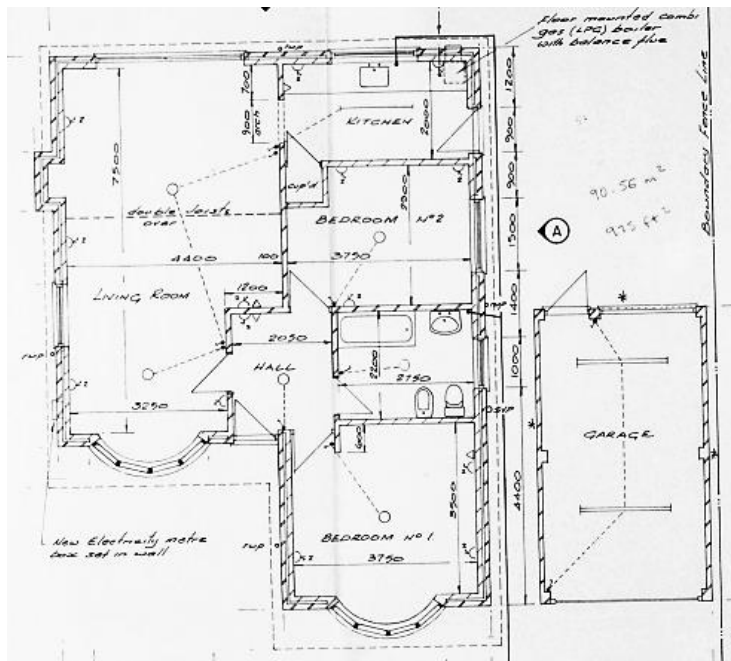
It is usually preferable for an extension to have a lower roofline and be set back behind the front building line, but these guidelines are more appropriate for the two-storey semi-detached and terraced properties featured in the Design Guide.

The proposed roof section is not higher than the existing roof and it does not look dominant for the building. It covers the new extension area and the existing section which projects at the front and it connects to the existing main roof. In order to maintain 35° angle of the original roof slope and to preserve at least a half of the existing roof, the new gable section cannot be lower and subordinate but it comes at the same height as the current roof. The whole roof structure has a similar style to a number of other roofs on the street and in the area. This design offers simplicity which stands better in the surrounding environment when compared with more complicated roof structures, consisting of a number of pitches, slopes and attached roof sections. It could be more practical in terms of maintenance and repairs and less likely to have issues such as failing roof valleys and ridges. Minimising the disturbance and impacts on the existing main roof as well as the possibility to reuse site material, could be considered as more effective, economical, and greener approach.

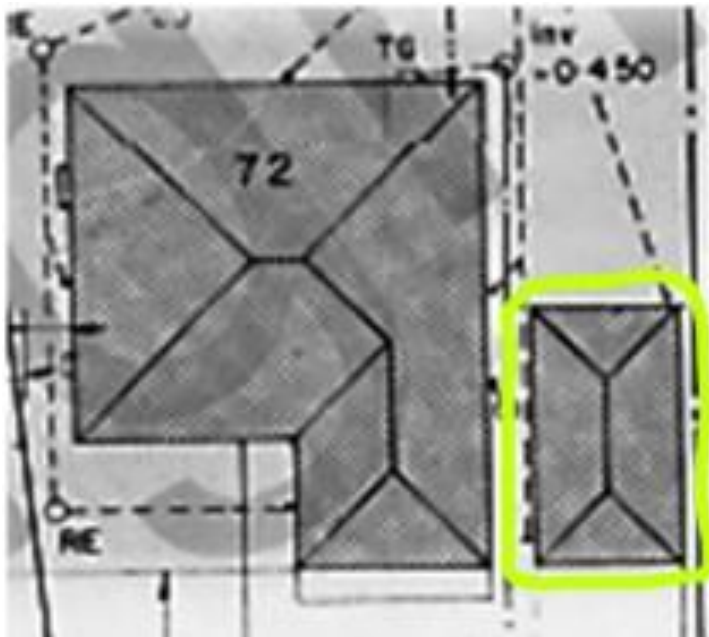
In addition, the gables at the front and back are cladded in matching roof tiles so the overall appearance of the roof is more complete while enhancing and complementing the property. Tile cladding at the front could be seen at 33, 41, 51 and 54 Beechwood Drive. *Please refer to Appendix 4.* The proposed roof structure fits better with the architectural style, distinctive features and surroundings while creating balanced and complete look, integrating old and new sections and making the building visually more attractive so it fits better with the variety of local properties.

There are gable windows allowing natural light in the loft space which is likely to be used for storage due to the loss of storage area following the garage demolition. However, this is a common feature for most properties on Beechwood Drive.

APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2



APPENDIX 3

Street Number	Street Name	Number of Bedrooms	Number of Receptions
1A	Beechwood Drive	3	2
2	Beechwood Drive	3	Not known
4	Beechwood Drive	4	Not known
5	Beechwood Drive	4	1
18	Beechwood Drive	3	1
21	Beechwood Drive	3	2
28	Beechwood Drive	3	1
29	Beechwood Drive	3	1
30	Beechwood Drive	4	1
37	Beechwood Drive	4	2
33	Beechwood Drive	4	Not known
39	Beechwood Drive	4	2
41	Beechwood Drive	3	2
44	Beechwood Drive	4	2
45	Beechwood Drive	3	2
47	Beechwood Drive	4	1
49	Beechwood Drive	3	1
52	Beechwood Drive	3	Not known
53	Beechwood Drive	3	1
54	Beechwood Drive	4	2
55	Beechwood Drive	4	1
56	Beechwood Drive	3	1
57	Beechwood Drive	3	2
59	Beechwood Drive	3	1
66	Beechwood Drive	3	Not known
73	Beechwood Drive	4	2
77	Beechwood Drive	3	Not known
Fleethouse	Beechwood Drive	4	1
Rosebud	Beechwood Drive	3	2
Old Oak Cottage	Beechwood Drive	3	Not known

Information extracted from Zoopla and Right Move

Property description	Total number of properties
Properties with 4 bedrooms and 2 receptions	5
Properties with 4 bedrooms and 1 reception	7
Properties with 3 bedrooms and 2 receptions	6
Properties with 3 bedrooms and 1 reception	12

APPENDIX 4



Scotts House, 73 Beechwood (neighbouring property)



39 Beechwood Drive



58 Beechwood Drive



45 Beechwood Drive



41 Beechwood Drive



54 Beechwood Drive



57 Beechwood Drive



50 Beechwood Drive



51 Beechwood Drive



59 Beechwood Drive



4 Beechwood Drive



37 Beechwood Drive



33 Beechwood Drive



On Beechwood Drive but no street number



On Beechwood Drive but no street number