



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240425

Location: Chestnuts Carters Hill Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a single storey rear extension with 4 roof lights.

Applicant: Mr Andrei Malasayeu

Site Visit Date: Desktop Assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Cover Letter
Application Form
Site Location Plan
Existing Block/Site Plan
Proposed Block/Site Plan
MAD-492-05– Existing and Proposed, Floor Plans and Elevations
TPO Plot Plan

Superseded:

~~Proposed Block/Site Plan
MAD-492-04 – Existing and Proposed, Floor Plans and Elevations~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
19950702	Erection of detached double garage with store and w.c. Permitted stable/tack store at front.Refused	Split Decision	15.12.1995
19930433	Erection of a bungalow.	Permitted	06.10.1993
19870403	Erection of weekend and holiday chalet to replace existing caravan.	Permitted	27.07.1987
19870102	Erection of replacement chalet for weekend and holiday use	Refused	27.04.1987
19860702	Erection of weekend and holiday chalet to replace existing caravans	Permitted	16.10.1986
19800937	Stationing of a caravan for weekend and holiday use	Permitted	23.12.1980
19800841	Stationing of a caravan to replace existing chalet	Permitted	23.12.1980

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS13 – Green Space, Sport and Recreation
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- C13 – Extensions to dwellings in the countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network

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 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020).
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006).
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015);
- Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Design for Gravesham: Design Code (2024)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

The proposed plan looks acceptable except that it may be more than a 1/3 development in green belt so we have no objections subject to restrictions on development in the green belt size compliant.

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

KCC Heritage

The site lies within an area of multi-period archaeological potential. However, based on existing Historic Environment Record data for the area and the relatively limited extent of the proposed works, I consider it

unlikely that these proposals would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and have no further comments to make in this case.

Neighbouring properties

12 surrounding properties were consulted, and 0 comments were received from members of the public. The final date to submit comments ended on 14.06.24.

Officer's Analysis

Description of Site

The committee report for planning reference 19950702 described the site as follows:

“Chestnuts’ is an authorised plot on the eastern side of Carters Hill Lane. It was originally two separate plots, ‘Chestnuts’ and ‘Timbers’, each with a detached chalet. The two plots have now been metred as one and the two detached chalets connected together. The plots measures some 152 metres deep (500 feet) and 34 metres wide (111) feet). To both sides of the plot lie other authorised plots. To the far southern side, adjacent to the sites southern neighbour, lie the rear gardens of properties in Conifer Drive.

The plot is well screened to the front with large Leylandii type trees. A double gate leads into the site, which rises up from Carters Hill Lane, levelling out to a plateau where the chalet and a shed are located. Levels of screening to the side boundaries are reasonable. Woodland lies to the rear.’

Since this description in 1995, the site has remained relatively unchanged, with exception of the garage built as approved in 1995 and other minor changes to outbuildings.

Principle of Development

The main issues for consideration in the determination of this scheme are as follows:

- Principle of development in the Green Belt;
- Impact on openness
- Design and Appearance
- Landscape Character Area
- Amenity of Future Occupiers
- Residential amenity;
- Highways Safety and Parking Provision
- Trees

Principle of Development in the Green Belt

The site is within the Green Belt as defined on the adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) policies map and this would be the starting point for determining an application for this proposal.

It is therefore considered that the key issues in this case relating to the Green Belt are:

- Whether the proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt for the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework and development plan policy, and
- Whether any harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations, so as to amount to the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Green Belts are of great importance. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by preserving the open and permanent characteristics of Green Belts (para. 142 of the NPPF 2023). Paragraph 152 of the NPPF 2023 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. '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.

