



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240574

Location: Gracy Lodge Valley Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a two-storey rear extension; Alterations and increase in roof height, including rear dormer and removal of chimney stack. Erection of a two-storey front porch with additional roof light windows to front and rear roof slopes.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Heard

Site Visit Date: For previous application ref. 20231286

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 01 – Plans & Elevations As Existing;
- Drawing no. 02A – Plans & Elevations As Proposed;
- Drawing no. 03 – Site Location Plan;
- Drawing no. 04 – Block Plan As Existing; and
- Drawing no. 05A – Block Plan As Proposed.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20231286	Alterations and increase in height to roof, including rear dormer and removal of chimney stack. Erection of a double storey front porch and roof light windows to front and rear roof slopes.	Permitted	07.02.2024
20130087	Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20111027 relating to alterations to velux windows, two additional velux windows and one additional window in flank elevation.	Permitted	08.02.2013
20120484	Application for approval of conditions 3, 4, 5 and 6 attached to planning permission reference number 20111027 relating to the external facing materials, landscaping scheme, slab levels and refuse storage area.	Approval of Details	08.06.2012
20111027	Erection of a detached four bedroom chalet bungalow.	Permitted	23.02.2012

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

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

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 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 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); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009) (delete as necessary).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

The works proposed are in keeping with the rural environment, they will not obstruct or cause any concern to the house on the adjacent plot and will bring the roof height to a similar level to the house on the adjacent plot. No objection subject to Green Belt restrictions

We therefore have no objection to this proposal.

Neighbouring properties

4 surrounding properties were consulted plus site notice – overall consultation expiry date was 24.07.2024 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

Gracy Lodge is a detached single storey dwelling on the eastern side of Valley Lane near to its junction with

Ridge Lane. The site is in the Green Belt and in the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. The house is faced with yellow bricks and a tiled roof which is of hipped roof design. To the front of the dwelling is a detached double garage.

The proposed development is for alterations and increase in height to roof, including rear dormer and removal of chimney stack. Erection of a double storey front porch and roof light windows to front and rear roof slopes.

Planning permission was granted under application ref. 20231286 for a very similar application for alterations and increase in height to roof, including rear dormer and removal of chimney stack, a double storey front porch and roof light windows to front and rear roof slopes on 07.02.2024. This current submission is essentially a revision of the previously approved scheme.

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) 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 (2023) 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 152 of the NPPF (2023) sets out that 'inappropriate development' is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF (2023) advises that, when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. '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 (2023) states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, but lists certain exceptions which are:

- 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) 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 Local Plan (including policies for rural exception sites), and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would:
 - not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development
 - not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within an area of the local planning authority

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.

Development Management Policies Document April 2018 (a document that has been subject to consultation but is not adopted) contains Proposed Policy DM 6 which relates to extensions, replacement buildings and ancillary development in the Green Belt. Although the weight that can be attached to this document/policy is limited, it does illustrate the Borough Council’s most recent approach to the type of development proposed at the application site.

With regard to extensions, Proposed Policy DM 6 outlines that the following will be taken into account in determining whether an extension in the Green Belt is proportionate;

- its footprint, floorspace and volume compared to the original building; and whether its scale, mass and height is subservient to the original building.

Gracey Lodge was permitted under ref. 20111027 as a new detached four bedroom chalet bungalow and is the original dwelling but as amended by non-material application ref.20130087. The property has had no subsequent extensions.

Floorspace calculations

Original Dwelling

Ground floor original floorspace – 103.3 sq.m

First floor original floorspace - 79.7 sq. m

Total floorspace of original dwelling = **183 sq. m**

Proposed extensions (Two storey rear extension, rear dormer, two storey front porch)

Proposed extensions = 77 sq. m

Total percentage increase of dwelling over original (77 divided by 183 x 100) = **42%**

As can be seen from the above, the external floorspace would exceed the one third limit by 9%.

As well as floorspace there are other factors which play a part in assessing whether a proposal is a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building which will include its footprint,

floorspace and volume compared to the original building and whether its scale, massing and height is subservient to the original building.

