

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240119

Location: 3 Camer Gardens Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of two storey extension to side of existing dwelling.

Applicant: Mr M Malyon

Site Visit Date: 23/02/2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. D-01 Rev. B – As Existing;
- Drawing no. D-02 Rev. B – Site Location Plan, Block Plan;
- Drawing no. D-06 – Block Plan As Proposed;
- Drawing no. D-05 Rev. A – As Proposed;
- Design & Access Statement; and
- Appendix 1 – Historic Maps.

Relevant Planning History

None.

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)

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Gravesham Local Plan Regulation 18 Stage 1 Consultation Part 2: Development Management Policies Document April 2018

The following draft policies are relevant to the consideration of this application:

- Proposed Policy DM 6: Extensions, Replacement Buildings and Ancillary Development in the Green Belt
- Proposed Policy DM 26: Residential Space Standards
- Proposed Policy DM 28: Domestic Extensions, Outbuildings and Other Development

- Proposed Policy DM 35: Light Pollution
- Proposed Policy DM 36: Sunlight and Daylight within New Development

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 4 – Decision-making
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- 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);
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Kent Downs AONB [Now called Kent Downs National Landscape] Management Plan 2021-2026

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

No objection.

Kent Downs National Landscape

They advise they do not normally comment on minor applications such as this and provide standard advice.

KCC Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, based on existing Historic Environment Record data for the area and the relatively limited extent of the proposed works, I consider it unlikely that these proposals would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

Neighbouring properties

2 surrounding properties were consulted and a site notice was also displayed. The overall consultation

expiry date was 22.03.2024 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of a two storey semi-detached dwelling situated in the Green Belt, the Kent Downs National Landscape, Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area and an Area of Archaeological Potential.

This proposal is for erection of a two storey side extension; the existing single storey side extension and store would be removed under the proposals. It is set out in the Design and Access Statement that the existing dwelling is very small by modern standards, the bathroom is located downstairs, the dwelling is poorly laid out with no thermal insulation, the stairs are located in the living room and pass through one of the first floor bedrooms to access the bedroom at second floor level which is impractical, lacking in privacy and dangerous in terms of fire safety, a fire in the kitchen would prevent escape from the whole of the rest of the dwelling and the staircase is narrow and steep. The proposal is to address these issues to bring the dwelling up to basic modern standards and to be used safely.



Whether the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt

The application site is located within the Green Belt where inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (Paragraph 152 of the NPPF 2023).

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2023) states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. '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.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023) states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;

- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

In this case point (c) is relevant. Any extension to the property must not result in disproportionate additions over and above the original building.

Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 states:

Extensions to dwellings will be considered on their merits but the Borough Council will expect the following criteria to be satisfied:-

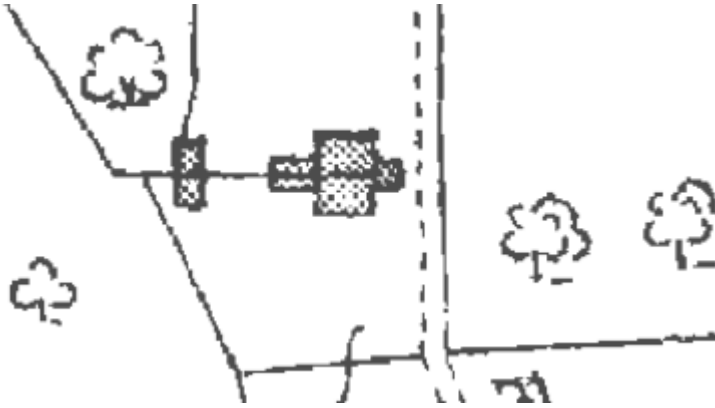
- (i) The existing dwelling must be an “original dwelling”* in permanent use as a dwelling.
- (ii) There will be an overall limit of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally) prior to any later extension or alteration, unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.
- (iii) Those extensions which provide essential basic amenities such as a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, which are currently not available or are clearly inadequate, will normally be permitted.
- (iv) The extension shall not be in a form which would facilitate the future formation of a separate residential curtilage.
- (v) The dwelling to be enlarged must have sufficient curtilage to accommodate the extension without undue visual intrusion into the open countryside.
- (vi) The appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of any extension shall be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting.
- (vii) Proposals for domestic garages and for other outbuildings will be considered on their individual merits but will be required to be well designed, discreetly sited and subservient to the scale of the main dwelling on the plot.

Development Management Policies Document April 2018 (a document that has been subject to consultation but is not adopted) contains Proposed Policy DM 6 which relates to extensions, replacement buildings and ancillary development in the Green Belt. Although the weight that can be attached to this document/policy is limited, it does illustrate the Borough Council’s most recent approach to the type of development proposed at the application site.

