

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260711

Location: Lily Cottage Wrotham Road Meopham Gravesend

Description: Demolition of existing rear conservatory and erection of rear single storey extension.

Applicant: Ms Rebecca Bushell

Site Visit Date: 08 September 2026

Submitted Documents/Plans

Householder Planning Application form;
Drawing no. 101 Existing layout, elevations, sections and roof plan;
Drawing no. 201 REVISION Proposed layout, elevations, section and roof plan;
Drawing no. 302 Materials details;
Existing block plan;
Proposed block plan;
Red line site boundary plan (1:1250);
Design, Access and Heritage Statement; and
Site photographs.

Superseded Documents/Plans

~~Drawing no. 201 Revision Proposed layout, elevations, section and roof plan.~~

Procedural Issues

Following a request from the GBC Conservation Officer, additional external facing materials information was provided. Because there was no alteration to the proposed development, no additional publicity was undertaken.

Relevant Planning History

None.

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

As set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012 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

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 (2026), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2026)

- Section 4 -Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 5 – Meeting the challenge of climate change
- Section 12 – Making Effective use of land
- Section 14 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 19 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 20 – Conserving and enhancing the historic 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)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Meopham Green Rural Conservation Area Appraisal SPD (2017)

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) make it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework sets out that when considering development proposals, relevant policies may be given weight, however, this is subject to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of compliance of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to them).

West Oxfordshire District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government & Rosconn Strategic Land Ltd [2018] EWHC 3065 (Admin) is a High Court judgement that deals with the weight to be given to a Regulation 19 Local Plan. In this judgement, the Court found that the weight to be given to an emerging Local Plan was a matter of planning judgement, which had to be reached having fully considered the relevant part of the Framework, which from 17 August 2026 Decision Making Policy DM4 of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan has reached the Regulation 19 Consultation stage, with the consultation

having ended on 18 August 2026. The emerging Local Plan does not form part of the Development Plan.

The Council is aware that third parties have raised objections to the wider emerging Local Plan and specific policies within it. Therefore, at present the Council cannot categorically state that the emerging Local Plan can be considered sound and consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) [as an emerging Local Plan being brought forward under the legacy system, it would be examined under the 2024 Framework]. Taking this into consideration, one can only conclude that at this stage of the process, **limited (i.e. minimal) weight should be afforded to the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan.**

This position would only change once the emerging Local Plan has progressed towards submission and examination, with the Council being fully aware of policies that are subject to unresolved objections and with knowledge of policies that have had their soundness and conformity against the Framework challenged.

This approach accords with the approach taken in a separate High Court case, *Gladman Developments Ltd v SSHCLG & Corby Borough Council*; & *Uttlesford DC* [2020] EWHC 518 (Admin) and Court of Appeal [2021] EWCA Civ 104, which was also the subject of a Court of Appeal Ruling [2021] EWCA Civ 104.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Conservation Officer

Initial response:

Lily Cottage is an unlisted mid-terrace dwelling whose contribution to the significance of the conservation area derives principally from its front elevation and its group value within the consistent terrace frontage to Wrotham Road. The application does not propose any changes to the front elevation, roofscape as viewed from the street, or the wider streetscape.

The element to be removed – the existing rear conservatory – is a modern, non-original addition and its removal does not result in any loss of historic fabric or significance. The proposed replacement is a single-storey rear extension, subservient in scale and massing to the host dwelling, set behind the rear building line and screened from neighbouring and public views by existing boundary planting. The submitted Design, Access and Heritage Statement confirms the works are not visible from public vantage points, and this is consistent with the drawings submitted.

Under the NPPF (August 2026), Chapter 20, Policy HE5 requires an assessment of the significance of the heritage asset (including the conservation area) and the effect of the proposal on that significance, categorised as: positive effect, no effect, harm (with degree identified), or total loss. Policy HE4(2) requires proposals to avoid or minimise harm to significance, and Policy HE6 confirms that any harm to a designated heritage asset (which includes conservation areas) is a matter of considerable importance and weight, to be weighed against public benefits, with Policy HE9 addressing conservation areas specifically. Locally, Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) seeks to protect and enhance heritage assets and their settings.

Applying this framework, I consider the proposal would have no effect / preserve the significance of the Meopham Green Conservation Area, given:

- the works are confined to the rear elevation and are not visible from public vantage points;
- the feature removed (the conservatory) is not a heritage asset or character-defining feature;
- the replacement extension is modest, single storey and subservient in scale and massing; and
- the proposed materials are stated to match the existing dwelling.

I therefore raise no objection to the application in heritage terms, subject to conditions to secure the following, as the submitted details are not sufficiently precise to rely on as submitted (the application form records the existing windows and door as uPVC, whereas the proposal describes 'heritage style' replacements without confirming material or joinery detail):

1. Samples/details of the render finish and any brickwork to match the existing dwelling, to be submitted

and approved prior to installation.

