



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240980

Location: The Cottage, Old Watling Street Higham Rochester

Description: Erection of a first floor rear extension.

Applicant: Mr Bobby Singh

Site Visit Date: Desktop

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Cover Letter;
- Application form;
- Drawing no. 3541-001 Rev. A – Existing Floor Plans and Elevations; and
- Drawing no. 3541-002 Rev. B – Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20240405	Erection of a rear first floor extension.	Refused	03.07.2024
20030364	Retention of single storey rear extension to form dining room and enlarged living room in substitution of the scheme previously permitted under ref. No. GR/2003/41	Permitted	20.06.2003
20030041	Erection of single storey rear extension to form a kitchen and enlarged living room.	Permitted	17.03.2003
19830822	Erection of a two storey dwelling with detached double garage	Permitted	19.12.1983

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

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 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

No response from:

- Higham Parish Council

Neighbouring properties

5 surrounding properties were consulted – overall consultation expiry date was 06 December – no comments received.

Officer's Analysis

The Cottage is a two storey detached property located on the northern side of Old Watling Street.



The property benefits from a large driveway and detached double garage. It has been extended previously to the rear at single storey level and is set-back further than the adjacent terrace to the west.

To the east of the application property is Crutches Gate Cottage and Farm House, which are Grade II Listed Buildings, and are therefore a material planning consideration.

Planning permission was refused for a first floor rear extension on 3 July under application ref. 20240405 on the following ground:

The proposed extension dominates the original property, is a disproportionate two storey addition that overly enlarges the existing extensions and results in an overdeveloped and bulky appearance. The development is therefore contrary to Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021), as well as Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

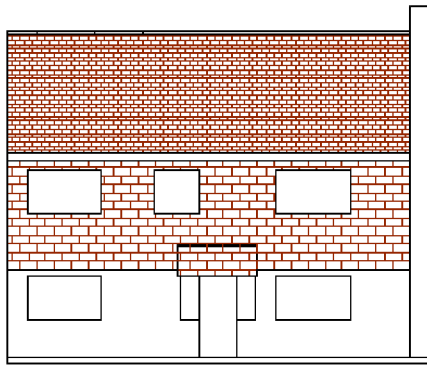
This application is a re-submission and again proposes the erection of a first floor rear extension, above the existing single storey extensions.

For ease of reference the existing, refused and proposed elevations are as follows:

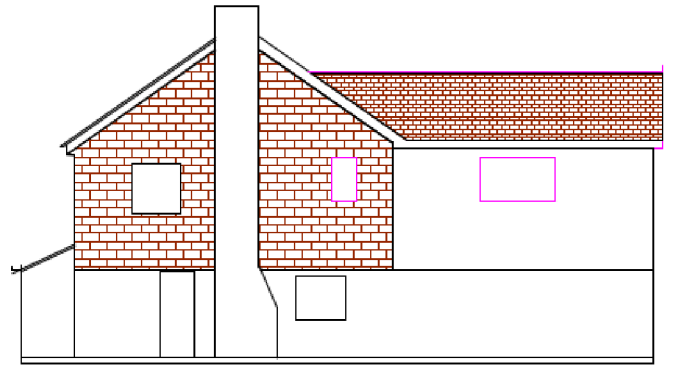
Existing



Refused (ref. 20240405)