With regard to extensions, Proposed Policy DM 6 outlines that the following will be taken into account in determining whether an extension in the Green Belt is proportionate;

- its footprint, floorspace and volume compared to the original building; and whether its scale, mass and height is subservient to the original building.

From a review of the Kent Historic Environment Record it can be seen that no. 3 Camer Gardens is present in the earliest map of 1871-1890 and therefore the original dwelling will be as it was at 1 July 1948. From that first map and in the map of 1929-1952 this shows the dwelling to be as follows:



Therefore, the original dwelling would include the front store element and rear porch but would exclude the side extension and conservatory which are later extensions to the dwelling. The side extension is to be removed under the proposals so will not need to be calculated in the existing extensions calculations.

Floorspace calculations

Original Dwelling

Ground floor original floorspace – 36.2 sq.m

First floor original floorspace – 29.4 sq. m

Second floor original floorspace - 12.9 sq. m

Total floorspace of original dwelling = 78.5 sq. m

Existing Extensions

Conservatory – 5.5 sq. m

*The existing side extension is to be demolished under the proposals so no need to calculate those under existing extensions.

Proposed extension (Two storey side extension)

Ground floor proposed – 16.6 sq. m

First floor proposed – 16.6 sq. m

Total floorspace of proposed extensions = 33.2 sq. m

Total percentage increase of dwelling over original (38.7 divided by 78.5 x 100) = 49%

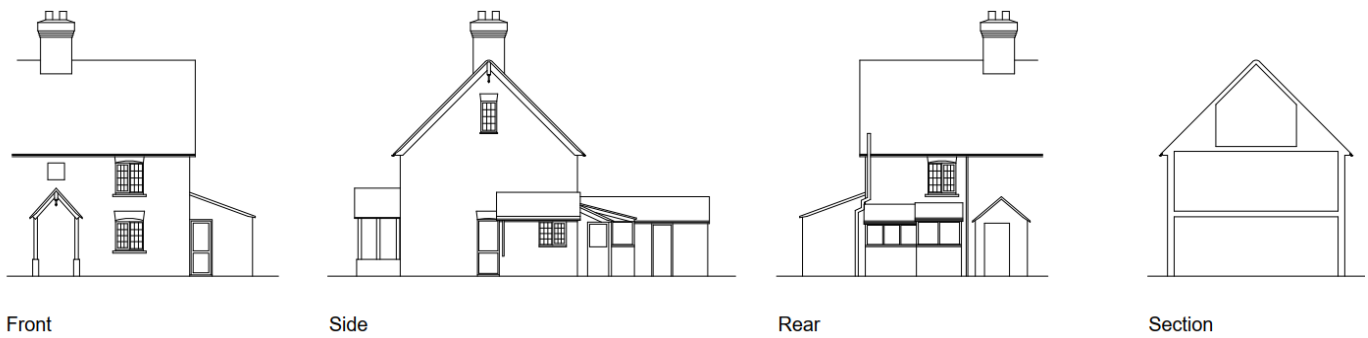
From the above assessment the proposed extension, taking into account the existing extension to the property which would be retained (the conservatory) the floorspace of the original dwelling would be increased by 49% which is 16 % greater than the one third (33%) limit set out in saved Policy C13 (LPFR).

Floorspace is just one calculation which can be used to assess whether a development is a disproportionate addition however, other such measures include footprint, volume etc.

The proposed two storey side extension would be built to the side of the dwelling and would be partly built on the site of the existing single storey side extension which is to be demolished. In terms of footprint, the footprint of the proposed two storey side extension would be 16.7 sq. m but the extension would be built on the site of the existing single storey side extension which is 6.4 sq. m so the actual additional footprint to the side of the dwelling would be 10.3 sq.m. The two storey extension would only 600mm greater in width than the existing single storey extension and although of greater depth it would be set in from the main front and rear walls.

In terms of volume below is the existing and proposed dwelling;

Existing dwelling:



Proposed dwelling



The proposed two storey side extension would result in an increase in built form at the side of the dwelling at both ground and first floor level. However, the proposed extension is modestly sized and is narrow (2.8m) and would be set down from the ridgeline of the host dwelling and set back from the main front wall. It would appear as a modestly sized extension to the host dwelling.

By taking into account all factors and by virtue of an assessment of floorspace, footprint and volume as well as scale, bulk, massing and design, it is considered that the proposed two storey side extension would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the original building. Although the floorspace is over the one third limit set in saved Policy C13 (LPFR) floorspace is only one factor to be considered when determining if an extension is disproportionate. In this case the additional footprint would not be significant due to the extension being built on the site of the existing single storey side extension. The volume, bulk and massing is also considered to be modest with the extension being narrow in width in comparison to the width of the host dwelling and designed subserviently with a set back and set down. Overall therefore based on all factors the proposed two storey side extension is not considered a disproportionate addition.

