



Delegated Report

Householder Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20231286

Location: Gracy Lodge Valley Lane Meopham Gravesend

Description: Alterations and increase in height to roof, including rear dormer and removal of chimney stack. Erection of a double storey front porch and roof light windows to front and rear roof slopes.

Applicant: Mr G Heard

Site Visit Date: 11/01/2024

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form;
Drawing no. 01 – Plans & Elevations As Existing;
Drawing no. 02 – Plans & Elevations As Proposed;
Drawing no. 03 – Site Location Plan;
Drawing no. 04 – Block Plan As Existing;
Drawing no. 05 – Block Plan As Proposed; and
Design & Access Statement.

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20130087	Application for non-material amendment to planning permission reference number 20111027 relating to alterations to velux windows, two additional velux windows and one additional window in flank elevation.	Permitted	08.02.2013
20120484	Application for approval of conditions 3, 4, 5 and 6 attached to planning permission reference number 20111027 relating to the external facing materials, landscaping scheme, slab levels and refuse storage area.	Approval of Details	08.06.2012
20111027	Erection of a detached four bedroom chalet bungalow.	Permitted	23.02.2012

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

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

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2023) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 13 - Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space standard (2015);
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006);
- Householder Extensions/Alterations Design Guide (2021); and
- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Meopham Parish Council

No objection.

Neighbouring properties

3 surrounding properties were consulted plus site notice – overall consultation expiry date was 02.02.2024 - no responses received.

Officer's Analysis

Gracy Lodge is a detached single storey dwelling on the eastern side of Valley Lane near to its junction with Ridge Lane. The site is in the Green Belt and in the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area. The house is faced with yellow bricks and a tiled roof which is of hipped roof design. To the front of the dwelling is a detached double garage.

The proposed development is for alterations and increase in height to roof, including rear dormer and removal of chimney stack. Erection of a double storey front porch and roof light windows to front and rear roof slopes.

Whether or not inappropriate development in the Green Belt

The Government attaches great importance to Green Belt. Paragraph 152 of the NPPF (2023) states that

inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very specific circumstances, while Paragraph 154 indicates that, other than for listed exceptions, the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate. One exception, provided for by Paragraph 154(c), is “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”; the NPPF (2023) does not define the extent of additions which may or should be considered disproportionate.

Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) sets out that extensions will be considered on their merits but will expect a number of criteria to be satisfied. Saved Policy C13 (LPFR) long pre-dates the introduction of current national Green Belt policy as set out in the NPPF (2023) and in referring to the size of the “original dwelling” rather than the “original building” it might in some cases be more restrictive than the NPPF (2023). Among other things, saved Policy C13 sets a total size limit for extensions of one third of the floor area of the original dwelling (measured externally), “unless the increased floorspace has no overall effect on the existing bulk and appearance of the dwelling”, so provides a local interpretation of a “disproportionate addition”. It also requires the appearance, massing, scale and form and materials of any extension to be appropriate to the existing dwelling and the Green Belt setting. 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 due weight.

Policy CS02 (LPCS) sets out the Council’s strategic approach to the Green Belt, stating that development outside settlements “will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt”

In this case the original building is as it was permitted under planning permission reference 20111027 for erection of a detached four bedroom chalet bungalow.

	Original Dwelling	Proposed Extended Dwelling	% increase above original
Internal Floorspace Area	161.9	185.9	14.8

As can be seen from the above, the internal floorspace would be well within the one third limit of saved Policy CS13 (LPFR).

Floorspace is just one calculation which can be used to assess whether a development is a disproportionate addition, other such measures include footprint, volume etc.

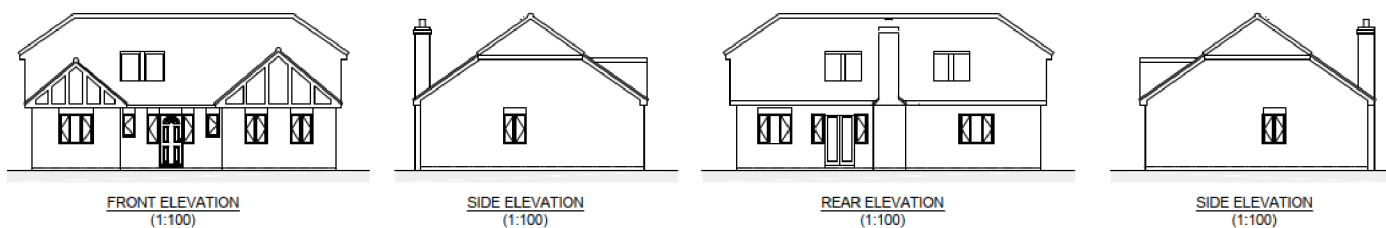
In respect of footprint, the proposed development would mostly be built above the existing dwelling as it relates to extension and alteration of the roof. There would be a front extension for a two storey porch. The calculations are:

	Existing Dwelling	Proposed Dwelling	% increase above original
Footprint	102.3	108	5

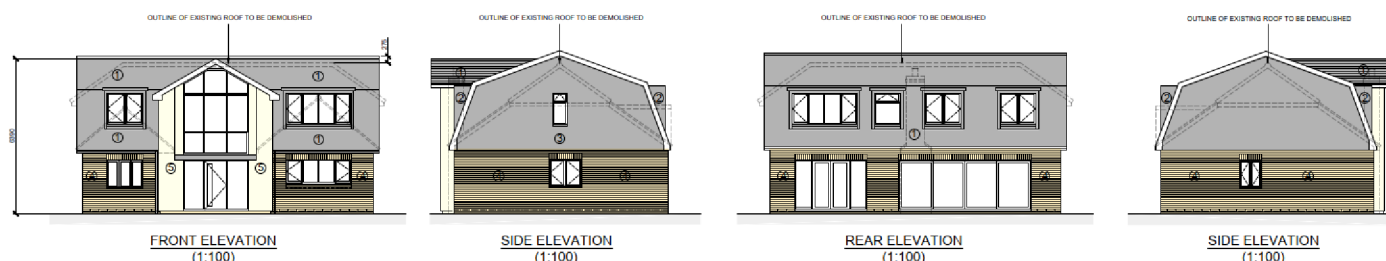
As can be seen, the footprint increase would be very modest.

