



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20220264

Location: 13A Bull Lane Higham Rochester Kent

Description: REVISED DESCRIPTION Demolition of Chimney stack, Enlargement of the rear dormer and construction of a glass balustrade across the existing front Juliet balcony.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Paul Markides

Site Visit Date: 5th May 2022

Submitted Documents/Plans

- Application Form;
- Revised Drawing No: 617-HPP-01 (Site Location Map, Existing/Proposed Block Plans)
- Revised Drawing No: 617-HPP-02 (Existing Plans/Elevations)
- Revised Drawing No: 617-HPP-03 (Proposed Plans/Elevations)

Superseded Plans

- ~~• Site Location Map Received 14/03/2022;~~
- ~~• Drawing No: 617-HPP-02 (Existing Plans/Elevations) Received 14/03/2022;~~
- ~~• Drawing No: 617-HPP-03 (Proposed Plans/Elevations) Received 14/03/2022;~~
- ~~• Drawing No: 617-HPP-01 (Existing/Proposed Block Plans) Received 14/03/2022;~~

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Outcome	Decision Date
20160805	Single storey rear extension with a depth of 5.0 metres, a maximum height of 3.20 metres and eaves height of 2.19 metres.	Prior Approval Granted	25.10.2016
19620377	erection of terrace of four houses with garages	Permitted	28.01.1963

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- 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 for Dwellings in the Countryside

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 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)
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2000)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

North Kent Marshes Internal Drainage Board

The site is within the drainage district of the North Kent Marshes Internal Drainage Board; however, the development does not impact on the Board's interests or fall within its remit. As such, the Board has no comments to make at this time.

Dickens Protection Society

In the Society's view the existing dormers are subservient in roof slopes and have an acceptable impact. The proposed changes would make them dominant in a terrace environment to the detriment of the street scene. The introduction of a balcony could result in overlooking.

A further response was provided for the revised plans which states:

The Society notes the submission of revised plans. It is also noted that the size of the proposed front dormer has been reduced. There remains a question of possible overlooking from the enlarged rear dormer.

Higham Parish Council

"Higham Parish Council object to the enlargement of the existing dormer on the front roof slope as this would not be in keeping with the neighbouring properties."

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by way of site notice and letters to two surrounding properties. The consultation period for the original proposal expired on 15th April 2022 and four objections were received.

The main points raised in the objection were:

- Plans are not an accurate depiction of what is on site and excludes the large front porch
- North elevations are incorrect on existing and proposed elevations and do not show large flue pipe
- 3D view need correcting
- French doors opening in front elevation not correctly shown and safety barrier is currently not in place
- Proposed second floor balcony is in conflict with the style of the roof dormers of the three other town houses in the terrace and will look out of place
- Nuisance to neighbours arising from use of balcony by way of noise pollution
- Privacy of adjoining neighbours will be compromised due to the view from the balcony into their front bedrooms
- Front porch does not have planning consent and is not included in the plan, its appearance is clumsy and in conflict with the 60's style of the town houses in the terrace
- Loss of privacy to bedrooms, addition of privacy screens would block light to bedrooms and affect lines of sight
- Extension and balcony will mean loss of light for as much as half of the day, rear extension will block light to back garden
- Impact on views
- Change of use to the bedroom as a socialising area as opposed to a bedroom will result in noise emanating from the balcony
- Out of character and not in keeping with neighbouring properties.
- Existing plans are inaccurate and fears that proposed plans could be similarly flawed and prove even worse than currently imagined
- Proposed materials do not match existing
- Plans are misleading
- No Juliet balcony shown on existing/proposed southern elevation which is dangerous

The applicant has since revised the plans and the application was advertised again by way of site notice and letters to four surrounding properties. The consultation period expired on 07/04/2023 and objection was received. The main points raised in the objection were:

- Incorrect Description as the description is based on an earlier withdrawn application
- Objections are raised to the first withdrawn proposal but no objections to current proposal if it only relates to rear dormer extension and provision of a glass safety barrier to the front of the property.

Analysis

Principle of Development

Green Belt

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. 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 their permanence.

Para. 147 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 states that 'Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.'

Para. 148 states '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.'

Para. 149(c) states 'A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are extension or alterations of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;

Policy C13 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994 states that extensions to dwellings in the countryside will be considered on their merits and lists a number of criteria. One of which is that there will be an overall limit of 1/3 of the gross floor area of the original dwelling.

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 cumulatively have a detrimental effect.

Given the criteria in the NPPF and LPFR (1994), google earth images indicate that the main part of the dwelling was erected around 1960. The site was granted prior approval consent for a single storey rear extension in 2016 which is now in place.



Details of the original dwelling, extended dwelling and the proposed dwelling are listed below;

Original dwelling floor area

Ground floor – 47 sq.m;

First floor – 47 sq.m

Second Floor - 35

Original total = 129 sq.m

Extended dwelling floor area

Ground floor – 70 sq.m

First floor – 47 sq.m

Second Floor - 35
Extended total = 152 sq.m

Proposed dwelling floor area

Ground floor – 70 sq.m
First floor – 47 sq.m
Second Floor – 41 sq.m
Proposed total = 158 sq.m

Total floor space increase over original dwelling (158-129)/129x100 = 22%

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 the increase is within the one third limit and satisfies the requirements of Policy C13 (LPFR).

