

## **Design & Access and Planning Statement**

Oaklands Farm, Slaugham Lane, Haywards Heath, West  
Sussex RH17 5TJ



## Design & Access and Planning Statement

Resubmission for the previously approved owners/managers house.

Oaklands Farm, Slaugham Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 5TJ.



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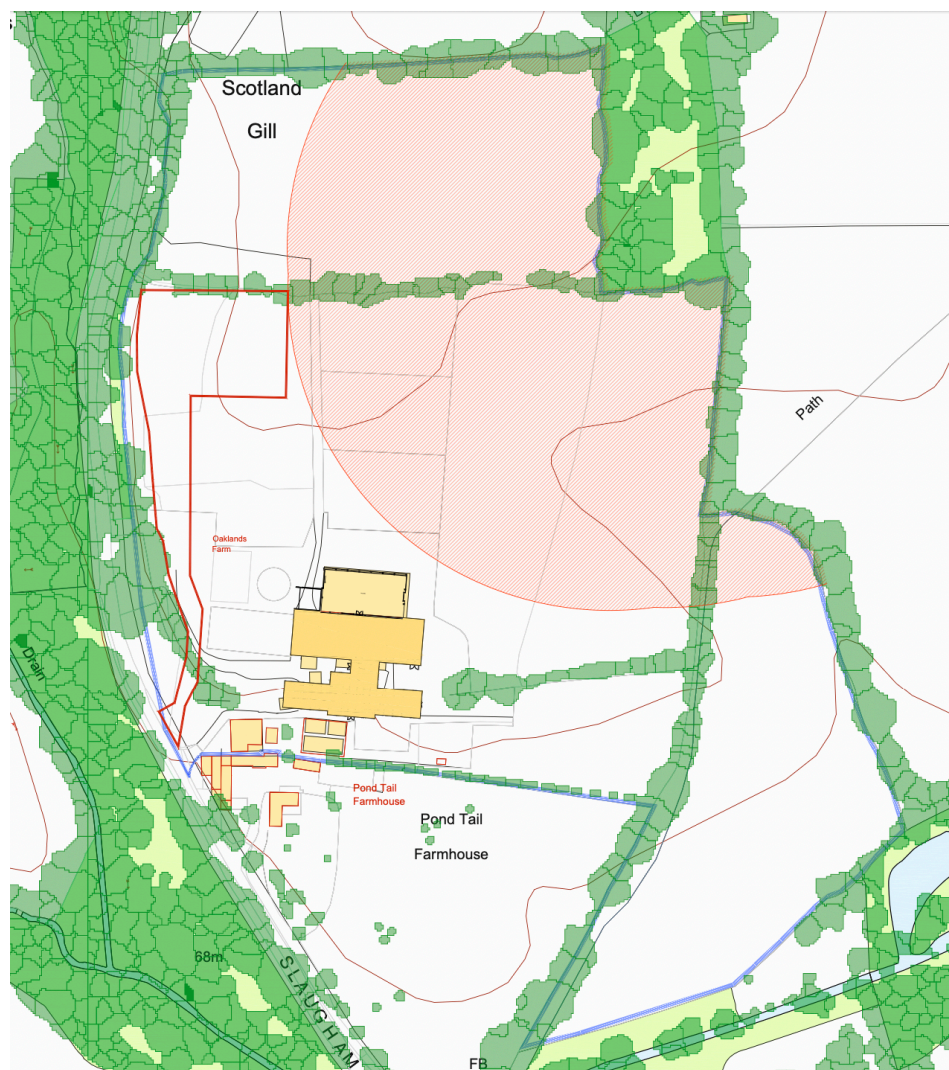
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of Fiona Bigwood, in respect of the submission of the planning application for a previously approved application (Ref. DM/21/0711 – *Re-Positioning and minor amendments to the owners/managers house, already permitted under planning application* (Ref. DM/18/2071).) for the re-siting and minor amendments to the previously approved owners/ managers house at Oaklands Farm, Slaugham Lane, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 5TJ.
- 1.1.2 The statement will firstly provide a description of the site and surrounding area. It will then go on to explain the current application proposal, detail the relevant planning history for the site and explore the planning, design and access considerations pertinent to it, in accordance with the relevant national and local guidance.
- 1.1.3 It will conclude that the principle of the owners/ managers house at this site has already been established but the application has lapsed. As previously assessed by the Council the proposals are in full accordance with the adopted development plan and other material planning considerations of relevance.



