Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application Nos:	20251249 (Planning) and 20251250 (Listed Building)
Location:	Boughurst Farm, Leywood Road, Meopham, Gravesend
Description:	**20251249:** Demolition of porch and erection of a two storey rear extension plus internal alterations to include structural alterations to link the new extension, internal reordering to the ground and first floor, new and replacement windows and associated hard landscaping. **20251250:** Application for Listed Building Consent for the demolition of porch and erection of a two storey rear extension plus internal alterations to include structural alterations to link the new extension, internal reordering to the ground and first floor, new and replacement windows and associated hard landscaping.
Applicant:	Mr & Mr Ohlson & Till
Site Visit Date:	Desktop assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Drawing no. EX_010 (Location Plan)
Drawing no. 27680_EX005 (Existing Block Plan)
Drawing no. 27680_EX_04 Rev. A (Existing Sections)
Drawing no. 27680_EX_01 Rev. A (Existing Site and Roof Plan)
Drawing no. 27680_EX_02 Rev. A (Existing Ground and First Floor Phasing)
Drawing no. 27680_EX_03 Rev. A (Existing Elevations)
Drawing no. 27680_J001 Rev. A (Proposed Replacement Window Joinery Details – Sheet 1 of 2)
Drawing no. 27680_J002 Rev. A (Proposed Replacement Window Joinery Details – Sheet 1 of 2)
Drawing no. 27680_PL_01 Rev. D (Proposed Site and Roof Plan)
Drawing no. 27680_PL_02 Rev. D (Proposed Ground Floor Plan)
Drawing no. 27680_PL_03 Rev. E (Proposed First Floor Plan)
Drawing no. 27680_PL_04 Rev. F (Proposed Elevations)
Drawing no. 27680_PL_05 Rev. E (Proposed Sections AA BB CC)
Design, Access & Heritage Statement (December 2025)
Window Schedule V2
Preliminary Roost Assessment (23 May 2025)
Pre-Development Tree Survey and Report (16 May 2025)
Bat Survey and Mitigation Strategy (5 December 2025)

Superseded plans/documents due to revisions:
~~Drawing no. 27680_J001 (Proposed Replacement Window Joinery Details – Sheet 1 of 2)~~
~~Drawing no. 27680_J002 (Proposed Replacement Window Joinery Details – Sheet 1 of 2)~~
~~Drawing no. 27680_PL_01 Rev. C (Proposed Site and Roof Plan)~~
~~Drawing no. 27680_PL_02 Rev. A (Proposed Ground Floor Plan)~~
~~Drawing no. 27680_PL_03 Rev. C (Proposed First Floor Plan)~~

~~Drawing no. 27680_PL_04 Rev. C (Proposed Elevations)~~
~~Drawing no. 27680_PL_05 Rev. C (Proposed Sections AA BB CC)~~
~~Design, Access & Heritage Statement (December 2025)~~
~~Window Schedule~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20240280	Application for approval of condition 3 attached to planning permission reference number 20231000 relating to an ecological enhancement plan being submitted.	Approval of details	06.06.2024
20231000	Demolition of existing workshop and storage building and construction of a new car port, workshop and storage building with associated turning and visitor parking area.	Permitted	28.11.2023
20230393	Demolition of existing workshop and storage building and construction of a new car port, workshop and storage building with associated landscaping, turning and visitor parking areas.	Refused	13.06.2023
20210920	Application for Listed Building Consent for conversion of existing outbuilding to two bedroom all year round holiday let.	Withdrawn	22.02.2022
20210919	Conversion existing outbuilding to two bedroom all year round holiday let.	Withdrawn	22.02.2022
20171004	Application for the approval of condition 2 attached to planning permission reference no. 20170711 relating to details of the extractor fan.	Approval	18.01.2018
20170711	Application for Listed Building Consent for the retention of the en-suite shower room and cupboard in the fourth bedroom at first floor level.	Permission	24.08.2017
20120667	Application for Listed Building Consent for the installation of secondary glazing to all windows at first and second floor levels.	Permission	19.09.2012
19980461	The installation of a Yorkstar 24 oil fired condensing boiler in lobby leading to ground floor toilet, with a rear exit external flue.	Permission	25.09.1998
19860199	Use of land as residential garden and erection of 2.75 metre high perimeter fence to tennis court	Permission	27.06.1986

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development and Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- TC2 – Policy for Listed Buildings

- T1 – Impact of Development on Highway Network
- 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)

- 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- 13 – Protecting Green Belt Land
- 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 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)
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2021-2026
- Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020
- Conservation Areas Maintenance / Replacement Windows and Doors Guidance SPD (2020)
- Listed Buildings – A Guide for Owners and Occupiers – Informal Guidance (2020)

Section 16(2) and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) require special regard to be paid to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses when considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission respectively

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

External Consultees

Dickens' Country Protection Society

The Society notes the site is in an area within which Green Belt Policies apply. The Society also notes the existing building is of some character and is listed Grade 11. In the Society's view the proposed extension would do little to enhance the listed building.

Any features of historic interest should be retained.

KCC Biodiversity

We are satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to determine the planning application.

