



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20260588

Location: Larchwood Northfleet Green Northfleet Gravesend

Description: Erection of a single storey rear extension with internal alterations.

Applicant: Mr A Smith

Site Visit Date: Desktop

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 41-PL-1000 Rev. A – Site Location Plan;
- Drawing no. 41-PL2-200 Rev. A – Existing and Proposed Site Plan;
- Drawing no. 41-PL2-101 Rev. A – Proposed Plans and
- Drawing no. 41-PL2-100 Rev. A – Existing Plans and Elevations.
- Drawing no. 41-PL2-101 Rev. A – Proposed Plans and Elevations; and
- Drawing no. 41-PL2-200 Rev. A – Existing and Proposed Site Plan.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20130202	Conversion of an existing oast house and attached barn to create two semi-detached dwellings together with parking and landscaping; conversion of existing agricultural building into two, 4 bedroom dwellings together with parking and landscaping; conversion of existing potato store to create five live/work units together with the erection of an open-fronted barn to provide ten car parking spaces, cycle and maintenance store and bin store, associated works and landscaping and demolition of lean-to building and erection of a replacement structure to provide garage for six cars and associated ancillary works.	Permitted	28.11.2013
20130203	Application for Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations in connection with the conversion of the oast house/barn building and stable building into residential.	Permitted	28.11.2013

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 4 – Decision-making
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- 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 Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Emerging Local Plan as a Material Consideration

Paragraph 48 of the Framework makes it clear that planning applications can only be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. An emerging Local Plan, does not form part of the Development. The Framework, at Paragraph 49 allows local planning authorities to give weight to relevant policies in emerging Local Plans, according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the Framework, the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to those policies.

West Oxfordshire District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government & Rosconn Strategic Land Ltd [2018] EWHC 3065 (Admin) is a High Court judgement that deals with the weight to be given to a Regulation 19 Local Plan. In this judgement the Court found that the weight to be given to an emerging Local Plan, was a matter of planning judgement, which had to be reached having fully considered the relevant part (Paragraph 49) of the Framework.

The Council's emerging Local Plan, is in the process of being consulted upon (it has reached Regulation 19 stage), the Council is not yet aware of whether third parties will support or object to specific policies within the Plan, or whether they will consider the policies with the emerging Local Plan to be broadly sound and consistent with the NPPF (2024). Taking this into consideration, one can only conclude that at this stage of the process, **limited (i.e. minimal) weight should be afforded to the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan**. This position would only change once the emerging Local Plan has progressed towards submission and examination, with the Council being fully aware of policies that are subject to unresolved objections and with knowledge of policies that have had their soundness and conformity against the Framework challenged.

This approach accords with the approach taken in a separate High Court case, Gladman Developments Ltd v SSHCLG & Corby Borough Council; & Uttlesford DC [2020] EWHC 518 (Admin) and Court of Appeal [2021] EWCA Civ 104, which was also the subject of a Court of Appeal Ruling [2021] EWCA Civ 104.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

No response from:

- Ward Councillors

Neighbouring properties

3 surrounding properties were consulted plus site notice with an overall consultation expiry date of 24.07.2026 – no responses received.

