

**Extensions & Alterations, Crabbles Cottage
Peartree Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent**

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

General

The application is for the extension and alterations to an existing dwelling, comprising minor footprint alterations to the existing extended dwelling and the demolition and reconstruction an existing double garage. All the development work is to be undertaken fully in association with the main dwelling and solely on previously developed land.

The Gross footprint increase is only 4% and NOT the 36% indicated by KCC EAS.

The site is located in an area of outstanding natural beauty and is to the southern side of the highway, Peartree Lane. Peartree lane is lined to both sides with development primarily of large stand-alone dwellings located within their own gardens. The application site is bounded to the south of its existing well established mature garden by Great Crabbles Wood a SSSI, part of which is within the applicants' ownership. The properties to the north of Peartree Lane are bounded beyond their mature well-established gardens by Court Wood a LWS woodland.

Immediately to the west of the application site is the site of a semi-underground covered reservoir storing water for the Utilities company. This site is heavily overgrown and is retained untouched by the application proposals.

Proposals

The application is for simple domestic extensions and alterations to the existing previously extended dwelling, predominantly to be extended to the first floor by building above the existing ground floor extension resulting in no additional footprint impact. The existing derelict remote double garage is to be demolished and a replacement double garage built immediately adjacent

and linked to the main dwelling, located on ground that has already been developed. The site of the demolished garage is to be made over to extended parking hard standing on the site of the former garage with a vehicular access track fitted adjacent to the western boundary giving access to the rear garden and the portion of the Great Crabbles Wood that is within the applicants' ownership. The existing rear raised patio is to be extended across the rear of the dwelling area all on previously developed and thereby disturbed land. As indicated above the actual footprint increase resulting from the building construction is only 4% gross.

All the proposed work is to be carried out on the portion of the site that has been previously developed, set to the rear of the existing mature extensive rear garden. The rear garden is to be retained totally as existing and will not be disturbed in any way and will remain as a complete buffer to the adjacent woodland. The protected woodland is not impacted in any way by the proposals and the Ecological importance of the woodland is wholly unaltered.

The Protected woodland is located a minimum of 30meters away from the proposed portion of the site to be developed with the existing mature garden between retained. The area of woodland to the north of Peartree Lane is located with a minimum 100mm clear separation from the development are of the proposed site with the highway and the adjoining dwellings and gardens between. Accordingly there is NO potential impact by the proposed development on the Court Wood ecological area.

The mature garden and boundary hedges to the application site are to be retained unaltered. The western boundary will be enhanced with additional hedge planting introduced allowable by the removal of the existing semi-derelict garage. These boundary treatments and the existence of the overgrown reservoir site to the west ensure that the existing natural green space and migrant routeways around the site are maintained undiminished and there is no impact by the proposed works on the local fauna and their habitats.

Impact of Development

As indicated above, the retention of existing boundary hedges, mature gardens all linking to the existing protected woodland, forming protected wildlife corridors fully ensures that the proposals have no impact on the

Biodiversity and Ecology of the application site. The proposed works are to be undertaken utilising matching constructions, materials and finishes. The raised patio will be formed to match the existing that is being extended complete with retaining planting beds to match. All external surfaces are formed to match existing and there will be no risk of water flooding to adjoining protected areas. There is no virgin ground that will be developed and so there is no ecological impact resultant from this application.

There is only one possible ecological risk. There is a remote possibility that there may be bats in the local area. There is no evidence of bats within the building and there is plentiful bat roosting possibilities within the adjacent protected woodland. The new construction is to be constructed to match the existing dwelling and should bats be using the existing pitched roofs they can continue to do so and additionally will be able to utilise the matching new roofs. The existing semi-derelict garage is formed with a flat roof that offers no habitat potential to bats and its removal will have no impact.

Details of Mitigation

As indicated above there is no impact from the works on Biodiversity or Ecology. However it is proposed that the enhancement of the boundary hedge to the western boundary will provide additional wildlife corridor protection to the existing. The other boundaries remain untouched. The new hedging will be indigenous plants to match the existing. No other planting is required/proposed.

The mature gardens and tree planting are retained unaltered.

Should the existence/evidence of Bats be found in the dwelling once works commence it is proposed that any necessary mitigation works be introduced at that stage and the services of a specialist consultant will be sought. The contractor will be required to immediately notify the owner if evidence were found and the planners will be notified accordingly. Works will stop immediately and not commence until agreement is given once the necessary surveys have taken place.

Enhancement Measures

It is proposed that additional bird and bat boxes will be fitted, mounted on existing trees within the site ownership. These will comprise standard bird boxes and basic Kent Bat Boxes all fitted within the relevant guidance, all the enhance the existing Ecological provisions on the application site.

Conclusion

As the application works will not be undertaken on previously undeveloped ground and the extent of the works is so limited there is in effect no likelihood of adverse impact on the Biodiversity or Ecology of the site.