



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240774

Location: 6 Lilac Place Meopham Gravesend Kent

Description: Erection of single storey rear extension incorporating a double gable with conversion of the garage into habitable room.

Applicant: Mr Daniel Dillon

Site Visit Date: 17.10.24

Preliminary Matters

During the course of the application, KCC Biodiversity team provided comments requesting high quality, labelled photographs in the first instance, to fully assess the likelihood of any constraints relating to ecology, primarily roosting bats. The agent was contacted accordingly and photos were provided on 01.10.24 and added to the application file. KCC Biodiversity were then reconsulted on the application, but raised queries relating to the loss of the tree in the rear garden. When undertaking the site visit for the application, no tree was noted on site and it appears that the tree in question had already been removed. In addition, it was noted that some hedging/planting had been removed from the front garden since the 2016 Google Street View images:

2016 Street View



Site Visit Photo



Whilst the removal of the tree and hedging/planting is unfortunate, this is not directly related to the application itself, has already taken place and does not require planning permission. As such, further information regarding the tree was not requested from the agent, and the application shall be determined as submitted.

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form;
Drawing No. PA001 – OS Plan and Block Plan with Parking Plan – Proposed;
Drawing No. PA002 – Floor Plans and Elevations – Existing;
Drawing No. PA003 – Floor Plan Roof Plan and Elevations – Proposed;
Drawing No. PA004 - 3D Visual – Existing and Proposed;
Supplementary Information – Ecological Pictures – East x 3;
Supplementary Information – Ecological Pictures – East x 3;
Supplementary Information – Ecological Pictures – East x 3;

Supplementary Information – PA103_00 – Ecology Review – West Elevation;
 Supplementary Information – PA104_00 – Ecology Review – North East Elevation;
 Supplementary Information – PA105_00 – Ecology Review – North Elevation; and
 Supplementary Information – PA106_00 – Ecology Review – North West Elevation.

Superseded

Drawing No. PA001_00 – OS Plan and Block Plan – Proposed

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19930106	Erection of single storey side extension to form bedroom, ensuite bathroom and w.c./shower room.	Permitted	01.04.1993
19810277	Erection of single storey side extension to form a garage	Permitted	06.05.1981

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 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

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

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Meopham Parish Council

Following discussion by our Planning Applications Working Group; the Council wishes to provide the following response:

Due to the reduction in parking space and the potential over development of the site (subject to permitted development) Meopham Parish Council objects to the application

We therefore object to this proposal.

KCC Biodiversity

Initial comments

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (KCC EAS) for Local Planning Authorities. It is independent, professional advice and is not a comment/position on the application from the county council. It is intended to advise the relevant planning officer(s) on the potential ecological impacts of the planning application and if sufficient/appropriate ecological information has been provided.

Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have must be directed in every instance to the planning officer, who will seek input from the EAS where appropriate and necessary.

NO INFORMATION – MORE INFORMATION NEEDED

No ecological information has been submitted with this application. As a result of reviewing the data we have available to us, and the information submitted with the planning application, we advise that further information is sought from the applicant with regards to the potential for ecological impacts to arise.

It is noted that proposals are relatively small in scale and will impact upon an existing dwelling and soft landscaping. However, from the information provided, it has not been possible to fully assess the likelihood of any constraints relating to ecology, primarily roosting bats.

To establish the potential for protected species presence, that must be taken account of in the planning decision, in the first instance, high quality, labelled, photographs of all aspects of the building, and the construction zone should be requested. Photographs need to focus on the roof, soffits and fascias to be affected by proposals. Photographs need to avoid shadowing and provide both close up and full elevation views.

Photographs can then be reviewed by Kent County Council Ecological Advice Service (KCC EAS). These photographs may satisfy KCC EAS that no ecological surveys are necessary at the site. However, where photographs are inconclusive, or indicate possible features suitable for protected species, a simple Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) may need to be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist¹, in accordance with good practice guidelines. Any EclA would need to include the following:

- Details of the impacts of development proposals on the ecological baseline established via a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)
- Details of any additional surveys undertaken following the PEA;
- Details of any appropriate and achievable ecological mitigation measures;
- Identification of any residual ecological effects after avoidance and mitigation measures have been considered, and any compensation measures required to offset residual effects;
- Details of ecological enhancement measures; and
- Provision of sufficient information to determine whether the project accords with relevant nature conservation policies and legislation.

The above is in line with paragraph 99 of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/20052 which states *“it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision”*.