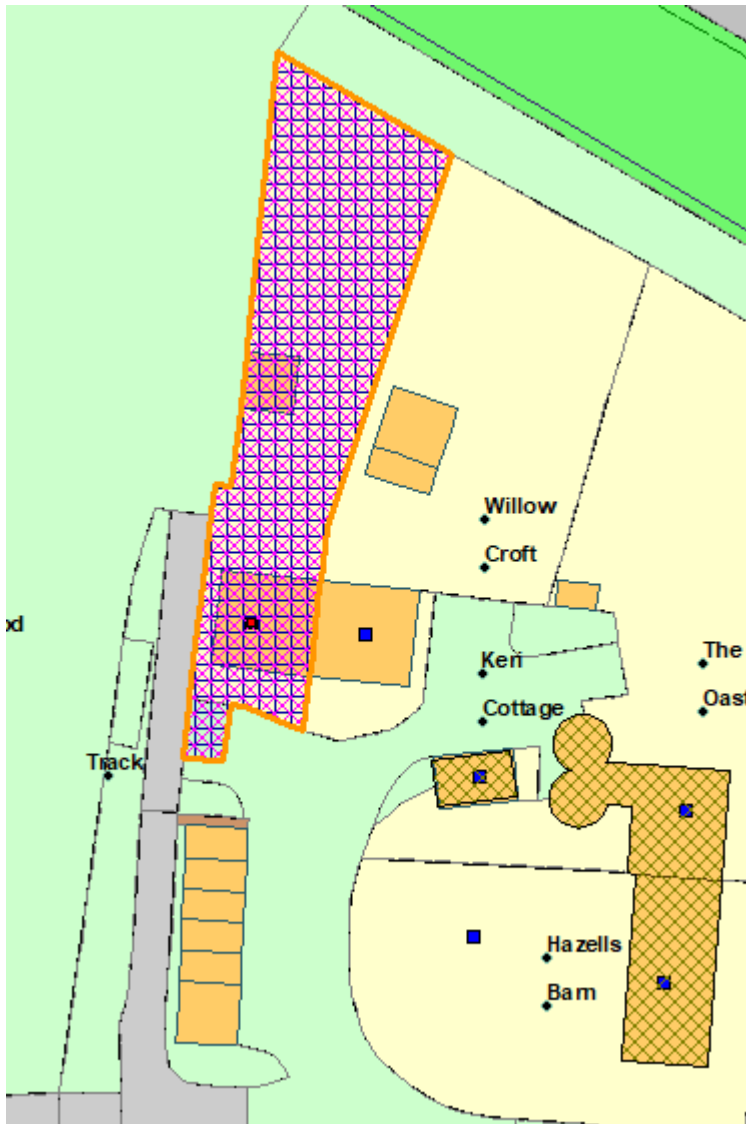
Officer's Analysis

The application site Larchwood is a two storey semi-detached dwelling which is situated in the Green Belt, the Istead Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area and an Area of Archaeological Potential.

Larchwood consists of one half of a former Atcost barn which has been converted into two dwellings under planning and listed building consent application refs. 20130202 & 20130203 as part of an overall redevelopment of the former Hazells Farm where all of the other farm buildings were also converted to residential dwellings – the other buildings converted were the listed barn with attached oast houses, the listed calf house/stable and the potato store.

It should be noted that the former Atcost Barn, of which Larchwood forms half, is not a listed building and is also not a curtilage listed building. The Atcost barn was part of the overall redevelopment of Hazells Farm and as there are the two listed buildings on that former farm complex which explains the reason for the listed building consent application submitted alongside the planning application. However, due to the Atcost barn building being of post 1st July 1948 in date, it is not a curtilage listed building.

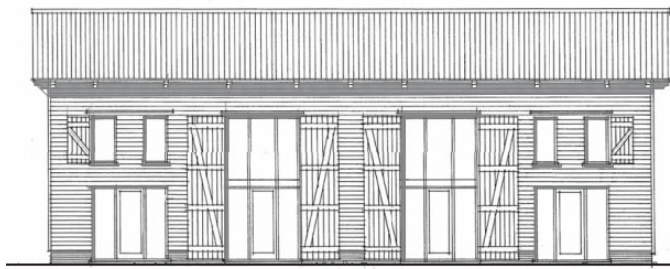
The below map extract shows the application site and also note the two listed buildings:



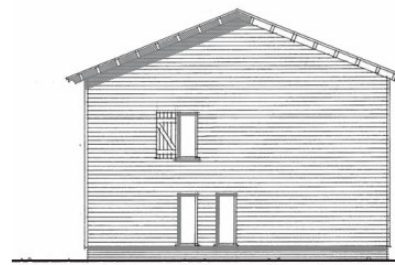
A photograph of the Atcost barn prior to conversion is as follows and as can be seen it is a modern barn:



The approved elevations and floor plans for the Atcost barn under application refs. 20130202 and 20130203 are as follows:



South Elevation (Front)



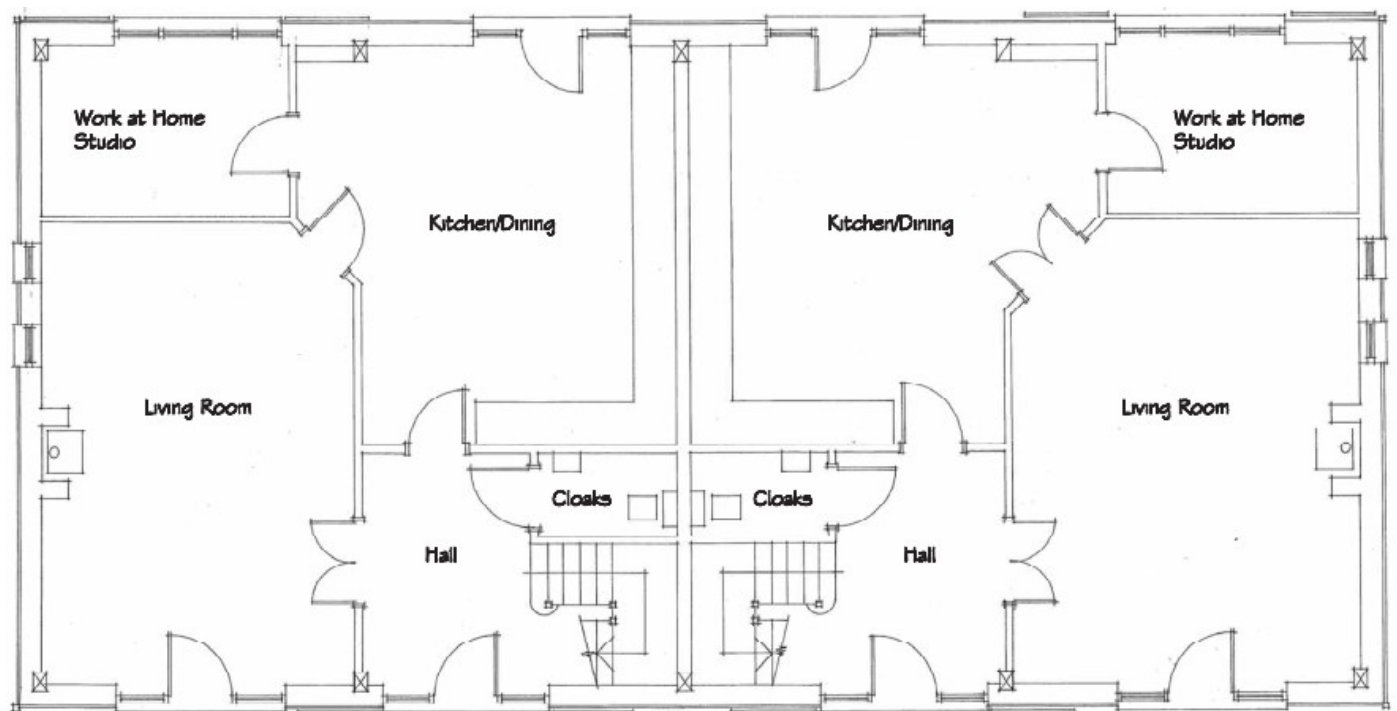
West Elevation (Gable)