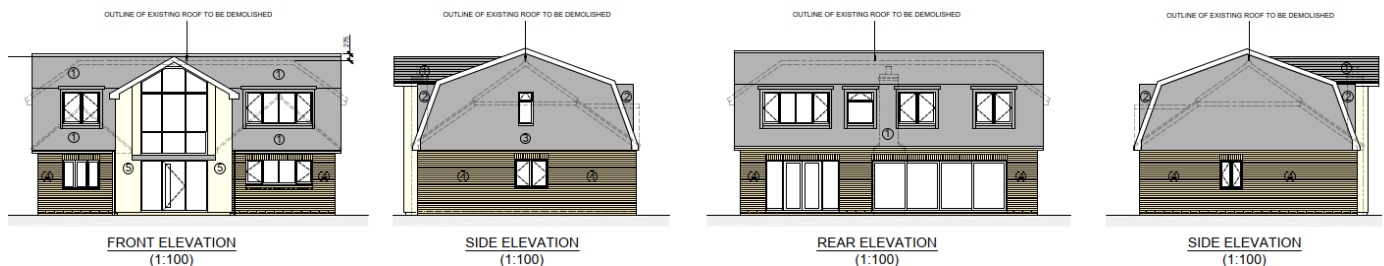
The proposal would increase the footprint of the dwelling; the original/existing footprint is 102.5 sq. m, the approval was 107.5 sq. m due to the proposed porch and the proposed scheme would be 132 sq. m which is an increase of 29.5 sq. m. This increase on the approval is due to the proposed two storey rear extension as well as the proposed porch.

In terms of volume, the existing, approved and proposed elevations are as follows:

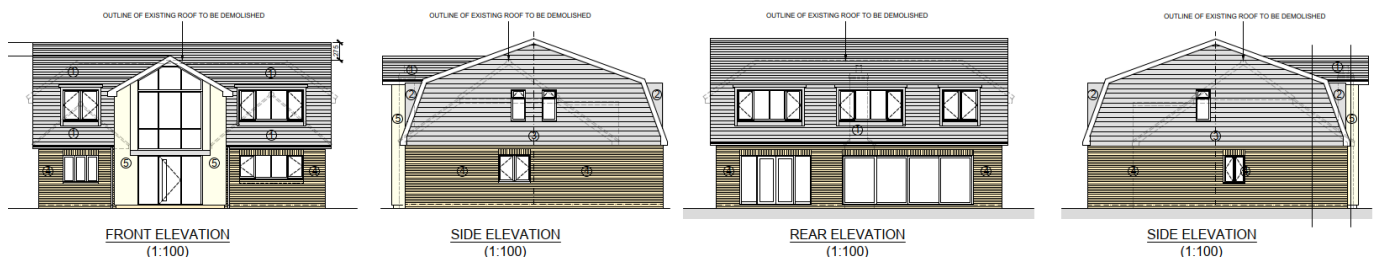
Existing



Approved



Proposed



As can be seen there would be an increase in volume compared to the approval, this is due to the proposed two storey rear extension which would increase the depth, bulk and massing at the rear of the dwelling. The depth of the dwelling as original/existing and in the approval is 8.8m and in the proposal it would be 10.8m as the two storey rear extension would be 2m in depth. The ridgeline would increase and be slightly higher than what has been previously approved. As original/existing the dwelling is 6.2m in height, in the approval it was 6.7m and in the proposal it would be 7m.

To summarise these factors therefore, the proposal would increase the external floor area of the original dwelling by 42% which is 9% over the one third limit. It would increase the footprint of the dwelling by 29.5 sq. m, around 24 sq. m of which is due to the two storey rear extension which was not proposed in the previous application. The proposal would increase the depth of the dwelling by 2m and increase the bulk and massing of the dwelling at the rear again due to the two storey rear extension which was not previously proposed. The height of the dwelling would also increase from 6.2 to 7m which is an increase of 800mm

(300mm more than the approval).

The proposal would exceed the one third limit increase of the original dwelling by 9% however, this is not considered to be a significant amount and as stated there are a number of other factors involved in determining if a proposal is a disproportionate addition or not. The proposal would involve an increase in the footprint of the dwelling by 29.5 sq. m which is not insignificant. The bulk of this (around 24 sq. m) would be due to the two storey rear extension proposed. This increase in footprint would also increase the depth of the dwelling however this increase in footprint and depth would be spread along the rear of the dwelling to a depth of 2m and the extension would not be a full height two storeys but with the gambrel roof design with dormers it is considered that the addition at the rear in terms of footprint, depth, bulk and massing would appear as a fairly modest addition in comparison to the host dwelling. The increase in the height of the dwelling by 800mm would be a fairly modest increase and the two storey front extension would be of modest footprint and depth. The dwelling would still remain as a bungalow (albeit chalet style with a first floor level). Overall it is considered that based on all factors the proposal would not result in a disproportionate addition in comparison to the original building.

A material consideration is the previous approval and in comparison to this the proposal would be a fairly modest increase over and above what has been permitted.

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 (2023).

Impact on openness of the Green Belt

A fundamental aim of Green Belt policy, set out in paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) is to keep land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. In considering the effects of the proposed development. Openness can be taken to mean the absence of development and has both a spatial and visual aspect. The baseline must be what currently exists on the site.

