

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20251099

Location: Beech Stables 2 Ifield Farm Shorne Ifield Road Shorne

Description: Application for variation of condition 2 attached to planning permission reference number 20221210 and appeal reference number App/K2230/D/23/3320082 for Erection of single storey rear extensions to form new ensuite bathroom and kitchen; alterations to fenestration to allow the replacement of a low pitched roof to a flat roof with brick parapet and coping stone.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs B Fletcher

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form
AX01 B – Location Plan, Existing and Proposed Site Plans
PD01 – Existing Plans
PD02 – Existing Elevations
PD03 C – Proposed Plans
PD04 D – Proposed Elevations
Design and Access Statement

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20221210	Erection of single storey rear extensions to form new ensuite bathroom and kitchen; alterations to fenestration.	Application Refused	17.01.2025
APP/ K2230/D/ 23/332008 2		Allowed at Appeal	04.08.2023
20060951	Conversion of existing stable building on the north side of the site into 2 three bedroom dwellings (Units 1 & 2); conversion of stable building on western side of the site into one four bedroom dwelling (Unit 3); conversion and reconstruction of oast houses and barn into one five bedroom dwelling (Unit 4); conversion of piggery range on eastern side into a four bedroom dwelling (Unit 5); conversion of existing granary into live/work unit to Unit 3; conversion of existing brick building into live/work unit to unit 4; conversion and extension of cart shed building to provide covered parking area for units 1, 2 and 5 and erection of new cart shed building to provide covered	Permitted	07.01.2007

	parking for units 3 and 4. Erection of associated garden walls and formation of hard and soft landscaping.		
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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)

- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- C13 – 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 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 13 – Protecting Greenbelt Land
- Section 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Section 16 – 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)
- SPG 4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Gravesham Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Shorne Parish Council

Application ref 20221210 is noted, along with the Appeal decision – we did not object to that proposal as the proposed design was compatible with the existing building and area.

The present proposal has material differences to what was approved:

- Change to flat roofs with parapets: The proposed design is not sympathetic to the existing

design and area, and could set a damaging precedent for the entire development. The proposed roof height is taller than the eaves of the building, which would not normally be permitted.

- The en-suite bathroom extension is deeper than previously applied for, and the positions of bedroom 4 and the courtyard have been swapped over.

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

3no. surrounding properties were consulted and 0 comments were received from members of the public. The final date to submit comments ended on 12.12.25.

