

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20231013

Location: Alston Norwood Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a two storey side and front extension, providing a first floor with habitable rooms by raising roof and erection of garage to the side.

Applicant: Mr Danny Dalton

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form

ALSTON/P/C/001 – Existing Outbuildings and Block Plan

ALSTON/P/A/001 – Existing and Proposed Elevations, Floor Plans and Elevations

ALSTON/P/B/001 – Floor Plans and Elevations as Proposed

Preliminary Roost Assessment

Relevant Planning History

No recent relevant planning history.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

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);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Parish Council:

No comments received.

Ward Councillors:

No comments received.

GBC Highways Officer:

I have no objections the property can readily accommodate two cars on the front driveway which is all guidance requires and the garage is a bonus which is generally ignored for car parking as it can be used for other purposes. However, as the number of bedrooms increases, cycle parking spaces are also required to comply with guidance at the rate of one cycle per bedroom.

KCC Highways Officer:

Referring to the above description, it would appear that this development proposal does not meet the criteria to warrant involvement from the Highway Authority in accordance with the current consultation protocol arrangements. If there are any material highway safety concerns that you consider should be brought to the attention of the HA, then please contact us again with your specific concerns for our consideration.

Informative: It is important to note that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway. Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because planning permission has been granted. For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway. Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have highway rights over the topsoil. Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. This process applies to all development works

affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process.

Should the development be approved by the Planning Authority, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, before the development is commenced, that all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority. The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181

KCC Heritage:

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, I consider it unlikely that these proposals, immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling, would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

KCC Biodiversity Officer:

We are satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to determine the planning application.

We have reviewed the submitted ecological information and we are satisfied with the conclusions that the building has limited potential to support roosting bats, but suitable features are present to support nesting birds.

Breeding Birds

Due to suitable habitat being present to support breeding birds we recommend the following information is included if planning permission is granted:

The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this Act.

Habitats are present on and around the site that provide opportunities for breeding birds. Any work to vegetation/structures that may provide suitable nesting habitats should be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (1st March to 31st August inclusive) to avoid destroying or damaging bird nests in use or being built. If vegetation/structures need to be removed during the breeding season, mitigation measures need to be implemented. This includes examination by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist immediately prior to starting work. If any nesting birds are found, works must cease until after the birds have finished nesting.

Bats

It has been assessed that the building has negligible potential to be used by roosting bats, but it is likely that bats are foraging /commuting within the site. Lighting can have a negative impact on bats (and other nocturnal species) and therefore any lighting must be designed to minimise light spill.

We recommend that if planning permission is granted the lighting condition has the following requirements:

- Be designed following best practice guidance within Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night'¹
- Downward facing and on motion sensors

Ecological Enhancements

Under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and paragraphs 174 and 180 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system.

If planning permission is granted we recommend the following condition is included:

Prior to completion, details of how the development will enhance biodiversity will be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. This will include integrated and/or wall-mounted bird and/or bat boxes. Wall-mounted boxes will be made of woodcrete to secure a suitably long-term and low maintenance biodiversity enhancement for the site. Any boxes for birds will be targeted at red or amber listed species (as per the latest British Trust for Ornithology Birds of Conservation Concern list). The approved measures will be implemented and retained thereafter.

Appendix 1 provides some generic (non-exhaustive) information regarding the most common enhancements we see proposed. Suitable detail may include the provision of information such as:

- The proposed target species;
- Make and model of any boxes;
- Location information such as height, aspect, surrounding habitat;
- Detailed planting schedules; and
- Relevant (basic) management necessary to ensure the habitat is suitable for the target species.

Neighbouring properties

6no. surrounding properties were consulted, and 0 comments were received from members of the public. The final date to submit comments ended on 30.11.23.

Officer's Analysis



Image taken in 2019 and taken from Google Earth

Principle of Development

This application is located in a Rural Settlement inset from the Green Belt, where alterations and extensions to residential buildings are generally acceptable in principle as per Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development.

However, all other relevant matters should be considered. In this instance, the main points to consider would be the potential impact on; Visual Amenity (Design, Character and Appearance), Amenity of Future Occupiers, Residential Amenity of neighbours, Parking and Highways, Biodiversity and Archaeology.

Design, Character and Appearance

The proposed extensions do appear to be extensive when viewed from the front and rear elevations. However, this is a product of the existing small width and long depth of the dwellinghouse. The plot is also wide rather than deep so it is more reasonable to avoid disproportionate extensions to extend mostly to the sides rather than the rear. As a result the dwellinghouse would increase by only 2.3m in depth. It would increase in width by 9.2m but 3.46m of this increased depth would be single storey in height. The height would increase to 15.1 from 13.2, an increase of 1.9m. These increases given the existing layout, character and form of this dwellinghouse and the wider area would be proportional to the main dwellinghouse.