Ecological Element	Present on site	Add Info	Comments
Protected/ Notable Species	The ecological reports has confirmed that the building supports a common pipistrelle roost (peak count 11) and a brown long eared roost (peak count of 3). The report has confirmed there is potential for breeding bats to be present A bat mitigation strategy has been submitted and appropriate mitigation. The proposal will result in the permanent loss of one common pipistrelle roosting feature and the temporary impact on the brown long eared roost curing construction.	No	**Bats** We are satisfied that the bat mitigation proposed is appropriate and we have provided suggested **condition wording** at the end of the report. We are satisfied that the proposed mitigation is appropriate to enable GBC be satisfied that the favourable conservation status can be met and, from the point of view of the third test, NE will issue a European Protected Species (EPS) licence. Further details on the 3 test can be found below. We highlight that the bat mitigation strategy has stated the following regarding **roofing felt** to be used during the construction. *Under bat mitigation licences, only bitumen Type 1F with hessian matrix can be used in areas where bats are likely to roost; if the use of non-bitumen coated roof membrane is necessary, a certificate that proves the roofing membrane has passed a 'snagging propensy test' will be needed by Natural England17. As pipistrelle bats are likely to go and roost under the clay tiles in the extension, this applies to the entire roof (existing and new), as well as any areas of hanging tiles.* No works can commence on site until Natural England Issue an EPS licence. **Breeding Birds** We recommend a breeding bird informative is included.
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	Exempt	No	We consider this application exempt from statutory BNG because it is a householder application as defined within article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
Lighting	If any additional lighting is proposed we advise that a sensitive Scheme is required.	No	Suggested condition wording provided an the end of the report

Additional Information

European Protected Species Licence

As Gravesham Borough Council must consider whether it is not unlikely that a Natural England mitigation licence will be granted, in so doing it must address the three tests when deciding whether to grant planning permission for the proposed development.

The three tests are:
1. Regulation 55(2)(e) states: a licence can be granted for the purposes of "preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment".
2. Regulation 55(9)(a) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied "that there is no satisfactory alternative".
Regulation 55(9)(b) states: the appropriate authority shall not grant a licence unless they are satisfied "that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range."

Suggested Conditions Wording

Bat Mitigation
Prior to and during construction works the bat mitigation detailed within he Bat survey and mitigation strategy (KB Ecology; December 2025) must be implemented as detailed unless subsequently amended by the Natural England Licence. If works have not commenced within 2 years of the date of the report a review and update of the mitigation strategy must be carried out prior to works commencing. On completion of the mitigation a letter must be submitted to the LPA for written approval to demonstrate that the mitigation has been implemented.

Sensitive Lighting (if any external lighting is proposed)
The condition requiring a lighting plan must have the following requirements:

• Be designed following best practice guidance within Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professional's '*Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*'1
• Site plan showing the location and types of lighting
• Plans demonstrating the lighting will not impact the roosting features. • Lighting must be downward facing and/or on motion sensors.

Breeding Bird Informative
The applicant is reminded that, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is an offence to remove, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built. Planning consent for a development does not provide a defence against prosecution under this Act.

Habitats are present on and around the site that provide opportunities for breeding birds. Any work to vegetation/structures that may provide suitable nesting habitats should be carried out outside of the bird breeding season (1st March to 31st August inclusive) to avoid destroying or damaging bird nests in use or being built. If vegetation/structures need to be removed during the breeding season, mitigation measures need to be implemented.

This includes examination by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist immediately prior to starting work. If any nesting birds are found, works must cease until after the birds have finished nesting.

KCC Heritage

Boughurst Farm is a Grade II listed 2-storey detached dwelling with a C15th core, which has been extended to the north and extensively altered over its lifetime.

The proposed extension has the potential to impact upon archaeological features associated with the earliest phases of use of the building and surrounding area.

The application is supported by a thorough and helpful heritage statement (James Clague Architects Dec 2025) and this has recorded and interpreted the structural elements of the building, fulfilling the potential requirement for further Historic Building recording works.

With this in mind, the following condition is proposed.

To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded during development works:
A) Prior to any development works the applicant (or their agents or successors in title) shall secure a programme of archaeological work comprising of an archaeological watching brief so that structural building works and groundworks are observed and archaeological information is recorded. The archaeological work shall be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority and in accordance with a Written Specification, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
B) The archaeological watching brief, post excavation assessment, analysis and reporting shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed Specification.
C) Within 6 months of the completion of the programme of archaeological works a Report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure that the archaeological interest of the site that would be affected by the development is properly examined and recorded in accordance with local and national planning policy.

Kent Downs National Landscape Unit

On 22 November 2023, all designated Areas of Outstanding Beauty (AONBs) in England and Wales were renamed 'National Landscapes' (NLs). Accordingly, the Kent Downs AONB is now the Kent Downs National Landscape. Its legal designation and policy status remain the same.

Also of note is the changes introduced through the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which came into force on 26/December 2023. The Act amends the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, which is the primary legislation relating to AONBs and replaces the previous Duty of Regard to AONBs set out at S85 with a new, strengthened requirement that:

‘In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty’. (Part 12 - Miscellaneous; Section 245. Protected Landscapes; paras (5) - (10).