Officer's Analysis

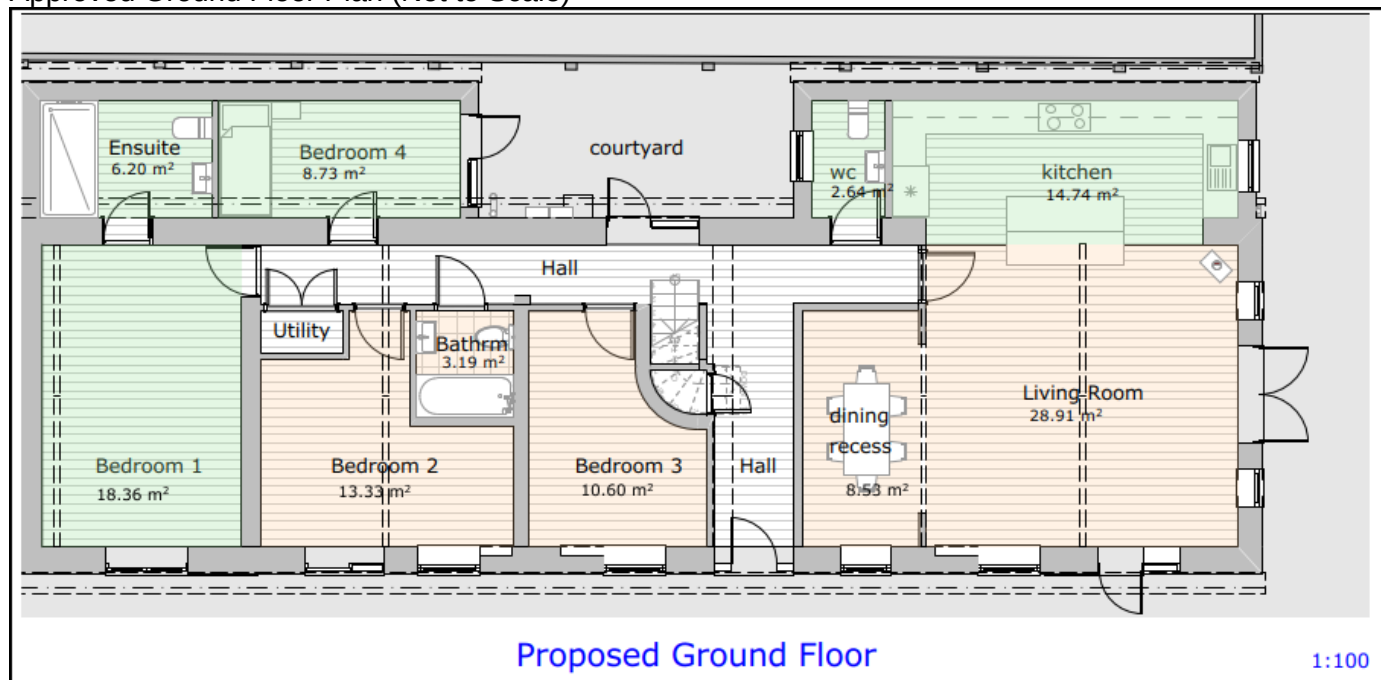
Proposal

This application seeks to vary the original approval under planning reference 20221210 for *Erection of single storey rear extensions to form new ensuite bathroom and kitchen; alterations to fenestration.*

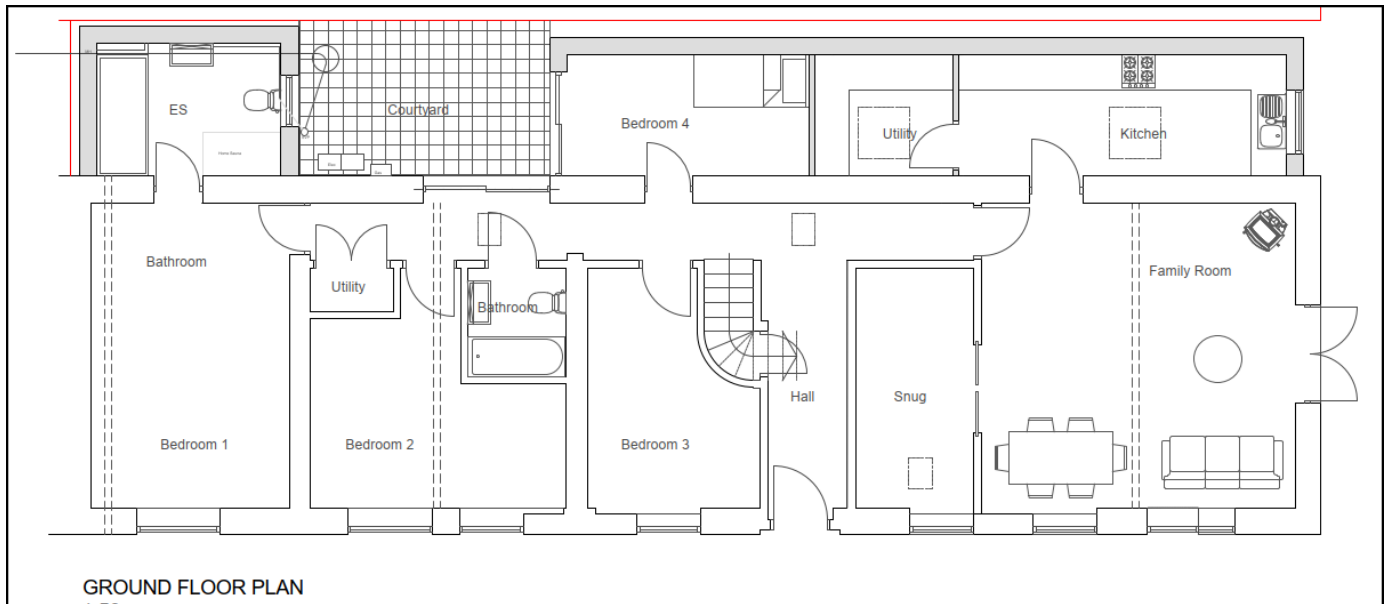
The changes proposed for this application include:

