



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Application no:	20220896
Location:	Crabbles Cottage, Pear Tree Lane, Shorne, Gravesend, DA12 3JS
Description:	**Revised Application** Demolition of existing detached garage; erection of first floor extension over existing attached garage at side to form bedroom with conversion of garage to dining room; erection of two storey linked side/rear extension to form garage, snug and utility area at ground floor and bedroom/ensuite/dressing room at first floor and with general alterations upgrade.
Applicant:	Mr and Mrs M Tutty-Johnson
Site Visit:	2 nd September 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application Form - dated 12 August 2022
- Revised Design and Access Statement - received 12 December 2022
- Revised Area Calculations - received 05 December 2022
- Applicant's appraisal of neighbouring applications - received 05 December 2022
- Applicant's agents additional supporting information - received 05 December 2022
- OS Red Line Site Location Plan (unnumbered)
- Drawing No 221/56 - 03: Ground Floor Layout as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 04: First Floor Plan as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 05: Roof Layout as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 06: Section Plan as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 07: Elevations Front and Side (East) as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 08: Elevations Rear and Side (West) as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 17: Block Plan as Existing
- Drawing No 221/56 - 18: Ground Floor Layout Plan as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 19: First Floor Layout Plan as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 21: Roof Layout Plan as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 22: Site Layout Plan as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 22: Site Layout Plan as Proposed (with demolished garage shown by red line)
- Drawing No 221/56 - 23: Elevations Front and Side (East) as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 24: Elevations Side (West) and Rear as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 25: Isometric Projection as Existing

- Drawing No 221/56 - 26: Isometric Projection as Proposed
- Drawing No 221/56 - 26: Isometric Projection as Proposed (with demolished garage shown by red line)
- Drawing No 221/56 - 27: Site Layout/Footprint 1954
- Drawing No 221/56 - 28: Site Layout/Footprint 2019 (as surveyed)
- Drawing No 221/56 - 29: Site Layout/Footprint 2022 (Post Permitted Development Alterations)
- Drawing No 221/56 - 30: Site Layout/Footprint 1954 (Revised Proposals)

Superseded

- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 09: Ground Floor Layout Plan as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 10: First Floor Layout Plan as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 11: Roof Layout Plan as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 12: Section Plan as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 13: Elevations Front and Side (East) as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 14: Elevations Side (West) and Rear as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 15: Block Plan as Proposed - SUPERSEDED;~~
- ~~Drawing No 221/56 - 16: Site Layout Plan as Proposed - SUPERSEDED.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
TH/6/73/323	Erection of double garage	PERMISSION	23.10.1973
BR/5109	Alteration of vestibule and addition of storm porch	APPROVED	03.07.1973
19540344 (TH/6/54/232)	Additions	PERMISSION	06.10.1954
19540339 (TH/6/54/227)	Additions	PERMISSION	06.10.1954

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) (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 (LPFR) (November 1994):

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

Paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (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 (LPFR) (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (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 - This application results in the removal of two garages, with one being replaced and an increase in the number of bedrooms from three to five. Given the property is in a rural area that does not benefit from any street lighting and is served by a limited width country lane, ideally the property should have a minimum of three parking spaces, allowing two for the residents and one for a visitor.

It is noted that the proposed garage is some 5.4 metres wide, which is less than ideal for a double garage, SPG4 suggests 6 metres and the width on one side will be encroached by the stairs leading to the upstairs potentially further limiting the space on that side of the garage. The width of 5.4 metres will also limit the width of the pedestrian route from the boot room (and hence the house) to the gym. The garage is therefore considered as only being suitable for a single motor vehicle but can readily accommodate the requirement for secure cycle parking. However, with so many existing access points and the length of hard surfaced land, there is no problem in accommodating additional parked vehicles at this site. It may not conform to current requirements, but it exists and the increase in vehicle movements associated with a five-bedroom dwelling would not be considered significant. I have no objections.

Local Ward Councillors - No comment received.

