



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application No:	20240405
Location:	The Cottage, Old Watling Street, Higham, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3UF
Description:	Erection of a rear first floor extension.
Applicant:	Mr Bobby Singh
Site Visit:	N/A Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form – dated 02 May 2024
- Drawing no. 01/24/ER – Rev. 0 – Existing Floor and Roof Plans
- Drawing no. 02/24/ER – Rev. 0 – Existing Elevations
- Drawing no. 03/24/ER – Rev. 0 – Proposed Floor and Roof Plans
- Drawing no. 04/24/ER – Rev. 0 – Proposed Elevations
- Drawing no. 05/24/ER – Rev. 0 – Existing Block Plan (scale – 1:500)
- Drawing no. 06/24/ER – Rev. 0 – Site Location Plan (scale – 1:1250)

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
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
20020897	Retention of the front boundary wall and gates.	PERMITTED	06.01.2003
19830822	Erection of a two storey dwelling with detached double garage	PERMITTED	19.12.1983
19830043	Outline application for application for the erection of a two storey dwelling	PERMITTED	23.05.1983
19600140	Site for erection of dwellings	REFUSED	28.06.1960

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 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)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed and Beautiful 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)
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

External Consultees

Higham Parish Council – No comment received.

Internal Consultees

Local Ward Councillors - No comment received.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 17 May 2024.

In addition, six surrounding properties were consulted and one representations was received. The neighbour registered objection to the development, raising the following concerns with overlooking and privacy impacts on amenity.

The consultation period expired 14 June 2024.