- Altered scale and positioning of extensions
- Altered fenestration
- Alternative roof design to flat roof with brick parapet and coping stone
- Internal alterations to layout

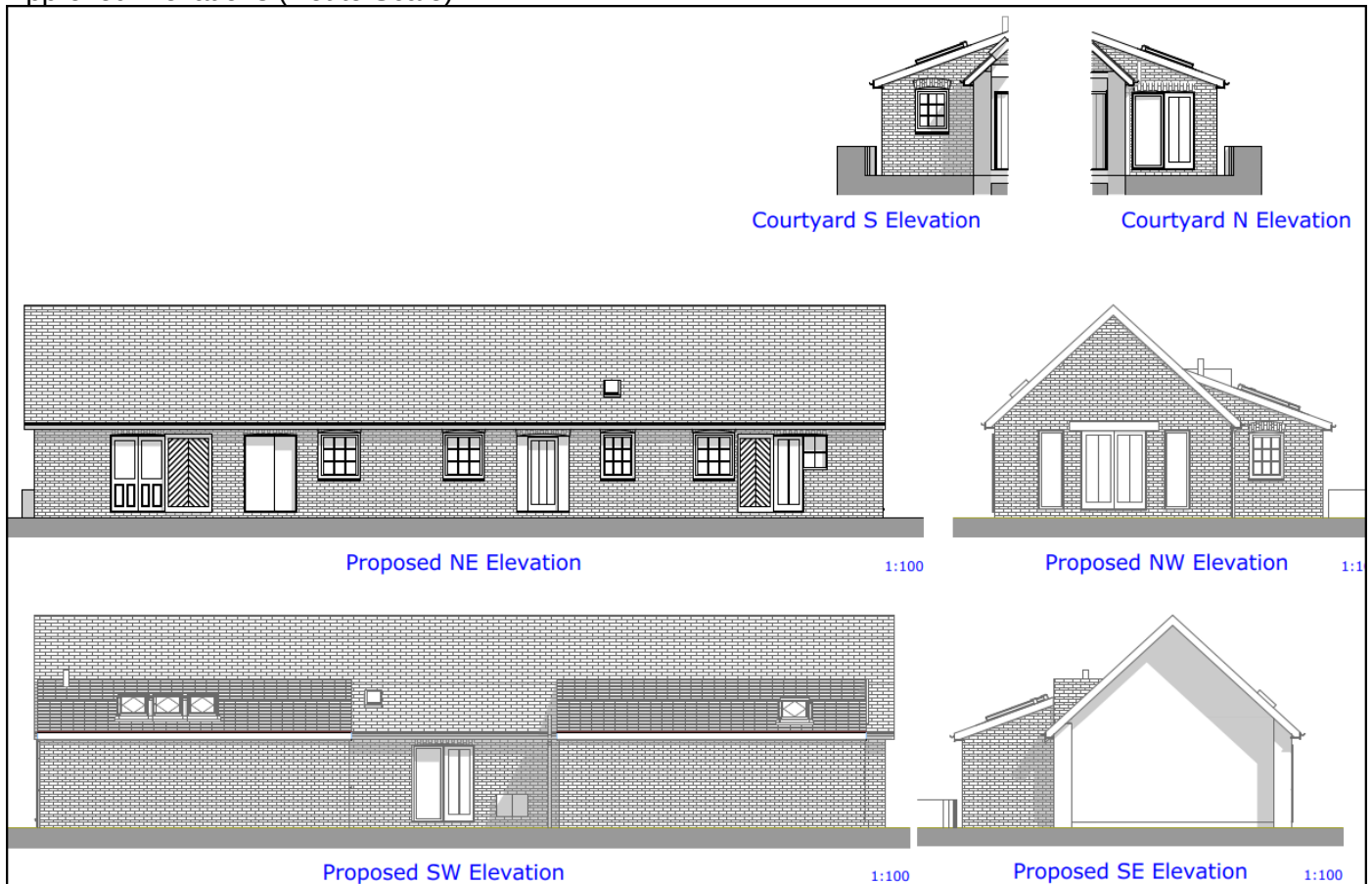
Approved Ground Floor Plan (Not to Scale)



Proposed Ground Floor Plan (Not to Scale)



Approved Elevations (Not to Scale)



Proposed Elevations (Not to Scale)



Principle of Development

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraphs 142-160 of the NPPF address proposals which would affect the Green Belt. It seeks to ensure that inappropriate development in the Green Belt would not be approved except in very special circumstance.

