

Caroline Grist

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 January 2026 08:40
To: Caroline Grist
Subject: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted Keynes

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your message.

I appreciate that you have been busy and would not want you and your manager to have to rush it so as to make the determination within today, so I agree the extension until this Friday, 30th January. Indeed, should you/your manager want a little more time, I would be open to that.

I'm afraid I don't understand your reference to "applications": as I understand it there is only one application: DM/25/1912. I think what you are saying is that you will have to refuse the entire application, despite your having accepted in correspondence that leaving certain aspects of the application untouched would be acceptable. That said, I understand that you can, in your report, say which aspects of the application do not lead to an objection. Please let me know if I have misunderstood.

I should also clarify that, as you have indicated that the application will be rejected, my previous indication that I was willing to replace the tarmac surface to the parking area with resin-bound gravel was made in an effort to reach an overall resolution of the application. As it now appears that agreement we will be moving onto the next stage and I still cannot see any good reason to make the change, I should be grateful if you would refer to specific conflicts with development plan policies or by reference to clear, evidenced technical or heritage harm that lead to the objection. I should also be grateful if you would do the same in relation to the other outstanding matters, as follows:

It is my understanding that the other aspects of the property to which you object are limited to the following:

- the extent and finish of the upper garden area beyond the previously approved decking; and
- the treatment of the areas immediately in front of the two windows set into the bank.

For completeness, I should also record that while concerns have been expressed in relation to the above items, these have so far been articulated primarily as matters of preference or principle, with no further explanation and my own concerns regarding drainage, damp risk and practical functioning have not been substantively addressed. I should be grateful if you could address them in your report.

If it assists you and your manager, my key points are:

- The building is effectively being treated as a listed building when it is not. While in the same hamlet, it is not in the immediate vicinity of a listed building. It was only designated as being of special historical interest after the original developer exceeded his permission (at the same time as the requirement to seek planning approval even for usually Permitted Developments was imposed). The property is set well away from the Public Right of Way; we have two families that live at the end of our lane and neither has raised any concerns.

- As to the parking area, the tarmac laid is tidy and consistent with the lane from which it branches off. Grass would be very impractical (the area is in constant use and, with the recent wet weather, our front garden is like a bog). Gravel would be no more in the vernacular of a Victorian stable block than tarmac is. The stipulation would involve significant cost, to no benefit.
- There has never been an objection in principle to decking on the upper level. In colour, it matches the weatherboarding on the sides of the main house. It is not overlooked by anyone. Grassing was tried by a previous owner but the current arrangement was decided upon, I suspect due to weight or drainage issues, or unsightliness. I am not willing to take the risk, at potentially significant cost (not just to change it, but potentially to repair any damage) when I can see no justification for doing so.
- As to the two windows, they receive no direct sunlight. I have found by looking online that there was previously grading below at least one of them but that was subsequently removed. I do not know why but it could have been due to technical/drainage issues, or indeed it could have been for aesthetic reasons. As to the latter, a stone extension to a Victorian stable block would not have been sought to be concealed in this way. The stonework is neat and in keeping with the age of the property. Nonetheless, I have suggested an evergreen climbing plant rooted in planters, which I believe would be the best way to conceal the stonework, but that suggestion has been rejected.

I should be grateful if the officer report and decision notice could clearly identify the specific policies relied upon in relation to each of the matters listed above, and explain why the concerns I have raised are not accepted.

Best regards

From: Caroline Grist <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>

Sent: Friday, January 23, 2026 18:13

Subject: RE: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted Keynes

Dear Kevin,

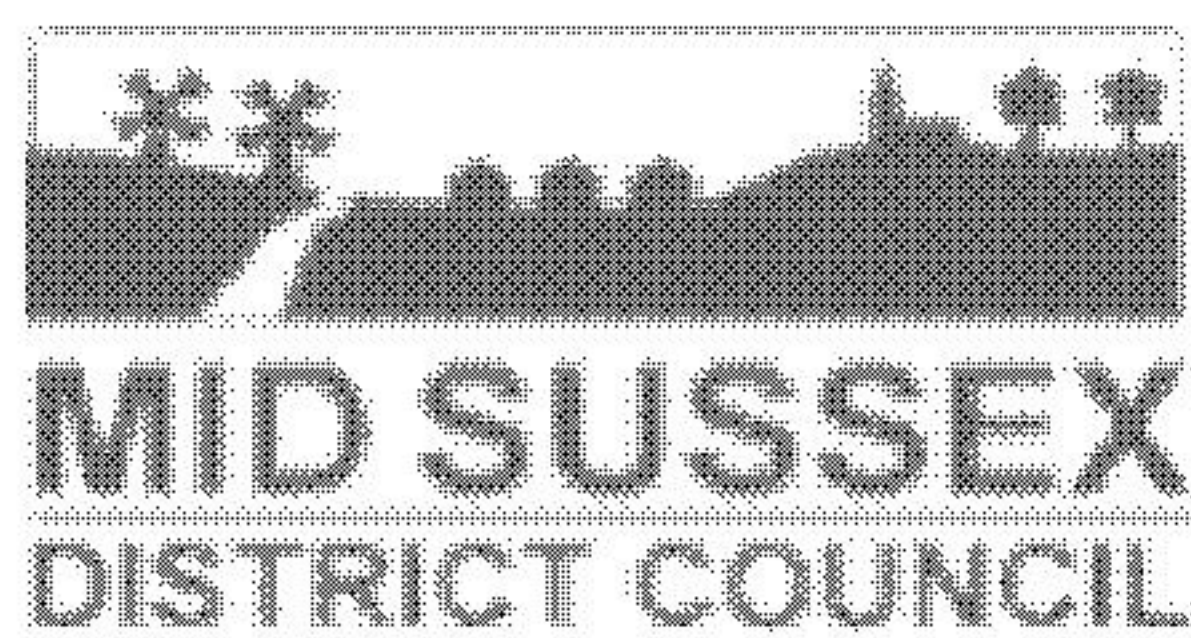
Thank you for the emails, which I have read and considered, however their contents are not sufficient to address the concerns that have been previously set out. It would appear that we have reached an impasse, and we will therefore action determining the applications.

