



Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250392

Location: Lucas Heron Hill Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Conversion of garage into an annexe and store.

Applicant: Mr Grix

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form
01B – Plans and Elevations as Existing
02B – Plans and Elevations as Proposed
03 – Block Plan as Proposed
05 – Site Location Plan
07 – Block Plan as Existing
Lighting Plan
Schedule of Proposed Materials, Landscaping and Lighting

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~01A – Plans and Elevations as Existing~~
~~02A – Plans and Elevations as Proposed~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230755	Conversion of garage into a granny annexe.	Refused	13.09.2023
APP/K2230/D/ 23/3333548		Allowed at Appeal	11.07.2024
20230353	Conversion of garage into a granny annexe.	Refused	09.06.2023

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS15 – Housing Density
- CS16 – Affordable Housing
- CS18 – Climate Change

- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- T5 – Access to the Identified Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 – Policy for Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes
- Section 11 – Making Effective use of Land
- Section 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the Natural Environment

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)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Parish Council

No comments received.

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

1no. surrounding property was consulted, and a site notice was placed on 8th May 2025. The overall consultation period expired on 30 May 2025. 1 comment was received from a member of the public, supporting the scheme. Summary of comment:

- This type of development has a positive impact for families and in addressing national structural challenges.
- There are several public benefits of annexes including; supporting multi-generation living and easing housing pressure for younger adults and older family member, reducing burden on social care systems, providing a more affordable, sustainable form of house, creating housing capacity without

increase pressure on greenfield development or overstretched infrastructure.

- Important to avoid separate standalone accommodation.
- Annexe accommodation should be; conditioned to ensure annexes remain ancillary, built with longevity in mind, compliant with building regulations, considers against financial implications.

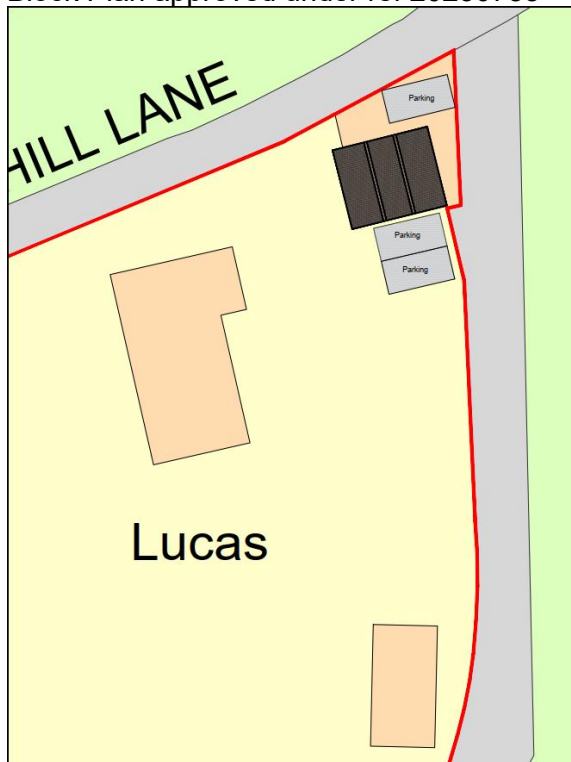
Officer's Analysis

Proposal

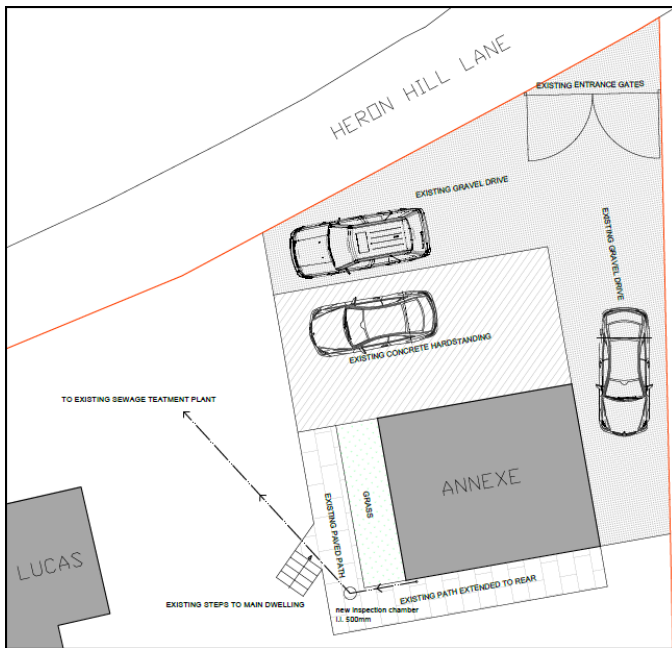
This application follows planning reference 20230755 for '*Conversion of Garage into a granny annexe*', which was refused and then overturned at appeal.