This places a much stronger duty on relevant authorities, which includes local authorities, to ensure that their actions and decisions seek to conserve and enhance AONBs, marking a significant change to the legal context of AONB policy.

Further guidance is provided in Appendix 2.

The Kent Downs National Landscape team has seen a recent uplift in the number of consultations on planning applications. In accordance with the agreed Kent Downs Planning Protocol, which sets out that the Kent Downs Landscape team will only have a limited land use planning role and will prioritise its involvement in planning to planning policy matters, we will not normally provide bespoke comments on more minor applications such as this. This does not imply support for, or objection to, the proposal. If our input would be particularly valued in this instance, please get in touch and we endeavour to provide informal advice where our current planning capacity allows.

In determining the application, the local planning authority has a new statutory duty, as set out above, to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Kent Downs National Landscape. Further advice on the new duty is provided in Appendix 2 of this letter. The Kent Downs National Landscape team recommends that to help fulfil the new statutory duty, the Local Planning Authority should ensure that the decision is consistent with relevant national and local planning policy and takes into account the aims, objectives and principles set out in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and its associated guidance documents. Further details of these are provided in Appendix 1.

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) (08.01.2026)

Thank you for notifying the SPAB of the above application concerning this 15th-century Grade II listed building. After carefully reviewing the submitted documents, we have a number of concerns and wish to register our objection.

We note that the applicant has revised a previous scheme following pre-application advice; however, not all recommendations appear to have been addressed—particularly regarding the overbearing nature of the proposed extension or the unjustified relocation of windows. In addition, there appears to be unnecessary loss of historic fabric without justification.

We expand on these points as follows:

Scale and Dominance of Extension: The proposed extension's ridge height is only marginally lower than the host dwelling, making it highly prominent from the north, south, and east elevations. The south elevation, in particular, is dominated by the extension, which is not subservient to the historic hall house. The scale of the extension seems driven by the first-floor connection, which appears unnecessary if the existing 19th century stair were retained. Keeping this access would preserve the existing plan form and avoid creating a new doorway into the northern bedroom, thereby reducing the loss of historic fabric.

Windows: There is no justification for relocating windows, which would result in the loss of historic fabric and harm the building's character. We also agree with your Conservation Officer's comments regarding the replacement of metal windows, which may replicate earlier versions. Windows are integral to historic character and should not be 'rationalised' into a uniform pattern or style.

Internal Alterations: While we do not object to removing modern partitions, the proposed rearrangement at the north end involves partial loss of a timber stud wall to create a new doorway, with no justification provided for this harm.

For the reasons described above, the application fails to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, specifically:

Paragraph 207 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
Paragraph 212 of the NPPF indicates that when considering the impact of a proposed development upon the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

We therefore recommend that the application be withdrawn and revised to address these concerns. We would be happy to review updated proposals in due course. If this information is not forthcoming, we recommend that permission be refused.

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) (18.03.2026)

Thank you for notifying the SPAB of the revised application concerning this 15th-century Grade II listed building.

We note that the applicant has amended the roof profile in response to our comments of 12 January 2026; however, this change does not sufficiently reduce the overbearing scale of the proposed extension. And as none of our other concerns have been addressed, we are still unable to support the application.
For ease of reference, our principal concerns remain:
• Scale and dominance: The extension remains overly prominent and insufficiently subservient to the 15th-century hall house.

• Plan form and access: The proposed first-floor connection from the proposed extension results in unnecessary bulk; retaining the 19th-century stair would avoid unnecessary loss of historic fabric.
• Windows: Relocation and replacement of windows would result in avoidable loss of historic fabric and harm to historic character, with no supporting justification.
• Internal alterations: Partial loss of a timber stud wall is proposed without explanation for the resulting harm.

For the reasons outlined above, the proposals fail to meet the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 207, 212, and 213, which require proper assessment of significance, great weight to conservation, and clear and convincing justification for any harm to a designated heritage asset.

We therefore recommend that permission be refused.

Internal Consultees

GBC Conservation Officer (11.02.2026)

The drawings showing the lowered roof ridge is spot on. The flat roof, to be metal, can fall to the back of the house away from the front entrance elevation, and a ridge tile detail incorporated to conceal it. This can be conditioned. This leaves the staircase, internal alteration to the partition to allow a door to the new study, and the front elevation leaded windows. On balance the relocation of the staircase allows the reordering of the plan, it is a later alteration, and its removal can be acknowledged in the way the floor is closed, ensuring the outline of the opening remains visible. This can be subject to a condition. The formation of a door for the study potentially results in the loss of historic fabric original to the earliest part of the building. The exploration work needs to establish if the fabric to be removed is original. On balance the re-instatement of the section of lost partition can be accepted in replacement providing the materials match the original. This can be conditioned.

Regarding the windows I think we were quite clear in our pre app comments that the restoration of a metal and leaded lights would be preferrable if the casements are to be altered on the front elevation, where diamond leaded lights offer the reflective quality of small glass panes which cannot be replicated in single sheet slimline sealed units. [The agent] will be aware of Historic England Guidance on thermal insulation and that windows offer less return than insulation upgrades elsewhere. The type of wrought iron leaded lights we are advising are appropriate to the building are those similar to the image below:

GBC Conservation Officer (24 March 2026)

Consideration of concerns raised by SPAB
It is of great assistance to receive statutory consultees responses to proposals and these are carefully considered in determining proposals. The following matters have been raised and these are responded to below.