The proposed development would result in increased to the height of the dwellinghouse, its width and depth. However, its footprint and bulk, would not be significantly larger than dwellinghouses in the vicinity as this building is one of the smaller dwellinghouses in the area. The removal of the outbuilding would enable the build but would also ensure that the plot would not become cluttered and overwhelmed by built form. The use of front projection would also offer a more symmetrical appearance to neighbouring property Barnsfield and a similar setback from the highway would be retained.

The proposed materials would be facing brickwork and shiplap cladding, clay roof tiles with a part flat roof, upvc and aluminium framed windows as detailed in the application form. This would be appropriate in the mixed rural residential area and would reflect materials used on neighbouring dwellinghouses.

On balance, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 130 of the NPPF (2023) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The NPPF (2023) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

The rear garden depth and area would not be altered as a result of this scheme. The rooms provided would comply with the minimum required internal space standards.

Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, no objection to the proposal was received.

There are two neighbouring properties who are most likely to be impacted by the development. Barnsfield to the East and Jonquil Cottage to the West.

To aid the assessment a 45-degree test was undertaken using the proposed site plan, as shown below (Not to Scale):



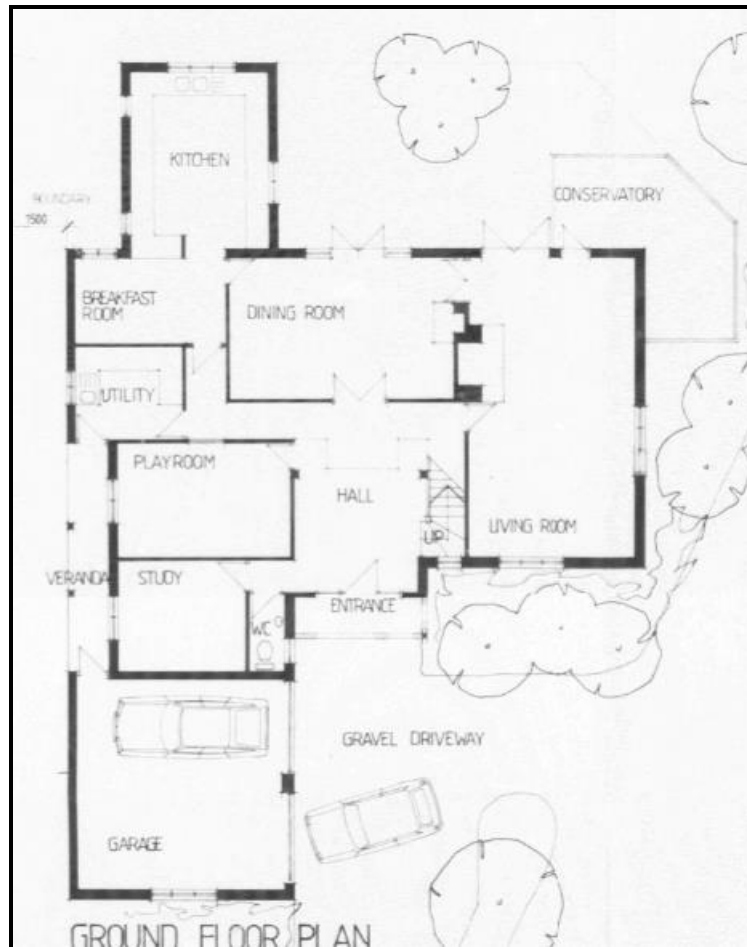
Barnsfield

This neighbour is 5 metres from the subject dwellinghouse. The distance between the buildings would be reduced to 1.5m. However, this distance reduction would be at single storey level only, with the two-storey elements remaining at a 5-metre distance. There would be 3 openings on the east side elevation at first floor. 2 of the openings would be rooflights, obliquely angled and unlikely to overlook. The third window would serve a bathroom, dormer and as such should be obscured glazed and fixed shut. A condition would be included where approved to ensure this would be the case.

The below images show the position of the side facing windows on this neighbouring property and that the three forward most side openings which are not rooflights served a utility room, playroom and study.