- 1.1.4 This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings submitted with the application.

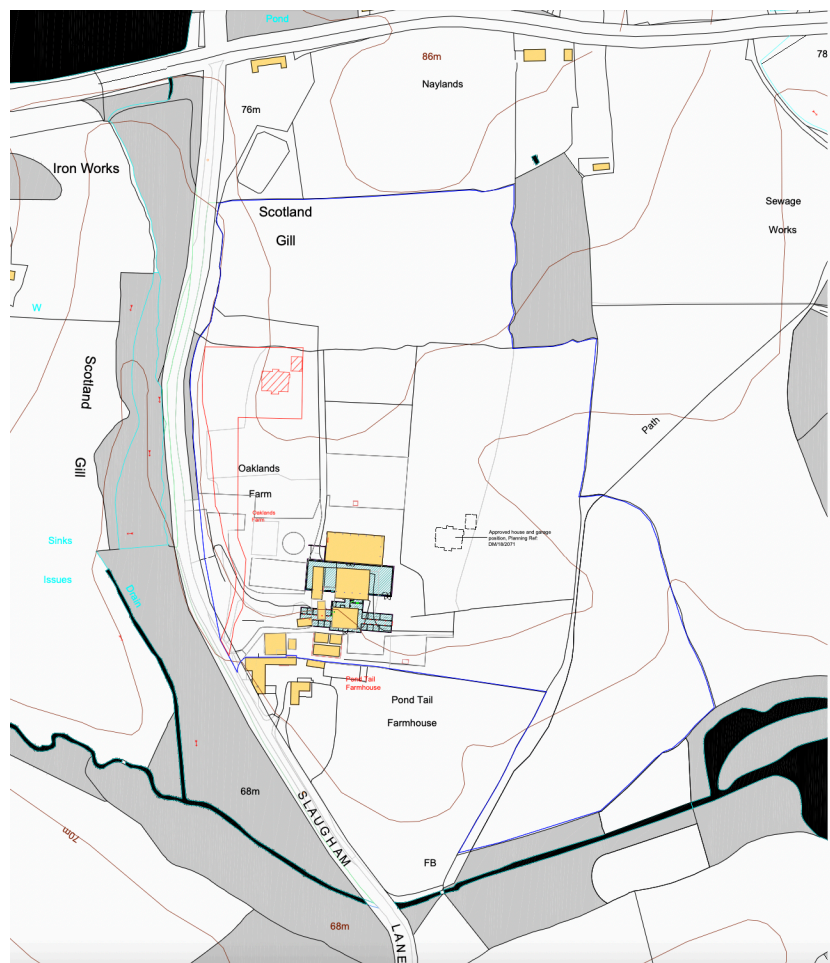
## 2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

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- 2.1.1 The Oaklands Farm site is located close to the village of Slaugham and is an equestrian land holding of around 32 hectares.
- 2.1.2 The site is situated approximately 1.7 miles from the village of Handcross, 1 mile from Warninglid village, and circa 6 miles south of Crawley town. The site is situated within the countryside and falls within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 2.1.3 The site has been used since 1989 as an equestrian property and a commercial livery yard. Various permissions have been granted on the site in the past relating to the expansion of equestrian facilities and use.
- 2.1.4 The site currently contains a collection of buildings associated with the equestrian use, including 24 stables, indoor riding arena, paddocks, horse walker, two mobile homes and several barns. There is also a chalet bungalow located to the north of the site entrance.
- 2.1.5 Vehicular access/egress to the site is currently taken from off Slaugham Lane which runs along the western boundary of the site.

### 3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1.1 This current application proposal is a resubmission of the previously approved owners/managers house at Oaklands Farm.
- 3.1.2 It follows approval of a previous planning application (Reference No: DM/18/2071) for the “Demolition of existing buildings, erection of replacement equestrian facilities for stud, conversion of existing barn for grooms accommodation and staff facilities and erection of owners/ managers house”. And a further application (Reference No: DM/21/0711) for the “Re-Positioning and minor amendments to the owners/managers house, already permitted under planning application (Ref. DM/18/2071)”. This application was approved by Mid Sussex District Council in April 2021 and therefore the principle of the owners/ managers house at this site has already been agreed and established with the Council. This application is the same as previously approved application Reference No: DM/21/0711 which has lapsed.
- 3.1.3 The accompanying ‘Location Plan as Proposed’ submitted with this application and extract of this plan reproduced below, shows the position of the approved owner’s/manager’s house and garage in Reference No: DM/18/2071, and the position previously approved as now required application Reference No: DM/21/0711 which is shown with a red hatched line.



