

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/24/2101	Case Officer:	Katherine Williams
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Proposed two storey front extension with storm porch at ground floor level.		
Site:	Springfield, Rashes Farm, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 4PR,		
Validation Date	6 Dec 2024	Overall Expiry Date:	10 Jan 2025
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Refusal	Recommendation Date:	28 Jan 2025
Target Date:	31 Jan 2025	Recommending Officer Signature:	Katherine Williams

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
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Signed and Agreed By:	Steven King	Date:	29 Jan 2025
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/24/2101

Springfield, Rashes Farm, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 4PR
Proposed two storey front extension with storm porch at ground floor level.
Mr Rick Verbeeten

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received

SUMMARY OF CONSULTEES

Conservation Officer - Objection

Ecologist - No objection, recommend conditions

Flood Risk and Drainage Team - No objection

PARISH COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No comment

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for a two storey front extension with storm porch at ground floor level.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

TH/024/97 - Conversion of former dairy buildings to a dwellinghouse and garage, including the provision of a new small link building; re-siting of covered cattle yard building and the construction of a new tractor shed along with remedial improvements to the existing access road at its junction with Selsfield Road, together with the formation of three new passing bays. Granted

12/03501/FUL - Extension to main dwelling to provide utility room and rear porch. New garage and garden equipment store. Conversion of old granary building to form annex living. Accommodation for dependant relative, together with covered link to main dwelling. Granted

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application property consists of a detached two storey annexe building associated with the adjacent dwellinghouse, Springfield, and is located off the eastern side of Selsfield Road, outside the built up area boundary of Turners Hill. The property is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and within the countryside.

The property is located at the end of a private extended access road which is shared by surrounding residential properties. This access road has a verdant character with boundary hedging on either side which leads to dwellings of traditional forms and designs, which contributes to the rural character of the area. The application property originally consisted of a farmyard used in association to the adjacent Rashes Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building and has subsequently been converted to a dwellinghouse and ancillary buildings. The dwellinghouse of Springfield has a single storey form with an adjacent garage building and two storey annexe which creates an enclosed courtyard with the main garden to the south and west. The gated entrance to the courtyard is adjacent to Rashes Farmhouse, which gives views of the listed building on the approach to the property with an existing visual relationship between the properties

The annexe building has a simple linear form with a narrow depth, which reflects its previous agricultural use and appearance. The building is located adjacent to the gated entrance to the property with visibility with Rashes Farmhouse. The building is constructed in brick, plain roof tiles and white fenestration.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposed extension would have a width and depth of 3.295 metres and 3.315 metres with pitched roof within would have an overall height of some 5.7 metres and an eaves height to match the existing building. The extension would appear as a suspended first floor extension with an open porch below to serve the existing front door. The proposal would be constructed in hanging tiles and timber beams, with roof tiles and fenestration to match the existing building.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF POLICIES

Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocation DPD and Turners Hill Neighbourhood Plan.

National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance) does not form part of the development plan, but is an important material consideration.

Mid Sussex District Plan

The District Plan was adopted at Full Council on 28th March 2018.

Relevant policies:

DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
DP16 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DP26 - Character and Design
DP34 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP38 - Biodiversity
DP41 - Flood Risk and Drainage

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

There are no relevant policies.

Turners Hill Neighbourhood Plan (made March 2016)

THP7 - Building Extensions and Infill Development
THP8 - Countryside Protection

Other Legislation

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Consultation Draft

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024. There are unresolved objections to the majority of

Policies in the draft District Plan and as such, only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPS1 - Climate Change
DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction
DPS4 - Flood Risk and Drainage
DPN1 - Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
DPC1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DPB1 - Character and Design
DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

National Planning Policy Guidance

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the main issues that need to be considered in the determination of this application are as follows;

- Design and Impact on the Non-Designated Heritage Asset and Setting of the Listed Building
- Impact on the AONB
- Impact on neighbouring properties
- Biodiversity
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Other Matters

Design and Impact on the Non-Designated Heritage Asset and Setting of the Listed Building

S.66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

Policy DP34 of the District Plan is relevant and states:

'Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- *A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;*
- *Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;*
- *Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- *Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a*

- prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;
- Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;
- Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.

