



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20221257

Location: Rosebank Valley Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of detached garage with storage in roof space over

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Stokes

Site Visit Date: 26 January 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
 - Drawing no. 03 – Site Location Plan;
 - Drawing no. 101 – Block Plan As Existing;
 - Drawing no. 102 Rev. A – Block Plan As Proposed;
 - Drawing no. 103 Rev. A – Plans & Elevations As Proposed; and
 - Heritage and Planning Statement.
- ~~• Drawing no. 102 – Block Plan As Proposed~~
- ~~• Drawing no. 103 – Plans & Elevations As Proposed~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20200226	Erection of a side and front extension to form larger lounge and entrance porch, removal of the existing hipped roofs for the construction of enlarged barn hip roofs and insertion of dormer window in to rear roof slope to allow loft space to be used as habitable rooms	Permitted	20.04.2020
20200189	Continued use of land as domestic garden ancillary to the main dwelling and retention of single storey detached summer house, rendered block retaining walls, brick, rendered boundary walls and decorative gates	Permitted	12.06.2020
20040205	Construction of a new roof to bungalow involving an increase in its height to provide habitable rooms in the roof space and erection of a detached double garage at the front.	Permitted	11.05.2004
19910218	Erection of a bungalow with detached garage.	Permitted	23.07.1991

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
- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites

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

National Planning Policy Framework (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

- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009).

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

GBC Highways Officer

I have no highway objections the garage is adequate for two vehicles and there is sufficient manoeuvring room for access and egress.

Meopham Parish Council

Objects on the grounds of overdevelopment in the Green Belt.

KCC Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way NS295 lies to the west of the application area and I therefore enclose a copy of the Public Rights of Way network map showing the definitive line of the path for your information.

It is important to advise the applicants that a public right of way must not be stopped up, diverted, obstructed or the surface disturbed and there must be no encroachment on the current width, at any time now or in future. This includes any building materials or waste generated during any of the construction

phases. Please note that no furniture or fixtures may be erected on or across Public Rights of Way without the express consent of the Highways Authority.

Neighbouring properties

1 surrounding property was consulted plus site and press notices – overall consultation expiry date 30 December 2022 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of a detached property in use as a single family dwelling. The site is located in the Green Belt, Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area, a PROW nearby and is in an Area of Archaeological Potential.

The principle issues in the assessment of the application are:

- Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt
 - Impact on Openness
 - Design, Character and Appearance including Landscape Character
 - Parking and Highway Safety
 - Amenity of Occupiers
 - Neighbouring Amenity
 - Archaeology
 - Public Rights of Way
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Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt

Paragraph 137 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence and paragraph 138 lists the five purposes that the Green Belt serves. At the application site, the Green Belt assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. 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.

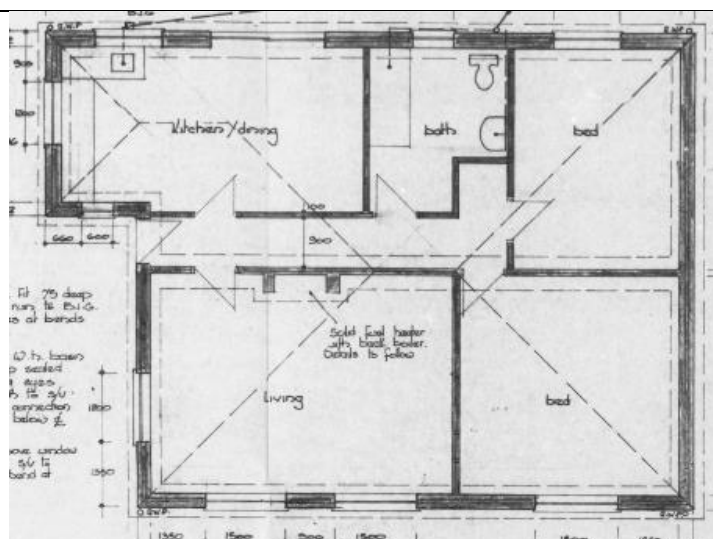
Paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021) states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt but lists certain exceptions. These exceptions are set out in sub-paragraphs 149(a) to 149(g). Sub-paragraph 149(c) identifies the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