- 3.1.4 The owners/ managers house will be located towards the west of the Oaklands Farm site and to the north of the circular horse walker.

- 3.1.5 The house would be two storey's in height and would comprise 4 bedrooms. It is also the intention to incorporate a basement for the house. The house would have a fairly traditional design with a pitched roof and feature entrance porch. A balcony is proposed at the rear of the house, which would be situated over a flat roofed projection.
- 3.1.6 Adjacent to the house, at its north-eastern corner, there would also be an associated detached garage with pitched roof.
- 3.1.7 Both the house and garage will have brick elevations and red tiled roofs so as to fit in with the surroundings. The proposed construction materials have not changed from the already permitted owners/ managers house at the site.

## 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

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4.1.1 The previous relevant planning history for the site is set out below:

- DM/21/0711 – Re-Positioning and minor amendments to the owners/managers house, already permitted under planning application (Ref. DM/18/2071) - Approved April 2021
- DM/19/3242 – Variation of condition no. 4 of application DM/18/2071, to replace approved plans to allow for changes in design. This related to a reduction in the size of the hay barn and muck heap attached to the rear of the indoor arena, together with a proposed roof for the muck heap. This also resulted in an altered footprint for the arena and stables, with a new rear horse access door in the north end of the arena - Approved February 2020
- DM/18/2071 – Demolish existing buildings, erection of replacement equestrian facilities for stud, conversion of existing barn for grooms accommodation and staff facilities, erection of owners/ managers house - Approved April 2019
- 14/01871/FUL – Erection of a single storey five bedroom house with a habitable attic space, as replacement to the existing 3 bedroom bungalow - Approved July 2014
- 06/00044/FUL – Extensions and alterations to existing chalet dwelling and revocation of extant Planning permission No SV/04/798/FUL for new dwelling - Approved February 2006
- 04/01117/FUL – Enclosed sand school building and exercise yard - Approved August 2004
- 04/00798/FUL – Replacement dwelling - Approved May 2004

## 5. PLANNING POLICY

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- 5.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires decisions on planning applications to be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.1.2 The adopted Development Plan in this instance comprises the:
- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, adopted March 2018;
  - Any relevant 'Saved' Policies from the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004; and
  - Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan, 2014-2031, 'made' September 2019.
- 5.1.3 Other material planning considerations include guidance set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in February 2019, guidance set out in the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024, and guidance set out in the High Weald AONB Housing Design Guide, November 2019.

### 5.2 Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

- 5.2.1 Mid Sussex District Council adopted the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 as a Development Plan Document in March 2018. Relevant policies with respect to this planning application include DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of Countryside), DP15 (New Homes in the Countryside), DP16 (High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), DP21 (Transport) and DP26 (Character and Design).

#### **DP12: Protection and enhancement of countryside**

- 5.2.2 The primary objective of the District Plan with respect to the countryside is to secure its protection by minimising the amount of land taken for development and preventing development that does not need to be located there. At the same time, it seeks to enhance the countryside, support the rural economy by accommodating well-deigned, appropriate new forms of development and changes in land use where a countryside location is required and where it does not adversely affect the rural environment.

#### **DP15: New Homes in the Countryside**

- 5.2.3 Policy DP15 of the adopted District Plan conforms with the National Planning Policy Framework, where it relates to the development of a sustainable rural economy (paragraph 55).

#### **DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

- 5.2.4 *'The National Planning Policy Framework gives great weight to the need to conserve the landscape and scenic beauty of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are also identified as important considerations. National policy also states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that they are in the public interest....'*

- 5.2.5 Significant consideration should be given to the conservation and enhancement of the locally distinctive features of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as defined by the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

**DP21: Transport**

- 5.2.6 Policy DP21 of the adopted District Plan deals with transport. It seeks to create sustainable communities and ease of access to local services and facilities. It also requires new development to not result in severe residual cumulative transport impacts.