External consultees

Shorne Parish Council - No objection to the principle of this house being updated and enlarged but has the following objections to/comments on this present proposal:

- The house is relatively small for this part of Pear Tree Lane, but the residential plot is also smaller than average in depth. The applicant owns additional adjacent non-residential woodland land at the rear which is not fully shown on the site plan.
- The house is located very close to the roadway so sideways extension will have significant impact on the street scene, with greatly increased mass/bulk and negative impact on the street scene and openness in the Green Belt.
- The house has previously been extended:

- The original floor area of the house appears to have been about 46sqm
 - 19540339 permitted to add a ground floor bedroom and bathroom at the rear, increasing the floor area by about 24sqm or 57% more than as original.
 - 19540344, permitted additions nature unclear at present but with the same description
 - Various other alterations and additions have subsequently been made without planning permission including a detached double garage, an enlarged and attached garage near the house, a front and north side single storey extension, a front porch and a rear single-storey extension.
- The present proposal would result in a floor area of about 225sqm (excluding another 45sqm of garage with habitable accommodation over). These figures represent a 5-6-fold increase in the floor area over the original house.
 - The proposed first floor has 6 bedrooms; a parking plan is needed showing that sufficient parking and turning can be provided safely on-site.
 - Plans refer to an existing access roadway but if originally present this appears to be blocked by the existing detached double garage. The Design and Access statement describes this as a new access route to be created
 - Most of the extension does not show subsidiarity to the original house.
 - We understand that KCC Highways will not allow shingle driveways due to the gravel spilling onto the roadway and require bonded surfaces within 6m of the roadway.
 - Plans do not include any changes to the road frontage of the property or any new gates to the driveways (which would not be permitted immediately on the roadside).
 - The proposed first floor balcony should not be extended onto the adjacent flat-roofed structure. Its indicated location should not cause any overlooking to the neighbouring property.
 - If permitted, the garage/gym section should have conditions attached that it is only an annexe and cannot be used as separate, self-contained residential accommodation.
 - Due to the size of the proposed extensions, we request that permitted development rights should be withdrawn in order to control any future development proposals.

Dicken Country Protection Society (DCPS) - The Society notes that normally increasing the size of the dwelling in the Green belt is limited to 30% of the original. In this case it is proposed to increase the size by 52% increasing the bulk of the building and its impact on the openness of the Green Belt. In the circumstances consent if granted should include a condition removing permitted development rights in order that any further expansion can be controlled.

Neighbouring properties

A notice was displayed on site 2nd September 2022.

In addition, three surrounding properties were consulted and no representations were received. The consultation period expired 23rd September 2022.

Preliminary Matters

The Local Planning Authority were concerned with the quantum of development within the Green Belt and the requisite harm caused to its openness and permanence, as well as the design implications of the proposal. The agent was contacted regarding these concerns in October 2022. The revised plans reduced the scale of the development and provided additional information to justify the extensions against planning policy.

The assessment below has been made against the revised plans and additional information received from the agent December 2022.

Analysis

Site Description

Crabbles Cottage is a detached two storey dwelling located on the south side of Pear Tree Lane Shorne set within large grounds and located within a ribbon of housing in the countryside and Green Belt outside of the rural settlement of Shorne Ridgeway, as defined in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (see red line plan below).



The existing dwelling is located on a roughly rectangular site and is set well forward on its curtilage, and which has a frontage to Pear Tree Lane of 38m and a depth therefrom of 48m and an area of circa 0.18 hectares (0.45 acres). There is also land beyond the rear garden that is within the ownership of the applicant comprising a wooded area that is within a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The dwelling occupies an elevated position, but the rear garden falls away to the south.

The existing dwelling, which originally dates from the 1930's, has a rendered (and painted white) exterior and plain tiled roof. It has been extended and much altered at both sides at the front with flat roofed additions and also at the rear where there is a large flat roofed rear extension beyond which is a stepped block patio area.



There is what appears to be a recent porch on the front elevation. The dwelling has three vehicle entrances to the road and there is a detached flat roofed double garage 6.2m by 6.0m, built in the early 1970's, finished in rough cast render at the west side of the frontage.



There is a flat roofed attached garage on the west side of the dwelling that appears to be of more recent origins being of unfinished blockwork (see below) or may have been an adaption of any existing side addition, although there are no planning records relating to it.



