

Supporting Statement

Proposed Extension and Alterations

East Cottage, Church Lane, Ardingly, RH17 6UR

March 2026



1. Proposed Scheme

The proposal includes a two-storey side extension and a first-floor rear extension to provide ground-floor toilet facilities, a utility area, an enlarged kitchen–dining space, as well as safe stair access to the second floor, and bathroom facilities at first floor level. The changes are proposed to improve the quality of accommodation as part of a wholesale overhaul and renovation, which will include improvements in the thermal efficiency of the dwelling and its services systems, reducing energy consumption all in line with pragmatic sustainability goals.

The intention behind the scheme is to introduce an accessible ground-floor toilet and shower to support modern living and to future-proof the property in line with current housing standards. The Design Guide highlights the importance of inclusive, adaptable, and sustainable design to support long-term usability for residents. Creating a separate open-plan kitchen, living, and dining area also allows the existing living room to function as a ground-floor bedroom to accommodate residents' changing needs over time. The new layout is therefore designed to be flexible and adaptable, enhancing the versatility of the dwelling and can be supported in its own right.

The provision of additional sanitary facilities not only enhances the current meagre offering, but will enable comfortable multi-generational living in the longer term with dedicated facilities for each generation.

The existing property benefits from a converted loft space, although the current access, through one of the bedrooms, combined with the awkward paddle ladder seriously limits its practical use as habitable space. The proposal unlocks this by releasing the second bedroom at first floor level to house a proper staircase, with the balance of space used as ensuite facilities to the replacement bedroom provided in the extension. The revised layout also offers a protected stair for fire egress purposes, bringing the building in line with current Building Regulations.

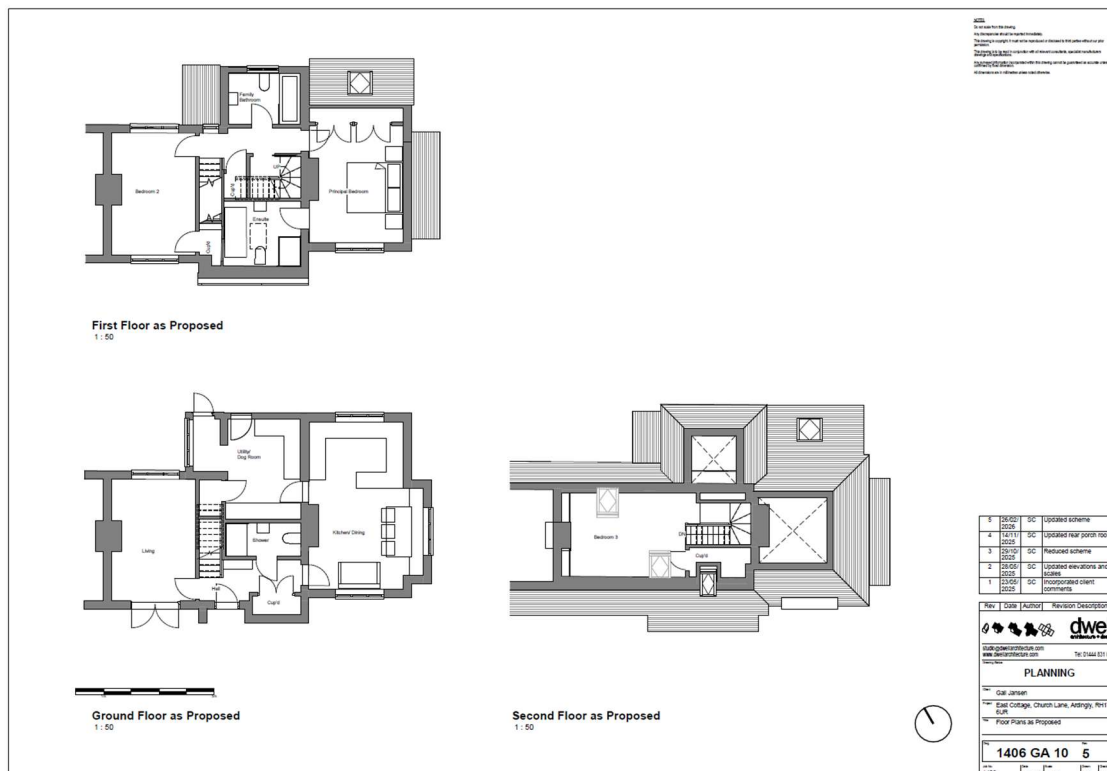
The side extension has been designed to remain subservient to the existing dwelling, in accordance with the Mid Sussex Design Guide's DG50. To this end, the ridge sits at a lower level, and changes made to the scheme in consultation with the LPA including reduction in overall width of the front elevation, removal of gable window, and proposed reinstatement of the original front door and porch arrangement are agreed reluctantly. We maintain that the width of the scheme originally tabled for consent to be appropriate, having been reduced from the pre-app design.