Other Heritage Assets

Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.

The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District. Significance can be defined as the special interest of a heritage asset, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

Proposals affecting such heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and current Government guidance.'

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

'All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:

- *is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
- *contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- *creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- *protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- *protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- *does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP27);*
- *creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- *incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- *take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- *optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.'*

Paras 205, 212-216 of the NPPF state:

'205. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the

asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

213. 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. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

Principle DG11 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states: 'Heritage assets and historic landscapes should be celebrated, enhanced and preserved where appropriate, for the enjoyment of existing and future residents. Where appropriate and providing it does not cause harm to the heritage assets or their setting, they should be carefully integrated into development proposals as they help to reinforce a sense of place and local identity.'

Elsewhere new development should generally reflect the scale of adjacent areas and the settlement context within which it is located to deliver a coherent and consistent urban fabric. There may be potential to introduce a new character / development form and massing:

- On larger urban extensions; this will typically be within the middle of the site and associated with a new neighbourhood centre, spine road or the main open space.
- In town centre locations defined as coarse grain areas and nearby sites identified on the brownfield sites register.'

Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide states: 'Extensions should typically use simple, uncomplicated building forms to compliment and coordinate with the scale, form and massing of the original dwelling. The design approach may benefit from coordinating with the existing pattern of window and door openings as well as employing facing materials to match those of the existing dwelling. Otherwise it should demonstrate the appropriateness of the alternative approach.'

Principle DG50 relates to front extensions and states: 'Front extensions are more likely to be acceptable where the building line is staggered or where the dwelling is set well back from the road. They are less likely to be acceptable in streets with a strong consistent building form as they risk disrupting the underlying order. Where front extensions are considered acceptable, they should normally be limited to a modest single storey or porch-type extension that reflect the character of the existing property.'

The Council's Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and has provided the following initial comments:

'Firstly I would note that no Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application- given the location within the setting of Rashes Farm, this would be a validation requirement. A statement should be provided based on the staged approach to assessment set out in the relevant Historic England guidance GPA Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets'. The comments below may be subject to revision based on the contents of the Heritage Statement, when received.

The application site is a converted farm building within a courtyard forming part of the historic farmstead of Rashes Farm. The farmstead, which includes a Grade II listed 18th century farmhouse situated just to the north, is in a rural location outside Turners Hill. The building affected by the application is to the western side of the farmyard, and from its appearance and a brief historical map regression exercise is likely to date from the 19th century. The angular building forming the southern side of the yard, which has a front projection along the eastern side of the yard from its northeastern corner, and a rear projection to its southwestern corner facing onto what may have been a second, southern yard, may date in part from the 19th or early 20th centuries, but appears to have been fairly extensively altered. The northeastern corner of the yard is defined by a modern garage building which replaced earlier buildings in this position. A further detached building some distance to the west along the entrance track from Selsfield Road appears to be a converted and extended former cart lodge also associated with Rashes Farm.

Based on the limited information in front of us I would consider it likely that Rashes Farmhouse would be considered to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex farmhouse of its period, altered and extended in response to changing socio-economic circumstances, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn. As such, both the surviving rural setting of the farmhouse, and the surviving former farmstead, which remains legible notwithstanding that some of the buildings have been altered or replaced, will make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and how this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values.

Again, based on the limited information available, it is in my opinion that the buildings within the former farmyard are unlikely to be regarded as curtilage listed. However, it is possible that at least some of them- including in particular the application property, which appears less altered- may be regarded as non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs), i.e. building of historical or architectural interest within the local context. These are issues which I would suggest could also usefully be addressed by the Heritage Statement.

The current proposal is for an extension to the front of the application property comprising a two storey projection with first floor accommodation set over an open sided porch. The addition is shown with a gabled tiled roof, tiled elevations at first floor, with timber posts to the porch below set on brick plinth walls. The addition appears intended to resemble a projecting 'hayloft' or similar, with 'hayloft' doors to the front elevation with a decorative 'winch' above.