In determining proposals for garages and outbuildings in the countryside account will be taken of Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994). It states that proposals 'for domestic garages and 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.' As saved Policy C13 pre-dates the NPPF, the weight attached to the policies must be considered carefully, with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 145 of the NPPF. These aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the NPPF (2021) and should be afforded due weight.

The proposed erection of a garage or another domestic outbuilding does not fall within any of the categories listed in paragraph 149 of the NPPF 2021. However, it is acknowledged that there is case law (most notably *Sevenoaks District Council v Secretary of State for the Environment and Dawe* 1997) which establishes that a domestic outbuilding may be regarded as an extension to a dwelling provided that it forms a 'normal domestic adjunct'. In considering whether a proposal is considered to be a normal domestic adjunct, consideration is given to location and use in relation to the main dwelling. The garage would be used for the parking of vehicles for the host dwelling and would be in close proximity to Rosebank and therefore it is considered that the proposed garage building could reasonably be treated as an

The proposal therefore needs to be considered against paragraph 149 (c) of the NPPF which allows for the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The NPPF Glossary defines original building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or if constructed after 1 July 1948 then as it was originally built.

The original dwelling had a floor area (measured externally) of 93 sq. m:



The image contains two architectural floor plans. The left plan is the 'GROUND FLOOR PLAN' of a house, showing a dining room, kitchen, utility room, entrance hall, living room, and a bedroom. It includes a north arrow and a scale bar. The right plan is the 'ATTIC/FIRST FLOOR PLAN (1:50)', showing a central staircase, a bathroom, and four bedrooms. It also includes a north arrow and a scale bar.

Page 4 of 9

therefore considered to comply with saved Policy C13 (LPFR). It was also considered the design was not a disproportionate addition to the dwelling and it was therefore judged that the proposal would therefore be appropriate development in the Green Belt.