The proposal would therefore not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the proposal is compliant with Policy CS02 (LPCS), Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) and paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2023).

Effect on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

As stated, due to the modest increase in the footprint of the dwelling and the very subservient nature of the two storey side extension in respect of width, depth and height it is considered that the extension would not harm the openness of the Green Belt. The proposal is therefore considered to not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Design, Character and Appearance including Landscape Character

Policy CS19 (LPCS) states that the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. The NPPF (2023) sets out that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

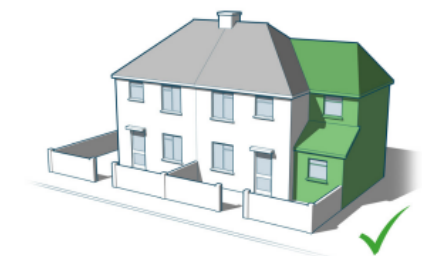
The Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) states the following in respect of two storey/first floor side extensions and front extensions:

Two storey side extensions

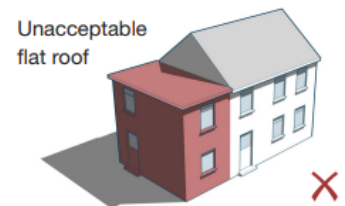
Two Storey Side

10.5 Two storey extensions can have a more significant impact on the appearance of the street. Care is also needed when considering the relationship between any proposed extension and the boundary with neighbouring properties as the separation between properties can provide access routes to the rear of the property and in some locations are part of the character of the area. Depending on the orientation of the neighbouring property, side extensions also have the potential to impact their amenity. To ensure these potential issues are resolved, two storey side extensions should be designed in accordance with the guidance below.

- **Footprint:** Extensions should generally aim to appear subservient to the host building by lying behind the main front building line, though where designed well or having regard to positive local character, other approaches can be supported. See advice of extensions to corner properties in the following section.
- **Height:** Extensions should not exceed the eaves height of the host building.
- **Width:** Extensions should generally be no greater than half the width of the host building. The existing rhythm of the street, including for example characteristic gaps between properties, the symmetry of pairs of semi-detached homes or groups of terraced houses, should not be unreasonably interrupted. A minimum gap of 1 metre should be retained between the extension and the flank boundary.
- **Design:** Extensions are of greater visibility, and should incorporate roof designs to reflect and generally be subservient to the main property's roof. The use of flat or false pitched roofs visible from the street should be avoided. Patterns of windows should reflect the host building and local character. Walls to extensions should not form the site boundary with the public highway, as these can be oppressive and encourage antisocial activities.
- **Materials:** Matching external materials and window / door frames should be used.
- **Overlooking:** Extensions should avoid inserting any flank windows where they would allow new, or significantly increased overlooking views into neighbouring gardens / properties.
- **Light / Outlook:** The 45 / 25 degree rule will be used to assess the impact of the extension on neighbouring light / outlook.

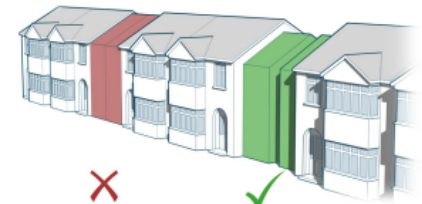


Ground floor set back 0.5m



Unacceptable flat roof

Two storey side extensions should be subordinate in scale to the original house.



Side extensions should be set back and set in to avoid the 'terrace effect'.

In respect of this guidance, the proposed two storey side extension would be set back behind the main front wall of the dwelling and would be set down from the ridgeline. The extension is modest in respect of its width at 2.8m which would not be greater than half the width of the existing host dwelling (half the width of the host dwelling is 3.15m). The fenestration is in keeping with that of the host dwelling and matching materials would be used. It would therefore be a subservient addition which would be in keeping with the scale and character of the host dwelling and would not impact on but would respect the symmetry and character of this pair of semi-detached dwellings. In respect of design, character and appearance it is considered the proposed two storey side extension would be compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

The application site is located in the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area.

Paragraph 182 of the NPPF (2023) states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in AONB's [now renamed National Landscapes] which amongst others have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations. The scale and extent of

development in these areas should be limited.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced. The greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB [now renamed the Kent Downs National Landscape] and its setting.