The relevant exceptions to this policy are as follows:

Paragraph 154(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', as an exception to this policy. Paragraph 154(g) identifies another exception as;

'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; or*
- 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 the area of the local planning authority'*

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014

Core Policy CS02 sets out where development should be distributed in the borough. Preference is given to those urbanised areas as sustainable locations. Outside urbanised areas, those rural settlements which are inset from the Green Belt would also be considered acceptable in principle. This site is in a rural area, in the Greenbelt **NOT** forming part of settlement inset from the Greenbelt. In this context the policy states that developments; *'will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in this plan.'*

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994

Saved Policy C13 sets out the requirements for extensions to dwellings. Of particular consideration and to assist in assessing whether the addition would be disproportionate, this policy limits the increased floorspace to one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling. However, this policy does pre-date the NPPF, and greater weight should be given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 of the NPPF 2023.

"Original dwelling" for the purpose of Saved Policy C13 means the building in permanent residential use at 1st July 1948.

In this case, given the historical context of the site and the previous amalgamation of the two chalets together to form 1 dwellinghouse, this shall be considered the point at which the dwellinghouse was formed. It does not appear that the dwellinghouse has been extended since.

The dwellinghouse as existing has a floor area of 97.2m². The proposed extension would have a floor area of 22.85m². Overall, the proposal would result in a dwellinghouse equalling 120.05m². This would be a 23.5% increase, less than the one third increase.

A visual assessment of the extension on the dwellinghouse would also be necessary to assess its modesty. In this case, the position of the extension to one side of the dwellinghouse and its depth of 5m, whilst being an unusual format would not result in a significant increase in depth to this currently modestly sized bungalow.

On balance, the rear extension would **NOT** result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building visually and would be in contradiction with paragraph 154(c) and 154(g) of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and Saved Policy C13 of Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994).

Impact on openness

As stated above, paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) 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.

Given that the development would be modest, it is considered that the increased size and scale of the application property would NOT detract from this setting and the rural character of the area and would contravene the provisions of paragraph 142 and 154(G) of the NPPF (2023).

Design, Character and Appearance and Landscape Character Area

Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014 requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of surrounding area.

The Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide SPD provides guidance on single storey rear extensions at paragraph 10.2. This is included below with additional highlighting relating to this case:

10 Extensions and Alterations

10.1 This section outlines the type of residential extensions and alterations that the Council may consider acceptable. Each planning application will be considered by the Council on its merits on the basis that each property is different.

Rear Extensions

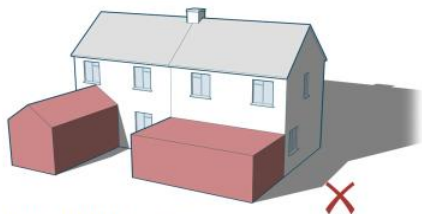
Single Storey Rear Extensions

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:

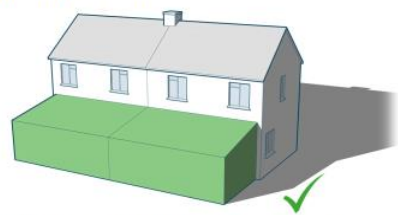
- Depth: The extension does not dominate the original property. This can cause the site to appear overdeveloped, and cause long dark internal spaces to be formed. Extensions to extensions will generally not be supported.
- Height: Single storey extensions should not rise above the window sill level of 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.



Single storey extensions should not rise above window sill level of any first floor window.