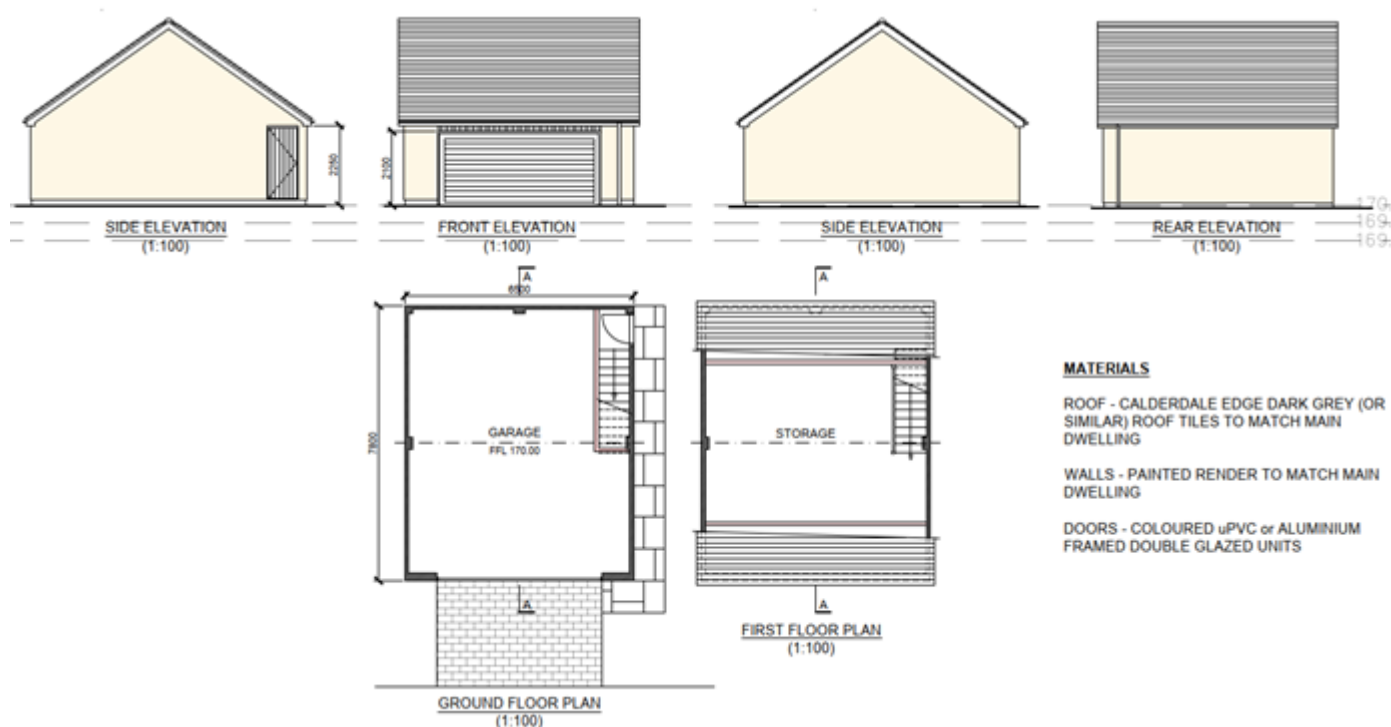
In this case the garage as originally proposed had a floor area (measured externally) was 50.7 sq. m but the agent was asked to reduce the size of the garage and its floor area measured externally would now be 36 sq. m. The garage would add further floorspace to the site which cumulatively would be disproportionate to the size of the original dwelling when considered with the previous additions. There is also a summer house in the south-west corner of the site which was permitted under ref. 20200189 which is 19.5 sq. m in area (measured externally).

However floorspace is just one calculation which can be used to assess whether a development is a disproportionate addition. Other such measures include footprint, volume, scale, mass and height are also relevant.

