

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20250245

Location: The Cottage, Old Watling Street Higham Rochester

Description: Erection of a first floor rear extension.

Applicant: Mr Bobby Singh

Site Visit Date: Desktop

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 3541-001 Rev. A – Existing Floor Plans and Elevations;
- Drawing no. 3541-003 Rev. A – Revised Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations.

Superseded

~~Drawing no. 3541-003 – Revised Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations.~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20240980	Erection of a first floor rear extension.	Permitted	20.12.2024
20240405	Erection of a rear first floor extension.	Refused	03.07.2024
20030364	Retention of single storey rear extension to form dining room and enlarged living room in substitution of the scheme previously permitted under ref. No. GR/2003/41	Permitted	20.06.2003
20030041	Erection of single storey rear extension to form a kitchen and enlarged living room.	Permitted	17.03.2003
19830822	Erection of a two storey dwelling with detached double garage	Permitted	19.12.1983

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 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic 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)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Higham Parish Council

Our councillors are aware of the previously refused planning application, due to the ‘overdevelopment and bulky appearance.’ Our councillors feel this planning application is similar to the one previously refused and the proposed extension will still result in an overdevelopment of the original property.

Neighbouring properties

6 surrounding properties were consulted plus site and press notices – overall consultation expiry date was 02.05.2025 – no responses received.

Officer’s Analysis

The Cottage is a two storey detached property located on the northern side of Old Watling Street.



The property benefits from a large driveway and detached double garage. It has been extended previously to the rear at single storey level and is set-back further than the adjacent terrace to the west.

To the east of the application property is Crutches Gate Cottage and Farm House, which are Grade II Listed Buildings, and are therefore a material planning consideration.

Planning permission was refused for a first floor rear extension on 3 July under application ref. 20240405 on the following ground:

The proposed extension dominates the original property, is a disproportionate two storey addition that overly enlarges the existing extensions and results in an overdeveloped and bulky appearance. The development is therefore contrary to Gravesham's Design Guidance SPD (2021), as well as Policy CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and Section 12 (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

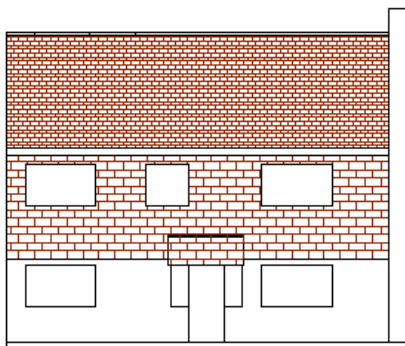
A further application for a first floor rear extension was subsequently submitted under application ref. 20240980 which was permitted.

This current application is a further application for a first floor rear extension.

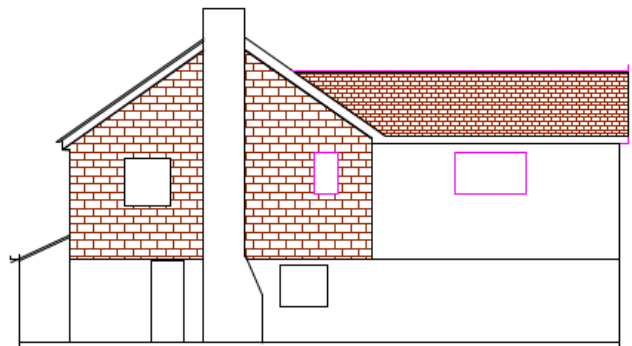
For ease of reference the existing, refused, permitted and proposed elevations are as follows:



Refused (ref. 20240405)



FRONT ELEVATION

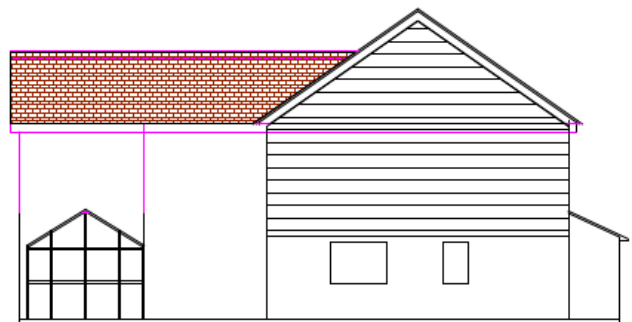


NORTH ELEVATION
PROPOSED



REAR ELEVATION
PROPOSED

Permitted (ref. 20240980)



SOUTH ELEVATION
PROPOSED



Proposed (ref. 20250245)



The previously refused extension had a staggered depth and width with the following dimensions:
 Depth – 3.1m – 6.25m
 Width – 4.6m - 9.4m

Height – 5.05m – 6.85m

The permitted extension has the following dimensions:

Depth - 3.3m

Width - 6.7m

Height - 5.4m

The proposed extension has the following dimensions:

Depth - 3.3m

Width – 9.4m

Height – 4.8m

The extension would create space for two extended bedrooms.

