



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240956

Location: Greenwood Carters Hill Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Erection of a first floor rear elevation and erection of two dormer windows to existing roof slope.

Applicant: Mr Nick Brazys

Site Visit Date: 4/11/2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application form
- Existing Block Plan
- Proposed Block Plan
- Site Location Map
- Drawing No: MAD-491-05 (Existing/Proposed Plans and Elevations)

Supplementary Information

- Cover Letter

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Outcome	Decision Date
20240399	Erection of a single storey side extension and erection of two dormer windows to the first floor rear elevation.	Refused	14.06.2024
20230188	Erection of a single storey front extension to include 2 skylights and alterations to existing side extension to construct a bigger entrance hall.	Refused	02.05.2023
AP 2023/00038 /REF	Erection of a single storey front extension to include 2 skylights and alterations to existing side extension to construct a bigger entrance hall.	Appeal Dismissed	18.01.2024
19920347	Details pursuant to GR/91/636 for the erection of two detached bungalows with detached double garages at the front.	Permitted	13.07.1992
19910636	Outline Application for the erection of 2no. bungalows.	Permitted	23.10.1991

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

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

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

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) sets out those 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 The review 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 a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) general conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- 4 – Decision making
- 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- 12 – Achieving sustainable development and well-designed places
- 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- SPD4 - Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021)
- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Local Ward Councillors

No comments received.

Meopham Parish Council

No comments received.

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by way of site notice and letters to 10 surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 19.11.2024 and 2 objections were received.

The main points raised in the objections were:

- Installation of velux windows will look directly at neighbouring property.
- Original property was conditioned to allow only obscure glazed velux windows
- Elevations are incorrectly annotated on plans
- Plans do not show how far dormer will protrude from the roof
- Width of dormer larger than average size
- No mention of how high the dormers will be
- Dormers will overlook a garden of neighbouring property thus impacting privacy

Analysis

Background

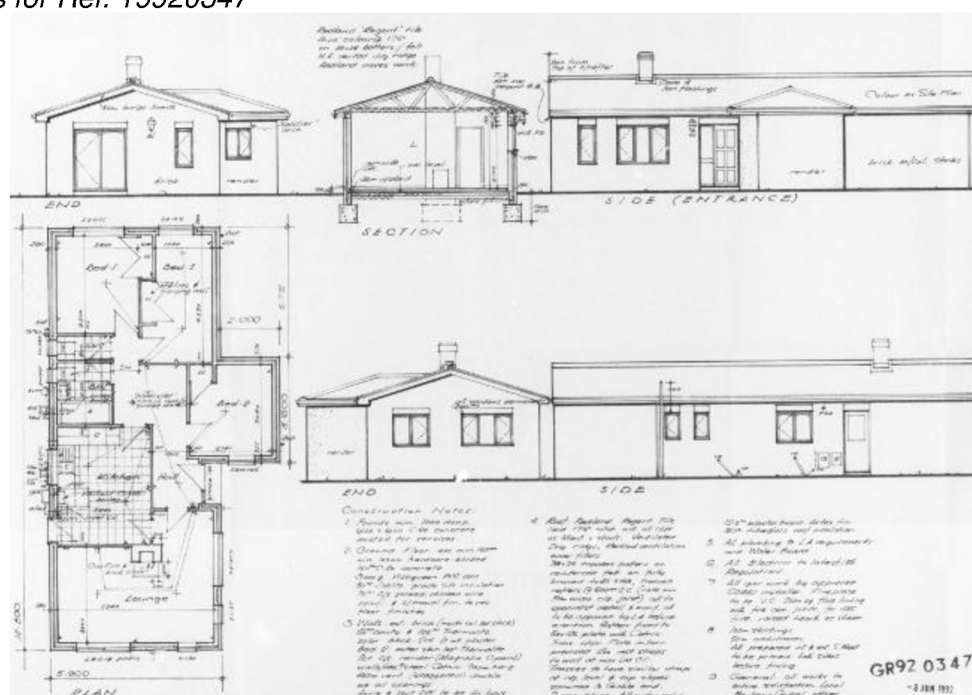
The current application is a resubmission of 20240399 which was refused owing to the below ground:

The proposal represents a disproportionate addition and exceeds the one third limit to the original dwelling, which will harm the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), Policies CS01 (Sustainable Development), CS02 (Scale and Distribution of Development) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

The original dwelling was constructed some time after 1992, following outline planning permission dated 23rd October 1991 (Planning Ref. 19910636) and reserved matters approval dated 13th July 1992 (Planning Ref. 19920347). Looking at the planning history, it would appear that planning permission was approved for *alterations to increase height of roof and width of front gable to form open porch and allow conversion of roofspace to form 2 no. bedrooms and bedroom with ensuite shower room/w.c. on 23rd March 2001* (Planning Ref. 20000840) and was implemented in its entirety. Therefore the property as it is today is not the 'original' dwelling.