The AONB [now renamed National Landscape Management Plan] has a number of relevant policies including:

SD1 – the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB [now renamed National Landscape]

SD2 – the local character, qualities and distinctiveness of the AONB [now renamed National Landscape] will be conserved and enhanced in the design, scale, setting and materials of new development

SD3 – new development will be opposed which disregards the primary purpose of the AONB [now renamed National Landscape]

SD9 – the particular historic and locally distinctive character of rural settlements and buildings of the AONB [now renamed National Landscape] will be maintained and strengthened; new developments will be expected to apply appropriate design guidance and to be complimentary to local character in form, setting, scale, contribution to settlement pattern and choice of materials

BD5 – Protection, conservation and extension of Kent Downs priority and distinctive habitats and species will be supported and the local plan process and planning decisions

WT1 – Threats to the existing extent of woodland and transitional habitats around woodland will be resisted.

The site is situated in the West Kent Downs Character Area in the Landscape Assessment in the Kent Downs [Now National Landscape]. Recommendations include protecting historic features of the landscape, (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) but also the historic hedgerows, farms and lanes which have formed the fabric of the landscape for centuries and ensure that any new development around historic villages respects the scale, layout, massing and materials of existing buildings, and also their relationship with the landform. Landscape proposals should reflect local character using appropriate form, structure and species.

The Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009) states the key characteristics of the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area are gently undulating topography with a mixture of arable and pasture farmland, neat pattern of small square fields in the south, broader irregular shaped fields to the north and narrow lanes and roads lined with hedgerows. It states that the overall condition of the landscape is good and it has moderate sensitivity. It recommends that the landscape characteristics should be conserved and reinforced.

The area the site is located is rural in character with only sporadic development along Camer Street. There is a large area of farmland to the north and west and a large area with trees and shrubland to the south. The site itself contains a dwelling with a large garden principally to the front and side.

The proposal would result in an increase in the footprint of the dwelling and replace an existing single storey side extension with a two storey built form. However, in this case it is very modestly sized and subservient to the host dwelling being set back from the front wall, set down from the ridge and of modest width. The extension would be only 600mm greater in width than the existing single storey side extension and the depth of the dwelling overall would not be increased. On balance it is considered that the proposal would not result in an increased prominence of the existing dwelling. It is therefore considered the proposal would preserve the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape and would protect the local landscape character. As such in respect of the National Landscape and the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area, the proposal is compliant with Policies CS12 and CS19 (LPCS) and section 182 of the NPPF (2023).

Amenity of occupiers

The dwelling is currently three bedrooms and as a result of the proposal would still remain a three bedroom property. The garden area would be 584 sq. m which exceeds the 100 sq. m minimum required for properties with three bedrooms as set out in SPG2 (2020). Some of this will be used for parking of cars but taking that into account the garden area would still be far in exceedance of the minimum standard. The element being the private rear garden depth would remain as existing - 5.3m which is under the 10m minimum required. However this is an existing situation and due to the positioning of the dwelling on the plot the main garden is essentially to the front and side, rather than the rear. The depth of the garden overall to the side would remain some 42m. Overall the garden area and depth is considered acceptable.

In terms of bedrooms due to the extension and re-ordering of the interior all bedrooms would either be new or altered. All bedrooms would exceed the minimum standards for single and double bedrooms as set out in the Technical Housing Standards (2015) which state that the minimum size for a single bedroom is 7.5 sq. m and for a double is 11.5 sq. m.

First floor rear double bedroom 1 – 12.7 sq. m

First floor single bedroom in extension – 8.4 sq. m

Second floor single bedroom – 9.2 sq. m

As can be seen all bedrooms would exceed the minimum standards as set out in The Technical Housing Standards (2015).

In respect of the amenity of occupiers it is considered the proposal is compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Neighbouring amenity

Due to the location of the proposed extension on the north side elevation of host dwelling and the distance to the nearest neighbouring dwelling no. 1 Camer Gardens being 28.7m there would be no harmful impact on this property with regards overshadowing, loss of outlook or overlooking.

Due to the siting of the extension it would have no impact on the adjoining semi-detached dwelling, no. 4 Camer Gardens.

In respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and highway safety

The proposal would not increase the number of bedrooms at the property which would remain at three, therefore no impact on parking demand or alteration of the existing parking situation where there is space for a number of vehicles. In respect of parking and highway safety the proposal would therefore be compliant with Policy CS11 (LPCS) and saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Archaeology

The site is located in an area of Archaeological Potential but KCC Heritage confirm that the proposals are unlikely to have a significant below-ground archaeological impact. It is therefore considered there is no need for any archaeological work or watching brief condition in this case, should permission be forthcoming. In respect of archaeology the proposal is considered compliant with saved Policy TC7 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion

The above discussion sets out that the proposed development would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would not impact on openness, would be acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance, would not impact on the Kent Downs National Landscape or landscape character and would not impact on the amenity of occupiers or neighbouring properties, parking and highway safety or archaeology.

The proposed development is therefore considered compliant with local and national planning policy.

Recommendation: Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision).

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	8th April 2024	Dated:	08 April 2024