

Heritage Statement

8 Wellington Cottages, Meopham Green, Meopham, Gravesend, DA13 0QF

Demolition of existing single-storey rear extension and construction of replacement extension

1. Introduction

This statement supports a householder planning application at 8 Wellington Cottages. The proposal is to demolish the existing single-storey rear extension and replace it with a new single-storey rear extension projecting 4 metres from the rear wall of the house.

The property sits within the Meopham Green Conservation Area. The house itself is not listed and is not, so far as the applicant is aware, a designated heritage asset. The relevant heritage asset for the purposes of this statement is therefore the conservation area in which the property sits.

Since purchasing the property in April 2025, we have undertaken a significant restoration of the property which had been “unloved” for many years. These works have begun with the interior of the main house, resolving persistent damp and minor structural issues. Our intention is to restore the property’s outward appearance in keeping with neighbouring properties and in-line with the requirements of being part of a conservation area, while ensuring that the property is energy efficient, properly maintained, and healthy for its occupants. The current extension houses a cramped bathroom (the property’s only bathroom) that suffers from significant and persistent damp and mould (despite a number of attempted remedial efforts) caused by the nature of its construction. Our proposal will ensure the construction materials and finish will match the existing property but built to modern building standards to ensure the property contributes to the aesthetic of the conservation area and is fit for purpose.

2. The Heritage Asset and its Setting

Meopham Green Conservation Area takes its character from the open green at its centre, the surrounding buildings, and lanes that frame it. Wellington Cottages form part of this group: a terrace of small cottages set back from the green, contributing to the conservation area through their traditional appearance.

The element of the application property that contributes to the conservation area is its principal elevation and roofline as seen from the surrounding streets and from the green. The rear of the property is largely enclosed by an existing fence and a private access road, with limited visibility from the green or from any public viewpoint that contributes to the appreciation of the conservation area.

3. Schedule and Justification of the Proposed Works

The proposed works are:

- Demolition of the existing single-storey, single-skin rear extension.
- Construction of a replacement single-storey extension projecting 4 metres from the original rear wall of the house and extending 0.65 metres beyond the existing side wall.
- Construction in cavity-wall (double-skin) form to provide a thermally efficient, weather-tight enclosure compliant with current Building Regulations. The 0.65 metre

side increase is the minimum needed to accommodate the additional wall thickness of the new cavity construction together with a modest internal gain.

- External finishes selected to match the existing house, including standard brick with white render finish, and tiled roof.

A professional survey of the existing extension has confirmed that it is of single-skin construction and is suspected to have inadequate foundations. The space suffers from persistent damp and mould, which the previous owner has clearly attempted to address through a number of remedial measures, including the installation of several air vents. Despite these efforts the structure remains damp and unfit for purpose. The justification for the works is therefore twofold: to replace a structure that has reached the end of its useful life with one that is properly built and habitable, and to bring the rear of the property up to a modern standard of thermal performance, supporting the long-term use and maintenance of the dwelling. The modest increase in depth (approximately 1 metre over the existing) brings the extension into line with the depth of neighbouring extensions in the same terrace.

4. Assessment of Impact on the Conservation Area

The impact of the proposal on the significance of Meopham Green Conservation Area has been considered as follows:

- The main body of the works is to the rear of the property. Public views of this part of the proposal are limited, with no clear view available from the green, the public highway or any other significant public viewpoint.
- The extension projects 0.65 metres beyond the existing side wall of the house. This element may be partially visible from the front in oblique views, but the projection is very modest in scale, set back behind the front building line, and will be finished in materials matching the existing house so that it reads as a coherent part of the dwelling. Further, significant existing buttressing on the outer wall already protrudes from the side of the house.
- The principal elevation, roofline and front boundary of the property are unaffected. The features that contribute most to the character of the conservation area are preserved in their entirety.
- Several neighbouring properties in the same terrace already feature single-storey rear extensions of comparable depth. The proposal therefore reflects an established pattern of rear development and would not appear out of place.
- Other cottages in the immediate locality have also been extended to the side, in some cases by significantly more than the 0.65 metre projection proposed here. There is therefore a clear local precedent for modest side extensions of this kind, and the proposal sits comfortably within the established character of the surrounding properties.
- The replacement extension is modest in scale and subordinate to the host dwelling, with a height well below that of the main house.
- External materials will match the existing dwelling, ensuring visual coherence where the extension is incidentally glimpsed from the private access road.

On this basis, the proposal is considered to result in no harm to the significance of the conservation area.

5. How Harm is Minimised and Significance Preserved

Harm has been avoided through the design of the proposal. The main body of the works is located to the rear of the property where public views are limited, and the principal elevation

and roofline are left untouched. The 0.65 metre side projection has been kept to the minimum needed to accommodate cavity-wall construction and a modest internal gain, sits behind the front building line, and will use matching materials so as to read as part of the existing dwelling. The replacement of a single-skin structure creates a thermally efficient extension supporting the long-term retention and use of a property that contributes positively to the conservation area. The character and appearance of the conservation area is preserved, and arguably modestly enhanced through the removal of an existing substandard structure to the rear.

6. Conclusion

The proposal involves the replacement of an existing substandard rear extension with a modest, well-constructed replacement that matches the depth of neighbouring extensions in the same terrace. The main body of the works is to the rear of the property where public views are extremely limited. A small 0.65 metre side projection, required to accommodate the new cavity construction, is set behind the front building line, finished in matching materials, and consistent with side extensions seen elsewhere on cottages in the immediate area. The principal elevation and roofline of the property — the elements that most contribute to the character of Meopham Green Conservation Area — are unaffected. The proposal therefore preserves the character and appearance of the conservation area.

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28th April 2026