



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20220746
Location:	Glen Hurst, Pear Tree Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 3JT
Description:	Erection of a two storey side extension, loft conversion including two rear dormers and addition of porch.
Applicant:	Mr & Mrs Rand
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

Application Form - dated 01/07/2022;
Supplementary Information - Design and Access Statement;
Ordnance Survey Site Location Plan (scale - 1:1250);
Drawing no. 06002 - P.2 - Existing and Proposed Site Plan (scale - 1:500);
Drawing no. 07001 - P.2 - Existing Floor Plans;
Drawing no. 07002 - P.1 - Proposed Floor Plans;
Drawing no. 08001 - P.2 - Existing Elevations;
Drawing no. 08002 - P.1 - Proposed Elevations.

Relevant Planning History

No relevant planning history

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 - Sustainable Development
- CS02 - Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 - Green Infrastructure
- CS18 - Climate Change
- CS19 - Design & Development Principles

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

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

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural 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 Guidance (SPD) (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal consultees

GBC - Highways Officer - I have no objections the site benefits from more than adequate car parking, although perhaps a condition should be attached so the car parking provision can be protected.

External consultees

Meopham Parish Council - The Parish Council has no objection in principle to this proposal subject to there not being any significant and valid objections from neighbours.

The existing house is relatively small for the size of its plot and is located to one side. Part of the site is woodland.

The proposed extensions/alterations are subservient and in keeping with the style of the existing house. There will be some impact on openness in the Green Belt.

The plans do not include any hard or soft landscaping.

We note that a considerable area of land on the site appears to have previously been changed to hardstanding, the purpose and need for this is unclear.

In view of the size of the proposed extension and the observed land clearance we request that permitted development rights for the site should be withdrawn.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 13th July 2022.

In addition, three neighbouring properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 5th August 2022.

Analysis

Glen Hurst is a two storey detached property located on the western side of Pear Tree Lane. The property is characterised by a two storey side projection, has a small flat roof section above the main body of the house and painted render.



The property benefits from a large driveway and a detached garage, which was constructed under permitted development but does not benefit from a lawful development certificate.

Proposed Development

This application proposes the erection of a two storey side extension, loft conversion and a porch. The two storey side extension will infill the existing gap at the front of the property and extend beyond the flank wall. The roof will be widened by creating a large flat roof section with two rear dormers and a number of velux windows on both front and rear roof slopes. The roof of the side extension will similarly have a flat roof. The porch will be located centrally on the front elevation and will be set-down below the existing ground level with steps down to access the property.

The dimensions of each extension are listed below:

Two Storey Side (Infill)

- Depth - 2.8m
- Width - 4m
- Height (max) - 7.3m
- Height (eave) - 4.75m

Porch

- Depth - 1.5m
- Width - 2.88m

Two Storey Side

- Depth - 7m
- Width - 4.3m
- Height (max) - 6.8m
- Height (eave) - 4.8m

Dormers

- Depth - 1.95m
- Width - 1.6m

- Height (max) - 3m
- Height (eave) - 1.88m

- Height - 1.95m

Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations



The extensions will create space on ground floor for a new open plan kitchen/living/diner, a separate living room, new utility room and an additional wc. At first floor space would be created for an additional ensuite bedroom and a home office. The new second floor will contain an ensuite bedroom with a dressing room.

Extension to Dwelling

The application site is located in the Green Belt and as such Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) is relevant. Development in the urban area is prioritised as the sustainable location for development. In the rural area, Policy CS02 states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the policies map. Development outside those settlements, i.e. in the Green Belt, will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in the LPCS.

There are five principle issues in determining this application;

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?
2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt;
3. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
4. Other matters; and
5. Any very special circumstances?
6. Impact on the Landscape.

1. Is the proposed development appropriate in the Green Belt?

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 goes on to say that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt unless it falls within the specified exceptions. The relevant exception to consider for this application is part c of paragraph 149 of the NPPF, which states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In determining this proposal account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (LPFR) (1994) which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside. It sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF, the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

In particular Policy C13 places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria ii). It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting (criteria vi). It is considered that these factors are relevant in determining whether the size of an extension is proportionate and as such, these aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the NPPF and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	84.9m ²	130m ²	53%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	137.35m ²	263.85m ²	92%

Volume	-	-	-
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The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse exceed the one third limit set out in saved policy C13. Therefore in purely numerical terms, the extension is contrary to the local plan Green Belt policy, potentially representing a disproportionate increase over the original floor area of the building. The volume calculations of the extensions, over the original dwelling, have not been calculated in this application and will instead be visually assessed.