Officer's Analysis

Site Description

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

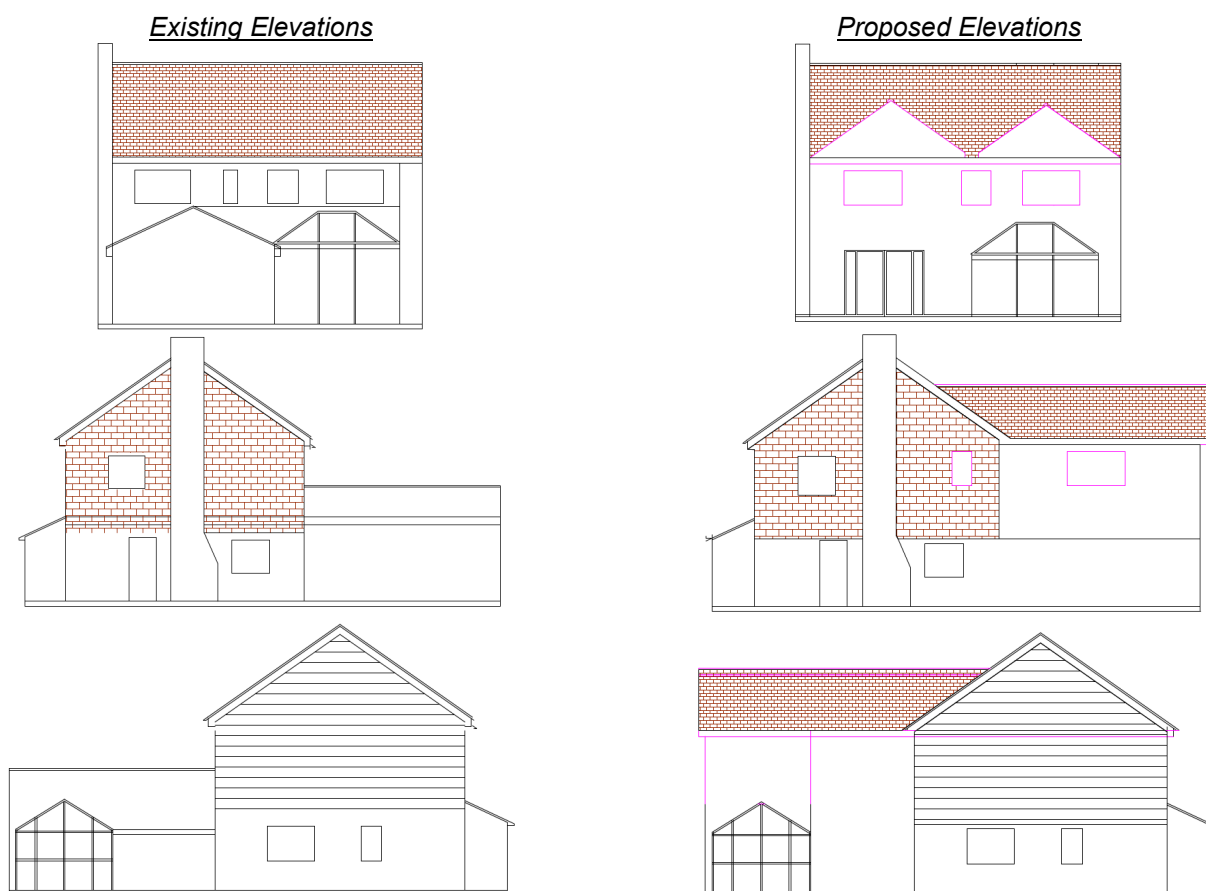


The property benefits from a large driveway and detached double garage. It has been extended previously to the rear at single storey level and is set-back further than the adjacent terrace to the west.

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.

Proposed Development

This application proposes the erection of a first floor rear extension, above the existing single storey extensions.



The extension would have a staggered depth and width, with the following dimensions:

- Depth (max) – 6.25m
- Width (max) – 9.4m
- Height (max) – 6.85m
- Depth (min) – 3.1m
- Width (min) – 4.6m
- Height (eave) – 5.05m

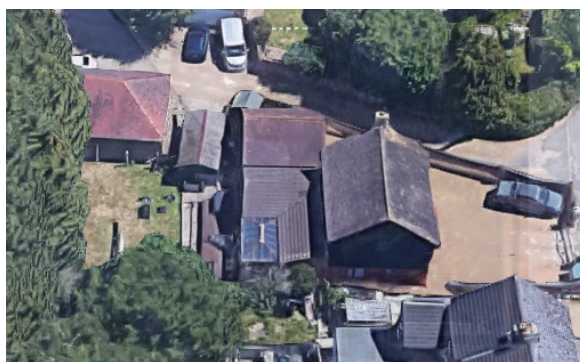
It would create space for an enlarged second bedroom, with an ensuite and walk-in wardrobe, and a new family bathroom.

Design, Character and Appearance

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. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the NPPF (2023) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

The extension proposed will be constructed above the existing single storey projections on the rear of the dwelling, but will notably increase the bulk and massing by creating a first floor which increases the height and width, as well as changing its roof form.

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". In this case, the extension dominates the original property in depth at two storey level and is a disproportionate addition that extends above existing extensions, which results in a bulky overdeveloped appearance.



The satellite image above demonstrates the scale of the existing single storey extensions, and serves to highlight the additional bulk and massing that the proposed development would introduce to the rear, dominating and overdeveloping the dwelling.

Although a dominant, poorly designed addition, the extensions is located to the rear of the dwelling and would not have any impact on the adjacent Grade II Listed Building, Crutches Gate Cottage and Farm House.

Overall, the proposed rear extension is poor design and a disproportionate addition that dominates the original property contrary to Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD, Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2023).

Amenity of Future 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 extension would provide good sized rooms for future occupiers and is in accordance with local residential layout guidelines. Therefore, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

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 (2023) 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 in relation to loss of light, overlooking, loss of outlook or sense of enclosure. Although the property is set-back from the adjoining terraced properties, the extension is located to the north of the neighbours and is therefore not expected to result in any overshadowing of habitable windows by virtue of the path of the sun. In addition, there are no proposed flank windows facing west towards the terrace to result in any overlooking into habitable rooms or the private amenity space of the neighbours. Similarly, the adjacent property (1 Rose Cottages) has flank windows forward of the application property and as such, the extension would not result in any outlook or sense of enclosure impacts.



The proposed extension is not considered to impact on the amenity of other properties to the north and east, by virtue of distances of 20m and 25m respectively to those dwellings, and the dense boundary screening in place.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to safeguard the amenity of surrounding properties and is in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2023).

Parking and Highway

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).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on the Landscape – the property 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.

Although the extension hereby proposed are considered large and poorly designed in relation to the existing dwelling, the development is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the landscape. The property is located within a well-developed part of the countryside and will therefore not harm the character of the Higham arable farmlands landscape.

Conclusion

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

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).

Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission is refused.

Recommendation

Refusal

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

Case Officer:	Mr Ethan Bonthron	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	3 rd July 2024	Dated:	03 July 2024