The detached garage to the south of the property formed part of the 1992 reserved matters planning permission and was constructed at similar time to the original dwelling.

Approved Plans for Ref. 19920347



Approved Plans for Ref. 20000840



There have been a number of refusals at this site, the aforementioned refusal came after a decision under 20230188 which was also refused on the below grounds:

The proposal represents a disproportionate addition and exceeds the one third limit to the original dwelling, which will harm the openness of the Green Belt. Therefore the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, contrary to saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994), Policies CS01 (Sustainable Development), CS02 (Scale and Distribution of Development) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), and Sections 12 and 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

By virtue of the location and design, the proposed side extension is considered to be unacceptable, as it would be highly visible from public vantage points, that is considered to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the property itself. The development is therefore contrary to the requirements of Policies CS12 (Green Infrastructure) and CS19 (Development and Design Principles) of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) and paragraphs 130, 174 and 179 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

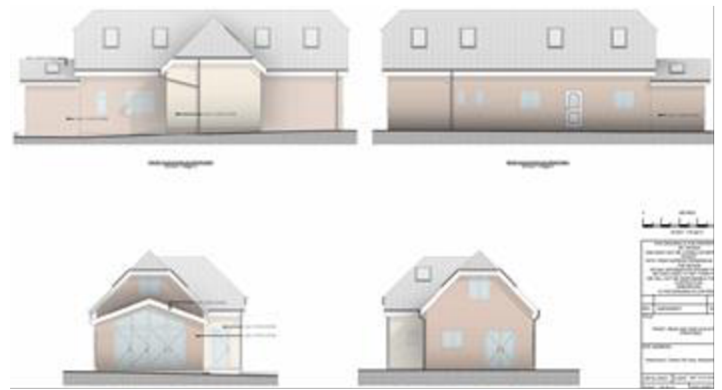
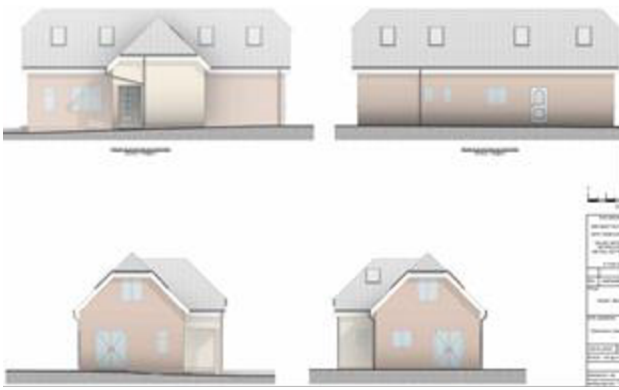
An appeal was lodged under reference 2023/00038/REF (Appendix 1) and dismissed, with the Inspectorate citing:

- The proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt which by definition is harmful. It would also result in a small loss of openness of the Green Belt. As per Paragraph 153 of the Framework, any harm to the Green Belt should be given substantial weight and inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm is not just outweighed but clearly outweighed by other considerations.*
- The weight I could ascribe to those considerations in favour of the proposed development would be limited and insufficient to justify the proposed development, owing to the substantial weight that should be attached to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances do not therefore exist.*