2. Full details (materials, sections and elevations at an appropriate scale) of the proposed windows and door, to confirm a heritage-appropriate design and, ideally, timber construction, prior to installation.
3. Details of the rooflight (make, model, profile and how it sits within the flat roof) to ensure a low-key, conservation-appropriate appearance.
4. Retention of the existing boundary hedge/screening referred to in the Design, Access and Heritage Statement, given the role it plays in screening the extension from the neighbouring property.

Meopham Parish Council

No objection.

Neighbouring properties

The application was publicised by a site notice, newspaper advertisement and to seven neighbouring properties by letter. No representations have been received. The overall consultation period expired on 21 August 2026.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance

The application site is located within the Meopham Green Conservation Area and it is noted that Section 72(1) of the Planning Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act 1990 (as amended) requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Policy CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) places a high priority on the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment. Saved Policy TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 sets out that development within or affecting conservation areas will be carefully judged for its impact and will be expected to make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (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.

In relation to single storey rear extensions, the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) sets out that they should not dominate the original property in terms of depth (extensions to extensions will not generally be supported); they should not rise above the window cill level of any first floor windows; they should not be excessive in height, especially where they are greater than three metres in depth; or excessive in width (no greater than the original building). Flats roofs can be acceptable where they are not widely visible and pitched roof designs should reflect the main roof.

The GBC Conservation Officer has not raised an objection to the proposed development and considers that it would have no effect/preserve the significance of the Meopham Green Conservation Area because the extension would be located at the rear and would not be visible from public vantage points; because the existing conservatory is not a heritage asset or character-defining feature; and because the proposed extension would be modest, single storey and subservient in scale and massing and have matching materials. He suggests four planning conditions.

The proposed development would have a footprint that is almost identical to the existing conservatory (which would be removed) and there would only be an increase of 0.5 metres in height, above the existing conservatory. The extension would not be widely visible from public vantage points and would remove a modern addition to a historical dwelling and replace it with a more sympathetic feature. The proposal would be subservient to the existing building and be appropriate in terms of general design and facing materials.

In light of the additional materials information provided by the applicant, conditions 1-3 suggested by the GBC Conservation Officer are no longer relevant. Condition 4 suggested by the GBC Conservation Officer (requiring the retention of the existing hedge) would not be reasonable, because the existing hedge/boundary treatment to Heather Dell, Wrotham Road does not screen the existing conservatory.

The application site is located in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area (LCA) and as such, Policy CS12 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) is also 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 application site is located in a village and the proposed development would be within an existing residential curtilage. The proposal would result in a small increase in the amount of built development but would not adversely affect the overall landscape character of the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of design and would not have an adverse impact on the character or appearance of existing building, the surrounding landscape or the Meopham Green Conservation Area. Therefore, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS12, CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), Saved Policy TC3 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994 and the Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD (2021).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (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 proposed development would not adversely affect the private amenity space or internal layout of the application property and would not adversely impact on the privacy, daylight or sunlight of its occupants. As such, the proposal would not be detrimental to the amenity of future occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) requires new development to be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of neighbouring occupiers. In this regard, the Borough Council's adopted Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) are relevant.

The closest residential properties to the application site are Heather Dell and Danecote, Wrotham Road (located to the south and north respectively). Nos. 3 and 4 Windmill Close are located to the west.

Due to the design of the proposed development and to the design, layout and orientation of surrounding properties, there would be no adverse overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts to any of the surrounding residential occupiers.

In order to prevent any future loss of privacy impacts to neighbours, any planning permission granted should be conditioned to preclude the insertion of any windows or openings in the side elevations of the proposed development.

Overall, the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be in line with Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

The application site is located within an area with some palaeolithic potential and of multi-period archaeological potential and within Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3. However, as the proposed development is within the confines of an existing residential garden and only a relatively small amount of groundworks would occur, then it is considered that there would be no adverse impacts to groundwater or

archaeology. As such, the proposal would be in line with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) and Saved Policy TC7 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review November 1994.

It is noted that the application site is within an area covered by an Article 4 direction (reference Ar/09/4 Meopham Green) which removes various permitted development rights from dwellings including Classes A, C, D and H of Part 1, Class A of Part 2 and Class B of Part 31 of Schedule 2 to the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

It is also noted that Meopham Parish Council does not raise an objection to the proposal.

Suggested Conditions

Time Limit

Development in accordance with the approved plans

Facing materials, windows and doors in accordance with drawing nos. 201 REVISION (Proposed layout, elevations, section and roof plan) and 302 (Materials details).

No openings in flank elevations

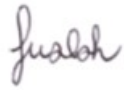
Conclusion

The proposal would comply with local and national planning policies and subject to the conditions set out above, the proposal would be acceptable.

Recommendation

Planning permission subject to conditions is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Kelly Joyce	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	22nd September 2026	Dated:	22 September 2026