**5.2.7 DP26: Character and Design**

- 5.2.8 Policy DP26 of the District Plan requires high quality in design, with new development that contributes positively to the private and public realm, protects valued landscapes and creates accessible environments. The specific wording of the policy is set out below:

**5.3 Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan 2014 - 2031**

- 5.3.1 The application site falls within the administrative boundary of Slaugham Parish Council and is therefore subject to the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan (SNP), 2014 - 2031. The plan has been prepared by Slaugham Parish Council and was 'made' in September 2019 and therefore forms part of the statutory development plan for the area.

- 5.3.2 The main aims of the SNP are to:

- Provide a framework for future development in the plan area.
- Protect the individual village identities.
- Enhance the facilities and recreational needs of each settlement.

- 5.3.3 A total of thirteen strategic objectives are set out within the SNP. Those of relevance to this proposal include the following:

- 5.3.4 Strategic objective 1: *"To preserve, protect and enhance the countryside including the High Weald AONB, open spaces, fields and hedgerows, ancient woodland in the Parish".*

- 5.3.5 Strategic objective 9: *"To ensure that new homes are energy efficient and are built to a high standard of design at a suitable density, using local materials".*

- 5.3.6 Strategic objective 11: *"To support existing and new business activity in the Parish, including those associated with the visitor and tourism sector, in appropriate locations".*

**5.4 National Planning Policy Framework**

- 5.4.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. As stated above, it is a material consideration to be taken into account when forming decisions on planning applications.

- 5.4.2 The core principles of the Framework refer to a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The three dimensions to sustainable development are economic, social and environmental. The three dimensions are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

- 5.4.3 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside, unless one or more of five criteria, can be met. Criterion (a) states that: *"There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside"*.
- 5.4.4 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states that: "Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe".
- 5.4.5 Paragraph 127 of the NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: "are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; and are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change".
- 5.4.6 Paragraph 172 of the NPPF states that: "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, 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".

## 5.5 The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024

- 5.5.1 The High Weald AONB Management Plan is the single most important document for the AONB. It sets out long term objectives for conserving this nationally important landscape and the local authorities' ambitions for how the High Weald will be looked after for the next 5 years.
- 5.5.2 The High Weald AONB is one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe. It is home to ancient woodland, wildlife and welcoming villages, sweeping views and a myriad of inter-connecting paths and tracks where you can walk in the footsteps of Anglo-Saxons. It is characterised by dispersed historic settlements of farmsteads and hamlets, and late Medieval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.
- 5.5.3 Three objectives are set out within the Management Plan with respect to 'Settlements' and these are as follows:
- 5.5.4 Objective S1: *"To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside"*.
- 5.5.5 Objective S2: *"To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement"*
- 5.5.6 Objective S3: *"To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design"*.

## 5.6 High Weald Housing Design Guide, November 2019

- 5.6.1 The High Weald AONB Partnership, including the 15 local planning authorities, have prepared a Design Guide for new housing development in the High Weald. This was published in November 2019 and is another material planning consideration to be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications for new housing within the AONB.
- 5.6.2 The Guide is aimed at all those involved in housing developments within the High Weald AONB including designers, developers and planning decision makers, so they can meet the requirements of the NPPF for well-designed places and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.
- 5.6.3 It gives clear, practical and consistent advice on design expectations for new housing development within the AONB. This will enable higher quality and landscape-led design that reflects intrinsic High Weald character and is embedded with a true sense of place, without stifling innovation and creativity.
- 5.6.4 Ten separate principles/ policies are set out within the design guide which cover the following three issues:
- Response to setting;
  - Placemaking principles; and
  - Detailed design.
- 5.6.5 The guide states that for development to reflect and enhance the character of the High Weald, it must be designed to integrate into its setting. In terms of context, rather than being a constraint, context should offer opportunities to retain and embed the character of the High Weald into a genuinely landscape-led design.

## 6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

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6.1.1 This section highlights why the development is considered suitable in policy terms and demonstrates why it should be supported by the Council when assessed against the adopted development plan and other material considerations.

6.1.2 The key planning matters affecting this application are as follows:

- Principle of development;
- Reason for the required re-siting of the house and its impact on neighbouring properties;
- Design considerations and visual impact on the AONB; and
- Access and highway safety.

6.1.3 Each issue is considered in turn below.

### 6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 As stated previously, this current planning application is a resubmission of Application Ref. DM/21/0711 for the *“Re-Positioning and minor amendments to the owners/managers house, already permitted under planning application (Ref. DM/18/2071).”* Which was approved April 2021, which followed a previous planning application (Reference No: DM/18/2071) which was approved by Mid Sussex District Council in April 2019.