As has been set out above, there would be an increase in the external floor area, footprint, depth, height, bulk and massing of the dwelling however, it is considered that they would not be significant enough increases to warrant being disproportionate additions and with the gambrel roof design with dormers this would still mean the property would be a bungalow (albeit chalet bungalow rather than the existing standard bungalow). From the front the dwelling would only really appear as if it was changing from a half hipped dwelling to a full gable end dwelling. The increase in mass from the gambrel roof design would not lead to a significant increase in the bulk of the roof. As stated, the dormers are subservient within the rear roof slope. The porch is of modest depth and set down from the ridgeline. Overall it is considered that there would be no harm caused to the openness of the Green Belt.

Design, Character and Appearance

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 (2023) 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 front extension although two storey is very modest in depth and as it would infill the existing set back on the front and would therefore only project from the main front elevation of the dwelling by 400mm. It's ridgeline would be set down from the main ridgeline of the dwelling. Overall, the front extension is considered a subservient addition. The 800mm increase in the height of the dwelling is modest and the change from a hipped roof design to a gable ended gambrel roof design is considered acceptable. Valley Lane is made up of a number of different styles of dwellings and there is no uniform design; the gambrel roof design would therefore not appear out of keeping. The two storey rear extension is considered a

subservient addition as it would be only 2m in depth and would have a gambrel roof design to match the front elevation. The dormer extensions are subservient, being set down from the ridge, up from the eaves and in from the sides. In summary the proposal is considered of acceptable design and in respect of design, character and appearance the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Landscape Character

The application site is located in the Harvel Wooded Downs 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.

The area the site is located in is rural in character with detached dwellings set in regular plots. As stated above the proposal would add additional footprint, depth and bulk and massing to the dwelling however it is considered that this would not lead to any significant increase in the prominence of the dwelling in the surrounding landscape. It is considered therefore that there would 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 (2023).

Amenity of occupiers

The dwelling is currently five bedrooms and as a result of the proposal would decrease to four bedrooms, therefore no increase in bedrooms. The property would retain a garden area and rear garden depth that would far exceed the minimum standards as set out in SPG2 (2020). The garden area would be 407.2 sq. m and the rear garden depth would be 28.2m.

In terms of bedrooms:

Bedroom 1 – 18.9 sq. m

Bedroom 2 – 14.6 sq. m

Bedroom 3 – 14.6 sq. m

Bedroom 4 – 14.4 sq. m

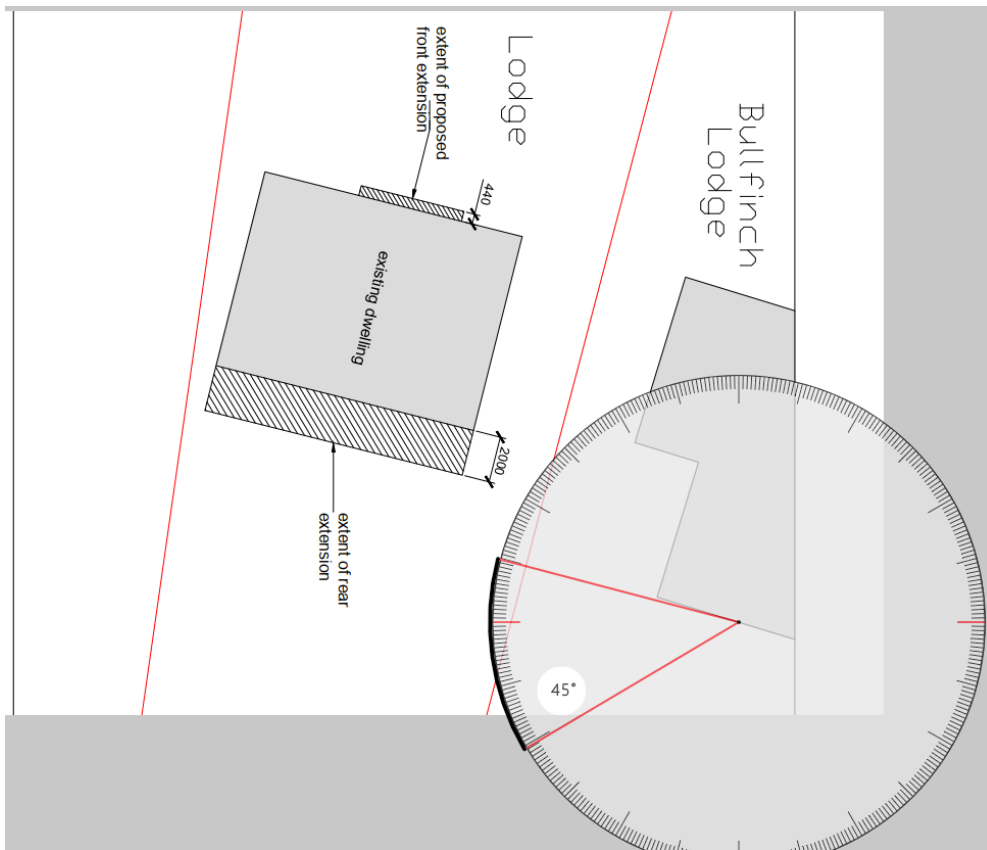
All bedrooms would exceed the minimum size for a double bedroom as set out in the Technical Housing Standards (2015) which is 11.5 sq. m.