Please be advised that we do not have powers to permit some works and not others, we can only issue one decision based on the current application. I would be very grateful if you could allow us until Friday 30th January to do this, as I will need to write up my assessment and the application the reviewed by my manager. Once the decision has been issued an appeal can then be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Kind regards,
Caroline

Caroline Grist
Senior Planning Officer
Development Management

Mid Sussex District Council
01444 477333
Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk
www.midsussex.gov.uk



Working together for a better Mid Sussex

Sent: 19 January 2026 11:02

To: Caroline Grist <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted Keynes

Dear Caroline

While I look forward to hearing from you in relation to the points made in my below message, at the weekend I spoke to a horticulturalist about the window surrounds. I was advised that the best plant to achieve the desired effect of disguising the stonework - a vigorous evergreen (so not bare in the winter) that will thrive with no direct sunlight - will be the climber *honeysuckle henryi*. It can be put in discreet planters below the window and will grow on a wire trellis. In order to achieve a compromise on this issue, I would be willing to install planters below both of the shaded windows. As previously discussed, I am advised that there may be structural issues if more weight is added to the roof and it appears from the history of the property that I've gleaned from the planning portal and that trailing plants may have already been tried unsuccessfully.

So as to avoid the burden of an appeal to the Inspector and, if necessary, the Court, I have already agreed to replace the tarmac resin-bound gravel in a colour of your choice.

I'm afraid that, for the reasons previously given, despite my efforts to find a compromise, it seems there is none that can be reached in respect of the decking on the upper level: I am not willing to risk structural issues and the fact that the area was previously grassed and then the area was changed only strengthens my suspicions. The response from the Conservation Officer that it's just too much makes no rational sense: it cannot be seen by anyone, does not involve demolition of historical works and some decking was allowed in principle. I think that this property is being treated as if it were listed, when it isn't (and is far from being adjacent to the listed Broadhurst Manor, as was initially the view of the Planning Officer). The requirement to obtain consent for Permitted Developments was only imposed following the original developer's application for retrospective planning permission and the documents on the planning portal show that there has been a much harsher approach since then. The Council's approach should not be punishment for the past misdeeds of others, but rather an objective view based on the available evidence, the current state of the property and common sense.

With my above proposal for the windows, can we now please move forward with resolving this application at this level? If not, can we please swiftly move onto the next?

As always, please let me know if it would help to discuss.

Best wishes

Sent: Thursday, January 15, 2026 08:45

To: Caroline Grist <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted Keynes

Good morning, Caroline.

As mentioned in my previous message, unless the Conservation Officer's opinions on the remaining points are modified, I don't think we're going to be able to resolve this matter at this level.

If it helps, I have reflected on the two outstanding points and still cannot see a practical or aesthetic reason for either of them. The only reason for the position taken could be that previous permission was not complied with. That is not a good reason: I understand that retrospective consent is commonly applied for and believe it is a reasonable procedure when the project has not worked out exactly as planned.

As to the decking, I have provided ample evidence that no-one will realistically see it from outside the property. Unclear as to exactly why it is not acceptable as it is, but guessing it must be the contrast with the grass, I suggested green decking. That has been rejected. As some decking was permitted, I cannot see why other decking of the same type should be unacceptable in principle. I have voiced my concerns about weight and/or the ability of grass to thrive in shallow soil. The Conservation Officer's trenchant but unjustified and unjustifiable position does not merit the significant cost and risk.

Similar considerations apply around the windows in the bank. Not only will they likely not achieve the desired result, I very much doubt that any other Victorian building that had a stonework extension would seek to conceal it. It would produce a mix between a sympathetically restored Victorian stables and something from Tolkien - more suitable for Disneyland than West Sussex. I also don't understand the intended significance of your comment about things being removed - anything can be changed at any time. Historical workings need of course to be preserved but the areas we are talking about are all new ones.

While I can see no reason to tear up perfectly good tarmac to replace it with gravel that is no more likely to have been used at Victorian stables, I am willing to make that change in order to achieve a compromise. If that is not sufficient, I think it is better that we move forward with the next step in the appeal process.

Please let me know if it would help to discuss this. Otherwise, I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Best wishes
Kevin

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your message.

As to the resin-bound gravel, that sounds fine.

As to the other two items, I fear we have reached an impasse.

As to the decking on the upper level, I have already pointed out that it is seen by no-one and what I have pieced together from online research strongly suggests to me that there was a good reason why the decking was extended: otherwise the original developer would not have grassed the area above the garage when it was a stipulation, only for it to subsequently be gravelled by the subsequent owners: there would be no reason to do that unless the grassing didn't work. I am simply not prepared to change it back only to risk suffering the same experience that previous owners did, where I can see absolutely no reason (aesthetic or otherwise) for the Conservation Officer to insist on her stipulation.

Similar issues arise in respect of the window surrounds: it appears that the area was graded below at least one window and that that grading was removed, perhaps for technical reasons. The relevant aspect receives no sunlight so the proposed plants are unlikely to thrive. With all due respect to the Conservation Officer I believe that, objectively viewed, the current aspect looks good, and would look rather more odd were her requirements to be met.

In short, I believe that no reasonable planning officer would insist on these costly and potentially damaging requirements: I suggest that this is a situation where the Conservation Officer's views may of course be taken into account but, on these two issues, a more objective assessment should prevail.

I think we would both agree that this has gone on for long enough and we need to achieve some finality. If your position on the latter two points stands, then I think it best that we move onto the Planning Officer appeal process. They will come to the case with fresh eyes and unburdened with having been involved in the application that was previously not complied with. I hope that will not be necessary but, if it is, and he or she upholds the refusal, then I consider that, given the Conservation Officer's increasingly restrictive assessments in relation to the property following the original developer's failure to comply with permissions (which are inconsistent with her approach to neighbouring properties), I would have good grounds to challenge the refusal in the Court. As a litigator with over 30 years' experience, I know that it will not be a cheap option, but the £35,000 allowance for recovery of legal costs if I am successful (compared to the Council's more limited cap of a £5,000 recovery if it is successful) means that my financial exposure will be less than having to comply with the Conservation Officer's unreasonable stipulations (and then potentially having to pay even more money to put right any damage caused by complying with those stipulations).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes



On 13 Jan 2026, at 18:15, Caroline Grist
<Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Kevin,

Happy New Year to you as well and thank you for the emails.

Having spoken with our Conservation Officer, I would advise as follows regarding the points raised.

In terms of the decking, it is advised that green composite decking will not be considered an appropriate alternative, as this would (notwithstanding the colour) have a similar adverse impact on the character of the site as the decking as installed. Composite decking is also not an appropriate material for the context. We remain of the view, as previously set out, that the terraced area needs to remain of a reduced size as previously approved.