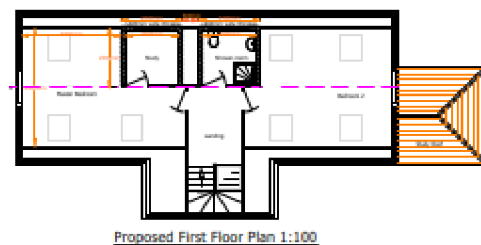
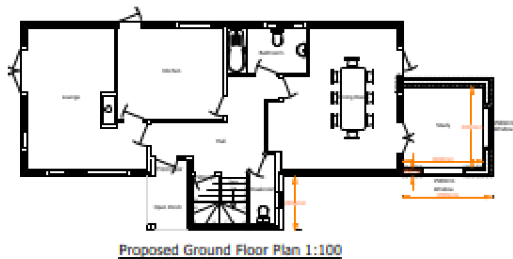
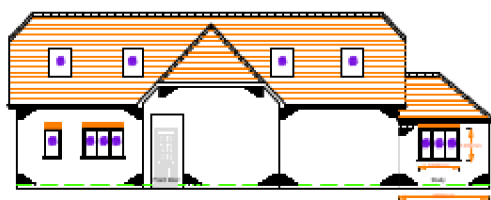
Below are the plans submitted under 20230188

Existing Elevations

Proposed Elevations



Below are the plans submitted under 20240399



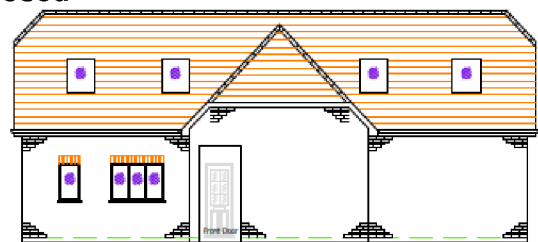
Proposal

The current proposal is a resubmission of 20240399 and is now described as “Erection of two rear dormers in existing roof slope to allow for the creation of a study and shower room.” The proposed dormers will have a width of approx. 2.3m, a height of 2m and a depth of 2.39m.

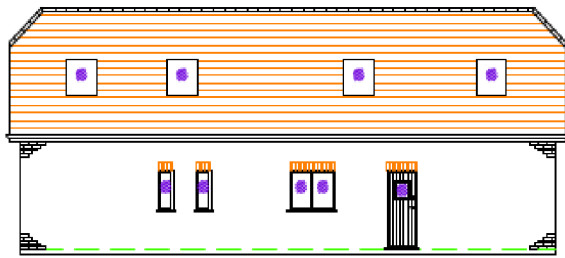
Existing



Proposed



Proposed Front (West) Elevation 1:100
Please note that this Proposed View is unchanged from the Existing View.



Existing Rear (East) Elevation 1:100



Proposed Rear (East) Elevation 1:100
Showing Two Dormer Windows to the
First Floor Roof



Existing Side (North) Elevation 1:100



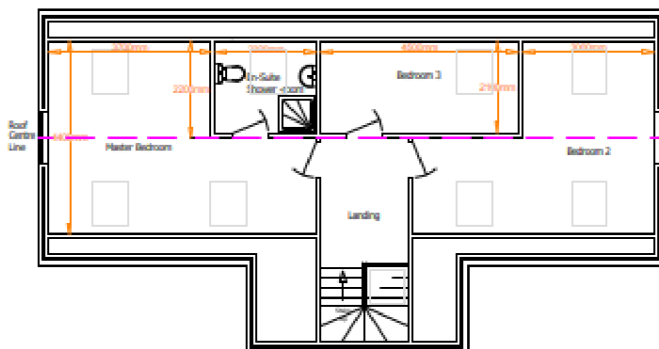
Proposed Side (North) Elevation 1:100



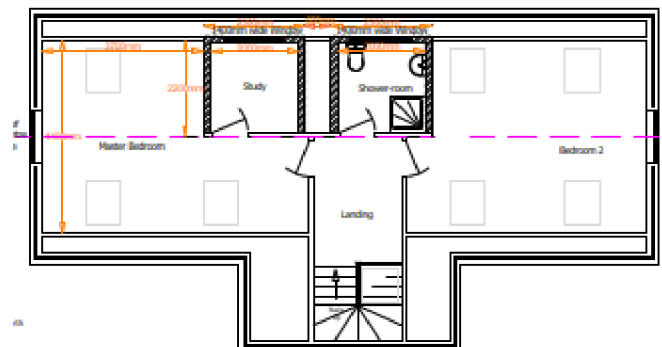
Existing Side (South) Elevation 1:100



Proposed Side (South) Elevation 1:100



Existing First Floor Plan 1:100



Proposed First Floor Plan 1:100

Site and Surrounding Area

The site is located in the Green Belt and in the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area as defined on the adopted Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy policies map and this must be the starting point for determining this application.