To compensate for the reduced width in the kitchen whilst still providing adequate space for ambulant disabled circulation, a modest projecting bay with window is incorporated into the side extension at ground floor level. This provides space to accommodate a dining table whilst adding visual relief to the eastern elevation, which would otherwise appear relatively bland. Although this is a side elevation, it forms a key part of the approach to the property when accessed via the driveway occupying the south east corner of the plot.



Importantly, the bay is set back from the principal elevation to enhance its subservience. With its two storeys and stronger vertical presence resulting from the reduction in width, the front wall of the extension is the dominant element controlling the visual width of the property.

The Conservation Officer has proposed that the bay is omitted, but as a result of the compromise in width doing so would make the internal space impractical, to the point of abandonment of the project and the loss of the benefits described above, as well as resulting in an ungainly side elevation which in our view would be visually discordant and not fitting to the CA context.



Proposed Scheme – Plans - 1406 GA 10 r5



Proposed Scheme – Elevations - 1406 GA 11 r6

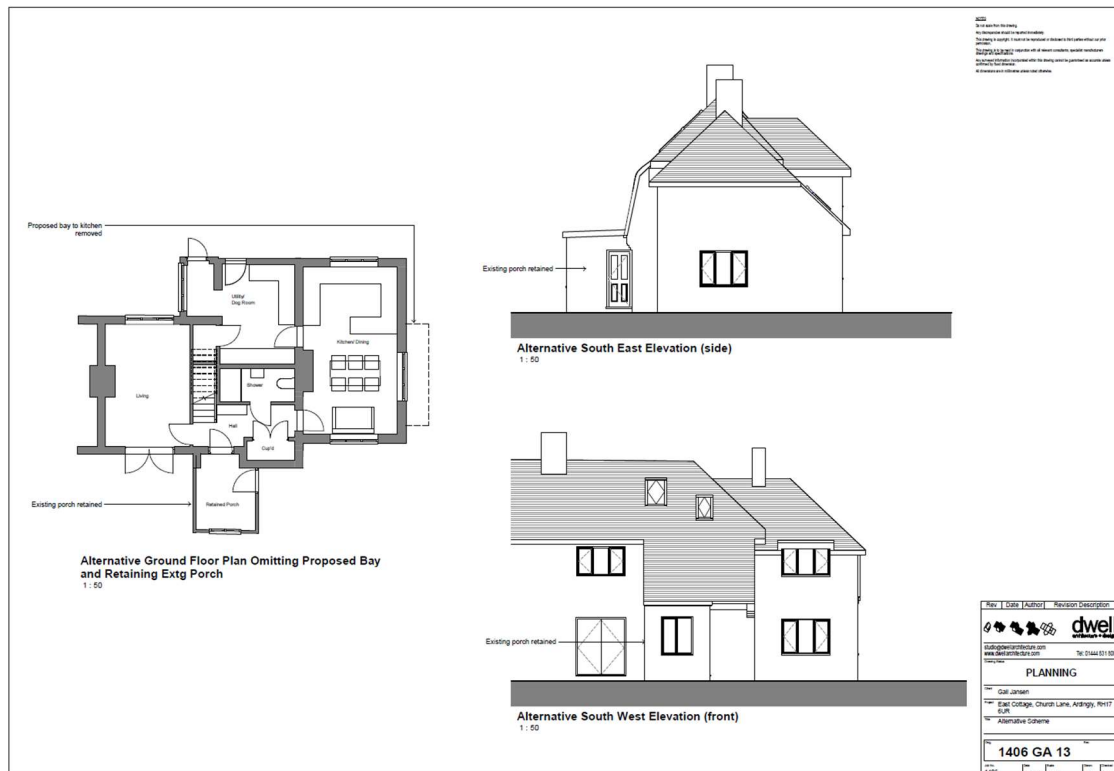
2. Impact of Removing Proposed Bay

An alternative scheme is shown below to illustrate the impact of removing the proposed dining room bay and retaining the existing porch, which could otherwise be used as an alternative dining space as it is currently. The adjoining West Cottage does not have a porch and retains its original entrance position, so keeping the existing porch for use as a dining area on East Cottage compromises the symmetry and balanced appearance of the pair of cottages. In our view, retaining the front porch would cause greater harm to the character of the property because it does not reinforce the original symmetry of the semi-detached pair.

The proposed scheme therefore removes the existing porch to help reinstate the balanced appearance of the pair and to reinforce the clarity of the front entrance on approach. In addition, retaining the proposed bay remains important, as it provides a suitable space for the dining table and supports the long-term adaptability and versatility of the ground floor for current and future residents.



Finally, the removal of the proposed bay would result in a blank and ungainly south-eastern elevation, which would suggest poor design. This elevation would be clearly visible when approaching East Cottage, as well as from the shared drive used by visitors and residents of West Cottage. Therefore, it is proposed that the bay remains included within the scheme, as it enhances the usability of the dwelling for modern living and future adaptability, while also providing articulation to a side elevation that is prominently viewed on approach to both East and West Cottages.



Alternative Scheme – Plan and Elevations - 1406 GA 13