This application has been submitted primarily to rectify an error on the previously approved plan which shows the existing building in an incorrect position. As the plans below show, the building is actually set further into the site to the south, than was originally indicated.

Block Plan approved under ref 20230755



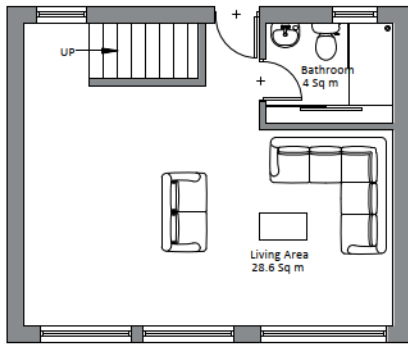
Proposed Block Plan



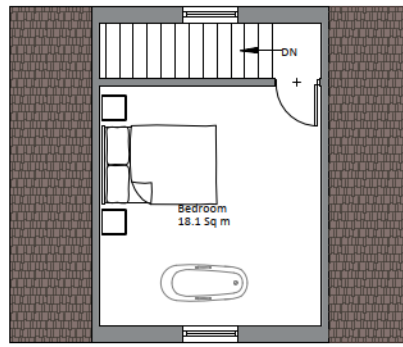
The site visit was undertaken on 30th May 2025 and an image from that visit is shown below:



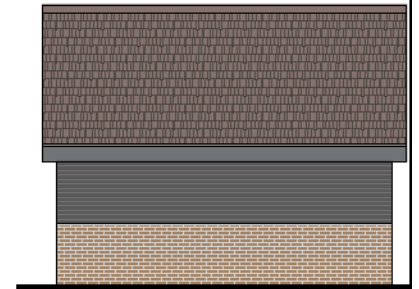
It is also apparent that the design of the building on the approved plans was incorrect, as it shows a section of flat roof, rather than the jerkinhead roof form of the existing building, as evident on the aerial maps and during this site visit. The floor layout proposed has also been changed, essentially reducing the scale of the living area to allow for a store area and inputting the staircase partially into the roof void to create a larger space in the bedroom. The openings are also different from the previous approval.



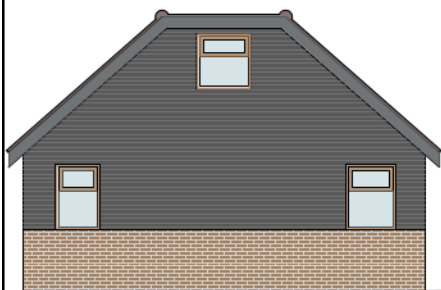
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