FRONT ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION
PROPOSED

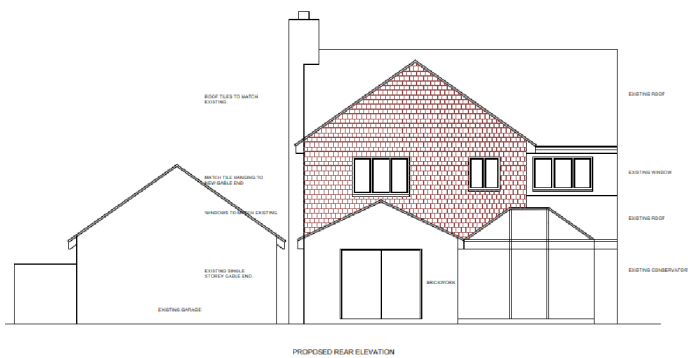


REAR ELEVATION
PROPOSED

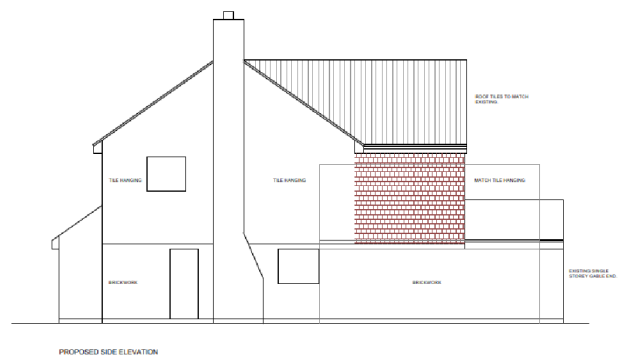


SOUTH ELEVATION
PROPOSED

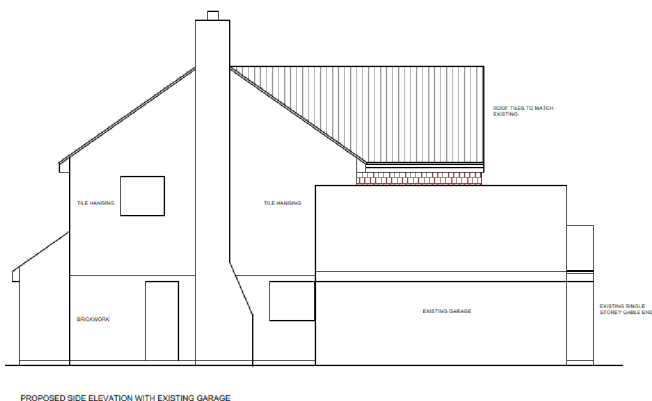
Proposed (current application)



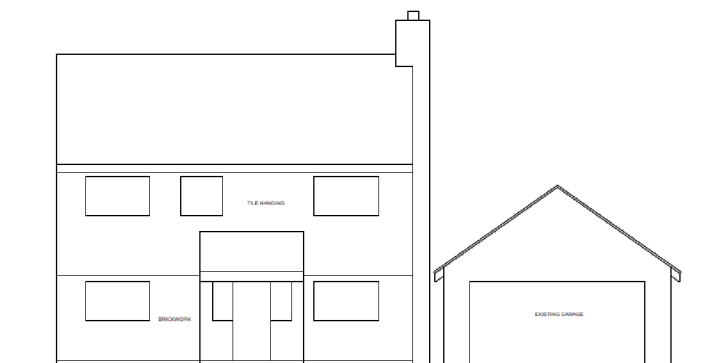
PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION



PROPOSED SIDE ELEVATION WITH EXISTING GARAGE



EXISTING FRONT ELEVATION

The previously refused extension had a staggered depth and width with the following dimensions:

Depth – 3.1m – 6.25m

Width – 4.6m - 9.4m

Height – 5.05m – 6.85m

The proposed extension would have the following dimensions:

Depth - 3.3m

Width - 6.7m

Height - 5.4m

The extension would create space for an extended bedroom and a bathroom.

The principle issues in the consideration of the application are as follows:

Design, Character and Appearance

This matter related to the ground of refusal of the previous application ref. 20240405.

Policy CS19 (LPCS) states that new development will be visually attractive and locally distinctive. It should also conserve and enhance the character of the local built and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding area. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2024) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

In previous application ref. 20240405 the proposed extension was to be constructed above the existing single storey projections on the rear of the dwelling and it was considered it would have resulted in a notable increase in the bulk and massing of the dwelling.