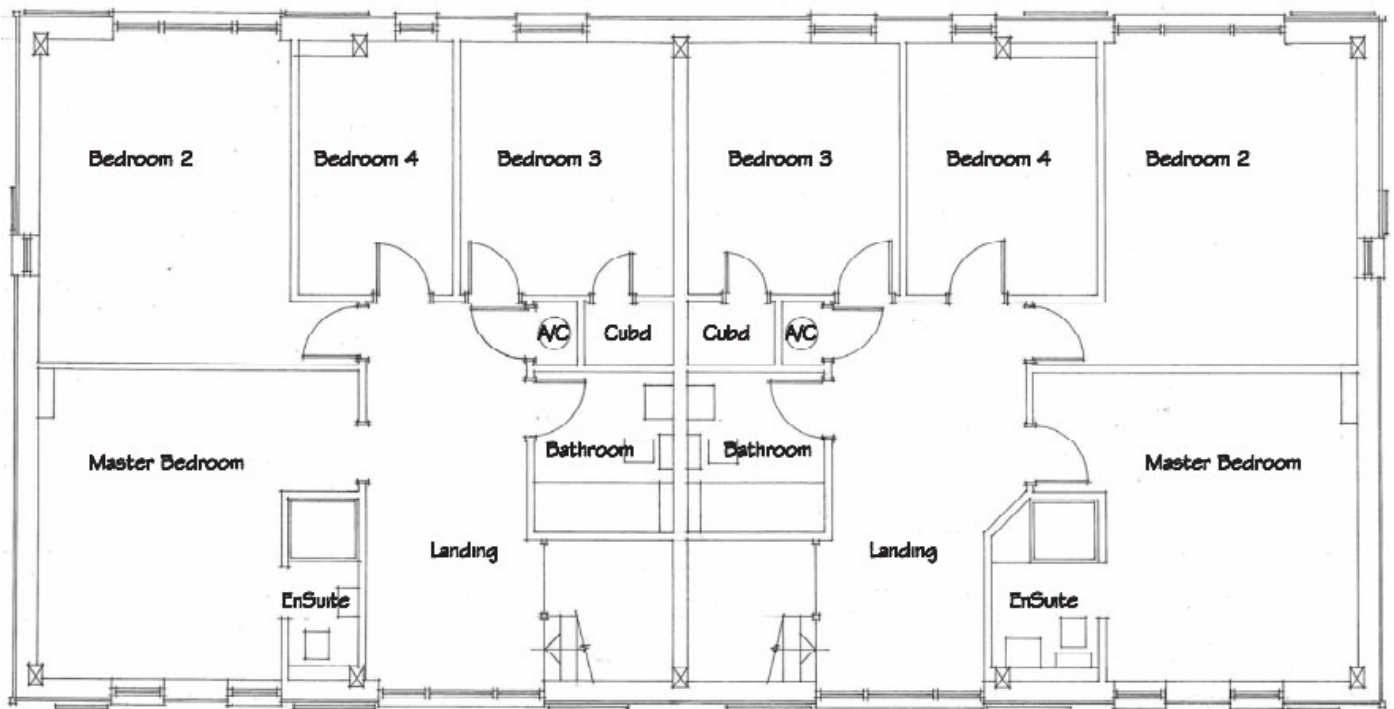


North Elevation (Rear)



East Elevation (Gable)





Larchwood as it currently stands - front view (property on left):





Larchwood as it currently stands – rear view (property on right):



The proposal is for the erection of a single storey rear extension.

The principle issues in the consideration of this application are:

- Whether the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt
- Effect on the openness of the Green Belt
- Design, Character and Appearance including Landscape Character
- Amenity of Occupiers
- Neighbouring Amenity
- Parking and Highways

Whether the proposed development is inappropriate development in the Green Belt

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Policy CS02 (LPCS) supports development outside defined settlements where it is compatible with national policies for protecting Green Belt and policies in the development plan.

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2024) states that the government attaches great importance to Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policies is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open with their essential characteristics being their openness and permanence. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that the Green Belt has five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and that 'inappropriate development' is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances and that 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024) states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of

the following exceptions applies:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
 - i. mineral extraction;
 - ii. engineering operations;
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Of relevance to the proposal is c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 states:

Extensions to dwellings will be considered on their merits but the Borough Council will expect the following criteria to be satisfied:-

- (i) The existing dwelling must be an “original dwelling”* in permanent use as a dwelling.
- (ii) There will be an overall limit of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally) prior to any later extension or alteration, unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling.
- (iii) Those extensions which provide essential basic amenities such as a bathroom, toilet or kitchen, which are currently not available or are clearly inadequate, will normally be permitted.
- (iv) The extension shall not be in a form which would facilitate the future formation of a separate residential curtilage.
- (v) The dwelling to be enlarged must have sufficient curtilage to accommodate the extension without undue visual intrusion into the open countryside.
- (vi) The appearance, massing, scale, form and materials of any extension shall be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting.
- (vii) Proposals for domestic garages and for other outbuildings will be considered on their individual merits but will be required to be well designed, discreetly sited and subservient to the scale of the main dwelling on the plot.