There are trees and hedges to the frontage between the various vehicle entrances. The forecourt is used for vehicle parking and manoeuvring, and most is hard surfaced laid with a type 1 aggregate finish.

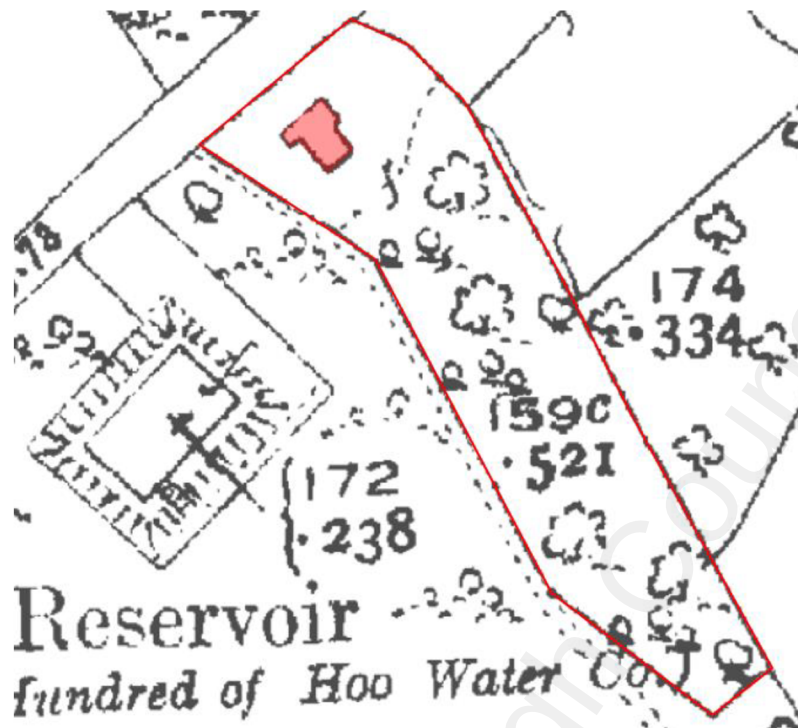
There are some outbuildings within the rear garden to the east side.

To the east of the dwelling is a much more modern large two storey dwelling (The Brindles) and to the west is a water reservoir. Opposite the application site are large detached two storey dwellings on the north side of Pear Tree Lane - Springhill and Courtwood.

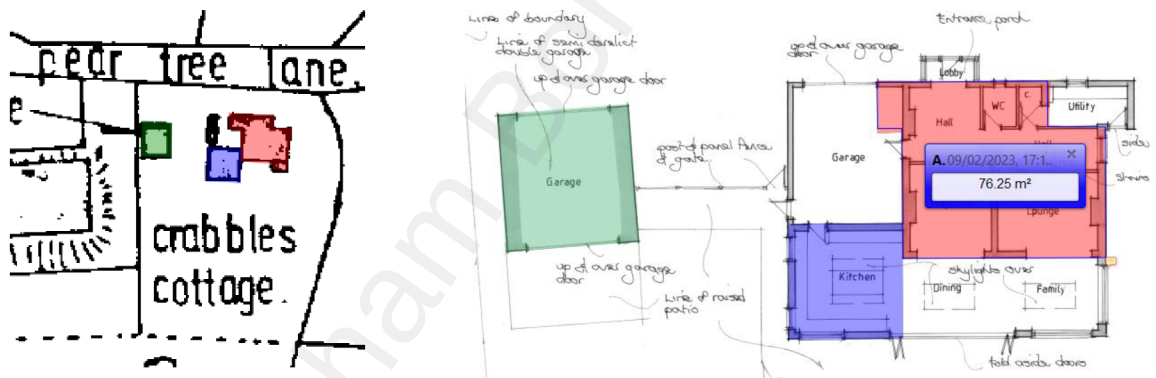
Pear Tree Lane is a local distributor road and a classified highway (C7) running between Shorne Ridgeway to the west and Higham and the A226 (Gravesend Road) to the east.