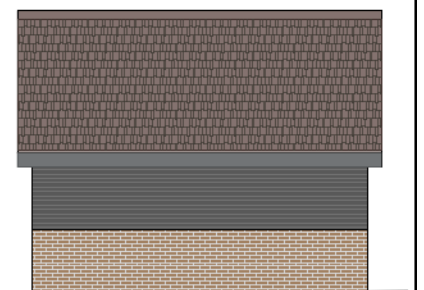
Side Elevation



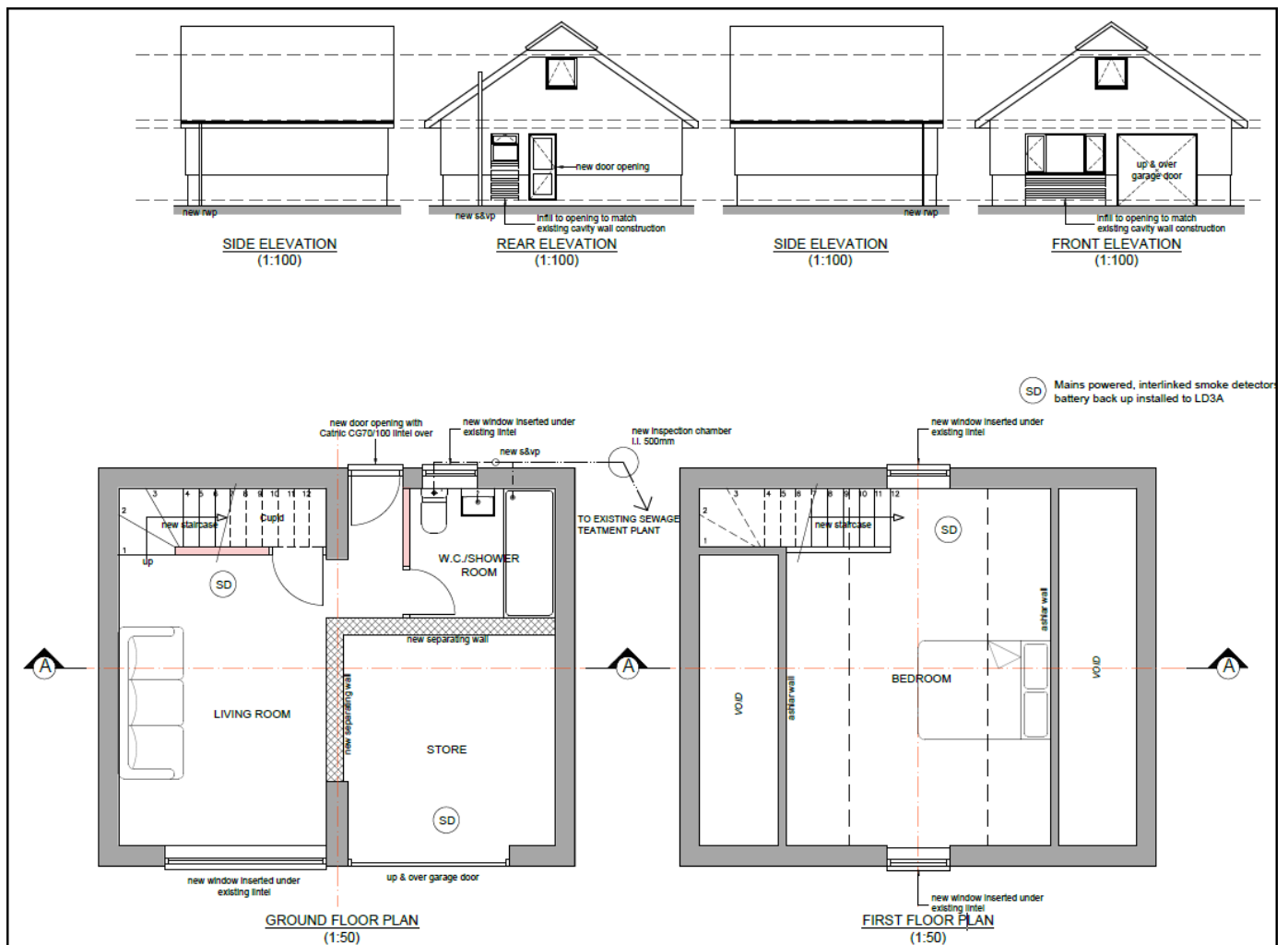
Rear Elevation



Front Elevation



Side Elevation



This application also includes details of parking, external lighting and landscaping which is reserved by condition on the existing approval.

A further small error was observed on the plans whereby the side elevation plans failed to show the small hipped roof on the front and rear elevations. This has been corrected with revised plans being submitted.

Principle of Development

Whether ancillary?

In the previous application on whether the building as converted would be ancillary, the inspector stated:

9. The appellant states the proposed annexe would be occupied by their elderly relative. It would contain a living room, bedroom and bathroom which would provide reasonably sized accommodation for one person. The annexe would be relatively close to the main house, connected to it by a short path, and - on the evidence before me - it would share the main dwelling's garden and parking area without physical division. The annexe would also be subordinate in size and scale to the main house, notwithstanding its somewhat elevated position.

10. I am therefore persuaded that, as a matter of fact and degree, the annexe would be physically and functionally related to the main dwelling. I recognise there would be space to add a kitchen in the open plan living area. However, there is no compelling evidence to suggest this would occur or to lead me to question the appellant's statement about the intended occupier for the space.

11. Even if the accommodation could be used as a separate dwelling, and even if a separate access could

be created, no such proposal is before me. Use of the annexe for residential purposes integral to the residential use of the main house and a restriction on plot severance could be secured by condition were the appeal to be allowed. If the annexe was not used as proposed, or if there was a material change of use in the future to create a separate dwelling, then a separate grant of planning permission would be required. The building would be at risk of enforcement action if such a permission was not granted.

In this new application, no detail of intended user has been provided. It would contain a store, living room, bedroom and bathroom with reasonably sized accommodation for one person. The annexe, despite the altered location would still be relatively close to the main house and shared the main dwellings garden and parking area, without physical division. It would also remain subordinate in size and scale. On balance, based on the inspector's assessment, this scheme as altered would continue to be considered be for residential purposes integral to the residential use of the main dwellinghouse. It will be conditioned accordingly.

The proposal would therefore comply with Policy CS02 (LPCS) and paragraphs 150 and 151 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Green Belt

Green Belts are of great importance. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by preserving the open and permanent characteristics of Green Belts (paragraph 137 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 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 Core Strategy 2014.

