



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240529

Location: 34 Walmers Avenue Higham Rochester Kent

Description: Conversion of existing outbuilding to family annexe.

Applicant: Mr Stone

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Planning Application Form;

Drawing No. 01 – Outbuilding Site Location Plan;

Drawing No. 02 – Outbuilding – Block Plans As Existing & As Proposed;

Drawing No. 03A – Outbuilding Plans & Elevations As Existing; and

Drawing No. 04 – Outbuilding Plans & Elevations As Proposed.

~~Drawing No. 03 – Outbuilding Plans & Elevations As Existing;~~

~~Drawing No. 04 – Outbuilding Plans & Elevations As Proposed.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20170691	Application for a non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20161176 to allow alterations to the dormer window on the front elevation.	Permitted	30.06.2017
20161176	Erection of first floor rear extension to form enlarged bedroom and retention of a dormer window in the side roof slope.	Permission	12.06.2017
20150104	**REVISED PLANS** Erection of a single storey rear extension with balcony over, garage enlargement and provision of french doors with juliet balcony on rear conservatory.	Permission	24.07.2015
20130016	Construction of pitched roof extension over existing ground floor side extension to form ensuite bathroom/wc.	Permission	17.04.2013
20041095	Alterations and enlargement of the roof involving construction of dormer windows in front and one side roof slope; conversion of the existing and proposed roof space into a bedroom, sitting room and en-suite bathroom/w.c. and installation of two bay windows in ground floor on front elevation.	Permission	09.02.2005
19950633	Erection of a conservatory at the rear	Permission	06.12.1995
19950472	Erection of a conservatory at the rear Refused Permitted on appeal	Split	05.09.1995

	A single storey side extension to form a wc and utility room. Permitted		
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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

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
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural 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); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Other Relevant Guidance

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

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Higham Parish Council
No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

Consultation was by way of individual letters sent to four surrounding properties. No comments have been

received. The overall consultation period expired on 16 July 2024.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

The application has been submitted as a householder application for the conversion of the existing outbuilding into a family annexe. The existing outbuilding is detached structure located to the rear of the garden. The building already has windows and doors to the front elevation and a large rear window and large roof light within the front roofslope. Internally there is already a shower room.

The proposal is to create a studio annexe with the only internal alterations being an open plan kitchen area. The shower room would be unaltered and the rest of the space would be open. There would be no changes to the external appearance of the building.

Description of Application Site and Surroundings

The application property is a chalet style detached bungalow with long garden, set in a residential area within the rural settlement of Higham inset from the Green Belt. The property is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area.



Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2023 sets out various design requirements and includes the need for the development to add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive; and be sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment. Paragraph 139 of the NPPF 2023 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy September 2014 sets out that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the built environment and take account of the scale, height, building lines and other architectural features of buildings. Account should also be taken of strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place.

There would be no external alterations to the existing outbuilding and no means of enclosure. The building has existing windows and doors to the front and a single window to the rear and a large rooflight. The proposals do not include any alterations.

The external alterations to the outbuilding would be minimal and do not overly alter its current appearance or increase its prominence. Due to its location within the rear of the garden, it would not be visible from the street scene. As such the proposal is in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

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 internal floor area measures approx. 39.19 sqm and shows the conversion to be a studio annexe. The National Housing standards state that a one bedroom, one person dwelling that is single storey must have an internal floor area of 37sqm (with shower room). The Gravesham Residential Layout Guidelines states that a bedsit (including kitchen/bathroom/wc) should have a floorspace of 30.0sqm. Therefore the proposed annexe would be acceptable. Furthermore, the annex will be utilised by relatives and it is considered acceptable as it will not form a separate self contained dwelling. This will be conditioned accordingly.

The rooms contained sufficient natural light and there are no privacy issues. The annexe is in excess of 26 metres from the rear elevation of the host property and neighbouring properties ensuring privacy is safeguarded.

The proposed annex would provide a satisfactory unit of accommodation.

A condition of obscure glass will be added to the existing shower room for the privacy of the occupiers.

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposal would not result in any additional windows or external alterations to the existing building. All windows are located within the front and rear elevations only and therefore there will be no loss of outlook, privacy, sunlight or daylight to this neighbour. The annexe is in excess of 26 metres from the rear elevation of the host property and neighbouring properties ensuring privacy is safeguarded.

No neighbour representations have been received.

Therefore in respect of impact on neighbour amenity, the proposal would be in accordance with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 and Paragraph 135(f) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

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.

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

The application property has a generous frontage hard surfaced area which can accommodate a number of vehicles and has an integral garage.

It is considered that sufficient space would be available at the site to accommodate the required vehicle and cycle parking.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal would not be detrimental to highway safety and would be in line with Policy CS11 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policies T1, P3 and P5 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Landscape Character

The application site is located in the Higham Arable Farmlands 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 Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications.

The Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area defined by very gently undulating topography, open arable farmland, views out to the marshes and the River Thames in the north, Original Saxon village of lower Higham and more recent development to the south, marsh side hamlets, isolated farmsteads and scattered properties with locally distinct styles and materials. Policy CS12 seeks to conserve, restore or enhance the overall landscape character.

The application site is located in a rural settlement inset from the green belt and is surrounded by residential dwellings. To the rear of the plot is open fields. It is noted that there would be no external changes to the existing outbuilding or loss of vegetation and that the residential nature of the application site would be retained.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to landscape character and would be in line with Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Conclusion & Recommendation

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

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

Case Officer:	Ms Amanda Cue	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
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Signed:	<i>A Cue</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	21st August 2024	Dated:	22 August 2024