1. Scale and Dominance of the Proposed Extension
Concern: The extension is overly prominent and insufficiently subservient to the host building.
Response:

The proposed extension has been carefully revised following pre-application feedback to ensure that it reads as a clearly subordinate addition to the historic farmhouse.
The following design measures have been incorporated to reduce scale and dominance:

- **Reduced overall dimensions:** The footprint, ridge height, and bulk of the extension have been reduced from earlier iterations.
- **Lower ridge and eaves line:** The extension sits noticeably below the main house, ensuring the original building remains visually dominant.
- **Set-back and rear siting:** The extension is located to the east (rear), avoiding impact on the principal (west) elevation and key views.
- **Subservient form and detailing:** The use of a catslide roof form and stepped massing reinforces the appearance of a secondary, ancillary structure.

To further clarify this relationship, the extension represents a **modest proportional increase in built form** and remains visually recessive in both immediate and wider views. Its positioning and reduced scale ensure that the **historic plan form and architectural hierarchy of the farmhouse are preserved**.
It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with the requirement for extensions to listed buildings to remain **subservient in scale, form, and visual impact**.

2. Plan Form, First-Floor Connection and 19th Century Stair
2a. First-Floor Connection
Concern: The first-floor link introduces unnecessary bulk.
Response:
The first-floor connection has been carefully designed to minimise both physical and visual impact:

- The link is formed **through areas of lesser historic significance**, avoiding primary historic fabric.
- The upper floor accommodation is partially contained within the **roof space**, reducing perceived mass.
- The connecting element is intentionally **lightweight in form**, with a reduced footprint and limited visual presence.

The inclusion of a first-floor connection is necessary to provide **functional and coherent circulation**, ensuring the building can operate effectively as a single dwelling. Alternative options were considered, including:

- A purely ground-floor link, which would have resulted in more extensive intervention at ground level;
- A detached or semi-detached arrangement, which would compromise usability and long-term viability.

The chosen approach therefore represents the **least harmful and most practical solution**, balancing functional requirements with conservation principles.

2b. 19th Century Stair
Concern: Retention of the 19th-century stair would avoid loss of historic fabric.
Response:
The existing stair is understood to be a **19th-century insertion**, rather than part of the original phase of the building. While it contributes to the building's historic evolution, it is not considered to be of the highest significance when compared to earlier fabric.
The proposed reconfiguration necessitates its removal in order to:

- Achieve a **coherent and efficient circulation layout**;
- Facilitate a viable relationship between existing and proposed spaces;
- Avoid more extensive interventions elsewhere in the building.

The following mitigation measures are proposed:

- **Full photographic and measured recording** prior to removal;
- **Salvage and reuse of materials** where practicable within the development.
- **Retain the outline of the staircase in the ground floor ceiling joist arrangement**

On balance, the removal of the stair results in **less than substantial harm**, which is outweighed by the public benefit of securing the building's **optimum viable use and long-term conservation**.

3. Windows – Relocation and Replacement
Concern: Insufficient justification for relocation and replacement of windows.
Response:

A detailed review of the existing windows has been undertaken, confirming that:

- A number of windows are **later replacements of limited heritage value**;
- Only a small number of openings retain early or historically significant fabric.

The proposals follow a clear conservation-led approach:

Replacement

- Windows identified as **modern or unsympathetic** are proposed to be replaced with **traditionally detailed timber joinery**, incorporating appropriate glazing bar patterns and proportions.
- This will result in a **net enhancement of the building's character**, restoring a more historically appropriate appearance.

Relocation

- The limited number of relocated openings relate to **later alterations**, not original fabric.
- Their repositioning:
    - Improves internal functionality;
    - Rationalises the elevation composition;
    - Does not harm the legibility of the building's historic development.

The proposals therefore represent a **proportionate and justified intervention**, consistent with the principle of enhancing significance where opportunities arise, while avoiding harm to genuinely historic elements.

4. Internal Alterations – Timber Stud Wall

Concern: Partial loss of a timber stud wall has not been justified.

Response:

The timber stud wall in question has been assessed as part of the internal fabric review. It is considered to be:

- Of **secondary significance**, likely associated with later reconfiguration rather than the earliest phase of the building;
- Not critical to the understanding of the building's original plan form.

The partial removal is required to:

- Enable **improved spatial arrangement and circulation**;
- Facilitate integration with the proposed extension;
- Support the **continued viable use of the building as a family dwelling**.

Where alteration is proposed:

- The extent of removal is **minimised as far as practicable**;
- The wall will be **recorded prior to intervention**;
- Remaining fabric will be **retained and incorporated** into the revised layout where feasible.
- Reinstatement of the previously removed section of partition will match the original in materials and detail.

As such, the impact is limited and results in **no more than less than substantial harm**, which is justified by the functional and conservation benefits of the scheme.

Conclusion

The proposals have been carefully developed in response to conservation concerns and are underpinned by a **heritage-led design approach**.

