
SUMMARY REPORT

Application Ref:	20211473
Site Address:	Green Hedges The Street Cobham Gravesend
Application Description:	Partial demolition of existing single storey rear extension. Erection of new single storey rear extension incorporating a new roof, erection of a porch to the side of the dwelling, first floor bathroom window adjustments and internal alterations.
Applicant:	Mr Tony Rice
Agent:	Mr Felix Lewis, Felix Lewis Architects Ltd
Ward:	Shorne, Cobham & Luddesdown
Parish:	Cobham
Decision due date:	10 February 2022
Publicity expiry date:	28 January 2022
Decision Level:	Planning Committee – Wednesday 2 nd February 2022
Reason for referral:	Applicant is a Member of the Council
Recommendation:	Permission

Summary of Reasons for Recommendation

The proposal is for the partial demolition of an existing single storey rear extension, and the erection of a new single storey rear extension incorporating a new roof, erection of a porch to the side of the dwelling, first floor bathroom window adjustments and internal alterations.

The proposed development is not considered to have an adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties, nor on the heritage assets in close proximity to the site, or on the adjacent highway network and surrounding landscape. The design of the proposed development is also deemed acceptable. On this basis, the proposed development is deemed to comply with local and national policy, subject to the planning conditions set out in this report and permission is recommended.

MAIN REPORT

1. Proposal and Site Description

- 1.1 The proposal is for the partial demolition of an existing single storey rear extension, and the erection of a new single storey rear extension incorporating a new roof, erection of a porch to the side of the dwelling, first floor bathroom window adjustments and internal alterations.

- 1.2 The application site at Green Hedges, The Street is a detached two storey dwelling set in a large plot. The property benefits from a detached garage to the side/rear and extensive driveway for more than two vehicles.
- 1.3 The application site is located in the Green Belt, in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Cobham Conservation Area and in the Ashenbank and Cobham Parkland 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.
- 1.4 To the north of application site is a mixture of open fields and woods which are within the Green Belt and AONB.

2. Relevant Planning History

2.1 The relevant planning history is as follows;

Application Ref. No.	Description	Status	Date
19980074	Demolition of the coal store and shed and detached garage.	Permission	26.03.1998
19980026	Erection of single storey rear extensions to form dining room and lobby/store, involving the demolition of existing coal store; erection of detached double garage with attached coal store; alterations to front dormer windows from continuous flat roof to form separate pitched roofs and alterations to rear dormer window from existing flat roof to pitched roof.	Permission	11.03.1998
19920257	Application for Conservation Area consent for the demolition of the existing outhouse on the north-east elevation in connection with the erection of a replacement extension.	Permission	05.06.1992
19920256	Demolition of the existing outhouse and erection of a replacement single storey extension on the north-east elevation to form porch with an access ramp and steps and construction of a bay window on the north-west elevation.	Permission	05.06.1992
19881094	Erection of single storey extension on the south- east elevation to form a conservatory.	Permission	13.12.1988

3. Planning Policy, Development Plan and other Material Considerations

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

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

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

- C13 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Countryside
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- Section 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG2 - Residential layout guidelines including Housing Standards Policy Statement October 2015 Adopted 1996 – amended June 2020;
- SPG 4 - KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- Cobham Conservation Area Appraisal (2017)
- Management Plan Rural Conservation Areas Appraisals (2016)
- Kent Downs AONB Management Plan 2021-2026; and
- Technical Housing Standards: Nationally Described Space Standards (2015).

4. Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Publicity

- 4.1 Letters were sent to 6 surrounding properties, a site notice displayed on site and press notice published with an overall expiry date of 28th January 2022. No comments have been received thus far.

Consultees

- 4.2 No comments have been received pertaining to this proposed development, consultees consulted included Kent Downs AONB Management Unit and Cobham Parish Council.