With regards to the planting, the use of planters would be unlikely to be an acceptable alternative as they would be potentially removable. The areas in question should be altered to allow for the implementation of a permanent soft landscaped scheme, as per the approved plans.

Lastly, with respect to the parking area adjacent to the stables, the use of resin bound gravel could be considered as an alternative to the installed tarmac. We will need further details, including the gravel mix (we would expect buff/red/brown to reflect the local vernacular) to consider this alternative further.

Kind regards,

Caroline

Caroline Grist

Senior Planning Officer

Development Management

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<image001.png>

Working together for a better Mid Sussex

Sent: 06 January 2026 16:51

To: Caroline Grist <Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road,
Horsted Keynes

Dear Caroline

A Happy New Year to you and I hope you had a good break.

As to the general comments in your final paragraph, I must confess that I'm not clear as to what extent proximity to listed buildings/public rights of way is considered to be important here, giving the Conservation Officer's liberal approach when planning permission was originally granted (and a similar approach to a neighbouring property closer to the listed Broadhurst Manor) and the quite different approach taken when retrospective consent was requested. The buildings haven't moved during the relevant period. As to the "glimpse" from the public right of way, to the extent that it may be important, I attach a photograph taken last week from the closest point of the right of way to the property (with the hedge at its barest). None of the items under discussion are visible.

Also, while the remaining items under consideration do indeed bear a closer resemblance to the second planning application, we wouldn't be having this conversation if they did not differ from the permission that was granted. But I think it worth noting that, so far as I can tell, the majority of the requirements imposed on the grant of permission were complied with by the original developer (and remain complied with): the removal of the garage and reduction in size of the parking area (permission was subsequently granted for the space to be used as an internal room); the removal of the formal garden and fountain; the

reduction in the number of exterior lights and compliance with the hedge planting plan. It seems that many of the subsequent changes were made by the subsequent purchaser, who may have been oblivious to the voluminous detail of the property's planning history. But, irrespective of all that, I suggest that the property has to be judged as it is now, with new owners who did not ignore permissions but brought these issues to your attention following the purchase, in an effort to regularise the situation.

Taking the outstanding items in turn:

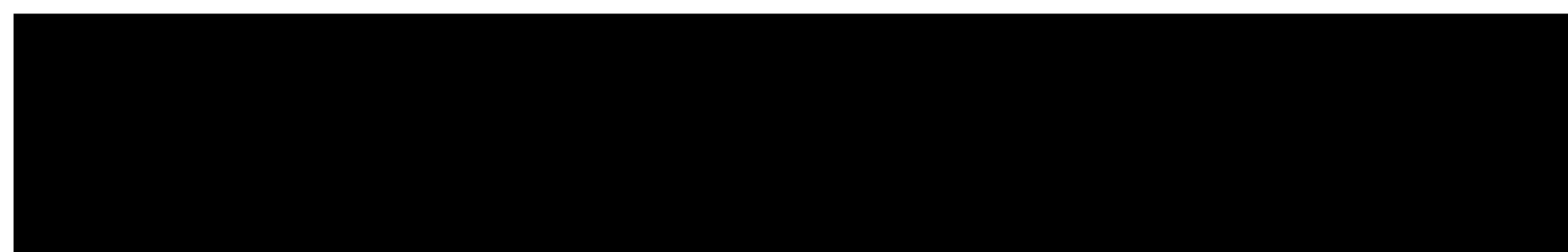
1. **The decking on the upper level.** It is correct that the current extent of decking exceeds the extant permission. As I have said, I cannot see why, if decking was allowed in principle, a larger area should not be permitted. Either the area is fully grassed or it isn't. This is particularly so where no-one can see it apart from our immediate neighbours (who would have to go to the end of their garden and peer over the hedge). Please see <https://www.onthemarket.com/details/10225637/#/photos/16>, which I understand to have been in the estate agent's brochure when the property was sold by the original developer and shows regrassing. It seems that the subsequent purchasers (possibly unaware of the requirement to obtain planning permission for what would usually be permitted developments, imposed after the first application for retrospective planning consent was refused) removed the turf. As I have said, I am concerned that grassing the area was tried but did not work out and so the grass was removed. All of the non-grassed areas are above underground rooms. I suspect there may have been an issue with weight and/or, with shallow roots, any grass did not thrive and was unsightly. I cannot think of any reason why, in particular, a gravel area should have been installed when it provided no additional useable space for garden furniture or the like. Nonetheless, without prejudice to my position that no change is appropriate, I'm willing to explore replacing the decked/gravelled area with green composite decking (such as <https://www.hosungdeck.com/hot-selling-wpc-products/dark-green-composite-decking/>), as a compromise between my concerns and what I understand to be the objection. If feasible, would that resolve this issue?
2. **Planting.** As this shows (from the same source as above), there was at least some compliance with the extant permission: <https://www.onthemarket.com/details/10225637/#/photos/1>. I can only conclude that there must have been some good reason why it was changed by the subsequent purchasers. I have already said that I don't see any good reason for this requirement: the aspect is currently aesthetically pleasing and the change that the Conservation Officer insists on looks quite odd (as can be seen from the photograph). Rather than supporting the aim of making the property consistent with its original use, it undermines it. No Victorian owner of a stables would seek to disguise the addition to look like a hobbit house. In any event, I doubt that what the Conservation Officer seeks is achievable: the aspect is west facing and receives no direct sunlight (evening sun is masked by trees) so the best to be achieved is likely to be some withered tendrils.

Nonetheless, and again without prejudice to my position that this is both inappropriate and likely unworkable, I'm willing to investigate planters on the roof to help to disguise the area around the relevant windows. If feasible, would that resolve the issue?

3. **Grasscrete in the parking area.** I've already sent a photograph of what happens to the grasscrete in the garden when cars are parked there. It's not pretty. The area is in constant use and abuts a tarmaced lane. It seems to me that using a different substance will only highlight the difference but, again without prejudice to my view that that it should simply be left alone, I'm willing to investigate replacing it with resin-bound gravel (e.g. <https://www.gclproducts.co.uk/c/resin-bound-gravel/resin-bound-gravel-kits/>). Would that resolve that issue?

I look forward to hearing from you on the above three points. If these are likely solutions, I'll then look into them in more detail and get back to you as soon as I can.