- The **scale and form** of the extension are demonstrably subservient;
- The **plan form and connections** represent the least harmful viable solution;
- The **window strategy** is justified and results in enhancement;
- The **internal alterations** are limited, necessary, and appropriately mitigated.

Overall, any identified harm is **less than substantial** and is clearly outweighed by the benefits of:

- Securing the building's **optimum viable use**;
- Enhancing its **architectural coherence**;
- Supporting its **long-term conservation**.

The proposals are therefore considered to comply with relevant heritage policy and guidance.

<u>Neighbouring properties</u>

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 3 properties, on site and in the press.

The overall consultation period expired on 23 March 2026.

No representations have been received from neighbouring properties.

Luddesdown Parish Council and the Local Ward Councillors were also consulted and no responses were received.

Officer's Analysis

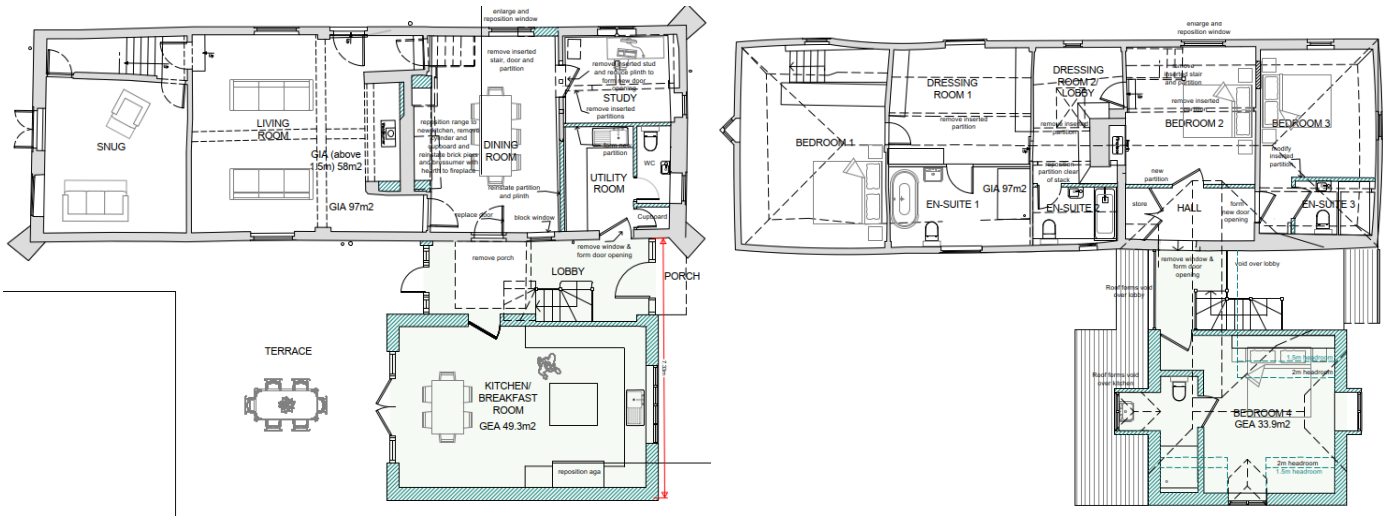
<u>Proposal</u>

This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of a porch and the erection of a two storey rear extension plus internal alterations to include structural alterations to link the new extension, internal reordering to the ground and first floor, new and replacement windows and associated hard landscaping.

During the application process, the submitted plans have been revised in order to address consultee comments. The revised plans have reduced the scale of the extension and amended internal alterations and the windows on the front elevation.

The proposed two storey extension will be on the rear (east) elevation to the northern end of the house. It will project 7.3m to the rear, including a 2m link, which will contain a lobby leading from the existing house to a new kitchen/breakfast room on the ground floor and a staircase leading to a bedroom and ensuite on the first floor:

Proposed ground and first floor plans:



Proposed elevations:

As set out in the Design Statement, internally, the proposed alterations are as follows:

Ground Floor

- Remove porch and door opening. Board over adjacent window opening from both sides with a slight recess to retain the notion of its existence. Enlarge window to proposed utility room to form a new door opening.
- Removal of circa C19th/ possibly C20th stair, cupboard and aga range with flue and formation of fireplace to the dining room.
- Reinstatement of framed partition and plinth to separate the proposed utility room.
- New door opening to the study.
- Reposition window to the west of the dining room.

First Floor

- Removal and adjustment of modern partitions and the stair to the first floor.
- Reposition all bathrooms to the east side and remove wastes and soil/vent stacks from the principal elevation.
- New door opening to connect the extension.
- Repositioning of the west window centrally to proposed bedroom 2.

Windows

- Replace windows to the principal elevation to the west with traditional hardwood frames with metal casements with diamond pattern leaded lights.
- The remainder of the windows will be replaced with new timber frames with timber casements and through glazing bars all to match the original detail but with 14mm sealed double glazed slimline units as per the submitted joinery details.

- The new windows in the extension would also match this pattern and material but with double glazing to modern Building Regulations requirements.