5. Service Manager Planning Comments

Background

- 5.1 From the planning history, planning permission was granted in 1988 for the erection of single storey extension on the south-east elevation to form a conservatory (Ref. 19881094) and in 1992 planning permission was given for the demolition of the existing outhouse and erection of a replacement single storey extension on the north-east elevation to form a porch with an access ramp and steps, and construction of a bay window on the north-west elevation (Ref. 19920256). It would appear from the submitted plans, that these permission were implemented in full and are still in situ, with the exception of the access ramp and steps.
- 5.2 In 1998, planning permission was granted for the erection of single storey rear extensions to form a dining room and lobby/store, involving the demolition of existing coal store; erection of detached double garage with attached coal store; alterations to front dormer windows from continuous flat roof to form separate pitched roofs and alterations to rear dormer window from existing flat roof to pitched roof (Ref. 19980026). From the submitted plans, together with the supporting Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement, it is evident that this permission was not implemented in its entirety and only the replacement garage and coal store were constructed.
- 5.3 The remaining elements of the permission (19980026) , whilst given in 1998, could still be implemented as the condition of time within the decision notice (condition 1), has been met by the garage and coal store being constructed. However, in terms of the proposed development, it would be difficult to construct this together with the remaining elements of the planning permission granted under 19980026. Therefore, in terms of assessing this current application, it will only be assessed against the development that has already occurred at the site.
- 5.4 The main issues in consideration of this application is whether;
- the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and, if inappropriate its effect on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land with it;
 - the proposal would impact on adjoining properties;
 - the proposal would impact the living conditions of future occupiers
 - the proposal would result in any parking and highway safety issues;
 - the proposal would adversely impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); and
 - the proposal would adversely impact on the landscape character of the site.

The appropriateness of the development within the Green Belt

- 5.4 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 148 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.
- 5.5 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. At paragraph 138 the NPPF (2021) 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.

- 5.6 The NPPF (2021) makes it clear that new buildings in the Green Belt should be regarded as inappropriate, with a small number of exceptions (paragraph 149). 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.
- 5.7 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).
- 5.8 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 (2021), the weight attached to the policy must be considered carefully; with greater weight being given where the approach is consistent with paragraph 149 the NPPF (2021).
- 5.9 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 (2021) and should be afforded weight.
- 5.11 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.
- 5.12 As highlighted in the planning history and within the Background section above, the existing dwelling in this case has previously been extended in terms of the conservatory to the side and the single storey rear extension.

Original dwelling

Ground Floor 86.78m²

First Floor 86.78m²

Roofspace (unknown)

Total floor space: 173.56m²

Current Property (as extended)

Ground Floor Extensions: 19.18m²

Current property total floor space: **192.74m²**

Total floor space increase over original dwelling **11.05%**

Proposed Extension (increase over the existing)

Ground Floor: 4.7m²

Total floor space proposed: **197.44m²**

Total floor space increase over original dwelling **2.7%**

Total increase in floor space, including previously approved extension, over original dwelling **13.75%**

- 5.12 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.
- 5.13 In this case the increased floorspace does not exceed the one third limit and therefore is within the parameters set by Policy C13 (LPFR).
- 5.14 The proposed porch would not result in an increase of internal habitable space and would only marginally increase the external footprint of the dwelling. In terms of the existing and proposed single storey extensions, cumulatively, these would result in an 13.75% increase of the original property, and would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- 5.16 In summary the proposed development is considered to fall within the exception set out in Para. 149 (c) of the NPPF, and therefore complies with Policy CS02 (LPCS).

Impact on openness and the purposes of the Green Belt

- 5.17 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.
- 5.18 The proposed porch and extension to the existing rear extension would not be highly visible from the surrounding area and would not project further to the rear or side than the existing built form. As a result, it is considered that the proposal does not result in any further material harm to the openness of the Green Belt and or represent encroachment into the countryside.
- 5.19 Therefore, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy CS02 (LPCS) and Section 13 of the NPPF (2021).

Character and appearance

- 5.21 The application property is located along The Street and is set approximately 9.8m from the front boundary with extensive soft landscaping surrounding the property, it is noted that there is no uniformity of property design within the local area. Due to the landscaping on site, the majority of the views of the property are obscured. The proposed porch and rear extension have been designed well and respect the hip roof of the host property and would not significantly differ from the existing rear extension. The proposed materials have been chosen to match the existing materials, as such it is considered that the impact of the proposed extension on the streetscene is minimal. Overall it is considered that the

extension and dormers are modest additions to the dwelling that would not detract or result in a detrimental impact on the host property.