The principle issues in the consideration of the application are as follows:

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (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 (2024) sets out that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area, be visually attractive and sympathetic to local character.

In previous application ref. 20240980 the permitted extension was to be constructed above the existing single storey projections on the rear of the dwelling and it was considered it was acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance. This new proposed first floor rear extension would be the same depth as the extension that has been approved. It would also be of less height (by 600mm) but would have a double pitched roof design as opposed to the single pitch as approved. It would be of increased width (by 2.7m).

In respect of first floor rear extensions the following guidance is given in the

- 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: two storey extensions can have very significant impact on neighbouring amenity, so should generally not be built up to site boundaries with neighbouring gardens / properties.
- Width: Extensions should not be of greater width than the original building.
- Design: Taller extensions are of greater visibility, and should incorporate roof designs to reflect, tie in with and not overwhelm the main property's roof. Patterns and proportions of windows should reflect the host building and local character.
- Materials: Using matching external materials and window / door frames is especially relevant for two storey extensions.
- 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.
- Light / Outlook: The 45 / 25 degree rule will be used to assess the impact of the extension on neighbouring light / outlook.
- Garden Space: Adequate garden area for the enlarged house should be retained following development.

In respect of the guidance the depth is not considered to dominate the property. The depth of the extension is 3.3m and the depth of the host building is 7.5m, the depth would therefore not dominate and indeed the depth is the same depth as the extension permitted under application ref. 20240980. The height of the extension would be set down sufficiently from the ridgeline of the main dwelling leaving a good amount of the existing rear roof slope still visible. Furthermore, the height of the extension would be less than the height of the approved extension. The width would be the full width of the host building but there is not anything in the guidance to say this is unacceptable. The guidance states that it would not be of greater width than the original building and the proposed extension is not. The roof design of two pitched roofs is in keeping with the pitched roof design of the host building. The materials would match the existing brick and roof tiles.

Overall therefore in design terms the proposed first floor rear extension is considered a subservient addition which is in keeping with the scale and character of the host building and would protect the character and appearance of the streetscene and would not impact on the streetscene. In respect of design, character and appearance the proposal is compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Amenity of 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', which is reinforced by the Council's Residential Layout Guidelines (RLG) (2020) and the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) (2015). These provide minimum requirements for room sizes and amenity space.

The proposed extended bedrooms would be 20.5 sq. m and 19.7 sq. m and would therefore exceed the minimum size for a double bedroom as set out in the NDSS (2015) which is 11.5 sq. m.

The dwelling would increase from three to four bedrooms, the proposed extension would not impact on the garden area or depth. The rear garden area and depth would still exceed the minimum requirements for rear garden area and depth as set out in SPG2 (2020). In respect of occupier amenity the proposal as before is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2024).

Neighbouring Amenity

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 135 of the NPPF (2024) requires development to have a high standard of amenity for existing users (in this case surrounding properties).

The proposed extension is not considered to have any detrimental impact on the amenity of adjoining properties. As stated, the extension would be the same depth as the extension approved in application ref. 20240980 and of less height. The extension would be full width and therefore 2.7m wider than the approved extension. However, it would extend up to the flank wall of the dwelling and not extend beyond it. Due to the distance of the extension to the neighbouring properties and the scale of the proposal it is considered it would not cause any impact on either neighbouring property with regards overshadowing, loss of light, loss of outlook or sense of enclosure. There are no windows proposed in either flank elevation therefore no overlooking. No neighbour representations have been received. In respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal as before is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS) and Section 12 of the NPPF (2024).

Parking and Highways

The property benefits from a large driveway and a detached double garage, with space to park a number of vehicles off-street.

Gravesham's SPG 4 (2006) requires a property with four or more bedrooms to provide three off-street

parking spaces. The property achieves this parking requirement on the driveway and as such, the development would provide sufficient off-street parking in accordance with SPG 4 (2006). In respect of parking and highways the proposal as before is therefore considered compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Landscape Character

The site is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. This area is characterised by very gently undulating topography of open arable farmland with pockets of orchards and garden nurseries. The developments spread from the original Saxon settlement of Lower Higham in the North, to more contemporary developments in the South around main road networks.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) seeks to protect the green infrastructure within the Borough and states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

Due to the subservient nature of the extension and the fact the site is located in a well-developed part of the countryside it is considered that the proposal would not cause harm to the character of the Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area. In respect of landscape character the proposal is therefore compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS).

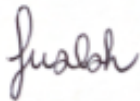
Conclusion

This proposal for a first floor rear extension is acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance, occupier and neighbouring amenity and parking and highway safety. The proposal is therefore compliant with local and national planning policy.

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:	
Dated:	9th May 2025	Dated:	09 May 2025