6.2.2 This planning application comprised the demolition of existing buildings, erection of replacement equestrian facilities for stud, conversion of existing barn for grooms accommodation and staff facilities and the erection of an owners/ managers house.

6.2.3 In considering this previous planning application, the Planning Officer, within her delegated report, stated in her conclusion that: *“Following the receipt of amended plans, the replacement manager/ owners house is also considered to be acceptable. The Rural Appraisal Consultant has also confirmed that given the nature of the use there is a justified need for the owner/ manager to live on site and one additional groom”.*

6.2.4 Policy DP15 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states that provided that it would not be in conflict with Policy DP12 of the District Plan which deals with protection and enhancement of the countryside, new homes in the countryside will be permitted where special justification exists.

6.2.5 One such form of special justification is *“Where accommodation is essential to enable agricultural, forestry and certain other full time rural workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work”.*

6.2.6 This replicates national policy of the NPPF, where it is stated that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside, unless one or more of five criteria, can be met. Criterion (a) states that: *“There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside”.*

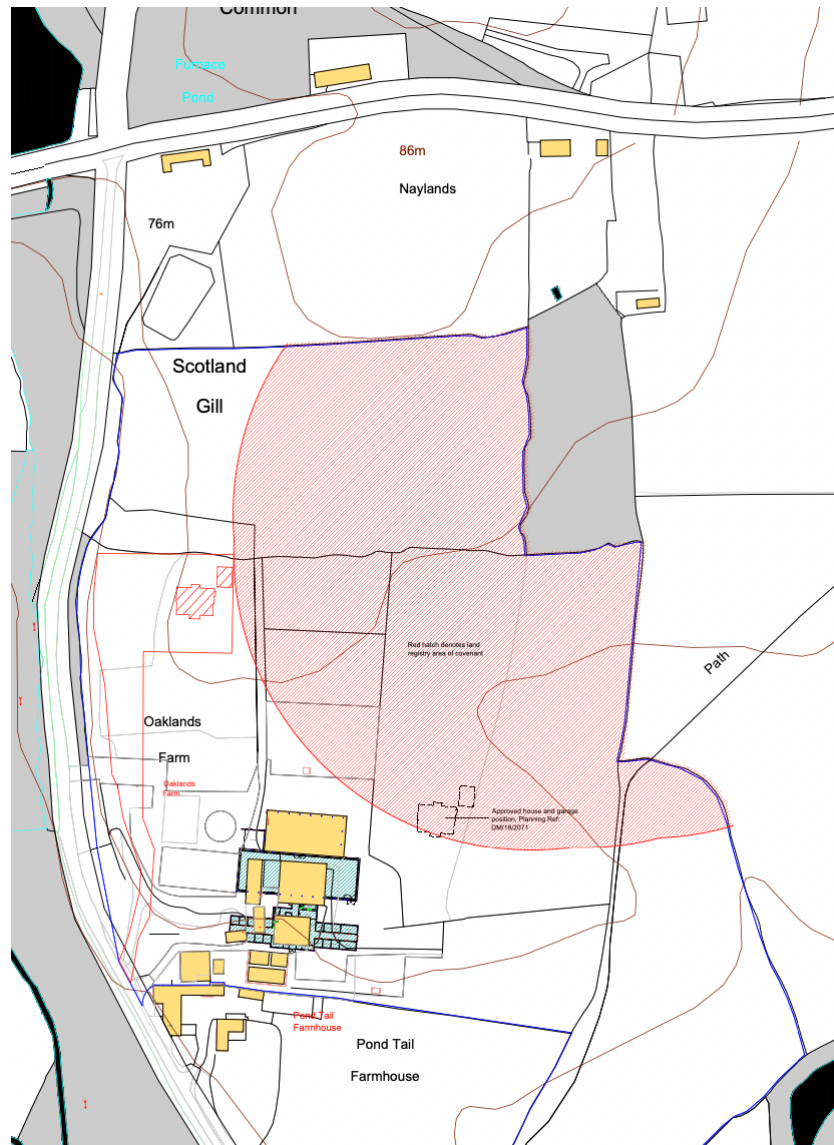
6.2.7 It is clear that it has already been agreed with the Council that special justification exists for this house which will accommodate the owner/ manager of this equestrian land holding. There

is a clear established functional need for the accommodation, with this information having already been provided to the Council with respect to the previously approved applications.