However the numerical calculation forms only a part of the overall assessment. Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that it may be acceptable to extend or alter a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. It does not provide a figure.

The infill extension does not project forward of the principle elevation of the property and the side extension is subordinate and subservient. The side extension will notably elongate the property, but this is similar to its existing character with the two storey side projection. Nevertheless, the extensions are considered to be disproportionate additions which add significant bulk and massing to the property by virtue of the large flat roof sections. While it is noted that the property has an existing flat roof section, the extension to this and introduction of an additional flat roof section creates unacceptable perceived bulk to the proposed dwelling which is considered inappropriate development and harmful to the Green Belt.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would result in a disproportionate addition to the property, adding significant physical and visual bulk to the dwelling, and as such the proposal would be inappropriate development which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. It is therefore contrary to Policy CS02 (LPCS), Policy C13 (LPFR) and to paragraph 149 (NPPF).

2. *The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt*

Paragraph 137 states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It also states that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.

Any new built form of development is likely to impact on the openness of the Green Belt, however it is important to establish the degree of harm. Openness of the Green Belt has both a spatial and visual aspect. The development will enlarge the dwelling substantially, with a two storey side extension that will project beyond the flank wall of the property by 4.3m, which is approximately 36% increase in width. Nevertheless, the subservience of the side extension is a good design strategy which would reduce perceived bulk. However the extension to, and introduction of, the flat roof sections is contrary to the good design strategies and adds significant perceived bulk that is harmful to the open character of the Green Belt. The existing flat roof section on the property is small, but would be increased by 390%, which creates harsh edges and a bulky appearance, adding to the overall massing of the proposed dwelling. Moreover, the two flat roof box dormers serve to exacerbate the harsh edges and boxy appearance. Overall, this proposal is therefore considered to erode the openness of the Green Belt.

Reference back to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF informs us that inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Whether the development causes any other harm and whether there are any other relevant considerations to balance the overall planning argument, should now be considered.

3. *The effect on the character and appearance of the area*

Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) (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.

Gravesham's newly published Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for new developments. This SPD highlights the importance of extensions being subordinate to the host building, that compliment and correspond with the character of the dwelling and wider context.

The side extension is subservient and subordinate to the main dwelling, it is set-down from the main ridge height and set-in from both the front and rear elevations, which is considered to be good design. However, the extensions are considered to be poor design by virtue of the extensions to, and introduction of additional, flat roof sections. The Local Planning Authority do not support applications proposing flat roofs above single storey level by virtue of their bulky and incongruous appearance. This application proposes an extension to the existing flat roof section and the introduction of a new flat roof section on the side extension. Although it is acknowledged that there is an existing small flat roof section on the property, the extension of this section and introduction of additional areas of flat roof exacerbates the poor design, bulky appearance and harsh edges. The flat roof box dormers serve to add to the bulky appearance and harsh edges of the proposed dwelling. Furthermore, the proposed flat roof sections are also out of character with the vernacular of the surrounding area, where all other properties have pitched roofs with traditional ridges and is contrary to policy guidance that seeks extensions to correspond with the wider context and integrate with the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed extensions by virtue of bulky and incongruous flat roofs are poor design contrary to Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

4. *Other matters*

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will safeguard the amenity of future occupiers. The garden is large and will not be significantly reduced as part of this development. The rooms proposed are in accordance with Gravesham's Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and will receive sufficient natural light. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Neighbouring

There will be no impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of loss of light, overlooking, sense of enclosure or loss of outlook. As such the proposal is considered to safeguard the amenity of adjoining properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF).

Parking and Highways

There are no parking or highways issues relating to the proposed development.

5. *Very special circumstances*

No specific arguments have been put forward by the applicant in relation to the assessment of 'very special circumstances'.

6. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within Shorne Woodland Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by an undulating topography, chestnut coppice woodland and a strong sense of enclosure. The developments are often located around traditional village greens, are buildings have varying styles and ages with chequered brickwork and ornamental brickwork.

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.

The proposed extensions are not considered to cause any detrimental harm to the character of the Shorne Woodlands landscape.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is contrary to local and national planning policy.

The proposed extensions introduce new, and extend existing, flat roof sections that add significant bulk to the property and are incongruous features, creating harsh edges that are exacerbated by the flat roof box dormers, which is poor design, disproportionate additions to the property and is harmful to the open character of the Green Belt. As such, the proposed development is contrary Policies CS12 and CS19 (LPCS), saved Policy C13 (LPFR) as well as Sections 12 and 13 (NPPF).

Recommendation:

Refusal

(For detailed reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	30 th August 2022	Dated:	31 st August 2022