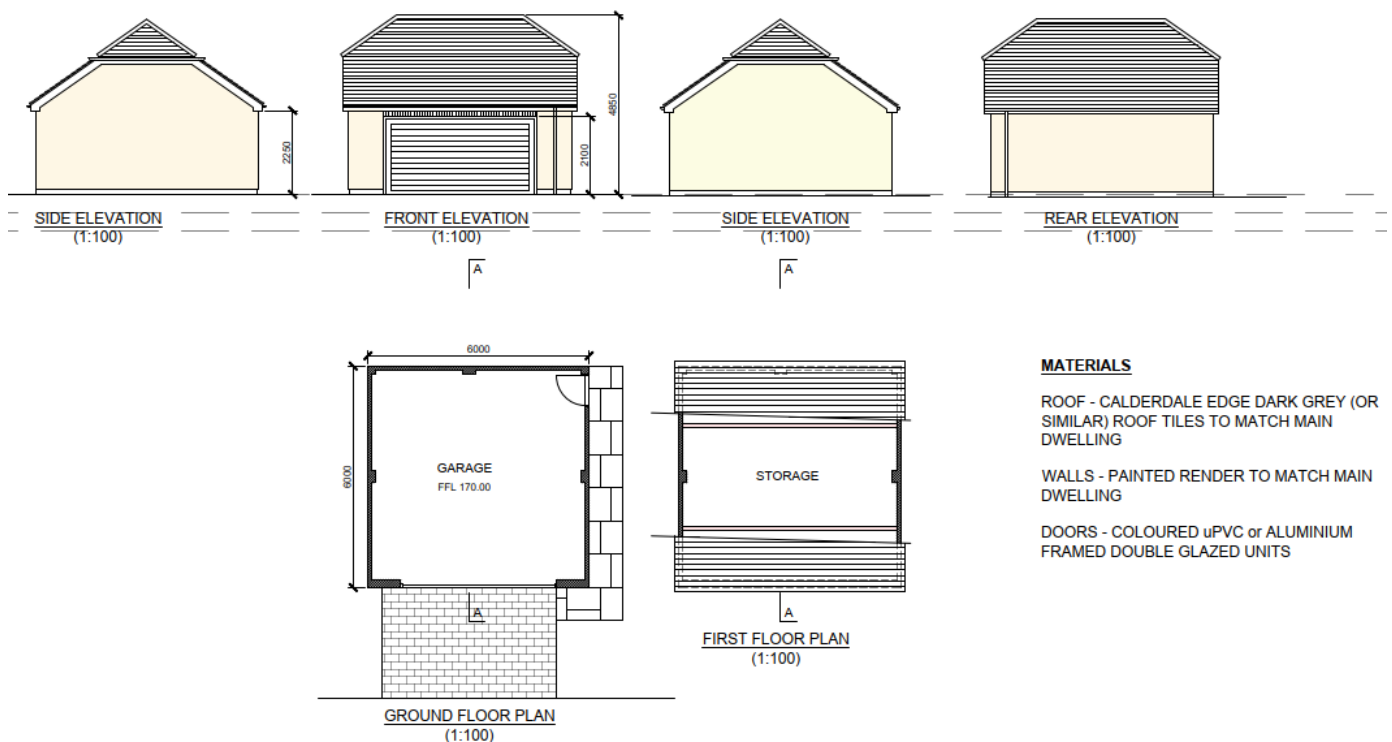
As stated, amendments have been sought in the course of the application. The garage was originally 7.8m x 6.5m and this has now been reduced to 6m x 6m. Its height has also been reduced from 5.31m (which was taller than the host dwelling) to 4.85m and the bulk and massing of the garage has been reduced by amending the originally proposed gable end roof to a half hip.

The original and revised proposals are shown below:

Original proposal:



Revised proposal:



The garage needed amending to be more in accordance with the garage previously approved at Rosebank under reference 20040205 but was never constructed, being 6m x 6m, a reduction in height and the introduction of a hipped roof, or barn hipped roof. The garage would be located on an elevated position which increases its presence. The garage as originally proposed was also taller than the main dwelling – main dwelling is 5.24m and the garage is 5.31m – which was not appropriate, accentuated by the higher position of the garage.

In terms of its siting, the garage would sit in front of the property but the existing summer house would be further forward still. There are other garages sited forward of dwellings in Valley Lane so it would not appear any more prominent than this other established development along Valley Lane in terms of garaging.

It is pertinent to note that a previous permission (Ref. 20040205) which was not implemented but which was for a new roof to the bungalow involving an increase in its height to provide habitable rooms in the roof space, included the erection of a detached double garage at the front which was similar to that proposed here in this application in terms of scale and appearance but was in a different location, albeit still forward of the dwelling. The previously permitted garage is a material consideration.

It is noted that the permission (Ref. 20200226) added a significant amount of floorspace to the dwelling which was far in exceedance of the original floorspace of the dwelling but the view was taken that due to the modest increase in footprint and the subservient nature of the first floor extension it did not constitute a disproportionate addition. The proposal would add to this already significant increase in floorspace but amendments have been sought and the garage has been reduced in scale and bulk from that originally proposed. In its revised form it is considered that taking into account all factors - floorspace, footprint, volume, scale, mass and height the garage - would be a subservient addition to the host dwelling such that it is considered it would not be a disproportionate addition and therefore would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. As such the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS02 (LPCS), saved Policy CS13 (LPFR) and section 13 of the NPPF (2021).

Impact on Openness

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.