- 6.2.8 Thus, the principle of the owners/ managers house at this site has already been agreed and established with the Council and the current proposal is in full accordance with the requirements of Policies DP12 & DP15 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the NPPF.

#### Reason for the Required Re-Siting of the House and its Impact on Neighbouring Properties

- 6.2.9 The reasoning behind the required re-positioning of the owners/ managers house at the Oaklands Farm site is with respect to a restrictive covenant set out within the HM Land Registry, Title Number WSX67138.
- 6.2.10 Within this Register of Title it is stated at Paragraph C(2) *"Not to erect any buildings or plant within five hundred feet of any existing outside boundaries of Naylands"*.
- 6.2.11 'Naylands' is the existing residential property located beyond and to the far north-east of the Oaklands Farm site which has a frontage onto Staplefield Road.
- 6.2.12 As the position of the previously approved owners house, as shown on the previously approved Block Plan (Drawing No. G435 1.07), subject to planning application Reference No: DM/18/2071, would not have met the requirement set out within the Land Registry, then this has entailed the re-positioning of the house as now sought and approved under Ref. DM/21/0711.
- 6.2.13 As such, it is now the intention to position the owners house to the west of the Oaklands site, just outside the Land Registry area of covenant, as shown on George Baxter Associates Location Plan as Proposed (Reference No. G435 1.06 rev A) and Furse Landscape Architect's submitted Masterplan drawing (Reference No. AGM-OKL-ALT-001).



- 6.2.14 The owners house in its previously approved location, will be situated approximately 277 metres (908 feet) from the residential property of Naylands, and approximately 217 metres (712 feet) from the other existing residential property located to the far north of the proposed owners house and which again has a frontage with Staplefield Road. Thus, the owners house will be located a considerable distance away from both these residential properties and will now be situated outside the Land Registry Area of Covenant.
- 6.2.15 Furthermore, the proposed house will also be screened by the existing trees and vegetation which are located immediately to the north of the proposed house and which are intended to be retained as part of the proposals. In addition, new trees are intended to be planted to the north and east of the house which will all help to screen the house and soften its built form from distant views.
- 6.2.16 Thus, as the house will be sited a considerable distance away from both Naylands and the other residential property located to the north, and due to the existing and proposed trees and vegetation and new planting which will be situated to the north and east of the house, the proposal will not result in any detrimental harm to the amenity of Naylands or any of the other distant neighbours.

- 6.2.17 Therefore, the proposal is in full accordance with the requirements of Policy DP26 of the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan, the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and all other relevant material planning considerations.

### 6.3 Design Considerations and Visual Impact on the AONB

- 6.3.1 The design of the owners house is the same as was approved by Mid Sussex District Council in April 2021 under application Reference No: DM/21/0711 which has since lapsed.
- 6.3.2 It comprises a two storey, 4 bedroomed house of fairly traditional design with a pitched roof and feature entrance porch. A basement level will also be incorporated within the house. A balcony is proposed at the rear over a flat roofed projection. It will be constructed from brick and have a red tiled roof.
- 6.3.3 Adjacent to the house, at its north-eastern corner, there will also be an associated detached triple garage with pitched roof. This garage will also be constructed from brick and have a red tiled roof to match the house.
- 6.3.4 Within the Planning Officer's report for the previous application (reference no. DM/21/0711), it was also stated that: *"In this case it is considered that a house of the same design and similar size, albeit that the proposal now includes an increase in height of 0.58m, has been approved under the extant permission DM/18/2071 on the site. The impact on the AONB was considered to be acceptable when the earlier application was assessed."*
- 6.3.5 As the massing and design of the house as proposed, is the same as that which has already received planning permission, and which was previously considered acceptable in its rural setting and location within the AONB, then it should follow that this design for the house should also be considered acceptable.
- 6.3.6 The house would have the same internal layout with four bedrooms at first floor level and would be constructed using the same materials, as previously approved. The new basement level would be completely hidden underground and obscured from any views.
- 6.3.7 The house and its associated garage would integrate into its setting and would not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB. It is a small scale proposal which will support the economy and social well-being of the AONB, and has been designed so as to integrate well within the landscape and is supported by a full set of drawings produced by Furse Landscape Architects.
- 6.3.8 With respect to ecology, an ecological assessment produced by ARBTECH. The Council's Consultant Ecologist raised no objection to the application previously, provided a condition was attached to the permission to ensure that the recommendations set out within the report were implemented in full. Such a condition would be acceptable once again with respect to this application proposal.
- 6.3.9 Thus, overall, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy DP16 and DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and all other relevant material planning considerations.