In my opinion the proposal raises a number of concerns in terms of the impact on the character of the building (a possible NDHA) and the positive contribution which it makes to the setting of the listed building:

- The principle of an extension to the front of the building is likely to be considered contentious, given its characteristic flat fronted form and frontage onto the former farm courtyard, which historically appears to have been a largely open area, as you would expect, albeit that it would appear at some stages in its working life to have been subdivided into a number of smaller yards.*
- Notwithstanding the open sided nature of the proposed addition at ground floor, it is substantial in both height and depth and would appear unduly visually prominent in the context of the existing building, particularly given its position to the frontage. This will detract from the appearance of the building, including in views from the listed farmhouse and its immediate setting.*
- Although I appreciate that the intention of the design may be to imitate a traditional hayloft or similar, this pastiche design detracts from the original architecture of the building, and confuses its narrative. This detracts from both its significance as a potential NDHA and its contribution to the historic farmstead and the setting of Rashes Farmhouse.*

For these reasons, I would consider that the proposal detracts from the significance of the building as a potential NDHA, and from the positive contribution which it makes to the setting of Rashes Farmhouse. This will be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF, the further information provided by a Heritage Statement may be helpful in determining the level of harm caused, but I would expect this to fall within the less than substantial scale in terms of the impact through setting on Rashes Farmhouse, so that paragraph 208 will apply. In terms of the NDHA and paragraph 209 of the NPPF, the level of harm caused may be relatively high, to an asset of perhaps a mid level of significance in the local context, but again the findings of an appropriately detailed HS will be useful in providing a more specific assessment.'

A Heritage Statement was subsequently submitted for the application and the following additional comments have been received from the Conservation Officer:

'We have now received a Heritage Statement in support of the above application. Having read and considered this document, it does not alter my position in respect of the significance of the application site as an NDHA, the positive contribution which it currently makes to the setting of Rashes Farmhouse, or the adverse impact of the current proposal in these respects. The comments made previously on the merits of the proposal in heritage terms therefore remain pertinent.'

Please note that paragraph 208 of the NPPF is now renumbered as 215, and 209 as 216.'

The proposed extension would be positioned centrally within the northern-eastern front elevation of the building and would appear as a first floor overhang extension, due to the open porch on the ground floor, which would detract from the existing linear form of the building. The extension would be of a width and depth which would appear out of scale and dominant to the existing proportions of the building, and particularly the modest depth of the building. The extension has been designed to have an appearance of a hayloft, however due to the over scaled proportions of the extension it would fail to adequately reflect this traditional feature and would compound the out of keeping appearance of the extension.

Due to the above, the proposal is considered to cause harm to the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. With respect to paragraph 216, a balanced judgement is required with regards to the scale of the harm and the significance of the non-designated heritage asset. The proposal is considered to cause high level harm to an asset with a mid level of significance in the local context.

The building forms part of the historic farmstead of Rashes Farm and associated with Rashes Farmhouse a Grade II listed 18th century farmhouse situated just to the north. The surviving rural setting of the farmhouse and surviving farmstead make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and how this is appreciated.

As stated above, the appearance and scale of the proposed extension is considered to be out of scale and dominant the existing front elevation of the building. The extension would also be seen in relation to the listed farmhouse and would detract from the significance of the listed building and the existing positive contribution the building it makes to the immediate setting of the Rashes Farmhouse.

In terms of the NPPF the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of the heritage asset, as set out in paragraph 215. It is not considered that there would be a public benefit from this domestic extension to an annexe building that would outweigh this harm.

It is therefore considered that the proposed extension would be out of keeping with the scale and form of the existing building and would dominate the front elevation of the building. This would also result in an unacceptable impact on non designated heritage asset and a detrimental impact on the setting of the listed building and therefore would be contrary to policies DP26 and DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the Mid Sussex Design Guide.

Impact on the AONB

The legal framework for AONBs, (also known as National Landscapes) in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CROW requires Local Planning Authorities to 'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of

the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CROW Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to 'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area' when discharging their functions in AONBs'. A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the AONB.

Mid Sussex District Plan policy DP16 states:

'Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;*
- the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;*
- character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and*
- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.*

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular'

Paragraphs 189 of the NPPF states that

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas'

A similar ethos is found within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan requiring proposals to conserve and enhance the AONB.