The proposed garage in its amended form is considered to a subservient addition to the host dwelling in respect of its dimensions and scale and would be well designed with materials to match the host dwelling. In terms of siting it would sit forward of the dwelling and so would have some impact on openness, but it would be sited in a domestic curtilage and the proposed siting would continue a pattern that is well established along the road of garages forward of dwellings. Overall it is therefore considered the impact on openness would not be material.

Design, Character and Appearance including Landscape Character

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021) requires development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (amongst other things) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

The site is located in the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021) requires development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (amongst other things) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan). Policy CS12 (LPCS) 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 Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009) advises that the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area is characterised by varied topography with steep valley sides and plateaux, ancient woodland, chestnut coppice and small paddocks and pasture, the traditional historic settlement of Harvel set around the village green, occasional traditional farmsteads and haphazard mosaic of residential plots and small holdings set within the woodland. It's condition and sensitivity is classed as moderate; it is stated that the landscape should be conserved and created.

The application site is located at the end of linear development along Valley Lane nestled by heavy tree coverage to the east, south and west. The plot contains a dwelling and another outbuilding (summer house) in the south-east corner. number of outbuildings (including a detached garage at the front and brick buildings at the rear). The proposed development would result in a small increase in the amount of built development within an existing residential curtilage but would not adversely affect the landscape character of the surrounding area.

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires new development to be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding local area. In particular the design of new development should be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.

The design of the proposed development, following the amendments, would be in keeping with the scale and character of the host dwelling and would have external facing materials to match the main dwelling. The proposed development would be located at the front of the dwelling but garages forward of dwellings is an established part of the streetscene. Furthermore, the site is located at the southern end of Valley Lane and nestled within heavy tree coverage so would not be widely visible in the surrounding area.

Overall it is considered that the proposed development would not be detrimental to the character of the host dwelling or the surrounding area and would not harm landscape character. As such the proposal in respect of design, character and appearance including landscape character is considered compliant with Policies CS12 and CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and Highway Safety

The garage in its amended form would have an internal measurement of 5.8m (width) x 5.69 m (length). The minimum internal dimensions for single and double garage as set out in SPG4 are as follows;

Preferred Garage Size for Single Car	5.5m (length) x 3.6m (width)
Preferred Garage Size for Two Cars	5.5m (length) x 6.0m (width)

The garage would therefore exceed the minimum standards for a single garage but just be 200mm short of the minimum width for a double garage. However, amendments have been sought in order to reduce the impact on Green Belt and character and appearance including landscape and therefore on balance it is considered this shortfall in width in respect of a double garage is acceptable on this occasion. There is alternative parking provision on the site. There would be no alterations to the existing access from Valley Lane. No objection from the GBC Highways Officer who notes there is sufficient manoeuvring room for access and egress. As such in respect of parking and highway safety the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS11 (LPCS) and saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Other Matters

Amenity of Occupiers

The proposed development would not harm the amenity of future occupiers and sufficient garden would be retained to comply with the Borough Council's Residential Layout Guidelines. As such, the proposal would be compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the scale of the proposed development (i.e a single storey building) and the distance of the proposed garage from the nearest neighbouring property to the north there would be no impact with regards overshadowing, loss of outlook or overlooking. Overall the proposed development would not be detrimental to the residential amenity of surrounding occupiers and would be compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS). No representations have been received.

Archaeology

The site is located in an Area of Archaeological Potential however, given the development of the site already it is unlikely that the proposal would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and therefore it is considered there would be no need for any archaeological works in this case. In respect of archaeology the proposal is therefore considered to not raise any issues with regards saved Policy TC7 (LPFR).

Public Rights of Way

Public Rights of Way NS295 lies to the west of the application site however, it would not be affected by the proposal in any way.

Conclusion/Balancing Exercise & Recommendation

The proposal is considered to not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, not impact on openness, be acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance including landscape character, parking and highway safety, occupier and neighbouring amenity, archaeology and public rights of way matters. As such it is compliant with local and national planning policies.

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:	16th March 2023	Dated:	16 March 2023