The relevant exceptions to this policy are as follows:

Paragraph 154(c) identifies '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;', as an exception to this policy. Paragraph 154(g) identifies another exception as;

'limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.'

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

Core Policy CS02 sets out where development should be distributed in the borough. Preference is given to those urbanised area as sustainable locations. Outside urbanised areas, those rural settlements which are inset from the Green Belt would also be considered acceptable in principle. This site is in a rural area, in the Greenbelt NOT forming part of a settlement inset from the Greenbelt. In this context the policy states that developments; 'will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in this plan.'

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

Policy C13 sets out the requirements for extensions to dwellings. Of particular consideration and to assist in assessing whether the addition would be disproportionate, this policy limits the increased floorspace to one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling. However, this policy does pre-date the NPPF, and greater weight should be given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 154 the NPPF 2024. "Original dwelling" for the purpose of Policy C13 means the building in permanent residential use at 1st July 1948.

The principle of development in the Green Belt was previously assessed as acceptable. This was based on

the limited increase in floorspace.

Planning consent for conversion of the stables was achieved in 2007 and the dwellinghouse as converted has not been extended since. The original dwellinghouse has an existing gross floor area of 115.5m². The approved floor area would be 153.5m² an increase of 38m². This is an increase of 32.9%, within the one third limitation. The proposed floor area as amended would be 152m². This is an increase of 31.6%, which remains within the one third limitation.

In principle and subject to assessment of design, character and appearance, the dwellinghouse as extended would be considered modest and would not result in significant harm to the openness of the Green Belt, in accordance with paragraphs 142-160 of the NPPF, Core Policy CS02 of Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and Saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan First Review 1994.

Design, Character, Appearance, Heritage Impact and Rural Setting

Although not Listed or in a Conservation Area, this is a historic farm building within an historic farm complex which is considered important in terms of its architectural and historic interest and contribution to the landscape. Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, recognises the importance of preserving the heritage and historic environment and a non-renewable resource, which once lost, cannot be replaced. This particular farmstead uses a traditional courtyard layout, where historically, working buildings are arranged around one or more yards. The working buildings are traditionally low form, and simple in design, allowing the farmhouse, or in this case the oast house, to be the dominant and more complex feature. The proposal to erect two extensions to the rear, whilst small in scale would appear incongruous given the sites rural setting and its current reflection of the clearly identifiable traditional farmstead form and layout. Whilst the development is in residential use, the neighbouring buildings have retained its simple, traditional and rural character and further extensions would undermine this resulting in an unduly domesticated appearance, eroding the rural character and permanently altering the traditional courtyard form of the farmstead complex.

The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets, which include non-designated heritage assets. It draws a distinction between substantial harm and less than substantial harm to such an asset. For the latter, which applies here, the test is that the harm should be weighed against public benefits, including securing the optimum viable use.

Whilst the position and layout of the extension has slightly changed, the proposed extensions would still be; 2no. single storey elements which would provide a small courtyard style garden area between. The proposed scale and size of the extensions in isolation, and being single storey would generally be subservient.

In the allowed appeal, the inspector described the site as follows:

3. The appeal site is within an historic farm yard complex located on the northern side of Shorne Ifield Road that was converted and subdivided into 5 residential units. The site is approximately 1km from the village of Shorne. The appeal unit and its neighbour result from the conversion of stable buildings. It has 3 bedrooms and is within a building that has been divided into 2 dwellings. It and its attached neighbour occupy one of 2 linear ranges in an 'L' formation, facing onto a central courtyard. A third side of the courtyard has a modern garage block. The complex is not listed, including in any local list, nor is it in a conservation area. Nevertheless it is of heritage value: as Historic England makes clear in one of its publications, "Traditional farmsteads are heritage assets which, through conservation and reuse, make a significant contribution to rural economies and communities."