Main Issues

The site is located in the countryside in the Kent Downs National Landscape and in the Green Belt. It is also located in the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area. The main dwelling, Boughurst Farm, is Grade II listed.

The main issues for consideration with this proposal are as follows:

- Principle of development in the Green Belt
- Impact on the landscape character of the surrounding area
- Impact on the main listed building and curtilage listed building on the site.

Due to the location of the property away from neighbouring residential dwellings, as well as the ample and unaffected parking space at the property, matters relating to residential amenity and parking and highways impacts are not considered to be a concern.

Principle of Development

Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2014 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 the Core Strategy 2014.

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 (paragraph 142 of the NPPF 2024). Paragraph 153 of the NPPF 2024 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.

Local Planning Authorities should regard development as inappropriate in the Green Belt, unless certain exceptions apply (paragraph 154 of the NPPF 2024). In the case of this proposal, which relates to an extension to the main dwelling, the following paragraph 154 exception is applicable:

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;

Saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan 1994 relates to extensions to dwellings in the countryside and generally seeks to maintain the open character of the Green Belt and retain a stock of rural dwellings of modest size. In relation to this proposal, criterion (ii) is relevant, which states that 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. Criteria (v) and (vi) are also relevant:

(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.

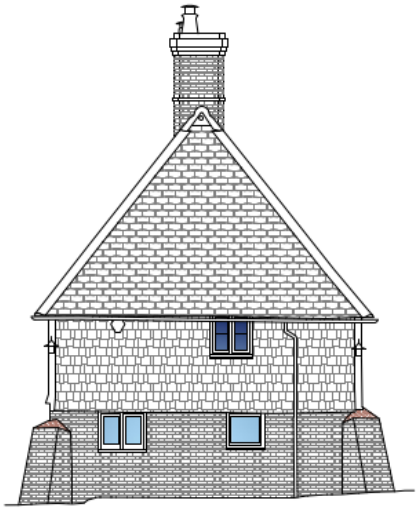
"Original dwelling" for the purpose of Policy C13 means the building in permanent residential use at 1st July 1948. In this case, the original property has not been extended since it was built, as can be seen from the above planning history. Turning to the matter of the impact of the proposed extension in this location in the

Green Belt, it clearly increases the size of the original building:

	Existing dwelling	**Existing dwelling plus proposed extension (minus removed porch 4m²)**	**Increase over existing (%)**
Gross external floor area (m²)	226 m²	317 (>91) m² (313 (>87)) m²	38 %

The current proposed 38% increase in the floor area of the existing dwelling is over the one third limit set out in Policy C13 and would increase the mass of the dwelling from the side:

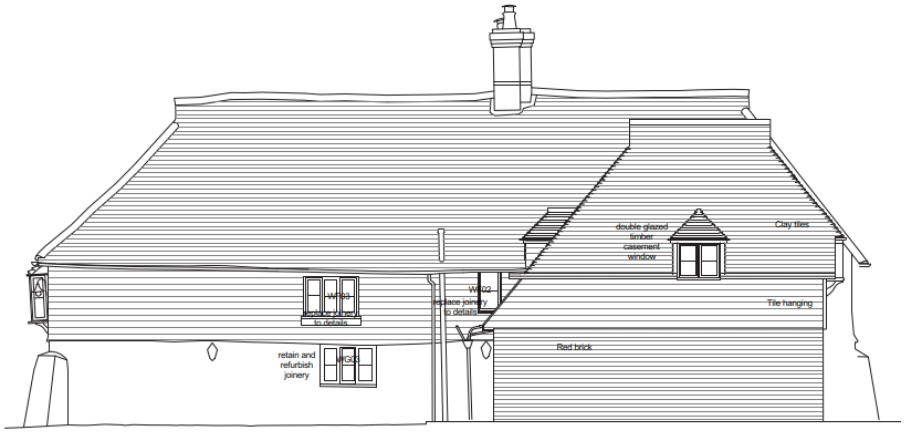
Existing north elevation:



Proposed north elevation:

However, it must be recognised that the house has not had any previous extensions and due to the location of the proposed extension to the rear and northern end of the house, which will keep the principal elevation intact, and the fact that it will be separated by a subordinate link and lower ridge, a 38% increase in floor area is not considered to be significantly over the extension limit, and therefore is not considered a disproportionate addition.

Proposed east elevation:



Modelled view:

On this basis, the proposed extension would comply with the requirements of saved Policy C13 of the Local Plan 1994 and would not result in a disproportionate addition, which would mean the proposal is not inappropriate in the Green Belt and would comply with paragraph 154c of the NPPF 2024.

Landscape Character

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy reflects these aims and requires that new development is well-designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Paragraph 187 of the NPPF 2024 aims for development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The site lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape. Reflective of paragraph 189 of the NPPF 2024, Policy SD2 of the Management Plan 2021-2026 recognises the need to conserve and enhance the local character, qualities, distinctiveness and natural resources of the National Landscape. Principle SD8 seeks to ensure that proposals do not negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the area.

The application site is also located in the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area and as such, Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014 is also relevant. This policy states that the overall landscape character of the Borough will be conserved, restored and enhanced and that the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (GLCA) will be taken into account in determining applications.