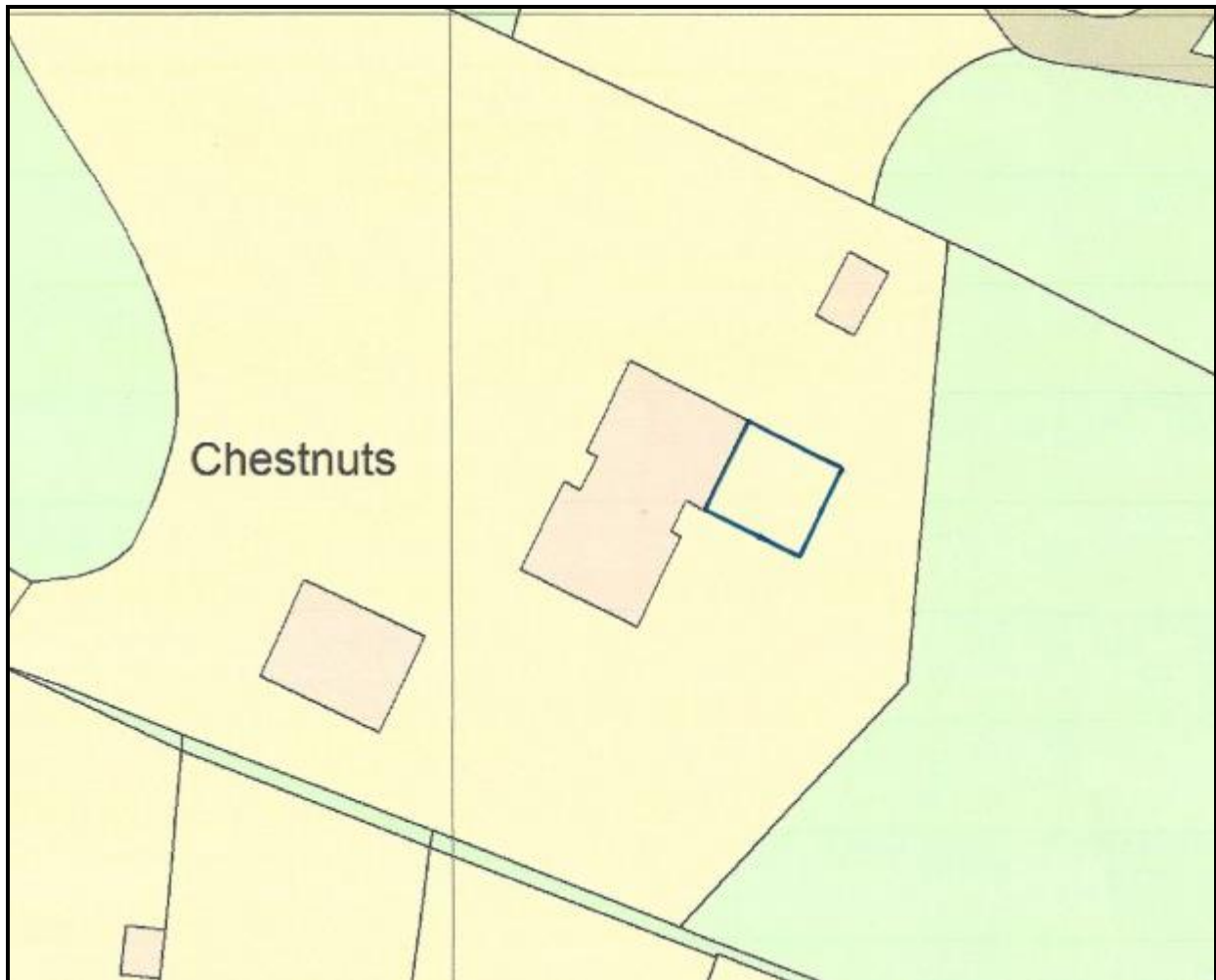


Inappropriate scale.

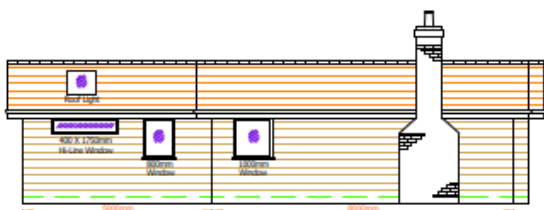


Appropriate scale and roof design ensures both extensions work together.

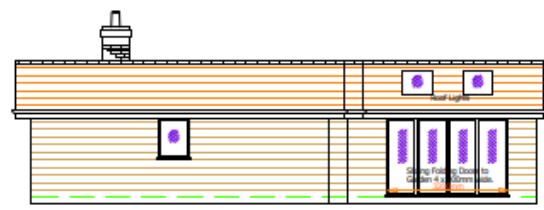
As can be seen, the proposed development would be appropriate in terms of height, depth, width, design and materials, complying with all design aspects of the guidance.