In the case of Larchwood, the original building is that as approved under applications refs. 20130202 and 20130203 (floor plans as above). The property has had no previous extensions.

Floorspace calculations

Original dwelling

Ground floor original floorspace – 78.6 sq. m
First floor original floorspace – 78.6 sq. m
Total floorspace of original dwelling – 157.2 sq. m

Proposed extension

45.9 sq. m

Total percentage increase of dwelling over original
(45.9 divided by 157.2 x 100) = **29%**

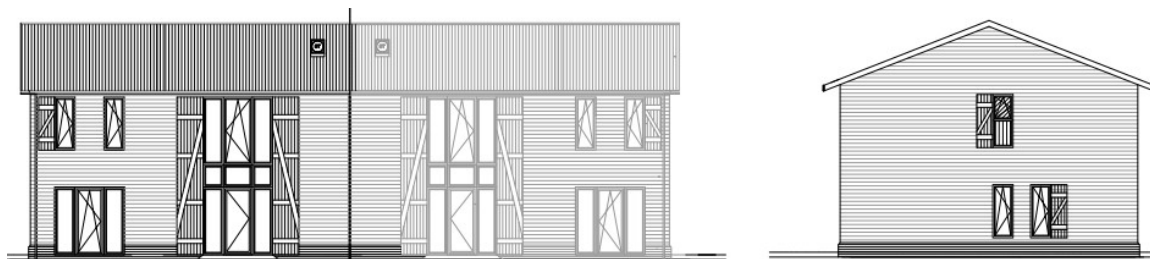
From the above assessment the proposed single storey extension would increase the floorspace of the original dwelling by 29% which is within the one third (33%) limit set out in saved Policy C13 (LPFR).

Floorspace is just one calculation which can be used to assess whether a development is a disproportionate addition, other such measures include footprint, volume etc.

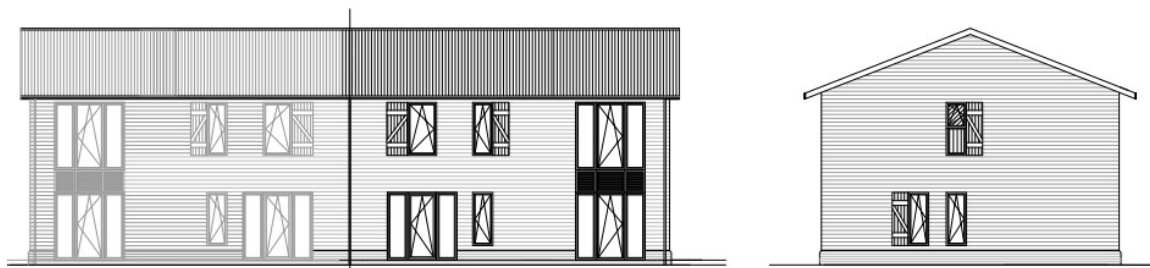
In terms of footprint, the original footprint of the dwelling is 78.6 sq. m and the proposed footprint would be 124.50 sq. m.