In relation to the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area, the GLCA states the area is defined by undulating topography with arable farmland and pasture, irregular field patterns, fields divided by native hedgerows and areas of native woodland that all contribute to the rural character of the area. The condition of the landscape is generally good, its sensitivity high. The guidelines for the area focus on maintaining the character of sparse and distinctive built development and conserve small-scale farmsteads.

The site is fairly open at the front with post and rail fencing and open gates alongside established trees, though Boughhurst Farm is set well back from the road. As the proposed extension would be at the rear of the main dwelling, it would not be visible from the front of the site, and it would not enclose the site or restrict views in any way.

Current Google Earth Aerial Image:

Photo of Site Frontage:

Overall, the impact from a public vantage point would be limited and very localised. Whilst there would be additional built development on the site, the proposed rear extension would not represent a significant change in the overall character and appearance of the site and would not significantly impact on the surrounding Landscape Character Area or be intrusive within the National Landscape setting.

Overall, the proposed extension would conserve the rural landscape context of this site within the National Landscape and Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area. As such, the proposal would comply with the requirements of the aforementioned landscape policies.

Design and Impact on Listed Building

The NPPF 2024 places great significance on the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets, and on new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 203). This is echoed in Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, which states that the significance of the Borough's heritage assets and their setting should always be preserved or enhanced. Saved Policy TC2 of the Local Plan 1994 sets out that for development involving affecting the setting of listed buildings, the primary consideration is the maintenance of the integrity of the original listed building. Proposals must be sympathetic in terms of their massing, scale, appearance and materials.

The main house, 'Boughurst Farm' is a Grade II Listed Building.

The proposed extension is generally well designed with the use of high-quality matching materials. Such a design approach would be traditional and in keeping with the character and appearance of the Listed Building.

The application is supported by a Design, Access and Heritage Statement and Window Schedule. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) have commented on the submissions and raised concerns about the initial and revised schemes. They acknowledge that the roof profile has been amended in response to their initial comments but consider this change does not sufficiently reduce the overbearing scale of the proposed extension, and their principal concerns remain:

• Scale and dominance: The extension remains overly prominent and insufficiently subservient to the 15th-century hall house.
• Plan form and access: The proposed first-floor connection from the proposed extension results in unnecessary bulk; retaining the 19th-century stair would avoid unnecessary loss of historic fabric.
• Windows: Relocation and replacement of windows would result in avoidable loss of historic fabric and harm to historic character, with no supporting justification.
• Internal alterations: Partial loss of a timber stud wall is proposed without explanation for the resulting harm.

The Council's Conservation Officer has specifically considered the concerns raised by SPAB and commented as follows:

Scale and Dominance
The proposed extension was revised following pre-application feedback and again through the planning application process to ensure it reads as a clearly subordinate addition to the historic farmhouse.

The following design measures have been incorporated to reduce scale and dominance:
- Reduced overall dimensions: The footprint, ridge height, and bulk of the extension have been reduced from earlier iterations.
- Lower ridge and eaves line: The extension sits noticeably below the main house, ensuring the original building remains visually dominant.
- Set-back and rear siting: The extension is located to the east (rear), avoiding impact on the principal (west) elevation and key views.

- Subservient form and detailing: The use of a catslide roof form and stepped massing reinforces the appearance of a secondary, ancillary structure.

To further clarify this relationship, the extension represents a modest proportional increase in built form and remains visually recessive in both immediate and wider views. Its positioning and reduced scale ensure that the historic plan form and architectural hierarchy of the farmhouse are preserved.

It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with the requirement for extensions to listed buildings to remain subservient in scale, form, and visual impact.

Plan Form and Access – First Floor Connection
The first-floor connection has been carefully designed to minimise both physical and visual impact:
- The link is formed through areas of lesser historic significance, avoiding primary historic fabric.
- The upper floor accommodation is partially contained within the roof space, reducing perceived mass.
- The connecting element is intentionally lightweight in form, with a reduced footprint and limited visual presence.
- The inclusion of a first-floor connection is necessary to provide functional and coherent circulation, ensuring the building can operate effectively as a single dwelling. Alternative options were considered, including:
  - A purely ground-floor link, which would have resulted in more extensive intervention at ground level;
  - A detached or semi-detached arrangement, which would compromise usability and long-term viability.

The chosen approach therefore represents the least harmful and most practical solution, balancing functional requirements with conservation principles.

Plan Form and Access – 19th Century Stair
The existing stair is understood to be a 19th-century insertion, rather than part of the original phase of the building. While it contributes to the building's historic evolution, it is not considered to be of the highest significance when compared to earlier fabric.

The proposed reconfiguration necessitates its removal in order to:
- Achieve a coherent and efficient circulation layout;
- Facilitate a viable relationship between existing and proposed spaces;
- Avoid more extensive interventions elsewhere in the building.

The following mitigation measures are proposed:
- Full photographic and measured recording prior to removal;
- Salvage and reuse of materials where practicable within the development;
- Retain the outline of the staircase in the ground floor ceiling joist arrangement.

On balance, the removal of the stair results in less than substantial harm, which is outweighed by the public benefit of securing the building's optimum viable use and long-term conservation

Windows – Relocation and Replacement
A detailed review of the existing windows has been undertaken, confirming that:
- A number of windows are later replacements of limited heritage value;
- Only a small number of openings retain early or historically significant fabric.

