

Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20221284

Location: 12 Hays Mead Henley Street Luddesdown Gravesend

Description: Removal of garage and conservatory and erection of a two storey side extension

Applicant: Ollie Reynolds

Site Visit Date: 14 January 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form;
- Drawing no. 01 Rev. 01 – WIP – Site Plan;
- Drawing no. 01 – SQM Existing V Proposed;
- Drawing no. 02 – Elevations;
- Drawing no. 02.1 – Floor plans; and
- Drawing no. 04 – Pics.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20210575	Erection of a first floor extension over existing attached garage and conversion of garage to habitable room.	Withdrawn	28.08.2021
20120919	Demolition of existing conservatory and erection of a conservatory at the rear.	Permitted	14.12.2012
19870703	Erection of single storey side extension to form kitchen utility room and double garage erection of canopy over new entrance at front.	Permitted	16.11.1987
TH6/52/239B	An amendment to layout	Permitted	07.04.1955
TH6/52/239	Outline application for erection of 12 dwellings.	Permitted	16.04.1953

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS11 - Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

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

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 4 – Decision-making
- 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- 11 – Making effective use of land
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- 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);
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009); and
- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Management Plan 2021-2026.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

No response from:

- Luddesdown Parish Council

Neighbouring properties

1 surrounding property was consulted plus site notice – the overall consultation expiry date was 6 January 2023 – no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

The application site consists of a two storey semi-detached dwelling situated in the Green Belt, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area and an Area of Archaeological Potential.

The proposal is for removal of the garage and conservatory and erection of a two storey side extension.

The principle issues for consideration are as follows:

- Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
- The effect on the openness of the Green Belt;
- Character and Appearance including the effect of the proposal on the AONB and Landscape Character Area
- Impact on occupier amenity
- Impact on neighbouring amenity;
- Parking and Highway Safety
- Archaeological Impact

Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt

The application site is located within the Green Belt where inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (Paragraph 147 of the NPPF 2021).

Paragraph 148 of the NPPF (2021) states 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 149 of the NPPF (2021) states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this 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 development 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; 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.

In this case point (c) is relevant. Any extension to the property must not result in disproportionate additions over and above the original building.

Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) states that extensions to dwellings will be considered on their merits but the 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.

In the case of no. 12 Hays Mead from a review of the planning history for the site this shows that the dwelling was permitted on 10 April 1953 (Ref. TH6/52/239) with an amendment to the layout permitted on 07 April 1955 (Ref. TH6/52/239B).

The original floor area of the dwelling (measured externally) was:

Ground Floor = 50.4 sq. m

First Floor = 50.4 sq. m

Original Floorspace Total = **100.8 sq. m**

The dwelling has been extended with an existing single storey side extension (Ref. 19870703) and a rear conservatory (Ref. 20120919). The extension has added a further 46.5 sq. m and the conservatory has added 12.5 sq. m, an increase of 59 sq. m overall which means the property has already been increased by **58 %** over the original dwelling. The property has therefore been significantly extended already beyond the one third (33%) limit.

It is however proposed to demolish the existing single storey side extension and rear conservatory as part of the proposals. This means they do not need to be calculated as existing extensions when assessing the increase that the proposed development would have over the original dwelling.

The proposed two storey side extension would be:

Ground Floor = 26.6 sq. m

First Floor = 26.6 sq. m

Total Increase in Floor Area = **53.2 sq. m**

From the above assessment the proposed two storey side extension would therefore increase the floorspace of the original dwelling by **52%** which would be considerably more than the one third (33%) limit set in saved Policy C13 (LPFR) however it is important to note that this is 6% less than the current increase over the original dwelling of 58%.

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.

The combined footprint of the existing side extension and rear conservatory is 50.4 sq. m and the footprint of the proposed extension would be 26.6 sq. m. Therefore, the proposed extension would result in a reduction in the footprint of the dwelling by 23.8%.

The proposed two storey side extension would also be of less width than the existing single storey side extension it would replace. The existing single storey side extension is 5.4m in width and the proposed two storey side extension would be 3.5m which is a reduction in width of 1.9m.

The depth of the proposed two storey side extension would also be less than the existing single storey side extension – the existing single storey side extension is 8.4m in depth and the proposed two storey side extension would be 7.5m in depth which is a reduction of 900mm.

The proposed two storey side extension by its nature would be of greater height than the existing single storey side extension as the existing extension is 3m in height and the proposed two storey extension would be 7.7m in height which is an increase of 4.7m. It would also have a gable roof design feature on the front elevation. The extension would however, be set down from the ridgeline of the host dwelling and set back from the front elevation.

There is a need therefore to take a look at the proposal in the round. The proposal would be over the one third limit but this is already the case with the existing single storey side extension and conservatory both of which have been granted planning permission. The proposed extension would actually result in this increase over the one third being 6% less than the current situation. The proposed extension would also result in a decrease in the footprint of the dwelling by 23% and a reduction in the width of the dwelling by 1.9m. The proposed extension would be greater in height than the existing extension by 4.7m but the extension is considered to have been designed as subservient to the host dwelling being that it would be set down from the ridgeline and set back from the main front wall. Overall it is considered that the benefits of the proposed extension in terms of it having less floorspace, footprint, width and depth than the existing extension it would replace outweigh the increase in height and that after an assessment of floorspace, footprint and volume, as well as scale bulk, design and massing, the proposed two storey side extension would not be a disproportionate addition over and above the original building. The proposal would therefore not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and it is therefore compliant with Policy CS02 (LPCS), saved Policy CS13 (LPFR) and paragraph 149 of the NPPF (2021).