The above is also in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) Act 2006. Under section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 and paragraphs 180 and 186 of the NPPF 2023, biodiversity should be maintained and enhanced through the planning system. Enhancement refers to providing net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation and compensation.

Further KCC Biodiversity comments following reconsultation

The following is provided by Kent County Council's Ecological Advice Service (KCC EAS) for Local Planning Authorities. It is independent, professional advice and is not a comment/position on the application from the county council. It is intended to advise the relevant planning officer(s) on the potential ecological impacts of the planning application and if sufficient/appropriate ecological information has been provided.

Any additional information, queries or comments on this advice that the applicant or other interested parties may have must be directed in every instance to the planning officer, who will seek input from the EAS where appropriate and necessary.

It is not clear from the submitted information if any trees are to be removed therefore the following comments are only valid if no trees are to be removed. If any trees are to be removed, please confirm which trees and provide pictures of them.

If no trees are to be lost, we advise the following comments are valid:

We have reviewed the photographs provided by the applicant, following our earlier comments, Sept 24. We are satisfied that sufficient information has been submitted and no further surveys are required for the building.

Following our earlier comments (Sept 24) the applicant has provided the requested photographs to show all aspects of the building and roof space affected by the proposals. We have reviewed the comprehensive photographs provided by the applicant showing all aspects, elevations, facias, soffits and roof spaces. We consider that in the photographs provided, the building appears well sealed, with no obvious potential roost features and we therefore do not require a building bat survey for this application.

If you have any queries regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Neighbouring properties

3 surrounding properties were consulted, a site notice was displayed on 12.09.24 and 1 response was

received objecting to the proposal. The objection is summarised below:

- Object to the garage conversion
- The new entrance door on the flank elevation would allow use as a separate dwelling, which is out of character
- Noise concerns due to increased footfall from this entrance
- Privacy concerns due to the proposed fenestration of the garage conversion being within close proximity, particularly facing our bedroom and kitchen windows (under construction)
- Light pollution concerns
- Request for the removal of the side entrance door and access to the studio be gained through the main property and the placement of the windows to the front of the garage conversion be reconsidered.

The objection contains both material and non-material planning considerations. Noise concerns due to increased footfall would not be a consideration of this proposal for extensions and alterations to a residential property. In addition, the proposal is a householder application and, as such, the formation of a separate unit of accommodation/home does not fall under this application type. However, if permission were to be forthcoming, a condition could be added to the decision notice to ensure the use of the garage conversion was restricted. Material considerations such as design, character and appearance and neighbouring amenity shall be assessed in the relevant sections of this report below.

Site Description

6 Lilac Place is a detached bungalow situated in the rural settlement, inset from the Greenbelt.

Site Photo



As evidenced by the planning history of the site, the property has been previously extended.