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

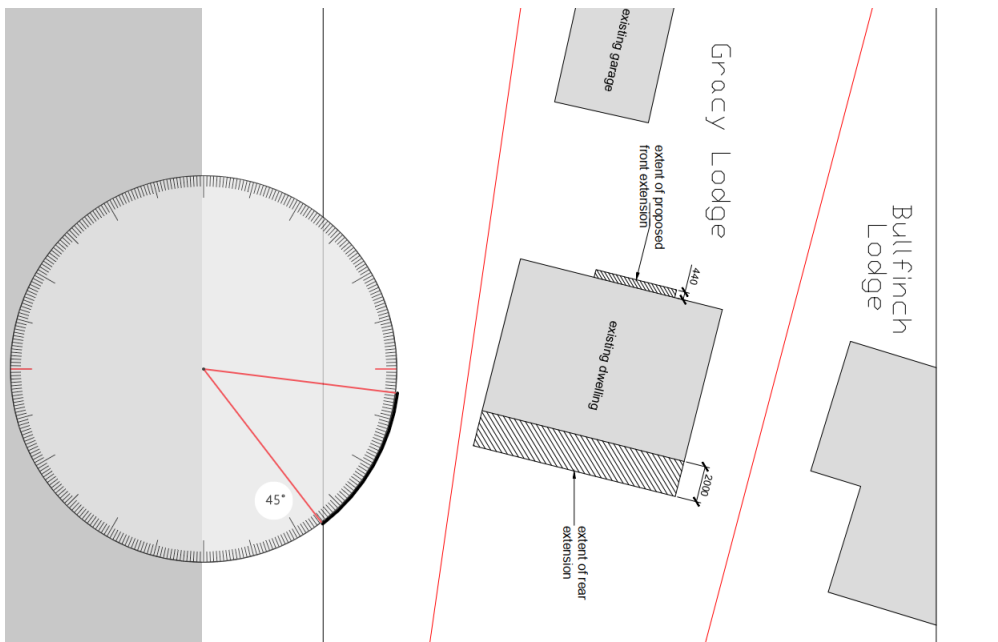
Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the property being a detached dwelling and located some from the neighbouring dwellings – some 7m to the flank elevation of Bullfinch Lodge, 17m to the flank elevation of Glencoe, 38m to the front elevation of Gzira and 42m to the flank elevation of Cherry Drive and the scale of the proposed development, it is considered there would be no harmful impact on any of these neighbouring properties with regards overshadowing or loss of outlook.

45 degree test from rear of Bullfinch Lodge:



45 degree test from rear of Glencoe:



There are two windows proposed in the south flank elevation at first floor level which would serve en-suites; with a distance of some 17m to the flank wall of Glencoe this would exceed the 11m minimum privacy distance therefore no overlooking to Glencoe. There is an en-suite window proposed in the north flank elevation facing Bullfinch Lodge; with a distance of 7m to the flank of Bullfinch Lodge this would be under the 11m minimum privacy distance however, as a non-habitable room this could be conditioned to be obscure glazed and non-opening from unless 1.7m above the floor level of the room, if permission were forthcoming to ensure no overlooking to Bullfinch Lodge. Existing boundary treatment would prevent any

overlooking between the ground floor kitchen window in the south flank elevation to Glencoe and between the wc. window in the north flank elevation and Bullfinch Lodge. The distance of the dormer windows in the rear of the two storey rear extension to Cherry Drive to the rear would be some 42m therefore no impact regarding overlooking as this would exceed the 26m minimum. Similarly with the distance from the glazed porch to the front of Gzira of some 38m there would be no overlooking.

No neighbour representations have been received.

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

Parking and highway safety

The proposal would decrease the number of bedrooms at the property from five to four and would not affect the existing parking provision. Therefore, in respect of parking and highway safety the proposal would be compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is considered to not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would not impact on openness, would be acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance, landscape character, occupier and neighbouring amenity and parking and highway safety.

Recommendation: Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	
Dated:	19th August 2024	Dated:	20 August 2024