The proposed development complies with the exceptions set out in Para. 149 (c) of the NPPF (2021), and Policy CS02 (LPCS).

Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

Having determined that the proposal is an appropriate development in the Green Belt, it is necessary to assess the effect on the openness and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. The NPPF (2021) 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.

The proposed extension would not result in any harms to the greenbelt as it is a dormer extension. As a result, it is considered that the proposal does not result in any material harm to the openness of the Green Belt or represent encroachment into the countryside.

Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy CS02 (LPCS) and Section 13 of the NPPF (2021).

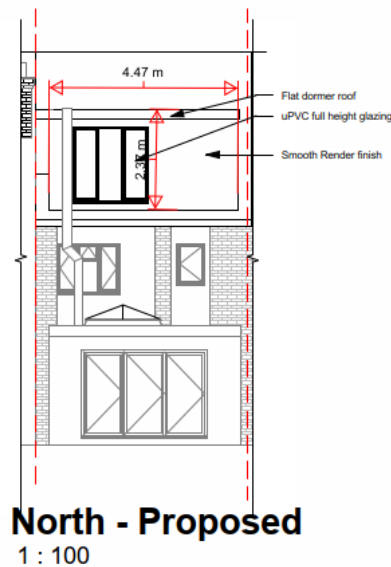
Background

The proposal was initially submitted in 2022 however due to neighbouring objections and inconsistencies in the plans the agent was invited to revise the proposal. The proposal was then readvertised to neighbouring properties and based on the new plans there were not any significant objections raised.

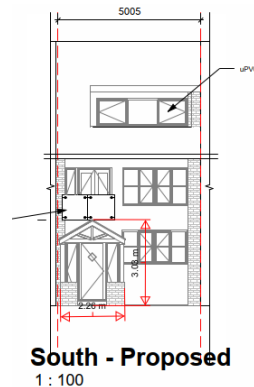
Proposal

The revised proposal seeks the enlargement of the existing rear dormer and subsequent demolition of the chimney stack and a glass balustrade across existing front Juliet balcony.

The rear dormer will have depth of approx. 2.9m and a height of approx. 2.4m and a width of approx. 4.4m, giving the dormer a total volume of 15.3m³. The dormer will be finished with a flat roof and include a floor to ceiling window to serve the bedroom and a smooth render finish.



In the front elevation a glass balustrade will be installed as a safety measure, as the current Juliet balcony doors have no safety barrier.



Character and Appearance

The application site is a mid-terrace house in use as a single family dwelling situated within the parish of Higham in an area designated as greenbelt. The property has been extended to the rear by way of a single storey extension and there is a large open porch to the front.

The proposal seeks an extension to the existing to the rear dormer and will include a large floor to ceiling window to serve the bedroom. The rear dormer is an original part of the property, the adjoining properties also have rear dormers which are larger in width, however it is not near whether these were extended or whether these were original.



The end property in this row of terraces has clearly extended their dormer so the principle of development to the roof is not uncharacteristic in this area. Giving the modest scale of the extension the rear dormer is not considered harmful to the character or appearance of the property and is deemed an acceptable addition.



The dormer will be set within the roof slope and set back from the eaves and below the main ridge, this is a positive form of design and is considered compliant with the requirements of CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and SPD4 Householder Alterations and Extensions Guidance (2021).

The installation of the glass balustrade is more of a safety feature, the neighbouring properties have metal railings across their existing Juliet balconies which are an original design feature across the terrace. The proposed glass balustrade compliments the host building and is deemed acceptable and compliant with CS19 Local Plan Core Strategy 2014.

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The proposal will reduce the number of bedrooms from 4 to 3 and so there are no concerns relating to amenity space in terms of garden space. The proposed bedroom is approx. 25m² internally which is generous for a bedroom.

The proposal is therefore compliant with the requirements of SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020) and safeguards the amenity of future occupiers.

Neighbouring Amenity

The proposed installation of the Juliet balcony is not likely to result in any harm in terms of loss of light outlook or privacy to adjoining occupiers.

The rear dormer is not liable to harm light or outlook to neighbouring properties due to its position being within the roof slope. In terms of privacy, the dormer is not liable to result in any harm to neighbouring privacy, whilst it is acknowledged there will be larger windows in a larger dormer the impact would not be considerably increased to a point where refusal is warranted.

The proposal is therefore considered to adequately safeguard neighbouring privacy.

Parking and Highways

The proposal will not impact any existing parking arrangements and there is a reduction to the number of bedrooms within the property and so there are no concerns in this regard.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Impact on the landscape - In addition to being within the Green Belt, the application site is located within the Higham Arable Farmlands Character Area, as set out in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment document.

Policy CS12 of the Gravesham's Local Plan Core Strategy Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) seeks to protect the Green infrastructure within the Borough and states at 5.7.26 that the overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced.

It is considered that this development would not be detrimental to the Higham Arable Farmlands Character Area and would not impact on the wider rural landscape.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal has been fully considered and permission is recommended.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Sharon Sahota	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	3 rd May 2023	Dated:	3rd May 2023