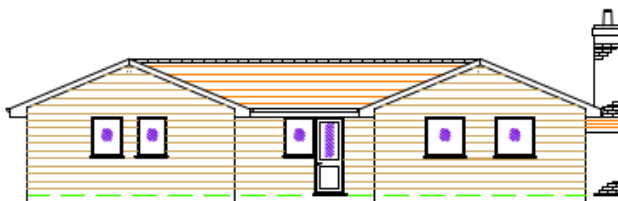
Proposed Block Plan (Not to Scale)



Proposed Side (North) Elevation 1:100



Proposed Side (South) Elevation 1:100



Proposed Rear (East) Elevation 1:100



Proposed Front (West) Elevation 1:100

Please Note Front Elevation is unchanged from the Existing

Proposed Elevations (Not to Scale)

On balance, the proposed development would comply with the requirements of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2023) in terms of design, character and appearance.

Landscape Character

The application site lies within the Meopham Downs Landscape area. The proposal is for alterations to existing properties which are located in a built-up rural settlement inset from the Green Belt.

The Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009) describes the key characteristics of the Meopham Downs as follows:

- Gently undulating topography with a mixture of arable and pasture farmland
- Neat pattern of small square fields in the south
- Broader irregular shaped fields to the north
- Narrow lanes and roads lined with hedgerows
- Three large settlements located along A227 running east and west
- Traditional architecture surrounding village greens provide local vernacular

Although the proposed development would increase the size of the properties, it would still retain a very open site due to the size of the plot and the surrounding garden and as such the proposed development would not be detrimental to the open, rural landscape character of the surrounding area.

In respect of landscape character, the proposal is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The NPPF (2023) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

The existing dwellinghouse contains two bedrooms, a lounge, Kitchen/diner, Shower room with WC, Bathroom, utility room and hall.

The proposed extension would result in addition of a garden room and Shower room with WC. There are no minimum space standards for a garden room. However, the wc and shower room would comply with minimum space standards with a 4m² floor area. The rear garden space is large and would continue to maintain an excess in the minimum external amenity space depth and area.

Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, no objection to the proposal was received.