The 'Original Dwelling'

The original dwelling, as shown in Kent County Council's heritage map (1929-1952), was significantly smaller and has been enlarged to its current form:



An extension was granted permission in 1954 for a rear extension. A later application was granted for a detached garage in 1973. These applications and the supporting documents provide more information on the original property (as shown below):



Therefore, the original footprint of the property is considered to be approximately 76.3m².

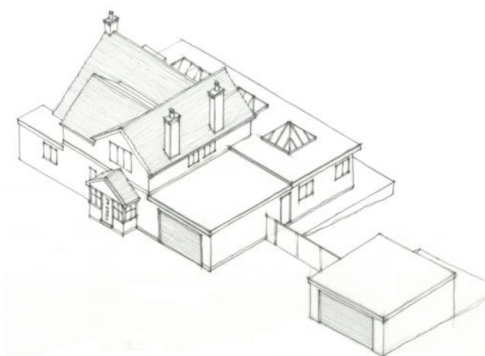
Proposed Development

This application proposes to demolish the detached garage and the erection of a first floor side extension above the attached garage, with a connected two storey side extension, set back from the principle elevation.

The first floor side extension would have a flat roof section, at a height of 6.7m, with eave heights that match the height of the dwelling (4.65m). The extension has a width of 5.6m and a depth of 6.9m. There will be two pitched roof dormer windows on the first-floor extension.

The two storey side extension would be set-back from the principle elevation by 4.65m. It would also have a flat roof at a height of 6.7m and the eave height will match the main dwelling (4.65m). The width of the extension would be 7.7m and have a depth of 7.4m.

Existing



Proposed



The development would involve a reconfiguration of the ground floor, creating space for a new study, snug, pantry, boot room and shower room. At first floor there would be a new bedroom, bathroom and ensuite master bedroom with two dressing rooms. The extended dwelling will be finished in matching materials, with painted render, plain clay roof tiles and white upvc/grey aluminium doors and windows.

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. Any very special circumstances?
4. The effect on the character and appearance of the area;
5. Impact on the Landscape; and
6. Other matters.

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

There are strict policy considerations within the Green Belt whereby paragraph 147 of the 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 (2021), 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 (2021), 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 (2021).

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 (2021) and should be afforded due weight.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint (m²)	76.3m ²	245m ²	221%
Internal Floorspace Area (m²)	123.3m ²	367.7m ²	198%
Volume	-	-	-

The application has been supported by calculations of the increase in built form, stating that the development would be a 38% increase. However, these calculations have focused on the existing footprint in 2022, which is misleading when saved policy C13 (LPFR) states that the 'original dwelling' is the starting point. As aforementioned, Crabbles Cottages has been significantly extended over and above its original footprint and the calculations in the table above are considered to be accurate.

The calculations demonstrate that the proposed additions to the dwellinghouse significantly 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 (2021) 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 proposed extensions to the property are considered to be disproportionate additions, over and

above the original dwelling. The extensions add significant visual bulk, by increasing the width of the property by 143% at first floor level and noticeably increases perceived bulk, which is exacerbated by the flat roof section and lack of subservience. This is evidenced by the screenshots below, which clearly demonstrate that the proposed extensions will significantly, and disproportionately, increase the scale, bulk and massing of the property, and therefore the cumulative built development is inappropriate.



Note - excluding the chimneys

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would result in a disproportionate addition to the property 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 of the NPPF (2021).

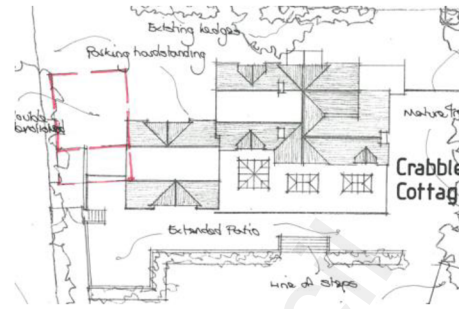
2. The effect of the proposal on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF (2021) 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 the side extensions over doubling the width of the existing property at first floor level. As discussed above, the development will add significant bulk and has been poorly designed without subservience, which substantially adds to the overall mass of the extensions. The extensions have flat roofs which would be constructed up to the ridge of the property, creating harsh edges and a bulky appearance, serving to add to the overall mass of the proposal. It is acknowledged that the two storey side extension is set-back from the principle elevation, however this is connected to the main dwelling, with the ridge and eaves at the same height and will be viewed as a continuation of the dwelling, adding to the elongation. Therefore, the significant increase in bulk and massing will have a harmful impact on the spatial openness of the Green Belt.