<image002.jpg>Best wishes



Thank you, Caroline.

I understand that you have been busy and am grateful that you've had a chance to respond to my comments. I'll consider over the weekend and aim to get back to you on Monday: I should like to move forward as quickly as possible - if it turns out that we cannot achieve a solution (and I very much hope we can) then it would be better to get moving with the Planning Inspectorate appeal and (should it be necessary) the appeal to the Court, both of which would, I expect take some time, and I would prefer to achieve some finality sooner rather than later.

Have a very good weekend. I'll mainly be wrapping!

Best wishes

Kevin

On 19 Dec 2025, at 16:37, Caroline Grist
<Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Kevin,

Thank you for the email and I am very sorry
for the delayed reply.

With regards to the upper level of the building, a proportion of decking was allowed. I have attached to this email a copy of the last approved plan that shows the extent of this. The rest of the land around it is to be finished in grass. The current arrangement, however, more closely resembles the second, retrospective, application that was submitted. The retrospective scheme showed a larger area of surfacing, which was not considered to be acceptable. The view in this regard therefore remains consistent and the same as the previous position in that the terraced area needs to remain of a reduced size.

With regards to the planting, we would expect for this to be re-instated. The approach for the development was that the extension was to appear hidden and set back into the bank, appearing to be part of the landscape. As such the planting is a very important in achieving this, so that only the window and a small amount of the stone work around it is visible.

With regards to the grasscrete this is not an uncommon approach when agricultural buildings are being developed. If it is not possible, an alternative could be gravel or

chippings but they would need to be of an appropriate mix of tones. The use of tarmac is considered to appear too urban in this rural location.

As it stands the areas currently under consideration bear a closer resemblance to the second planning application that was received. Changes were required to this scheme as these aspects of the conversion, as built, were not considered to be acceptable. As such it is considered that the works that have occurred are a retrograde step. Public views are a consideration however, as previously set out, they are not an overriding consideration. We have a legal responsibility to ensure that all forms of development protect the natural beauty of the AONB. Additionally private views are important when considering the impact to listed buildings as they form part of how the listed building is experienced, in this case how the estate worked together. There are also glimpsed views of the property from the Public Right of Way, where an impression of the building can be obtained.

I hope that the above is of assistance,

Kind regards,

Caroline

Caroline Grist

Senior Planning Officer

Development Management

Mid Sussex District Council

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Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk

<image001.png>

Working together for a better Mid Sussex

From:

Sent: 24 November 2025 12:50

To: Caroline Grist

[<Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk)

Subject: Re: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst
Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted
Keynes

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your message. It helps a little.

Apologies if my message was unclear: I have liaised with David Jenkins Design and included their input in my message to you of 13th November.

As set out in that reasoned message, I cannot see that there is a reasonable and proportionate justification for any of the discrepancies between the extant planning permission and the current state of the property having to be changed.

In your message, you say:

'In essence, what we are seeking is for the property and its landscaping to be finished as it was approved under application DM/19/2790. If, once you have investigated these matters, it is not possible for any of these works to be done then we would require why this is not possible to be set out in writing as well as any potential alternative

solutions that might address the issues raised.'

I am afraid that it's impossible for me to move forward with just a blanket insistence on compliance with the 2019 permission. In order to be able to explore the alternatives you suggest, I need to understand what is perceived to be the problem with the property as it currently is.

It would be very helpful to have a response to the individual points made in my message of 13th November on each of the identified discrepancies (which presumably you will need to prepare before any refusal of the current application).

If it assists, to summarise my points and highlight particular issues on which I should be grateful to understand your reasoning (though guidance on any issues not already addressed by me would also be welcome):

1. Decking/chipping on the upper level: a certain amount of decking was approved. There is more, and some stone chippings. I do not know why more decking was added: there was sufficient space for seating on the upper level. One possibility is that there was a technical issue. Neither do I know why chippings (and not decking) were added (though I do know that the area was grassed following the 2019 permission - perhaps the area will not bear the weight of decking). Either way, I suspect further technical issues. But, in any event, the changes are unnecessary. No-one can see it unless they peer over the hedge or are in the farmer's field, so it does not affect anyone's experience of the

area around Broadhurst Manor, neither (being reversible) does it impact on the character of the building in any meaningful way. Can you please explain why you consider it should be changed?

2. Regrading on the upper level: as stated in my 13th November message, it is not clear to me what the Conservation Officer was talking about, but I suspect she did not realise that the bank to the south of the property is likely as it was before the redevelopment. Can I please have some explanation?

3. The areas around the windows in the bank: I believe that the areas below them were regraded after the 2019 permission but that was regrading was subsequently removed. That may have been for technical reasons. It also appears that trailing plants were planted (the wall on the upper level has a trough for planting) but I assume they were unsuccessful (that face gets only evening light, through trees). In any event, I cannot understand why it should be considered necessary to do all this. I understand that a motivation of the Council has been to adhere to the original design and use of the property. But it did permit an

underground extension with windows and skylights. It seems to me that no Victorian person building a stone extension to a stables block would go to the trouble of disguising the stonework. *The Hobbit* was not published until 1937 and, even then, it didn't start an architectural trend. I can see no sensible reason to insist on this requirement: the stonework is neat and, I believe, made of local materials. Can you please explain whether you disagree and, if so, how?

4. The parking area to the North: this is our main parking area. I do not know if it has ever been grasscreted, but it is just a bad idea. Please see below a photograph I took today of the front garden grasscreted area, which has very much lighter use. It looks much worse than neat tarmac. Can you please explain whether you disagree and, if so, why?

<image005.jpg>

5. The stove flue pipe: it is likely at the minimum height and to change it would risk illegality

and safety. It is not inconsistent with the building's original use. Please explain whether and, if so, what, you would like me to do.

While I look forward to hearing from you on the above points (and anything else you would wish to be changed), I have a few comments on the second sentence that I quoted from your message.

I don't think that the question is whether it is *possible* to make changes, rather whether there is any reason at all *for* them to be made. In my message of 13th November I explained concerns over technical issues shared by David Jenkins architects and the obvious practicality of grasscreting the parking area. Within reason, anything can be done if one is prepared to spend enough money, but it seems to me that the Council's role is to assess what changes are reasonably necessary in order to comply with the relevant policies (as to which, it would be helpful if you could explain exactly which provisions of which policies and plans you consider to be relevant to the application).

