

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Internal Reconfiguration to Provide One Additional Self-Contained Residential Unit

Site Address: Whittaker House, 1 Leppard Walk, East Grinstead

Local Authority: Mid Sussex District Council

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a planning application seeking permission for the internal reconfiguration of part of the ground floor at Whittaker House to facilitate the creation of one additional self-contained residential unit.

The proposal relates solely to internal alterations within the existing building envelope and does not involve any external works, extensions, or alterations to the approved architectural form.

The statement should be read in conjunction with the previously approved Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the redevelopment of the site, which established the design rationale and principles accepted by the Local Planning Authority.

This document provides an update confirming that the approved design strategy remains valid and that the proposal represents a modest and proportionate evolution of the consented development.

2. Site and Planning Context

The site occupies a sustainable location within East Grinstead where the principle of residential development has been firmly established through successive planning permissions and detailed officer assessment.

The previous planning process carefully considered:

- Site constraints
- Neighbouring amenity
- Building scale and massing
- Living conditions
- Highway impacts
- Design quality

The resulting approved scheme reflects a balanced response to these considerations.

The current proposal does not seek to revisit or alter those conclusions.

3. Design Evolution and Continuity

The approved redevelopment established a contemporary residential building designed to make efficient use of previously developed land while respecting neighbouring properties.

The proposal maintains complete continuity with that approach.

There are no changes to:

- Building footprint
- Height or massing
- External appearance
- Fenestration
- Materials
- Landscaping
- Site layout

The architectural integrity of the development therefore remains fully intact.

Given the absence of physical change, the development will be visually indistinguishable from the approved scheme.

4. Amount

The proposal introduces one additional residential unit through internal reconfiguration only.

The modest increase reflects an efficient use of internal floorspace consistent with national objectives to optimise the use of previously developed land.

The scale of change is minor and does not alter the character or intensity of the development in any meaningful way.

5. Layout

Internal layout changes have been designed to ensure functional and comfortable accommodation.

The proposal maintains clear circulation routes and utilises existing infrastructure, including refuse storage and cycle provision.

No changes are proposed to the external site arrangement.

6. Scale

There are no changes to the scale of development.

The building remains exactly as approved and continues to sit comfortably within its surroundings.

7. Appearance

As the proposal does not involve any external works, the appearance of the building remains unchanged.

The design quality previously accepted by the Council is preserved.

8. Access

Vehicular Access

Existing access arrangements remain unchanged and continue to function effectively.

Given the sustainable location and modest nature of the proposal, no alteration to access arrangements is required.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access remains as approved, providing safe and convenient movement through the site.

Inclusive Access

The development continues to comply with Building Regulations requirements relating to accessibility and inclusive design.

The additional unit will benefit from the same access arrangements as the approved development.

9. Residential Amenity

Impact on Neighbours

As the proposal involves no external alterations, there will be no change in relationship with neighbouring properties.

There will be:

- No additional overlooking
- No change in outlook
- No increase in building mass
- No loss of light

The proposal therefore does not give rise to any adverse amenity impacts.

Living Conditions for Future Occupiers

The additional unit will provide suitable living accommodation consistent with expectations for town centre residential development.

The internal environment will meet modern standards of comfort and functionality.

10. Sustainable Design

The proposal represents inherently sustainable development through:

- Reuse of existing building fabric
- Efficient use of floorspace
- Avoidance of demolition or new construction
- Location within walking distance of services
- Reduced reliance on private vehicles

Optimising the use of existing buildings aligns with national sustainability objectives.

11. Response to Potential Concerns

Intensification

The proposal represents a very modest increase in occupancy within an established residential building and does not result in overdevelopment.

Parking

Given the town centre location and previous acceptance of reduced parking provision, the additional demand associated with one unit is negligible.

Noise

Internal works will comply with Building Regulations acoustic standards ensuring appropriate sound insulation.

12. Planning Balance

The proposal represents a logical refinement of an approved residential development and delivers a small but positive contribution to housing supply without generating harm.

The development:

- Maintains established design principles
 - Preserves character and appearance
 - Protects neighbouring amenity
 - Utilises existing infrastructure
 - Supports sustainable urban living
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13. Decision Maker Considerations and Compliance Summary

This section is provided to assist the Local Planning Authority in confirming that the proposal represents a proportionate and policy-compliant form of development, having regard to the established planning history of the site.

Established Principle

The principle of residential development at the site has been firmly established through the implementation of previous planning permissions and detailed consideration by the Local Planning Authority.

The current proposal does not alter the nature of the approved development but represents a modest internal optimisation of floorspace within the existing building envelope.

No Material Change to External Form

The proposal does not result in any change to:

- Building footprint
- Height or massing
- Architectural appearance
- Fenestration pattern
- Relationship with neighbouring properties
- Landscaping or site layout

As such, the development will be visually indistinguishable from the approved scheme and does not reopen design considerations previously resolved through the planning process.

Compliance with Design Objectives

The development continues to accord with the design principles established through earlier approvals, namely:

- Efficient use of previously developed land
 - Delivery of high quality residential accommodation
 - Respect for neighbouring amenity
 - Contribution to sustainable urban form
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Response to Previous Planning Considerations

Previous officer and design assessments focused on matters including building scale, impact on neighbouring amenity, living conditions, and highways considerations.

As the current proposal involves no external alteration, those matters remain unaffected and the conclusions previously reached remain applicable.

National Planning Policy Context

The proposal aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework, particularly:

- Supporting efficient use of land
- Optimising density in sustainable locations
- Delivering additional housing
- Promoting sustainable patterns of development

The development therefore benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Absence of Planning Harm

The proposal does not give rise to any material planning harm.

There are no adverse impacts in respect of:

- Visual character
- Neighbouring amenity
- Highway safety
- Environmental considerations
- Infrastructure capacity

Proportionate Nature of Proposal

The introduction of one additional unit represents a minor and logical evolution of the approved development.

The proposal should therefore be considered proportionate in scale and consistent with the overall planning strategy for the site.

13. Conclusion

Having regard to the established planning history, the absence of any external change, and the modest nature of the proposal, it is respectfully submitted that the development represents a sustainable and policy-compliant form of development which gives rise to no material harm.

Planning permission should therefore be granted without delay.