In terms of volume below is the existing and proposed dwelling;

Existing dwelling:



Proposed dwelling:



As can be seen the proposed alterations to the roof would increase its size but the increase in the height of the dwelling would only be 200mm (existing is 6.2m high and the proposed dwelling would be 6.4m). The gambrel roof design instead of the existing half hipped roof would increase the massing of the roof but it is not considered overly bulky. The dormers at the rear are modest in size and sit down from the ridge, up from the eaves and in from the sides of the roof. The dwelling would still remain as a bungalow (albeit chalet style). The two storey front addition is modest in depth and its ridgeline would be under the ridgeline of the existing host dwelling.

In respect of an assessment of floorspace, footprint and volume as well as scale, bulk, massing and design, it is considered the proposed development would not result in a disproportionate addition over and above the original building. Consequently, it would fall within the exception described in paragraph 154(c) of the NPPF (2023), and would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. By definition, it would not be harmful to the Green Belt. The development would therefore be compliant with saved Policy C13 (LPFR) and Policy CS02 (LPCS).

Impact on openness of the Green Belt

A fundamental aim of Green Belt policy, set out Paragraph 142 of the (LPF (2023) is to keep land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. In considering the effects of the proposed development. Openness can be taken to mean the absence of development and has both a spatial and visual aspect. The baseline must be what currently exists on the site.

As has been set out above, there would only be a very modest increase in the footprint of the dwelling with the two storey front extension. The rest of the proposal relates to alteration and enlargement of the roof including dormers. However, as set out above, although the proposal would increase the massing of the roof the height of the dwelling would only be a very minor increase. From the front the dwelling would only really appear as if it was changing from a half hipped dwelling to a full hipped dwelling. The increase in mass from the gambrel roof design is would not lead to a significant increase in the bulk of the roof. As stated, the dormers are subservient within the rear roof slope. Overall it is considered that there would be no harm caused to the openness of the Green Belt.

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (LPCS) states that the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. The NPPF (2023) sets out that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and

development process should achieve and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

The front extension although two storey is very modest in depth and as it would infill the existing set back on the front and would therefore only project from the main front elevation of the dwelling by 400mm. The ridgeline would be set down from the main ridgeline of the dwelling. Overall, the front extension is considered a subservient addition. The very slight increase in the height of the dwelling is modest and the change from a hipped roof design to a gambrel roof design is considered acceptable. Valley Lane is made up of a number of different styles of dwellings and there is no uniform design; the gambrel roof design would therefore not appear out of keeping. The dormer extensions in the rear are subservient, being set down from the ridge, up from the eaves and in from the sides. In summary the proposal is considered of acceptable design and in respect of design, character and appearance the proposal is considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Landscape Character

The application site is located in the Harvel Wooded Downs Landscape Character Area and as such, Policy CS12 (LPCS) is 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 will be taken into account in determining applications.

The area the site is located is rural in character with detached dwellings set in regular plots. The modest front extension and alterations and extension of the roof would not lead to any significant increase in the prominence of the dwelling in the surrounding landscape. It is considered therefore that there would be no adverse impact on the landscape character. As such, the proposal would be compliant with Policy CS12 (LPCS) and section 15 of the NPPF (2023).

Amenity of occupiers

The dwelling is currently five bedrooms and as a result of the proposal would decrease to three bedrooms, therefore no increase in bedrooms. There would also be no change to the existing garden area. As such the property would retain a garden area and rear garden depth in accordance with SPG2 (2020).

In terms of bedrooms:

Bedroom 1 – 16.3 sq. m

Bedroom 2 – 13.2 sq. m

Bedroom 3 – 13.2 sq. m

All bedrooms would exceed the minimum size for a double bedroom as set out in the Technical Housing Standards (2015) which is 11.5 sq. m.

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

Neighbouring Amenity

Due to the distance of the neighbouring dwellings – some 7m to the flank elevation of Bullfinch Lodge, 17m to the flank elevation of Glencoe, 38m to the front elevation of Gzira and 42m to the flank elevation of Cherry Drive and the scale of the proposed development, it is considered there would be no harmful impact on any of these neighbouring properties with regards overshadowing or loss of outlook. There is a window proposed in the south flank elevation at first floor level which would serve an en-suite; with a distance of some 17m to the flank wall of Glencoe this would exceed the 11m minimum privacy distance therefore no overlooking to Glencoe. No first floor level windows in the north flank elevation are proposed. The distance of the dormer to the flank elevation of Cherry Drive at some 40 plus metres would ensure no overlooking to that property. Similarly with the distance from the glazed porch to the front of Gzira of some 38m there would be no overlooking. In respect of neighbouring amenity the proposal is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Parking and highway safety

The proposal would decrease the number of bedrooms at the property from five to three and would not affect existing parking. Therefore, in respect of parking and highway safety the proposal would be compliant with saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

There is a similar approval which has been granted in Valley Lane at La Clef under application ref. 20210784 in respect of the roof alterations.

Conclusion & Recommendation

The proposal is considered to not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would not impact on openness, would be acceptable in respect of design, character and appearance, landscape character, occupier and neighbouring amenity and parking and highway safety.

Recommendation: Permission

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Ms Rebecca Harrison	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	6th February 2024	Dated:	07 February 2024