It will always be the case for retrospective applications that previous permission has not been sought or has been ignored. In this case, I think the non-compliance stems largely from an ignorance on the part of intermediate owners that they needed permission for minor changes but, in any event, the role of the Council is surely not to punish the current owners for past owners' actions, but rather to take a sensible and reasonable view of the property as it currently is.

As to the other points raised in your message:

1. I did not think any decision would be based on the number of letters received, rather their contents (or that people have chosen not to respond). Neither did I think it is the only

factor. But if the views of neighbours and passers-by who see the notice on the property don't have some importance, that begs the question of why the notice is published in the first place. It is reasonable to assume that those who received the letter read it. They did not object. The only objection you have received is from the Conservation Officer.

2. Related to the above point, you also say that the visibility of the works is not an overriding factor, but that did seem to be a factor in the Conservation Officer's comments, when she erroneously commented "*The stables...have an impact on the manner in which the special interests of the listed buildings are experienced by those approaching them along the public right of way running from the south towards Broadhurst Manor Road.*", as explained in my message of 13th November. But, if the possible effect on the public is really not such an important factor, that allows the discussion to focus on what is appropriate to the house (on which I commented in detail in my message of 13th November and have summarised above).

3. I'm grateful for the copy of the interesting Planning Inspectorate appeal decision, from which I note that he made a site visit and commented that each case will be decided on its own merits. That should certainly be the case. I don't know anything about the property in that case, but it is my opinion that my property, in its current state, is an appropriate stables conversion that turned a ruin into a modern home sympathetic to its surroundings. I have good reason to hope that, in the unwelcome event that the matter were to go the Inspector, they would approach the matter open-mindedly and objectively, and reach the same view.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

[Redacted]

From: Caroline Grist
<Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2025 5:52 PM
To: Kevin Cooper

[Redacted]
Subject: RE: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables, Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted Keynes

Dear Kevin,

Thank you for the emails and appreciate that you are looking into addressing them with David Jenkins Design.

With regards to the points raised, planning applications are firstly not determined based on the number of letters we receive in response to a development. We cannot assume why a person has chosen not to write in response and any representations received also form only one of the matters in our assessment. With regards to the visibility of the works this is not an overriding matter either. We have a responsibility to ensuring that development is appropriate to the area in which it is located and legal duties in assessing development that affects an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and listed buildings. This matter was addressed in an appeal decision, where a refused application was reviewed by the Planning Inspectorate (part of central government). Here the Inspector gave no weight to fact that the proposed extension would not be widely visible beyond the application site. I have attached a copy of this appeal decision to this email for your reference.

In essence, what we are seeking is for the property and its landscaping to be finished as it was approved under application DM/19/2790. If, once you have investigated these matters, it is not possible for any of these works to be done then we would require why this is not possible to be set out in writing as well as any potential alternative solutions that might address the issues raised.

I hope that the above is of assistance,

Kind regards,

Caroline

Caroline Grist

Senior Planning Officer

Development Management

Mid Sussex District Council

01444 477333

Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk

www.midsussex.gov.uk

<image001.png>

Working together for a better Mid Sussex

Sent: 13 November 2025 17:02

To: Caroline Grist

[<Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk>](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk)

Subject: Re: DM/25/1912: Broadhurst Stables,
Broadhurst Manor Road, Horsted Keynes

Dear Caroline

I expect you are busy so I thought it would be helpful if I set out my initial comments on the feedback from the Conservation Officer, and generally.

Introductory comments

1. I should first say that I applied for retrospective planning consent believing, as most do, that people should not be able to get away with ignoring the rules.

2. As you know, the current situation is neither of my making nor that of the most recent owners. I believe that the most recent consent was complied with by the original developer (at least substantially), but it seems that the subsequent owners (whom I believe reversed some of the changes) were unaware of (or, worst case, ignored) the planning history of the property at the time that they made them, between about 2021 and 2023.
3. As we have discussed, the property was developed by a Mr Kyle Dore between about 2016 and 2021. It was then sold to a couple (whom I believe made the main changes, including installing the log burner, removing the grading from below the windows in the bank and adding decking on both levels, perhaps believing them to be permitted developments). Then, in February 2024, it was bought by a couple who had the property for just over a year, before selling it to us. I do not think they made any of the changes.
4. We therefore do not have access to documentation relating to the original build, relevant to the works required by MSDC when retrospective planning consent was eventually granted, nor after the property's first sale. So, while we have some documentation, such as the HETAS Certificate, we do not have much to go on about decisions taken in the past, nor the reasons for them.
5. I have tried to locate the architect employed by Mr Dore, but it seems he has ceased

practising. This is supported by the fact that, for Mr Dore's last application, the plans were drawn up by another company. It seems that they have also ceased trading, hence I have had to employ a different company, David Jenkins Design, to draw up the plans for this application.

6. Having reviewed the Planning Portal, as I understand it, notices were sent in respect of this application to six of our neighbours. None have raised an objection. Neither did the Parish Council, nor Environmental Protection. It appears that Historic England (whom I understand to be the usual arbiters of whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest) were insufficiently interested in the application to comment. As I understand it, the only objection you have received is that of the Conservation Officer (who, in her comments, expressed "particular" disappointment, with which I sympathise), so I will primarily respond to her comments.
7. Of course, none of the relevant works should have been undertaken without the necessary planning consent. That is a given. But we are now years down the line and we are where we are. My comments in relation to the Conservation Officer's comments relate both to technical issues and some of the bases on which she appears to have formed her views. I hope that it is taken as given that any further actions taken in relation to the property now should be both reasonable and proportionate.

The potential impact on the public and previous comments

8. Taking the Conservation Officer's first comment in her email dated 22nd October: *"The stables...have an impact on the manner in which the special interests of the listed buildings are experienced by those approaching them along the public right of way running from the south towards Broadhurst Manor Road."*, there appears to be some geographical misunderstanding here.
9. The public right of way running from the south (i.e. coming from the village of Horsted Keynes) reaches a "T" junction to the south of the property. The route towards Broadhurst Manor involves a left turn well before our property and a further turn before one reaches the drive to Broadhurst Manor.
10. Our property is somewhat visible, at some distance, from the "T" junction (and indeed it appears to be wholly invisible to many delivery drivers, who say they have reached that point but could not find us!). As one advances up the lane, the hedge bordering the road that was previously required to be (and was) planted largely shields the house and garden from view (save for a five-bar gate for access to the garden and a smaller pedestrian gate nearer the house, though one has to proceed up the lane to reach an angle so as to be able to see through them).
11. The lane that borders the property leads only to a pair of semi-detached Victorian cottages. In passing, I note that the

Conservation Officer
commented thus about a recent
application for an extension to
the rear of Broadhurst Cottage
(my highlighting):

<image006.png>

Broadhurst Stables is further
away from Broadhurst Manor
than Broadhurst Cottage and is
similarly screened by planting. I
cannot see that the
Conservation Officer was
consulted at all in relation to
applications on the Planning
Portal in respect of Pond
Cottage (the other semi-
detached up the lane) or Garden
Cottage (much closer to the
entrance to Broadhurst Manor).