The effect on the openness of the Green Belt

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. Paragraph 001 of the Planning Practice Guidance (2021) on Green Belts looks to assess the impact of a proposal on the openness of the Green Belt by taking into account the spatial and visual aspects of a development, its duration and remediability, and the activity levels generated.

The site is located in the countryside and is part of a development of semi-detached dwellings in fairly narrow but deep plots. The housing itself has a general suburban feel to it but the surroundings are very much rural on this country lane with open fields surrounding the dwelling to the north, east and south.

As discussed in the above section the proposed two storey side extension would be of less floor area, footprint, width and depth than the existing single storey side extension it would replace. Although it would be of greater height it is considered that the reduction in all of the other aforementioned areas would outweigh any such impact from the increased height of a two storey extension as opposed to the existing single storey extension. The extension is set down from the ridge and set back from the front wall means it would appear as a subservient addition to the host dwelling and it is considered it would not increase the prominence of the dwelling in respect of the plot itself or in respect of the surrounding area. It is therefore considered that the proposal would not have an adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

Character and Appearance including the effect of the proposal on the AONB and Landscape Character Area

The application site is located in the Kent Downs AONB and the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area.

Policy CS12 (LPCS) states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced and the greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB. Proposals will take account of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment.

Policy SD1 of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan states that the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Kent Downs AONB is recognised as the primary purpose of the designation and given the highest level of protection and Policy SD2 states that the local character, qualities and distinctiveness of the Kent Downs AONB will be conserved and enhanced in the design, scale, setting and materials of new development.

In relation to the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area, the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009) advises that this area is characterised by gently undulating topography with a mix of arable and pasture farmland, three large settlements located along the A227 and traditional architecture surrounding village greens providing local vernacular.

The proposed two storey side extension would be of greater height than the existing single storey side extension but it would also be of less floor area, footprint, width and depth. It would also be subservient to the host dwelling and overall therefore it is considered that the extension would not increase the prominence of this residential development in the surrounding landscape nor its visibility and therefore there would be no adverse impact on the Kent Downs AONB or on the landscape character in general.

In design terms the two storey extension is well-designed being set back from the front wall, set down from the ridge. The gable feature on the front elevation would be of a slightly smaller scale than the main gable on the front of the dwelling. It is stated that facing materials for the walls and roof would match the existing dwelling. Overall it is considered the extension would be in keeping with the scale and character of the host dwelling and would also not impact on the character of the streetscene.

In respect of character and appearance including the impact on the AONB and landscape character the proposal is considered compliant with Policies CS12 and CS19 (LPCS).

Impact on occupier amenity

The dwelling is currently three bedrooms and as a result of the proposal it would increase to four. SPG2 states that the minimum garden area for a dwelling with four bedrooms is 100 sq. m and the minimum depth from the rear wall of the house is 10m.

Existing garden area = 388 sq. m

Existing garden depth from rear wall of house = Ranges between 27m to 37m

Proposed garden area = 397 sq. m

Proposed garden depth from rear wall of house = Range from 30m to 40m

With the removal of the rear conservatory and a narrower extension the proposal would actually result in a slight increase in the area and depth of the garden. The garden area and depth from the rear wall of the house would far exceed the minimum standards for a 4 bedroom dwelling as set out in SPG2.

As a result of the proposed extension and internal re-arrangement of the first floor there would be two new bedrooms created and one of the existing back bedrooms increased in size. The Technical Housing

Standards states the minimum sizes for bedrooms. A single bedroom should be a minimum of 7.5 sq. m and at least 2.15m in width and double bedrooms should be a minimum of 12.5 sq. m and at least one bedroom should be 2.75m in width and every other double at least 2.55m.

New front bedroom in extension = 10.5 sq. m and 3.2m in width
New back bedroom in extension = 10.7 sq. m and 3.2m in width
Existing enlarged back bedroom = 13.4 sq. m and 3.4m in width

Both new bedrooms would meet the minimum area for a single bedroom and the existing enlarged bedroom would achieve the minimum area for a double bedroom; all bedrooms would exceed the minimum widths. It is considered therefore the minimum standards as set out in the Technical Housing Standards would be achieved.

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

Impact on neighbouring amenity

Due to the location of the proposed extension on the eastern flank wall of the dwelling there would be no impact on any neighbouring property with regards overshadowing, loss or outlook, loss of outlook or overlooking. There are no neighbouring properties to the east and due to the siting of the extension on the eastern side of the dwelling by its nature it could not have any impact on the adjacent semi-detached dwelling no. 11 Hays Mead to the west.

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

Parking and Highway Safety

As stated, the property would increase from three to four bedrooms. SPG4 states that for properties with four or more bedrooms there should be a maximum of three spaces per dwelling. The proposal would result in the loss of the existing integral double garage but half of the front garden is hard paved as is an area down the side of the house where there is sufficient space for a number of vehicles and certainly to comply with the standards of SPG4. As such it is considered the property would retain sufficient off-street parking and would therefore not impact on highway safety by virtue of any on-street parking demand. In respect of parking and highway safety the proposal is considered compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Archaeological Impact

The site is located in an area of Archaeological Potential but given the construction of the existing single storey side extension it is unlikely that the proposal would have a significant below-ground archaeological impact and it is therefore considered there is not any need for any archaeological work or watching brief condition in this case. In respect of archaeological impact the proposal is considered compliant with saved Policy TC7 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

None.

Conclusion

The above discussion sets out that the proposed development is not considered to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would not reduce the openness of the Green Belt. It is also considered that the proposal would be acceptable in respect of character and appearance including landscape character and the Kent Downs AONB, occupier and neighbouring amenity, parking and highway safety and archaeology. As such the proposal is considered compliant with local and national planning policy and permission is therefore recommended.

Recommendation: Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>Rebecca Harrison</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	27th January 2023	Dated:	30th September 2023