Existing North East Elevation

Proposed North East Elevation



5.22 Taking account of all the above, it is considered that the proposal would accord with Policies CS02 and CS19 and Section 12 of the NPPF (2021).

Impact on the Heritage assets

5.23 The application site is within the Cobham Conservation Area and is it not considered that the modest extension to the dwelling will have a detrimental impact on the character or setting of the Conservation Area. The property itself is not adjacent to any listed buildings, whilst there a number in close proximity to the site, the proposed development will not harm the setting of these heritage assets.

5.24 As such the proposed development complies with Policies CS19 and CS20 (LPCS) and saved Policy TC3 of the Local Plan First Review (LPFR) and Section 16 of the NPPF (2021).

Impact on Landscape

5.25 Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) 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 AONB and its setting.

5.29 The application site is located within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and in the Ashenbank and Cobham Parkland Landscape Character Area. The topography is slightly undulating with a strong presence of man made landform. The area is characterised by two large areas of dense ancient woodland, traditional village centre, typical of north Kent landscape. The condition is good and the guidelines are to conserve and reinforce.

5.30 Due to the nature of this proposal there will 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 (2021).

Impact on future occupiers

5.23 The revised NPPF (2021) 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

- 5.24 The impact on neighbouring properties is considered 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.
- 5.25 Given the separation distance between properties and the scale of the proposal, it is considered the proposal would not result in loss of light, privacy, outlook and increased overshadowing. As such the development is in accordance with Policy CS19 (LPCS) in respect of the living conditions for neighbouring properties.

Parking and Highways

- 5.26 The application site benefits from a substantial size drive-way and existing garage with vehicle access to the west of the dwelling and the proposal would not result in any impact on the parking provision of the property.
- 5.27 In respect of parking and highway safety, the proposal is considered to accord with Policy CS11 (LPCS) and Saved Policy P3 (LPFR).

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposal is a sustainable form of development that accords with local and national planning policy including policies pertaining to Green Belt, heritage assets, Landscape Character and design. The application is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

The recommendation is for the application to be GRANTED Planning Permission, subject to the following conditions:

Time Limit

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted.

Reason In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Approved Plans

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Planning Application Form received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)001 Rev 0 – Existing Location & Block Plans received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)001B Rev 0 – Proposed Block Plan received 16th December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)002 Rev 0 – Existing Site Plan received 1st December 2021;

Drawing No. 321(GA)003 Rev 0 – Proposed Site Plan received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)010 Rev 0 – Existing Ground Floor Plan received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)013 Rev 0 – Existing Roof Plan received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)015 Rev 0 – Existing South West Elevation received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)16 Rev 0 – Existing North East Elevation received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)017 Rev 0 – Existing S.West & N.West Elevation received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)018 Rev 0 – Existing Sections received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)020 Rev 0 – Proposed Ground Floor Plan received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)023 Rev 0 – Proposed Roof Plan received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)025 Rev 0 – Proposed South West Elevation received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)026 Rev 0 – Proposed North Elevation received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)027 Rev 0 – Proposed S.East & N.West Elevation received 1st December 2021;
Drawing No. 321(GA)028 Rev 0 – Proposed Sections received 1st December 2021; and
Design, Access & Heritage Statement received 1st December 2021.

Reason For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Materials

3. Notwithstanding the details included on the application form and approved plans the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the development hereby permitted shall match those used in the existing dwelling.

Reason To maintain the character and appearance of the building and to ensure a satisfactory visual relationship between the existing and new development in accordance with adopted Policies CS12, CS19 & CS20 Gravesham Local Plan: Core Strategy (September 2014).

INFORMATIVES:-

DEVIATION FROM APPROVED PLANS

BUILDING REGULATIONS AND PARTY WALL ACT

STATEMENT OF POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE APPROACH TO DECISION- TAKING