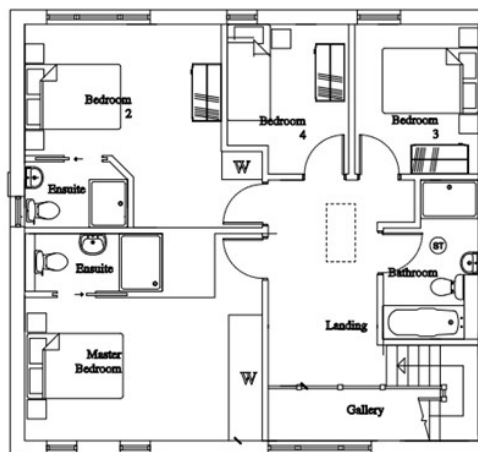
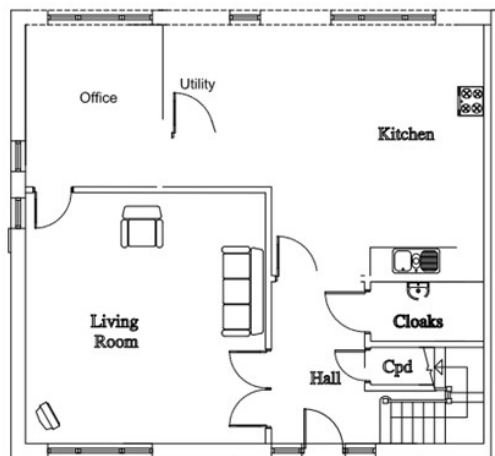
In terms of volume, below is the existing and proposed dwelling:

Existing

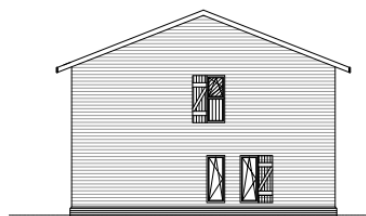
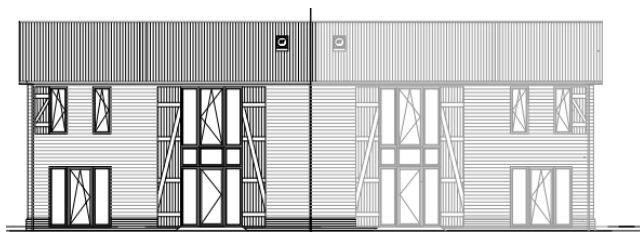


Front and Side Elevations

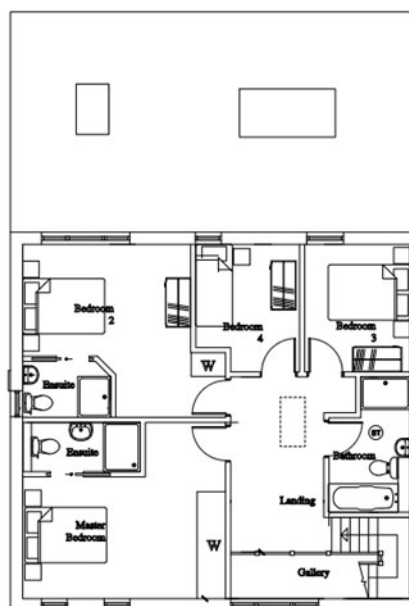
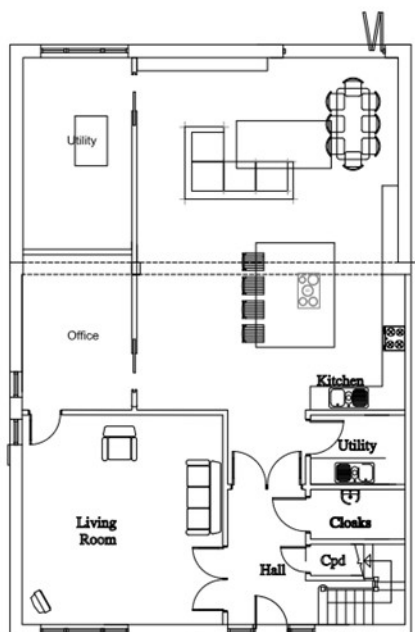




Proposed



Front and Side Elevations



The proposed single storey rear extension would result in an increase in built form at the rear of the

dwelling. It would be full width, 5m in depth and its height would be 2.7m with a flat roof as it is restricted by the long window opening above at first floor level. It is considered it would not be an overly large or dominant extension in terms of volume, width, depth or height.