Local Planning Authorities should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt (paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). However, there are exceptions to this which, as in the case of this proposal, and as set out in paragraph 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), include:

(d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction.

It was confirmed in the previous report and the inspectors report that there is no pertinent evidence to suggest the building is not of permanent or substantial construction.

On this matter the inspector stated:

17. Openness can be perceived spatially and visually. The building would not change in size or extent, so the proposed development would have no effect on spatial openness. Given the proposed use would be integral to that of the main dwellinghouse, any additional residential paraphernalia associated with the annexe would be limited, such that it would not materially harm visual openness. I therefore find the openness of the Green Belt would be preserved. For the same reasons, I find the proposal would not conflict with the Green Belt's purpose, at paragraph 143c) of the Framework, of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. There is no suggestion the proposal would conflict with any of the other purposes listed in Framework paragraph 143.

Although the extent of the building has changed from the approved plans given its altered position, as this was erroneous, the current plans would not alter the extent of the existing building, nor its scale. For the

same reasons as above, the proposal would not conflict with Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014, saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and paragraphs 143 and 154 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Design, Character and Appearance

On character, the inspector stated:

19. The area surrounding the appeal site is rural and wooded. It falls within the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA). Having regard to the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment and Guidelines, the LCA is characterised by a haphazard mosaic of residential plots and small holdings set within woodland, with a comprehensive network of winding narrow lanes. Heron Hill Lane is one such lane.

20. For the reasons I have outlined above, the proposed development would have little material effect on the appearance of the site from Heron Hill Lane or the surrounding woodland. Appropriate materials, landscaping and external lighting could be secured by condition were the appeal to be allowed. Consequently, the characteristics of the LCA would be conserved, with potential for a modest visual enhancement from new landscaping around the annexe.

The building is set further in than originally indicated, and so would have lesser of an impact on character than originally assumed. The jerkinhead roof as opposed to the part flat roof previously proposed is more appropriate in this setting and considered an improvement, as is the reduced number of openings and their more simplistic appearance. The details provided also indicate that existing landscape features would be retained, which include:

1. Concrete Hardstanding
2. Gravel Drive
3. Grass
4. Paving

No additional or new materials are proposed for landscaping in the document.

In terms of external lighting, these would be limited to;

1. 2no. wall lights located on either side of the entrance gate
2. 2no. security floodlights (1 on the front and 1 on the rear)
3. 4no. up and down wall lights (2 on the front and 2 on the rear)
4. 12no. downlights (6 on either side).

The majority of the lighting is down and up facing only and would limit light spill, with remainder lighting being of security type and beneficial to safe entry to the site during dark hours. These details are considered to be visually appropriate in terms of lighting and landscaping.

On balance, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The National Planning Policy Framework (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.

However, it is felt that appropriate external spacing would be provided given the large size of the plot. The

proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of SPG2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020.

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, but one letter of support, as summarised above.

The proposed building is located away from other residential neighbours and would not likely result in any significant harm to the amenity of the adjoining neighbours. The occupiers of the existing main dwellinghouse would likely not be impacted in terms of direct overlook, given the lack of side windows. There would also be no change to the scale of the building.

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

On parking and Highways, the inspector stated;

23. The KVPS sets a maximum vehicle parking standard of three spaces per dwelling of four or more bedrooms. I have found the proposed use would be for residential purposes integral to the residential use of the main dwellinghouse. On the evidence before me, the KVPS does not require additional vehicle parking spaces in these circumstances. There is no compelling evidence to substantiate the suggestion that an additional visitor parking space would be necessary. I therefore find three parking spaces would suffice.

24. The plans show space for three vehicles to park on site. During my visit, I observed three vehicles parked using the existing vehicular access. I am therefore not persuaded on the evidence before me that an additional vehicular access would be required. Further detail of parking layout in relation to the access and the accommodation they serve could be secured via condition were the appeal to be allowed.

The altered position of the building, set back further into the site, actually provides a greater level of spacing for the parking of cars. Based on the spacing of the existing concrete hardstanding and gravel drive, spacing for 3 vehicles would be maintained.

Adequate vehicle and cycle parking provision is therefore available in accordance with paragraphs 109 to 114 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), 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.

Conclusion

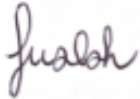
The proposed development complies with all relevant national and local planning policies. The previous conditions relating to parking, external lighting and landscaping have been addressed and would not require inclusion on the decision for this application.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to approve this application.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher and Mrs Faye Walsh	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
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Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	31 July 2025	Dated:	31st July 2025