Given the design, form and scale of the proposal in relation to the existing property and materials within the locality it is considered that the proposal would not have an impact on the AONB and would conserve it.

Impact on neighbouring properties

DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to ensure that development *'does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);'*

The proposed extension would be located to the north-eastern side of the building facing onto the existing courtyard and parking area of Springfield. Due to this position, the proposal would be obscured from view from most of the neighbouring properties and would not cause harm to their amenities. The proposal would be visible from Rashes Farm House with a separation distance of some 24 metres between this neighbour and the proposed extension. Given this separation it is considered that the proposal would not cause harm to the amenities of this neighbour.

Impact on Biodiversity

Policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

'Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*
- Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and*
- Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and*
- Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and*
- Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.*

Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks.

Valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution.'

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states:

'When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

(a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

(b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons 67 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

(d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.'

The Council's Ecologist has been consulted on the application and has provided the following comments:

'We have reviewed the Bat Emergence Report (Libby Morris Ecologist, August 2024) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Libby Morris Ecologist, June 2024), supplied by the applicant, relating to the likely impacts of development on designated sites, protected & Priority species and habitats, and identification of proportionate mitigation and mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

We note that, during the emergence survey in July 2024, no bats were observed emerging from the roof of the main house within the area which will be impacted by the works and it is therefore concluded that there are no bat roosts in the property (Bat Emergence Report (Libby Morris Ecologist, August 2024)). We therefore agree that no further surveys for bats in main house are required. In addition, the site

comprises hardstanding with no trees on site (Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Libby Morris Ecologist, June 2024)), and we therefore agree that no surveys are required for bats and trees.

However, as the dwelling has potentially suitable bat roost features and bats are mobile species, we support the Non-licensed Precautionary Method Statement for bats in Section 4 of the Bat Emergence Report (Libby Morris Ecologist, August 2024)). This should be secured by a condition of any consent.

We are satisfied that there is sufficient ecological information available for determination. We have no objections on ecological matters excluding Great Crested Newt as we have been instructed to leave comments on this European Protected Species to the NatureSpace Partnership.

This provides certainty for the LPA of the likely impacts on protected and Priority species and, with appropriate mitigation measures secured, the development can be made acceptable.

The mitigation and enhancement measures identified in the Bat Emergence Report (Libby Morris Ecologist, August 2024) and Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Libby Morris Ecologist, June 2024), should be secured by a condition of any consent and implemented in full. This is necessary to conserve and enhance protected and Priority species.

We accept that this householder application is exempt from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain as advised in the Government Guidelines and as advised in the Application Form.

We also support the proposed reasonable biodiversity enhancements for protected species, which have been recommended to secure net gains for biodiversity, as outlined under Paragraph 180d of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023). The reasonable biodiversity enhancement measures should be outlined within a Biodiversity Enhancement Layout and should be secured by a condition of any consent.

This will enable the LPA to demonstrate its compliance with its statutory duties including its biodiversity duty under s40 NERC Act 2006 (as amended).

Impacts will be minimised such that the proposal is acceptable subject to the conditions below based on BS42020:2013. In terms of biodiversity net gain, the enhancements proposed will contribute to this aim.'

The Ecologist Consultant concluded that there is no biodiversity policy reason of refusal and recommended conditions. It is therefore considered that this proposal would also comply with the aims of policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. As a householder application this development is exempt from the requirement to provide biodiversity net gain.

Other Matters

The Flood Risk and Drainage Team has been consulted on the application. As no habitable accommodation is proposed at ground floor level and the proposal is outside any Environmental Agency modelled floor extent on the wider site, no objection is raised.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is considered that the proposal would not cause harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties, would conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB, would be acceptable in terms of biodiversity.

However, due to the form, position, appearance and scale the proposed extension would dominant and disproportionate to the existing building. The building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, the position and scale of the extension is considered to detract from the significance and

character of the building which would cause unacceptable harm. The extension would also detract from the setting of Rashes Farmhouse and the positive contribution to the special interest to the listed building. This is contrary to policies DP26 and DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

Decision: Refusal

Case Officer: Katherine Williams