12. The only people that use the lane
adjoining the property are those
that live or have relatives or
business there. Those that live
there have voiced no objections
to the application. I expect that
most users of the bridleway are
local and know to turn left at the
“T” junction, or visitors will have
some form of map. As with the
two cottages up the lane, we are
tucked behind Broadhurst
Manor and the vast majority of
people using the public
bridleway simply do not know
that we exist. Very few people
without business in the lane
pass our garden (in my case,
just one lost jogger).
13. As to the Conservation Officer’s
previous comments on
Broadhurst Stables, some of
those in respect of the original
application for development in

2016 are as follows (my highlighting):

<image007.png>

I acknowledge that what Mr Dore built exceeded the original plans, but the Conservation Officer supported the revised application for retrospective consent in 2019 (DM/19/2790) as follows (my highlighting):

<image008.png>

Of course, she is not bound by her previous comments, but there has been something of a change in both the perception of distance from/effect on the listed buildings and the level of insistence on previous consent being strictly complied with.

Decking/chippings/regrading on the upper level

14. As to the Conservation Officer's comments on the decking and chippings above the buried extension, I understand that she wishes them to be returned to soft landscaping and considers that the area to the southeast of the building is not as approved and there should be "more natural landscaping".
15. As to the latter, I am not sure what the Conservation Officer means by that, but I assume it to mean that the slope of the bank between the upper and lower garden to the south of the steps is too steep. A document on the Planning Portal indicates that the stables were sited in a former quarry (described on one map as a "sand pit"). I think it's

reasonable to assume that the contouring was left undisturbed from how it was before development (indeed, I think I have seen a photograph showing that the dilapidated stables abutted a steep bank (I can look for it, if that will help).

16. In any event, it is indeed true that the decking is more extensive than that approved and the use of chippings was never approved.
17. I have photographs from previous sales that indicate that much of the area now decked did indeed have soft landscaping, which leads me to assume that there may have been some issue with the weight/drainage of those areas. I believe that is supported by the fact that the area of chippings is unusable for recreation, and there seems to me to be no good reason to have put them in unless there was some sort of problem (or at least concern).
18. But, irrespective of whether I am correct on the above assumption, I cannot see how more extensive decking (and chippings) on the upper level can possibly be visible to (and impact upon the interests of) anyone else. They are completely invisible from the "T" junction, and indeed the track that passes the property. To be affected, a member of the public would need to decide to drive up a dead-end lane with a cherry picker crane (otherwise they would be trespassing) or own or charter a helicopter.
19. Our neighbour to the north is quite a distance from this area and there is a hedge between the

properties. To the east is a farmer's field that contains sheep from time to time. I have never seen anyone other than farm workers in that field, so believe there are no public rights of way across it.

20. That some decking has previously been approved indicates that there is no objection to such decking *per se*. In my view, the more extensive decking harms no-one, but removing it will lead to unnecessary costs, disruption to our quiet enjoyment of the property and, potentially, technical issues.

The lack of a planted area and to the face of the bank around the window to the extension to the southwest of the original building, the grassed slope below and trailing plants

21. Taking these comments together, there is indeed more extensive stonework than was most recently approved and, while I understand that the requirement for the grading beneath the window was complied with, it seems that the subsequent owners decided to replace it with decking. I do not know if that was as a matter of free choice or whether there were technical issues (such as damp). Either way, a significant amount of visible stonework was previously approved.
22. I assume that the area as it now is results from the approved plan being tried but having failed. Perhaps there were structural or damp issues. Perhaps the plants failed to thrive on a face that is only in evening sunlight (I suspect limited by the tall trees across the lane).

23. Taking into account possible future issues with damp/drainage if the grading below the window is reinstated and the few members of the public who might be affected (both by the infrequency of use of the lane and the hedge when it is used), I do not think that such action as is recommended by the Conservation Officer to be reasonable and proportionate.
24. As to the decking below the window, that could only be apparent to a very dedicated member of the public who decided to proceed up the lane. It is the same colour as the weather boarding on the main building and unobtrusive. I believe that some concession needs to be made to the fact that the property is a family home. Decking for outdoor tables and plants is a common amenity. And no-one is trying to fool anyone into thinking that the property is anything but a restored old building now being used as a home (e.g. the significant skylights in the main building, which were approved, and are far from being original). I believe that some reasonable concessions need to be made to the fact that it is a family home.

Tarmacing of the parking area to the north (and, although not expressly commented upon by the Conservation Officer, presumably similar issues in relation to the stonework and grading around the window to the north of the main building as that to the southwest)

25. As to the stonework around the window, for the same reasons as for that to the southwest, I am concerned that previous owners may have encountered

structural or damp issues, or the planting scheme did not have the desired effect (the area is in the shadow of the main building and has no direct sunlight).

26. As to the parking area, it is to the north of the property and is also shaded by the main building throughout the day. Vegetation requires sunlight in order to thrive (the same would apply to grading below the window).
27. This is the principal parking area for the property, fitting (with some careful parking) two cars, at most. It is in constant use. Additional cars enter the garden through the five-bar gate and, despite the grasscreting there, churn it up.
28. If grasscreting were to be insisted upon, I fear that the area would be a mudbath in the winter and unsightly in the summer. It is for such reasons that tarmac is popular (indeed the lane is tarmaced and so the colour scheme flows from there into the parking area). I suppose the area could be made a bit more fancy/rural-looking with gravel, but that brings its own issues of gravel going everywhere but where you want it to be.

The stove flue pipe

29. While I'm grateful to the Conservation Officer for acknowledging the acceptability of this in principle, I have some comments.
30. The flue is not visible from the bridleway "T" junction at all. It only becomes visible to the traveller with a reason to be in the lane as one approaches and

passes the main building northwards. It is of course visible when approaching southwards, but moving it “further towards the rear of the building” would not change that.