Therefore, by virtue of an assessment of floorspace, footprint and volume as well as scale, bulk, massing and design, it is considered that the proposed single storey rear extension would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the original building.

The proposal would therefore not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such, the proposal is compliant with Policy CS02 (LPCS), Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) and paragraph 154 of the NPPF (2024).

Effect on the openness of the Green Belt

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2024) states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

The proposed development would add to the built form of the building but this would be in one strip along the back and it would not add significant new floorspace over and above the original dwelling. It would increase the depth of the dwelling but this would not be significant in comparison to the total depth of the dwelling (extension would be 5m compared to 8.6m for the total depth of the dwelling). The height is modest and the additional built form would not be a significant or dominant addition and would not increase its prominence overall. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2024) state 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. It is therefore now necessary to consider whether the development would cause any other harm and whether there are any other considerations that are relevant to the overall planning balance.

Design, Character and Appearance including Landscape Character

Policy CS19 (LPCS) states that the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. The NPPF (2024) sets out that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

The Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021) states the following in respect of single storey rear extensions:

Single Storey Rear Extensions

10.2 Single storey rear extensions are not normally visible from the street so are usually less visually intrusive than other extensions. However, these extensions can still have an impact on neighbouring amenity, including access to sunlight, daylight and outlook. To resolve these potential issues, single storey rear extensions should be designed to ensure that:

- Depth: The extension does not dominate the original property. This can cause the site to appear overdeveloped, and cause long dark internal spaces to be formed. Extensions to extensions will generally not be supported.
- Height: Single storey extensions should not rise above the window sill level of any first-floor windows. Care should be taken to limit the height of extensions where they abut neighbouring property boundaries, especially where extensions are of significant depth (above 3m deep).
- Width: Generally, extensions should not be of greater width than the original building.
- Design: Whilst flat roofs on low visibility rear extensions might be acceptable, care should be applied to extensions to properties on open corners. Pitched roof extensions to single storey properties should use roof shapes which reflect the pitch and type of roof of the original building.
- Materials: Generally, using matching external materials and window/door frames. In some instances, contemporary design may be appropriate, through the use of high-quality materials and design which complements the original house and has minimal impact on neighbouring properties.
- Overlooking: Extensions should avoid inserting any flank windows, or involve raised platforms where they would allow new, or increased overlooking views into neighbouring gardens/properties.

In respect of this, the depth would not dominate the original property as the extension would be 5m in depth from the original rear wall and the depth of the host dwelling is 8.6m. The height at 2.6m is modest and the flat roof of the extension would be below the first floor window cill level above. The extension would be the full width of the dwelling but would not extend beyond either side wall. The rear elevation is of low visibility and as a ground floor extension on the rear elevation, the flat roof design is therefore acceptable. The external facing material would be weatherboarding to match the existing.

In respect of this guidance, the proposed single storey rear extension would be in keeping with the scale and character of the host dwelling. In respect of design, character and appearance it is considered that the proposed single storey rear extension would be compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

The application site is located in the Istead Rise Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area and as such, Policy CS12 (LPCS) is relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment will be taken into account in determining applications.

In relation to the Istead Rise Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area, the document highlights that the key landscape characteristics are gently undulating topography with open arable fields, fields divided by tracks, roads, and occasional hedgerows, orchards to the east, minor native woodland clumps, few roads which are open in character, Istead Rise modern housing development, clusters of properties and farmsteads and large pylons. It states that the overall condition of the landscape is poor and it has moderate sensitivity. It recommends that the landscape characteristics should be restored and created.

The area the site is located is rural in character with the development being around this former Hazells Farm site and then continuing to the south around Northfleet Green; to the north is the A2 road and to the west are fields and then polytunnels; to the south are fields.

The proposed extension would result in an increase in the footprint and depth of the dwelling but it would



not increase the prominence of this residential development in the surrounding landscape and its visibility; there would therefore be no adverse impact on the landscape character. As such, the proposal would be compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and section 15 of the NPPF (2024).