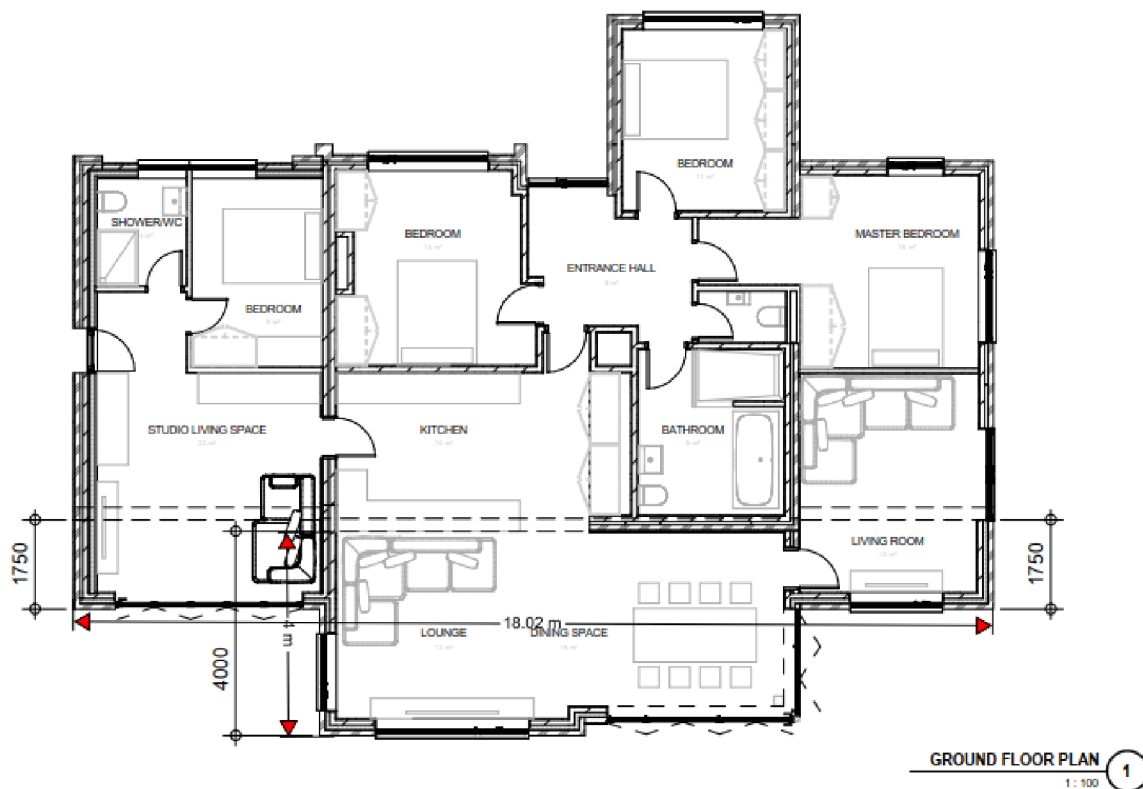
Proposed Development

The proposed development includes conversion of the garage to form a shower room, bedroom and 'studio' living space. Additionally, the proposal includes the erection of a single storey rear extension. The extension would be a maximum height of 4.09m, it would have a maximum depth of 4.00m and would span the entire width of the dwelling (including across the previous extensions):

3D Images



Ground Floor Plan



In addition, fenestration changes are proposed.

Officer's Analysis

Design, Character and Appearance and Impact on the Landscape Character 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. 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.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) (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. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF 2023 seeks to protect and enhance such valued landscapes.

Gravesham's Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance (SPD) (2021) states *it is important to ensure that any extensions or alterations to a home are well designed, well-built and sympathetic to their surroundings. By doing so we can ensure that there are no adverse effects on the original house, immediate neighbours, the local view of the street, as well as the character and appearance of the local area.*

Extension

The proposed extension is fairly large as it spans across the width of the dwelling. Notwithstanding this, the extension is located to the rear of the property, it has been designed to have a staggered appearance and incorporates a double gable. The extension is set lower than the main roof and the eaves compliment the existing dwelling. On balance, the extension is considered to be acceptable.

Conversion of Garage

The conversion of the garage would provide ancillary family living space, as per the description on the application form. The garage door would be replaced with windows and surrounding appropriate surrounding materials to infill the wall. This would not be considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the dwelling or surrounding area.

Fenestration

The proposal includes some fenestration alterations. The shower room window in the front elevation would be removed and replaced with brickwork to match the existing, the new window replacing the garage door would compliment the existing window style, a side door would be installed in the west elevation, and a new window and door would be installed in the east elevation. In the rear elevation there would be two sets of bi-fold doors and windows to compliment the existing dwelling. Rooflights would be incorporated into two of the rear pitched roof slopes.

Materials

The proposed external materials would include; red undulating roof tiles to match the existing, brick to match the existing walls and render in white/off white, as indicated by the drawings. Window details have not been provided, however, a condition can be added to ensure the new windows match the colour and frame style of the existing.

Landscape Character Area

The site lies within the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area, which is characterised by gently undulating topography with a mix of arable and pasture farmland, three large settlements located along the

A227 and traditional architecture surrounding village greens providing local vernacular. In situ, the proposed development within the residential area, is not considered to detrimentally impact the Landscape Character Area.

Overall balancing exercise

The proposed extension would not be visible from the street scene. There have been extensions to other properties in the surrounding area and as such, the principle of the extension is not out of context. In addition, a detached property could have a rear extension of up to 8.00m under a Prior Approval Larger homes Application, subject to compliance with the General Permitted Development Order (2015) (as amended). Although fairly large, the proposed extension has been staggered to reduce the overall bulk and massing and has been designed to appear subservient to the host dwelling. The proposed external materials would compliment the existing dwelling and be sympathetic to the character of the area, where there are examples of render along with the existing brickwork. In terms of fenestration, again, windows and doors at ground floor level can be installed under permitted development rights, providing they comply with the requirements of the order. Notwithstanding this, the fenestration is not deemed to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the host dwelling or surrounding area. Therefore, in terms of design, the proposals are considered to be acceptable and to accord with Policies CS12 and CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (2014) and Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023.)