It was highlighted how Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021) addresses two storey/first floor rear extensions, stating that "extensions to extensions will generally not be supported" and that care must be taken to ensure "the extension does not dominate the original property", which "can cause the site to appear overdeveloped, and cause long dark internal spaces". It was considered that the proposed extension would dominate the original property in depth at two storey level, would be a disproportionate addition that would extend above the existing extensions and result in a bulky overdeveloped appearance. Overall the proposed rear extension was considered of poor design and a disproportionate addition that would dominate the original property.

In this current application the proposed extension is of a smaller size and much more subservient. Whereas previously it was a full width addition and substantial depth at 6.2m at its deepest point, in this application the extension would now only cover two thirds of the rear elevation and be 3.3m in depth. The extension would be greater in height but the ridgeline would sit below the ridgeline of the host dwelling and as the width and depth have been decreased, overall the height is considered acceptable. There would be a third of the rear elevation of the host dwelling still visible at first floor level and a large part of the rear roof slope. Windows would match the host dwelling and the extension would be built in matching tile hanging for the walls and tiles for the roof. Overall, the proposed extension would now be subservient and in keeping with the character and appearance of the host dwelling. In respect of design, character and appearance it is considered meet the requirements of Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021) and would be compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and section 12 of the NPPF (2024). In this regard the ground of refusal of previous application ref. 20240405 has been resolved.

Amenity of Occupiers

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires that all development should be 'fit for purpose' and be 'adaptable to allow changes to meet the need of users', which is reinforced by the Council's Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) (2020) and the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) (2015). These provide minimum requirements for room sizes and amenity space.

The proposed extended bedroom in the extension would be 18 sq. m in floor area so would far exceed the minimum size for a double bedroom as set out in the NDSS (2015) which is 11.5 sq. m. It is also proposed to convert an existing office to a bedroom, that bedroom would be 8 sq. m which would exceed the minimum standard for a single bedroom as set out in the NDSS (2015) which is 7.5 sq. m.

The dwelling would increase from three to four bedrooms, the proposed extension would not impact on the garden area or depth. The rear garden area and depth would still exceed the minimum requirements for rear garden area and depth as set out in SPG2 (2020). In respect of occupier amenity the proposal as before is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2024).

Landscape Character

The site is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by very gently undulating topography of open arable farmland with pockets of orchards and garden nurseries. The developments spread from the original Saxon settlement of Lower Higham in the North, to more contemporary developments in the South around main road networks.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) 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.

Due to the subservient nature of the extension and the fact the site is located in a well-development part of the countryside it is considered that the proposal would not cause harm to the character of the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. In respect of landscape character the proposal is therefore compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS).

Neighbouring Amenity

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires new development to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land and paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) requires development to have a high standard of amenity for existing users (in this case surrounding properties).

The proposed extension is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the amenity of adjoining properties. Due to the reduced depth of the extension this is even more the case. This was considered the case in the previous application and is considered to be the case even more so in this application given the reduced size of the extension. Due to the distance of the extension to the neighbouring properties and the scale of the proposal it is considered it would not cause any impact on either neighbouring property with regards overshadowing, loss of light, loss of outlook or sense of enclosure. There are no windows proposed in either flank elevation therefore no overlooking. In respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal as before is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2024).

Parking and Highways

The property benefits from a large driveway and a detached double garage, with space to park a number of vehicles off-street.

Gravesham's SPG 4 (2006) requires a three bedroom property to provide two off-street parking spaces. The property achieves this parking requirement on the driveway and as such, the development would provide sufficient off-street parking in accordance with SPG 4 (2006). In respect of parking and highways the proposal as before is therefore considered compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Conclusion

This re-submission for a first floor rear extension is now acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance and has therefore addressed the ground of refusal of previous application ref. 20240405. The proposal as before is acceptable in respect of landscape character, occupier and neighbouring amenity and parking and highways. The proposal is therefore now compliant with local and national planning policy.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	19th December 2024	Dated:	20 th December 2024