31. As to its height, an internet search tells the reader that there are quite intricate regulations governing the total length, diameter, length above the roof and distance from the roof ridge. I suggest that it is reasonable to assume that those installing it did not use any more pipe than was necessary to comply with the regulations.
32. I believe that any changes to the current installation would not materially affect the rural character of the building (indeed, it wouldn’t surprise me if Victorian farriers had stoves to keep them warm in the winter when the building was used for its original purpose, and it is much less out-of-place than skylights) and such changes may indeed be illegal and unsafe.

Finally

33. In her message, the Conservation Officer says that “the *majority* of the work retrospectively applied for is in my opinion unacceptable in principle” (my emphasis). I assume that if she has not commented on anything, it is in the “minority”, and she does not object to it.
34. So, save for the stonework/grading around the window in the bank to the north of the main building (which I have addressed above), as this message is already long

enough, I have not commented further. That said, please let me know if you would like me to comment on any other aspects of the application.

Please do let me know if it would help for me to forward to you any of the documents on the MSDC Portal and/or photographs to which I refer above.

I look forward to hearing from you and please do let me know if it would help to discuss on a call..

Best wishes

Kevin

On 11 Nov 2025, at 15:40,



Dear Caroline.

Yes, 1st December will be fine. The architects (Robert Vickers at David Jenkins Design) are available to help and advise me (though, as you know, I'm spending the sellers' money. Without labouring the point, they were forced to sell as a result of some significant personal reasons and I believe they were innocent to the planning issues until I raised them, so I would like to keep the cost as low as possible).

I should like to follow up on some of the points in Emily's message and wonder how we

can best go about that. Would it be best to have a call? I can set out my thoughts in advance, if it will help.

Best wishes

Kevin

On 11 Nov 2025,
at 11:39,
Caroline Grist
<Caroline.Grist@midsussex.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Kevin,

Thank you for the email advising and it this situation is unfortunate.

I understand that you will need to look into matters further. Would it therefore be agreeable to update the current application date initially to Monday 1st December and we can keep it under review?

Kind regards,

Caroline

Caroline Grist

Senior Planning
Officer

Development
Management

Mid Sussex
District Council

01444 477333

[Caroline.Grist@](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsex.gov.uk)
[midsex.gov.u](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsex.gov.uk)
[k](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsex.gov.uk)
[www.midsex.](http://www.midsex.gov.uk)
[gov.uk](http://www.midsex.gov.uk)

<image001.png>

Working together
for a better Mid
Sussex



Sent: 10
November 2025
15:52
To: Caroline Grist
<[Caroline.Grist@](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsex.gov.uk)
[midsex.gov.uk](mailto:Caroline.Grist@midsex.gov.uk)
>

Subject: Re: DM/
25/1912:
Broadhurst
Stables,
Broadhurst
Manor Road,
Horsted Keynes

Dear Caroline

Thank you for
your message
and no need to
apologise for the
delay - I can fully
sympathise with
the pressure of
work!.

Of course I'm
disappointed
but, as you
know, it's
important to me
to get the
position
regularised. The
property has
been through
two sets of
owners since the
developer who
chose to depart
from the the
original consent
and I've no
reason to believe
that the
subsequent
purchasers (who
probably had not
looked into the
planning history
nearly as closely
as I did before
purchasing) were
aware of the
need to seek
permission for
what would, I
understand,
usually be
permitted
developments.
For example, we
have found

photographs on
the internet
indicating that
the grading in
front of the
windows in the
bank was done
after the
retrospective
consent was
eventually
granted, but that
was taken out
and decking put
in.

I'll report to the
sellers (I have
retained funds to
hopefully cover
this) and get in
touch with the
architects who
drew up the
plans for me.
Can I please get
back to you
when I have an
idea of their
availability?

Best wishes

Kevin

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quired to make this development acceptable under the previous application.

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Kind
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Caroline