Amenity of Future Occupiers

Gravesham's Residential layout guidelines (RLG) amended June 2020 sets out minimum private garden area and depth along with room size requirements. In terms of garden area, the resultant garden area satisfies these requirements.

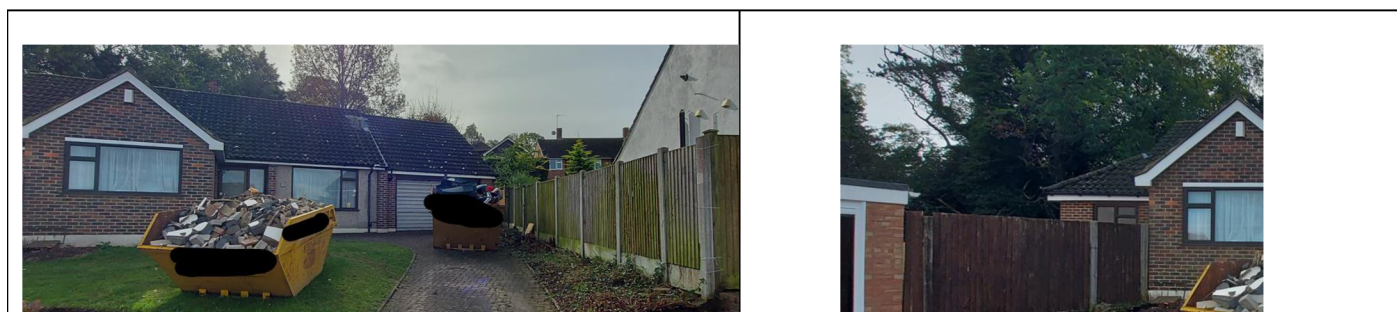
In terms of room sizes, the proposed plans accord with the RLG (2020), albeit the bedroom within the converted garage would be suitable for single occupancy only.

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

Neighbouring Amenity

As aforementioned above, one neighbour response was received as a result of the consultation carried out for this application. Neighbouring amenity is assessed in terms of loss of light, loss of privacy, loss of outlook or development causing a sense of enclosure.

The property is detached and in situ, the proposals are not considered to impact neighbouring amenity in terms of loss of light, loss of outlook nor would it cause a sense of enclosure. Concerns have been raised regarding privacy, particularly given that this could impact neighbouring extensions that have been approved previously. On the site visit, it was noted that there were no visible extensions that were in the process of being constructed. Notwithstanding this, it was noted that there is a high level fence across the shared boundaries:





Given that any new windows and doors are at ground floor level, the boundary treatments provide screening to ensure there is no detrimental loss of privacy between neighbouring properties and the application property. As such, the development is considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 (NPPF) (2023).

Parking and Highways

The proposal would result in the loss of the garage and formation of an additional bedroom. Meopham Parish Council have raised an objection to the proposal due to the reduction in parking space and potential overdevelopment of the site. Although the loss of the garage is regrettable, it can be seen from the below google image (and the above site visit photos), that the existing situation would provide sufficient space for two cars:



In addition, there appears to be no on street parking restrictions for Lilac Place. Therefore, it is considered that the application should not be refused on parking grounds. On balance, sufficient parking provision would be available, post development, and as such, there are no concerns regarding highways and parking.

Biodiversity

As aforementioned above, it was noted on the site visit that some planting in the frontage and the tree in the rear garden have been removed. Although this is not ideal, in this instance, these works can be carried out without planning permission.

As aforementioned above, KCC Biodiversity requested photos (in the first instance) during the consultation process. These were provided by the agent and KCC were reconsulted. As per their comments, the Biodiversity team are satisfied that a building bat survey is not required in this instance. As such, the application is considered to be acceptable in terms of biodiversity.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Archaeology

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, the proposed development is unlikely to have any archaeological impact.

Groundwater Protection Zone

The site is located within a Groundwater Protection Zone 3 area, however, the proposal would be unlikely to be impacted by this constraint.

Conclusion

The application has been fully considered and is in accordance with local and national planning policy.

The proposed development, subject to conditions, is considered acceptable in terms of design, character, appearance and impact on the Landscape Character Area. In addition, it is considered to safeguard the amenity of future occupiers and neighbours. Furthermore, the proposal provides sufficient off-road parking and is acceptable in terms of biodiversity.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lucy Hankin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	6 th November 2024	Dated:	7th November 2024