Relevant to this assessment the inspector made the following points:

- The position of the additions would have limited visibility which is a consideration.
- Small lean-to additions would not have been out of place with buildings un use as stables,

cattles/cart shed

- The approved extensions were not lean-to and they would interrupt the simple form of the existing roof.
- The inspector also appears to agree with the statement in the delegated report that the low pitched roof form would be preferable to a flat roof addition.

With all of this in mind, it is therefore important to consider whether the extensions which have already been assessed as subservient additions, would be harmful in their proposed form, with altered layout and a flat roof. Flat roofs are resisted and in this case, they do appear to be bolted on and do not reflect the existing character. On the other hand, they do result in lesser bulk, and interruption to the original roof slope. It is fair to say in this instance that the pitched roof is more reflective of local planning policies and the general approach taken to flat roofs. However, given the limited visibility of the additions and the reduces bulk and interruption to the original building, the harm from this low form flat roof design, with alternative layout would be limited.

The proposal would therefore be compliant with the requirements of; Policy CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of design, character, appearance, heritage and rural context.

Landscape Character Area

The proposal is for extensions and alterations to an existing property which is located in a rural area in the Green Belt, but also the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. This Landscape Character Area is characterised by very gently undulating topography and open arable farmland. There is the original Saxon village of Lower Higham and more recent development to the south with marsh side hamlets and settlements.

Policy CS12 of Gravesham Core Strategy (2014) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states at 5.7.26 the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

On the Landscape Character Area, the inspector stated:

11. The proposed development would increase the size of the property, but the minor increase in scale would not be apparent from anywhere other than the rear of the host dwelling. It would not harm the landscape character since it would be invisible due to the enclosure provided by the existing dwelling and the raised and dense planting at the rear. It would not interrupt the traditional courtyard form of the historic farmstead or materially increase domestic features. Therefore, it would not be detrimental to the traditional rural landscape character of the surrounding area.

The visibility of the scheme is not increased by the changes and so this assessment remains and the impact on the traditional rural landscape character of the surrounding area would be limited.

In respect of landscape character, the proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposed additional rooms would continue to meet minimum space standards. And the rear extensions would significantly reduce the space from the rear wall. As previously assessed, when approaching the issue practically, it is evident that the associated outdoor recreational garden for this property is located to the north-west side of the building and not the rear, and the space in this area would be unchanged.

The rooms meet the required minimum space standards and the dwellinghouse would continue to have



adequate garden space and area as per SPG2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020.

Neighbouring Amenity

Charlie Brown Stables, 1 Ifield Farm, is the attached neighbour located to the south-east, and is the neighbour most likely to be impacted by the development. As can be seen in the applicant provided photograph, the boundary at this rear point is separated by close boarded fencing, with a shed building immediately adjoining this in this neighbour's plot.



As is evident, there are no windows immediately adjoining the boundary on this neighbour's rear elevation and so the extension would not overshadow this neighbour detrimentally, particularly given the southern location of this neighbour and the east to west, southern route of the sun result in shadowing extending northwards, into the applicant's plot. The additional window would face north west, into the applicant's garden area and would not directly overlook any neighbouring plot.

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

The approval to convert the stables to a dwellinghouse ensured provision of 4 vehicular parking spaces. A 4-bedroom house would require 2 and so adequate space is available for vehicular parking.

Adequate parking provision is therefore available subject to inclusion of a condition requiring details of cycle parking provision, in compliance with saved policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan First Review 1994 and Policies CS11 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Conclusion

The proposed scheme as amended would be acceptable against all local and national planning policies.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to approve this application.

Conditions

The following conditions should be amended. Condition 1 (Standard Time Limit) relates to the time limit applied for works to begin. This should be updated to clarify the date by which works shall begin. Condition 2 (approved plans, should be amended to refer to the new and updated drawings. Conditions 3-4 should not be altered. Given that a flat roof is not proposed an additional condition should be added to ensure that the roof is not used as a balcony. Reasons will also be added to all conditions as a matter of consistency with the LPA's decision notices across the board.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	19th December 2025	Dated:	22nd December 2025