The proposals follow a clear conservation-led approach:

Replacement
- Windows identified as modern or unsympathetic are proposed to be replaced with traditionally detailed timber joinery, incorporating appropriate glazing bar patterns and proportions.
- This will result in a net enhancement of the building's character, restoring a more historically appropriate appearance.

Relocation
- The limited number of relocated openings relate to later alterations, not original fabric.
- Their repositioning:
  - Improves internal functionality;
  - Rationalises the elevation composition;
  - Does not harm the legibility of the building's historic development.
  -

The proposals therefore represent a proportionate and justified intervention, consistent with the principle of enhancing significance where opportunities arise, while avoiding harm to genuinely historic elements.

Internal Alterations – Timber Stud Wall
The timber stud wall in question has been assessed as part of the internal fabric review. It is considered to be:
- Of secondary significance, likely associated with later reconfiguration rather than the earliest phase of the building;
- Not critical to the understanding of the building's original plan form.

The partial removal is required to:
- Enable improved spatial arrangement and circulation;
- Facilitate integration with the proposed extension;
- Support the continued viable use of the building as a family dwelling.

Where alteration is proposed:
- The extent of removal is minimised as far as practicable;
- The wall will be recorded prior to intervention;
- Remaining fabric will be retained and incorporated into the revised layout where feasible;
- Reinstatement of the previously removed section of partition will match the original in materials and detail.

Conclusion
On the basis of the revisions to the scheme, the impact is limited and results in no more than less than substantial harm to the listed building, which is justified by the functional and conservation benefits of the scheme.

The proposals have been carefully developed and justified in response to conservation concerns and are underpinned by a heritage-led design approach:
- The scale and form of the extension are demonstrably subservient;
- The plan form and connections represent the least harmful viable solution;
- The window strategy is justified and results in enhancement;
- The internal alterations are limited, necessary, and appropriately mitigated.

Overall, any identified harm is less than substantial and is clearly outweighed by the benefits of securing the building's optimum viable use, enhancing its architectural coherence and supporting its long-term conservation. The proposals are therefore considered to comply with relevant heritage policy and guidance, including paragraphs 203, 207, 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF 2024.

Conditions are recommended to include details of materials, joinery, windows, structural openings, partitions, roof construction, making good and repair and rainwater goods, as well as recording and protection of historic fabric and salvage and reuse of materials.

<u>Any Other Material Planning Considerations</u>

Archaeology

Saved Policy TC7 of the Local Plan 1994 states that development on important archaeological sites will not

normally be permitted.

KCC Heritage has confirmed Boughurst Farm is a Grade II listed 2-storey detached dwelling with a C15th core, which has historically been extended to the north and altered over its lifetime.

The proposed extension has the potential to impact upon archaeological features associated with the earliest phases of use of the building and surrounding area.

The application is supported by a thorough and helpful heritage statement (James Clague Architects, dated Deccember 2025) and this has recorded and interpreted the structural elements of the building, illustrating the potential requirement for further Historic Building recording works. A watching brief condition is therefore required.

On this basis, the proposal complies with the relevant requirements of saved Policy TC7 of the Local Plan 1994, Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and Section 16 of the NPPF 2024.

Biodiversity

The NPPF 2024 at paragraph 187 states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects this stance and states that there will be no net loss of biodiversity in the Borough, and opportunities to enhance, restore, re-create and maintain habitats will be sought. Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy also seeks to protect sites designated for their biodiversity value based on their level of importance and enhance, restore, recreate and maintain habitats particularly within Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, which is a designation of this site.

The development is located within the curtilage of a residential property. The application submissions include a tree survey and report, a Preliminary Roost Assessment and a Bat Survey and Mitigation Strategy.

The arboricultural impact of the proposed scheme is low as all trees are to be retained, and ground protection and protective fencing will be installed and erected as necessary.

With regard to the Roost Assessment and Bat Survey, Kent County Council’s Biodiversity Officer is satisfied that the proposed bat mitigation is appropriate and that the favourable conservation status can be met. Natural England must issue a European Protected Species licence, and no works can commence until this happens.

Conditions are recommended relating to bat mitigation and sensitive lighting.

As this is a householder application, it is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

Conclusion

Whilst the proposed extension is generous, overall its size is not considered to be a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling, and it would not therefore be an inappropriate development in the Green Belt. Furthermore, the proposal would conserve the rural landscape context of this site within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Luddesdown Downs Landscape Character Area and would protect the integrity of the original Grade II Listed Building by securing its optimum viable use and supporting its long-term conservation. Archaeology and biodiversity matters are also acceptable subject to further details.

As such, the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policies CS02, CS12, CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, saved Policies TC2, TC7 and C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and paragraphs 131, 135, 154, 187, 189, 192, 203, 207, 210 212, 213 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

Recommendation

Permission with conditions.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Katherine Parkin	**Team Leader:**	**Richard Hart**
Signed:	K. Parkin	**Signed:**	***R Hart***
Dated:	25 March 2026	**Dated:**	**26th March 2026**