Approved Elevation from 19890456

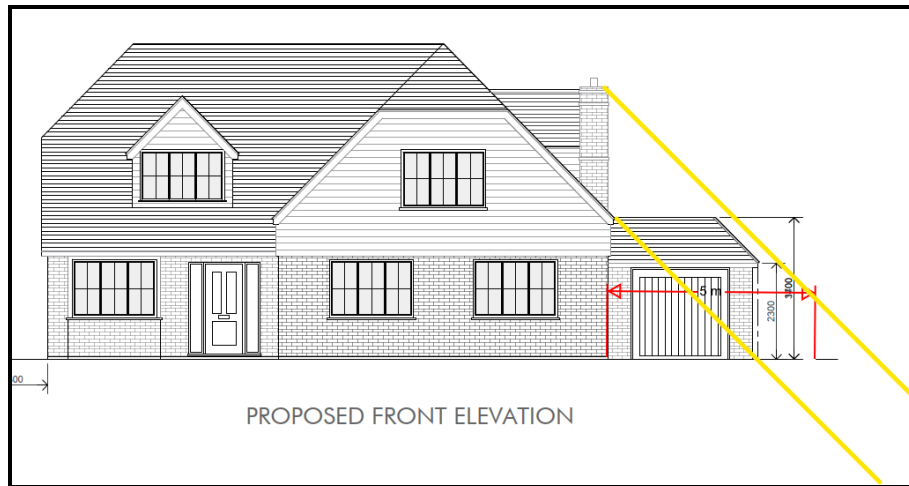


Approved Floor Plan from 19890456



Image taken in 2019 from Google Earth

As the below 45 degree test shows, the openings would only partially be overshadowed, and given that 2 of the openings are set in from the elevation this would be reduced further. The use of the rooms at the time of being built were also not habitable rooms.



The scale, bulk, position and layout of the proposed extension would not overbear upon, significantly overshadow or overlook this neighbouring property.

Jonquil Cottage

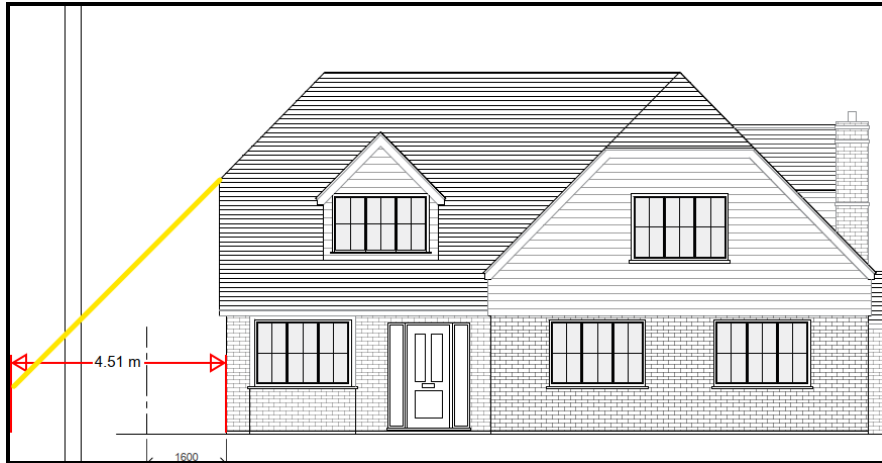
This neighbour is located 10.2 metres to the west. The distance would reduce to 4.5m

The below image shows that there is a side opening to this property which is a door.



Image taken in 2019 from Google Earth highlightin side opening.

The below image shows that there would be partial overshadowing of this opening, but this would not be significant. It is also noted that it serves a garage, which is a non habitable room.



The scale, bulk, position and layout of the proposed extension would not overbear upon, significantly overshadow or overlook this neighbouring property.

The proposal is therefore considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in compliance with policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Parking and Highways

Two vehicles can be accommodated for parking on the front drive. Whilst GBC Highways Officer advises that cycle storage would be required, it is noted that the proposed garage would not be included in the parking provision calculations due to its ability to be used for other purposes such as storage. The proposed garage would provide adequate space to store cycles.

Adequate vehicle and cycle parking provision is therefore available in accordance with paragraphs 110 to 113 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), Saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review (1994) and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 subject to further details of cycle parking provision.

Biodiversity

The Preliminary Roost Assessment showed the building has limited potential to support roosting bats, but suitable features are present to support nesting birds. Whilst the KCC Biodiversity Officer has not objected to the scheme, they have recommended inclusion of relevant conditions relating to, Breeding Birds, Bats and Ecological Enhancements.

Subject to the inclusion and compliance with planning conditions, the proposed development would comply with section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and paragraphs 180 and 186 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system.

Archaeology

KCC Heritage were consulted on this application but have raised no concerns regarding the scheme and impacts archaeologically. No conditions would related to archaeology would therefore be necessary.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposed development complies with all relevant national and local planning policies, subject to planning conditions. The recommendation is to approve.

(For detailed conditions / reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Lisa Williams	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	22nd December 2023	Dated:	28th December 2023