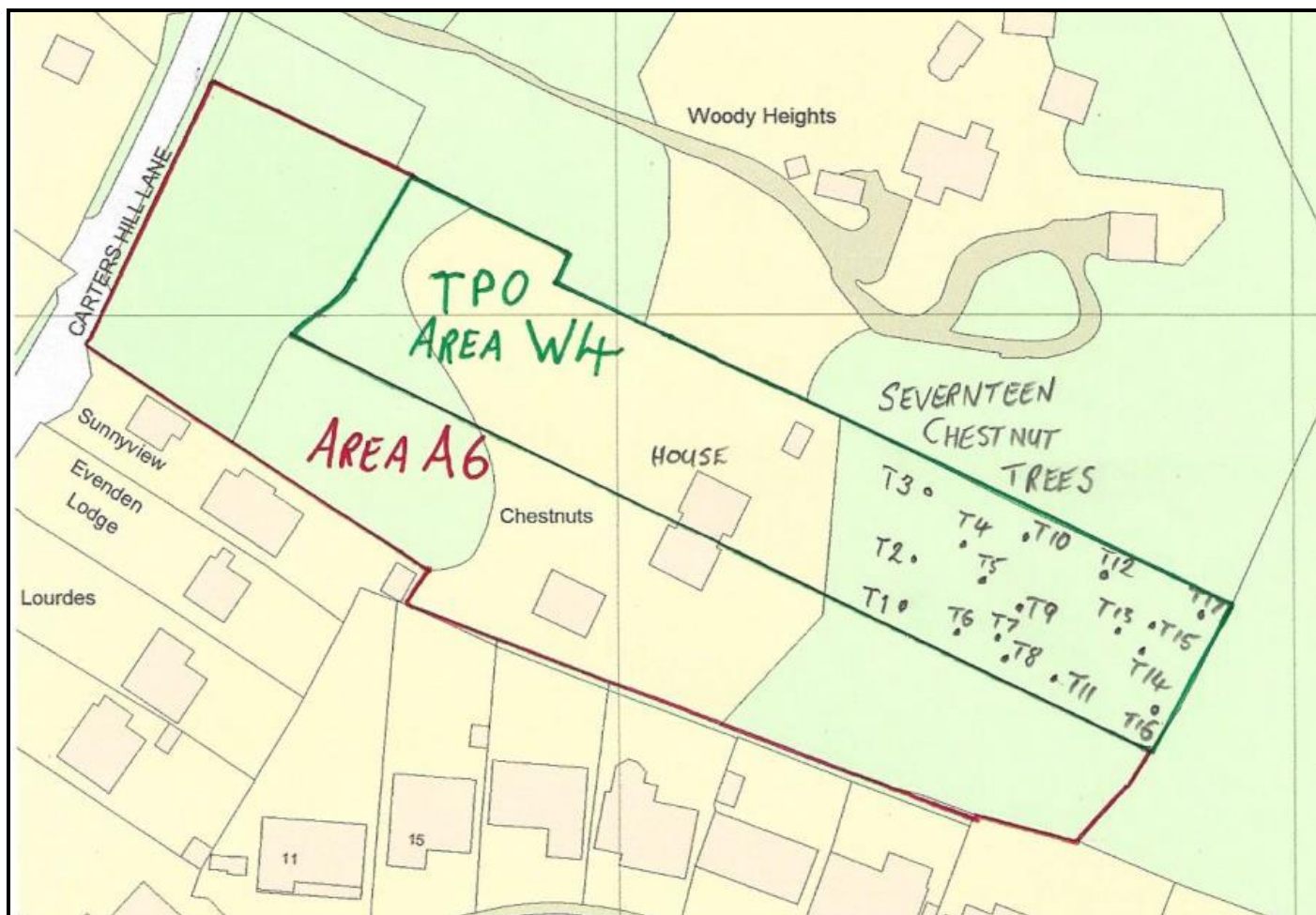
In this case whilst there are adjoining properties, it is considered that the dwellinghouse is relatively isolated, being centrally located in a large plot. There is sufficient distance and natural screening which would ensure there would be no significant adverse impacts in terms of overbearing bulk and overlooking.

The proposal is therefore considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in compliance with policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Trees (TPO)

To the northern half of the site, there is an area of woodland covered by a blanket Tree Protection Order reference; TPO_1978_003.

However, the side elevation of the existing dwellinghouse is approximately 8m from the edge of the tree-line. At request the agent has supplied a plan showing the location of trees in relation to the dwellinghouse.



This plan details only trees located to the rear of the site. However, as can be seen on the aerial views of the site, as per below, there are trees within the TPO area which extend to the northern side and western, front of the dwellinghouse.



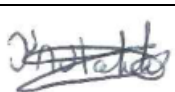
The closest trees would be located to the north and approximately 8 metres from the side of the dwellinghouse. However, the proposed extension would not extend any closer to these trees as it would extend to the east, the rear trees are therefore the most likely to be impacted by the development. These trees are approximately 31 metres from the existing rear elevation. With a depth of 5 metres proposed for the extension, the development would be approximate 26 metres from the tree line to the east.

The standard for calculating the Root Protection Area for single stemmed trees (without consideration for areas of hardstanding etc.), is to multiply the circumference of the tree by 12. Considering the 26m distance the circumference of the tree would need to be 2.2m to have a root protection area of 26 metres. As such the proposed extension would be unlikely to harm the root protection area or the structure of the trees, where appropriately tree protection measures are put in place during the construction. As such a condition requiring details of tree protection measures would be applied where approved.

Conclusion & Recommendation

Subject to details reserved by conditions, the proposed development complies with all relevant national and local planning policies. The recommendation is to approve the scheme.

(For detailed conditions / reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	15 th August 2024	Dated:	20 August 2024