The application site at Greenwood, Carters Hill is a detached dwelling, that has been extended to form a

two storey dwelling and is set in a large plot with a detached double garage. The property is set back from the highway by approximately 32.23m, with entrance gates set in from the highway by 15m. The property benefits from a large detached double garage to the front and driveway providing road parking for more than three cars.



The key issues in the consideration of this application is;

- Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
- its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land with it;
- the effect on character and appearance
- whether the proposal would impact the living conditions of future occupiers
- whether the proposal would impact on neighbouring properties;
- whether the proposal would result in any parking and highway safety issues;
- any other material considerations.

The appropriateness of the development within the Green Belt

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt is development that by definition, is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 153 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 goes on to say that very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

The NPPF (2023) notes that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence. At paragraph 143 the NPPF (2023) lists the 5 purposes which the Green Belt serves. Of particular relevance in this case is that it assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

The NPPF (2023) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 154). The listed exceptions include 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.

Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014) (LPCS) prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development. In the rural area it states that development will be supported within rural settlements that are inset from the Green Belt and defined on the Policies Map. Development outside those settlements (which is the case here), will only be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in (LPCS).

Furthermore, Saved Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994) (LPFR), which relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside, sets out a number of criteria that should be met when considering proposals for domestic extensions. As the policy pre-dates the NPPF (2023), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 154 the NPPF (2023).

In particular Policy C13 (LPFR) places an overall limit on extensions of one third of the gross floor area of the original dwelling, unless the increased floor space has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling (criteria (ii)). It also requires the massing, scale and form of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting (criteria (vi)). It is considered that these factors are relevant in determining whether the size of an extension is proportionate and as such, these aspects of the policy are broadly in line with the NPPF (2023) and should be afforded weight.

In determining proposals for residential extensions in the Green Belt an assessment will be made against the impact of the 'original' existing development. The original building is the building as it existed on 1 July 1948, however, for older homes constructed prior to July 1st, 1948, the 'original dwelling' refers to the floorspace of the dwelling as it was on this date. Any additions that have occurred since the 'original' dwelling date are considered cumulatively and will be counted as part of the overall increase in floorspace of the dwelling when new additions are being assessed. The reason for this is small reductions in openness, repeated many times, can have a cumulatively detrimental effect.

The current submission does not propose an increase to the floor space of the dwelling as it has removed the side extension element and will only comprise the two dormers in the existing roof slope.

Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) provides the local interpretation of national policy and states 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.

In this case there is not any increase to the floor space and so there are no concerns regarding the development being a disproportionate addition in the greenbelt. This is therefore considered to overcome the reasons for refusal under application 20240399.

In summary it is considered that the dormers will not result in any further increase to the footprint of the dwelling and is acceptable in terms of local and national planning policy in terms of green belt.

Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. Policy CS12 of the Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 states that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes within the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that proposals will take account of the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment.

Given that there is no increase to the footprint of the dwelling the proposal does not result in any material harm to openness of the greenbelt.

Character and appearance

The application property is located on the western end of Carters Hill Lane within the Green Belt. The property is located is bounded by a high level brick wall and is set back generously from the highway.

The revised proposal has removed the ground floor extension and only comprises the erection of two pitched roof dormers in the rear elevation, these are not visible from a public vantage point.

The proposed rear dormers would add to the existing roof however they would not result in detrimental harm to the character of the dwelling. On this basis it is considered that the proposal would not result in detrimental harm to the character of the dwelling, nor the wider character of the area. The proposal therefore complies with CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Impact on future occupiers

The revised NPPF (2023) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the living space of the main dwelling and as such accords with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Impact on neighbouring properties

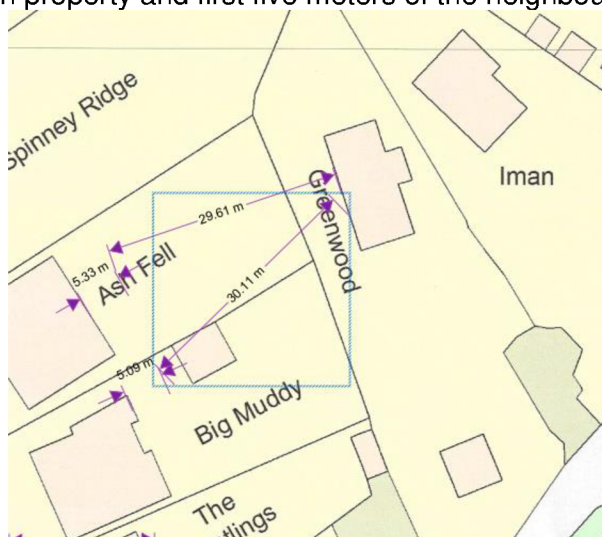
Two objections were received regarding the impact of the development on the privacy of neighbouring properties. The comments referred to application GR/20000840 which imposed the below condition:

7. The velux windows to the master bedroom, ensuite bathroom and bedroom 2 on the rear elevation shall be fitted with obscure glass only at all times.

It should be noted that this condition was imposed under historic policy and the current proposal will be assessed with regard to criteria specified within Policy CS19, which states 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. Applications are also assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines 2020. The guidance states:

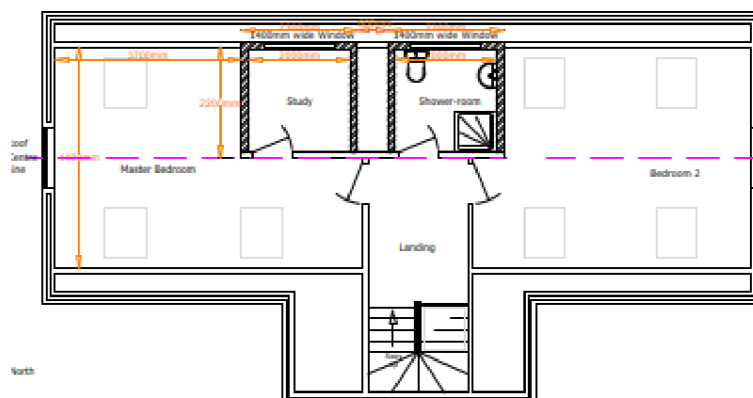
- 17 Where windows of habitable rooms face each other (whether across a road, pedestrian way or private garden) a window-to-window distance of at least 21 metres should be provided. Habitable rooms are defined as bedrooms and living areas, but specifically exclude kitchens and bathrooms.
- 18 In addition, a minimum distance of 21 metres shall be provided between the windows of habitable rooms and the private garden area of any dwelling. A private garden area is defined as the first five metres of garden adjacent to the rear of the dwelling.

In the case of the dormer windows serving habitable rooms they would need to have a minimum of 21 meters between the application property and first five meters of the neighbouring gardens.



The above diagram shows that had the dormers served habitable rooms the privacy distances are adequate to meet the requirements of SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines 2020. However, the proposed the first dormer window will serve a shower room which is not a habitable room, this window will be conditioned as obscure glazed in perpetuity to safeguard privacy due to the nature of the proposed use of the room. With regards to the second dormer, it will serve a study which is not considered a habitable room; however it is important to highlight as above, that if the proposed dormers were used as habitable rooms

they would not have caused any impact on neighbouring amenity.



Proposed First Floor Plan 1:100

Given the separation distance between it is considered the proposal would not result in loss of light, outlook and increased overshadowing, the dormer serving the shower room will be conditioned as obscure glazed to ensure neighbouring privacy. As such the development is in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) in respect of the living conditions for neighbouring properties.

Parking and Highways

The proposal would result in a reduction of bedrooms with the existing garage and driveway providing adequate parking for the needs of the development and so the proposal would accord with SPG4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006) and Saved Policy P3 of the Local Plan and Policy CS11 (LPCS).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Landscape Character Area

Section 15 of the NPPF (2023) highlights the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural environment, one aspect of which is the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes. 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 and the greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape and its setting.

The application site is located within the Meopham Downs Landscape Character Area. The topography is gently undulating with a mixture of arable and pasture farmland. The area is characterised by neat pattern of small square fields in the south, broader irregular shaped fields to the north, with narrow lanes and road lined with hedgerows. The condition is good and the guidelines are to conserve and reinforce.

Due to the layout of the site, position of the proposed extension and surrounding built form, it is considered that there would be no direct impact on the landscape character area. As such the proposal would accord with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and Section 15 of the NPPF (2023).

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is recommended for permission subject to conditions.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Sharon Sahota	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
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Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	10 th December 2024	Dated:	10 th December 202