## 6.4 Access and Highway Safety

- 6.4.1 Vehicular access to the re-positioned owners house will be provided via the existing vehicular access/ egress point off Slaugham Lane which also provides access to a number of equestrian buildings within the owner's landholding.
- 6.4.2 A new access driveway to the owners house will be provided which will have a gravel surface finish and will be lined on either side by new avenue trees. The area surrounding the new access driveway and proposed avenue trees will also be seeded with a wildflower and grass mix, thereby integrating the new driveway into the landscape and surroundings. The position of the new access drive and proposed landscaping, is shown on the submitted Masterplan General Arrangement and Landscape Strategy drawings reference no's: AGM-OKL-ALT-003-1 and AGM-OKL-ALT-003-2.
- 6.4.3 Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan which deals with transport, requires development to be sustainably located to minimise the need for travel, but notes that there may be circumstances where development needs to be located in the countryside, such as rural economic uses.
- 6.4.4 The policy also states that proposals should be designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the LPA, including road widths and size of garages; that the scheme provides adequate car parking; it avoids severe additional traffic congestion; it protects the safety of road users and pedestrians and the scheme does not harm the special qualities of the High Weald AONB through its transport impacts.
- 6.4.5 With respect to the previously approved application (reference no. DM/21/0711), the consultation response received from West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Highways, confirmed that they had no objection to the proposals.
- 6.4.6 As this current proposal merely seeks to re-position the owners house within the Oaklands Farm site, then it will have no impact with respect to additional traffic movements into and out of the site. Furthermore, the new access driveway has been designed so that it integrates into the landscape including the provision of new avenue trees which will be planted along both sides of the driveway, together with the provision of wildflower and grass planting. This will ensure that it does not harm the special qualities of the AONB.
- 6.4.7 Thus, the proposal is in full accordance with the requirements of Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan and all other relevant material planning considerations in terms of access and highway safety.

## 7. CONCLUSION

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- 7.1.1 In conclusion, the principle of the owner's/manager's house at this site has already been established and agreed with Mid Sussex District Council through the previous planning application Ref. DM/21/0711 *"Re-Positioning and minor amendments to the owners/managers house, already permitted under planning application (Ref. DM/18/2071)."* which was granted permission by the Council in April 2021 but has since lapsed.
- 7.1.2 The re-positioning of the house within the farm site, is required with respect to a restrictive covenant which states that no buildings or plant shall be erected within five hundred feet of any existing outside boundaries of the residential property 'Naylands'. Thus, the proposed house has now been re-sited to the west of the farm site so as to conform with this covenant.
- 7.1.3 As the re-positioned house will be sited a considerable distance away from both Naylands and the other residential property located to the north, and due to the existing and proposed trees and vegetation and new planting which will be situated to the north and east of the house, the proposal will not result in any detrimental harm to the amenity of Naylands or any of the other distant neighbours.
- 7.1.4 The design of the owners house is the same as was approved by Mid Sussex District Council in April 2021 under application Reference No: DM/21/0711 which has since lapsed.
- 7.1.5 The relatively secluded location, the level of natural screening in place and the use of sympathetic materials, will ensure that no harm will be caused to the character and appearance of the surrounding landscape.
- 7.1.6 Furthermore, new trees and landscaping will be planted to further soften the appearance of the new development, while carefully ensuring that the original appearance of the site is not compromised. The house and its associated garage have been designed to integrate well within the landscape and its surroundings and would not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB.
- 7.1.7 The house will be accessed via the existing vehicular access/ egress point off Slaugham Lane. The WSCC Highways Officer in his consultation response for the previously approved application, confirmed that he had no objection to this application. As no change to the intended access point is proposed as part of this current application, then it should follow that this application should again be found acceptable with respect to access and highway safety.
- 7.1.8 Overall, the re-positioning of the owners/ managers house should be considered acceptable, with the principle of the house having already been established. The proposals are in full accordance with the policies set out in the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan, the 'made' Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan, relevant national planning policy set out in the NPPF and other relevant material considerations, and should therefore be approved.