Amenity of Occupiers

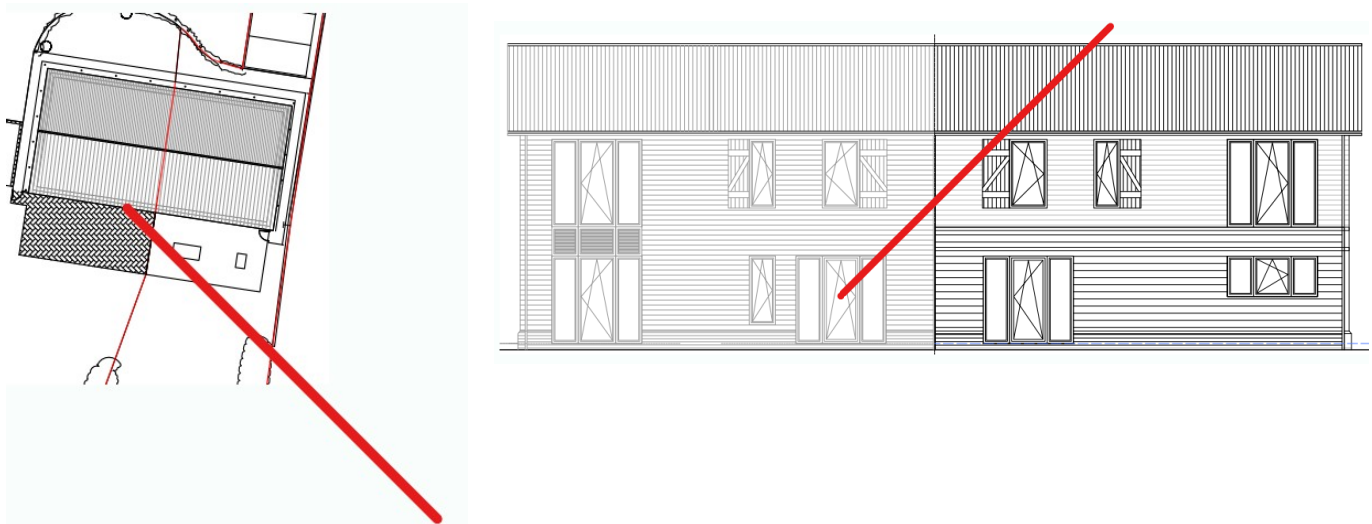
The extension would create an enlarged kitchen, dining room and utility room. The kitchen and dining room would be 52 sq. m which is far in exceedance of the minimum standard for a kitchen/dining room of 12 sq. m as set out in SPG2 (2020).

The garden area would be 682 sq. m and the rear garden depth would be 43.5m which are both far in exceedance of the minimum standards as set out in SPG2 (2020).

Overall in respect of the amenity of occupiers the proposal would be compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Neighbouring Amenity

There is one neighbouring property to the east, Willow Croft. The 45 degree test has been carried out from the centre point of the nearest opening on both plan and elevation:



As can be seen, although the extension would fail the 45 degree test on plan, it would not fail on elevation, and as it does not fail on both plan and elevation, this denotes that there would be no overshadowing to Willow Croft. There are no windows in the east flank elevation of the proposed extension and as such no overlooking.

In respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal is compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and Highways

The proposal would not any additional bedrooms or alter the existing parking provision and as such there would be no impact on parking or highways and in respect of this matter the proposal is compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Archaeology

The site is in an Area of Archaeological Potential but due to the redevelopment of the site from a former barn to residential dwellings, it is considered that with the garden to the rear and the laying of hardstanding etc, that there is unlikely to be any potential archaeology remaining. As such, it is considered that in respect of archaeology the proposal is compliant with saved Policy TC7 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion

The proposal would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would not impact on openness, would be acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance including landscape character, amenity of occupiers, neighbouring amenity, parking and highways and archaeology.

Recommendation

Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	<i>F Walsh</i>
Dated:	4th August 2026	Dated:	05 August 2026