Caroline
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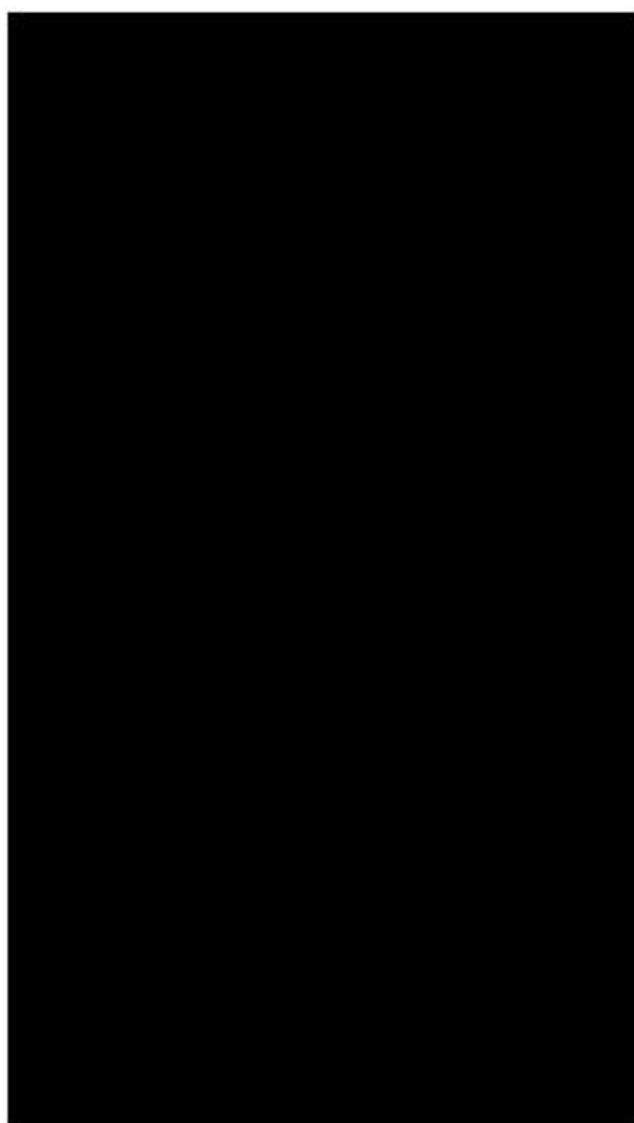
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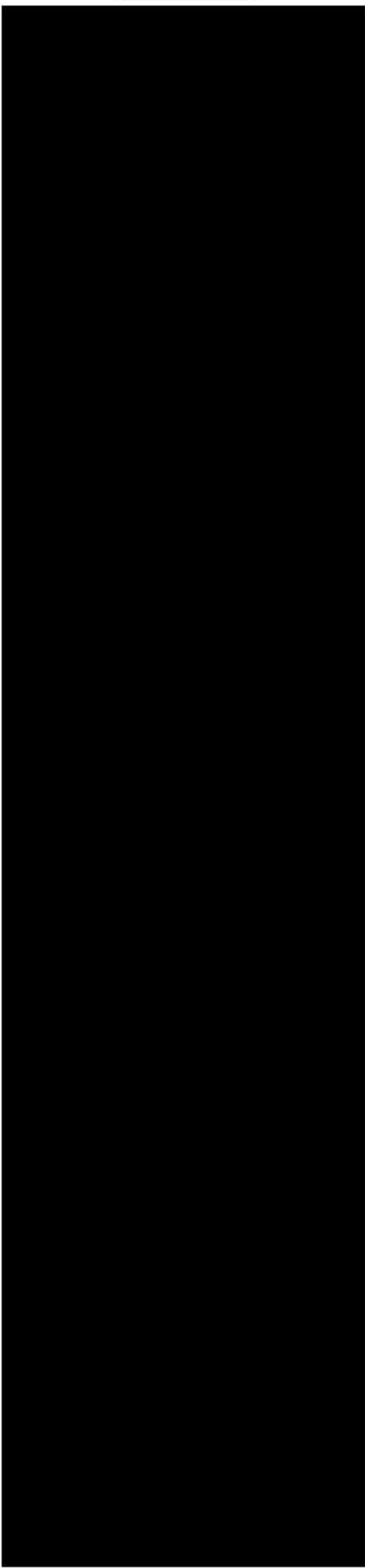
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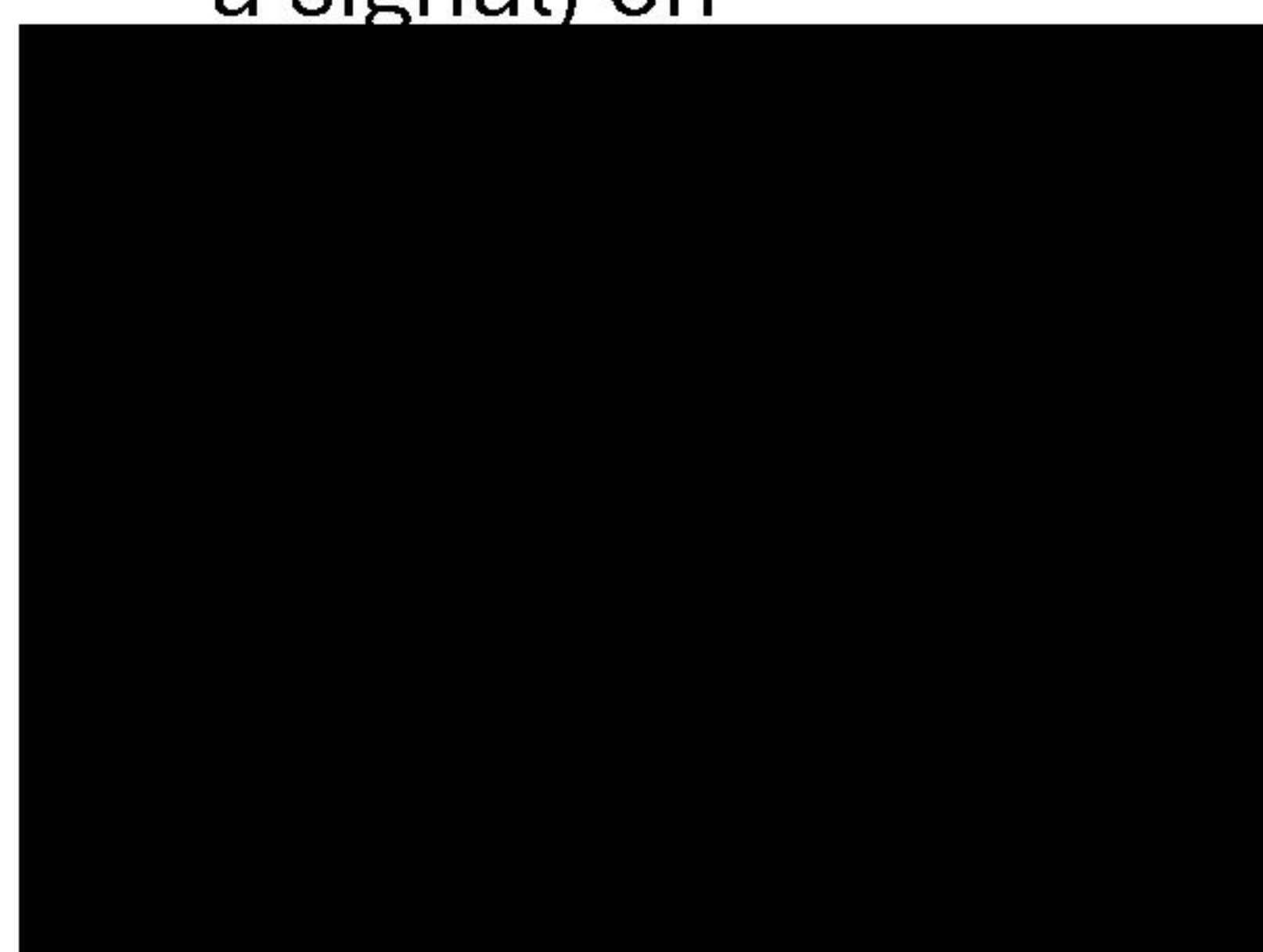
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Dear Caroline

Thank you very
much for your
message and
please accept
my apologies for
the delay in
responding - I
have been away
on a course and

am only just
catching up!

Next Tuesday
21st at 1000 will
be fine for us,
and we look
forward to seeing
you and the
Conservation
Officer then. If
the property's
location is not
familiar to you,
satnav can be
unreliable and
we appear to be
in the mid-
Sussex
equivalent of the
Bermuda
Triangle when it
comes to mobile
signal. If you use
it, our
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On
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Caroline
Grist
<Caroline.
Grist@
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