In visual terms, the property is set close to and is clearly visible from the highway as shown in the image below. The extensions will be constructed up to the edge of the garage at a width of 13.3m, which would enclose the visual open character of the site and erode the openness of the Green Belt.



As a result of these factors, the proposed development, would cause considerable harm to the visual openness of the Green Belt. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to cause an unacceptable degree of harm to the spatial and visual openness of the Green Belt.

Reference back to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the NPPF (2021) 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. Very special circumstances

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

However, the Design and Access Statement references the need for increased living accommodation for the applicant's family, stating that the property needs *"to be extended to provide the urgently needed sleeping accommodation, bringing the cottage format more in line with the surrounding major dwelling units"*. The need for additional living accommodation is noted, however must be balanced against Green Belt policies and the harmful impact to the openness and inappropriateness has been assessed above.

The other argument presented is the wider context of Pear Tree Lane. The application has been supported by a wider appraisal of properties along Pear Tree Lane, using a mapping exercise to demonstrate extensions and additions. Although this information is useful as a visual demonstration of the context, the intricacies of these cases has been missed and precedent is not a material planning consideration, with each application being considered on its own individual merits. Therefore, as set out in the Green Belt assessment above, the proposed extensions are inappropriate and disproportionate additions over and above the original property, which will harm both its visual and spatial openness.

4. Impact on the Landscape

In addition to being within the Green Belt, the site is located within the 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 Shorne Woodlands landscape area contains varied styles of building at different ages, and although the proposed property would be bulky and at a significant scale, it would not be considered to harm the character of the landscape and the materials using in its construction would match the existing palate.

5. *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. Moreover, Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF (2021) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

Gravesham's newly published Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guidance SPD (2021) set out key principles for developments. Generally, the SPD highlights the importance of new development complimenting and corresponding to existing character and the wider context. In this case, the rural character of the area and other surrounding dwellings should be considered. Furthermore, the SPD states that extensions should match roof styles and pitches, and that *"in most cases a flat-roofed extension to the front or side, or where clearly visible from the street, will not be supported (unless the original house main roof is flat)"*.

The extensions are considered to be poor design by virtue of the lack of subservience or subordination, which are key principles set out in Gravesham's SPD. Furthermore, the extensions fail to respect or respond to the original characteristics of the property, and introduce bulky 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, and the SPD clearly states that they will not be supported on the side where clearly visible from the street. Therefore, the proposed extensions are bulky and incongruous additions to the property, introduce incongruous flat roofs and are poor design contrary to Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021), Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

6. *Other matters*

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'. 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 of the NPPF (2021).

Neighbouring

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 127 of the NPPF (2021) requires development to have a high standard of amenity for existing users (in this case surrounding properties).

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 of the NPPF (2021).

Parking and Highways

The development will remove the existing detached garage and develop over space that is currently used for vehicular parking. Nevertheless, a new garage will be provided in the two storey side extension and there will be space on the driveway to accommodate three off-street parking spaces, in accordance with Gravesham's adopted parking standards (SPG 4) (2006). As such, there are no objections in relation to parking or highway policy.

Conclusion:

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

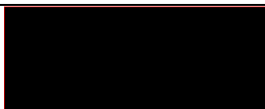
The proposed extensions will significantly increase the size and scale of the property, which is inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The extensions would disproportionately enlarge the dwelling and add considerable bulk, which is harmful to the open character of the Green Belt and introduce large flat roof sections which are poor design that fails to respond to the character of the dwelling. As such, the proposal is contrary to the Design Guidance SPD (2021), Policies CS12 and CS19 of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), saved policy C13 of Gravesham's Local Plan First Review (1994), as well as Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

As such, it is recommended that the application 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:	21 st February 2023	Dated:	21 February 2023