



North Hall, Staplefield Lane, Staplefield,  
West Sussex RH17 6AS

## **PLANNING STATEMENT**

Householder Planning Permission & Listed Building  
Consent Applications

*Conversion of the first floor of the Granary to facilitate ancillary  
accommodation to the main house together with associated minor  
external alterations*

November 2025

## INTRODUCTION

1. This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for householder Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent relating to the conversion of the first floor of the Granary to facilitate ancillary accommodation to the main house at North Hall, Staplefield Lane West Sussex RH17 6AS
2. In addition to this Statement, this pre-application enquiry includes the following supporting information:
  1. Completed application forms
  2. Completed CIL form
  3. Covering letter
  4. Application drawings (by FPD)
    - D1000rev02 - Location Plan
    - D1100-rev 02 - Existing Site Plan
    - D1200-rev01 - Existing Plan & Elevations
    - D3400rev02 - Proposed Plan & Elevations
    - D3400rev00 - Indicative Details
  5. 251118 Design Document REV00 Planning (by FPD)
  6. Planning Statement (by FPD)
  7. Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment (by Desbruslais)
  8. Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (by Arbtech)

## SITE CONTEXT

3. The property is a detached former farmhouse situated just south of Staplefield. The property is listed Grade II. The listing was made in 1983. There are various outbuildings within the curtilage of the main building, including a Grade II listed barn to the north west.
4. The Granary is a two-storey building situated between the listed buildings. The building itself is a partially masonry, partially timber framed structure built into the

rising ground covering the southern part of the. The building is considered to be a curtilage listed structure rather than specifically listed itself.

5. As indicated page 6 of the Heritage Impact Assessment, *“The ‘granary’ nature of the building is not certain due to the fact that the building is built into the land on two sides and this would negate the usual protections from vermin and dampness that would be typically necessary for grain storage, with separation from the ground and air flow underneath the grain storage floor.*

*The name may well be, therefore, somewhat fanciful, as the building seems unlikely to actually have been used for such a purpose.”*

6. The ground floor is a triple garage, used as a garage/workshop and for storage. The upper floor is also used for storage or as a games room. Please refer to Appendix 1 for photographs.

#### **HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

7. The Granary is located within the curtilage of two Grade II listed buildings. The English Heritage listing descriptions are set out below.

**Statutory Address:** North Hall, Mallion's Lane

**List Entry Number:** 1354842

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 11 May 1983

**Details:** CUCKFIELD RURAL MALLION'S LANE 1. 5405 North Hall TQ 22 NE 10/301 II; C17 or earlier timber-framed building, refronted with red brick on ground floor and tile-hung above. Tiled roof. Casement windows. Two storeys. Three windows. Modern addition to south.

**Statutory Address:** Barn to the North West of North Hall

**List Entry Number:** 1285851

**Date first listed:** 11 May 1983

**Grade:** II

**Details:** CUCKFIELD RURAL MALLION'S LANE 1. 5405 Barn to the north west of North Ball TQ 22 NE 10/301A II; C18. Facet with weather-boarding on a stone base. Hipped tiled roof.

8. The Granary, which is the subject of these proposals, is not specifically listed, nor is it described in the listed listing descriptions for either North Hall or the Barn. The building appears on 19th-century maps and is of similar materials to the Barn, although it has been significantly modified in recent decades.
9. The Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment by Desbruslais provides a full assessment of the subject building's significance and also the impact of proposed alterations to the curtilage listed structure within the immediate environs of a Grade II Listed asset.
10. The assessment seeks to ensure that the special architectural and historic interest of the building and the character and appearance of the local area is conserved, whilst providing comment upon both elements of change and alteration to the subject building.

#### **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

11. The Council's planning register records the following application in respect to the property:
12. Ref. No: **CD/041/96** "*Emergency works to construct buttress wall against end wall of building.*" Approved 03 October 1996

#### **PRE-APPLICATION**

13. In March 2025 a request for pre-application advice was submitted to Mid-Sussex District Council with respect to the conversion of an existing outbuilding to ancillary accommodation associated with the main dwelling (North Hall).

14. Formal advice was received on 19 June 2025 from Hamish Evans, along with detailed heritage comments from Mid-Sussex’s Conservation Officer, Emily Wade.
15. The pre-application scheme proposed the conversion of the existing granary within the grounds of North Hall to provide an ancillary gym/office/games room.
16. Officers accepted the principle of the conversion, providing the building would remain ancillary and not capable of independent occupation. The Conservation Officer also considered the conversion to be acceptable, subject to minor amendments and a targeted historic building survey and heritage impact assessment to clarify the historic significance of the building.
17. The proposed elements of the pre-app scheme are set out in the table below alongside the advice received.

<b>Proposal - External</b>	<b>Conservation Officer Advice</b>
Replacement of non-original windows with new timber casements of appropriate design.	<i>Replacement windows acceptable subject to confirming age and design</i>
Installation of two conservation rooflights on the northwest roof slope.	<i>Rooflights acceptable in principle but Preferably on the southern roof slope.</i>
Flue on northwest roof slope	<i>Flue to be located in a less prominent position.</i>
Enlargement of south-east window.	<i>Contentious as it would involve the removal of original fabric. Consider vertical enlargement to reference the former door in this position.</i>
A small window is proposed to the east elevation to serve a shower room, positioned to minimise any fabric loss.	<i>New north-east window for the shower room should be omitted if possible</i>
<b>Proposal - Internal</b>	

Open-plan space with an enclosed shower room ancillary to North Hall.	<i>The principle of development was considered acceptable provided the building remained ancillary and not capable of independent occupation.</i>
Reinstate wall finishes to improve thermal performance and weather proofing.	<i>Internal lining acceptable; evidence of historic lath and plaster should be explored.</i>

**PLANNING LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT**

**Legislation**

1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that determinations under the planning acts must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
2. Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the Council to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
3. The relevant policies for assessing this proposal are outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan (2018), (2024), and relevant Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance (SPDs/SPGs).

**National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF)**

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (revised December 2024) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied through the planning system.
5. At the heart of the revised Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
6. The revised NPPF makes clear that the starting point for decision making is the development plan and a presumption in favour of sustainable development does not

change that statutory status. Applications for development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Local Plan should therefore be approved without delay.

7. The NPPF recognises that the planning and development process is fundamental in achieving the creation of high-quality buildings and places in which to live and work and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
8. The following sections are considered relevant to this proposal:
  - Chapter 2 Achieving sustainable development
  - Chapter 11 Making effective use of land
  - Chapter 12 Achieving well-designed places
  - Chapter 16 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
9. Section 12 refers to well-designed places. Paragraph 135 (c) states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
10. Section 16 refers to the historic environment and requires the decision maker to consider whether the proposal sustains and enhances the significance of heritage assets, making a balanced judgement having regard to the scale of harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset (paragraphs 205-214).

### **Development Plan**

18. The statutory development plan for Mid-Sussex District Council comprises:

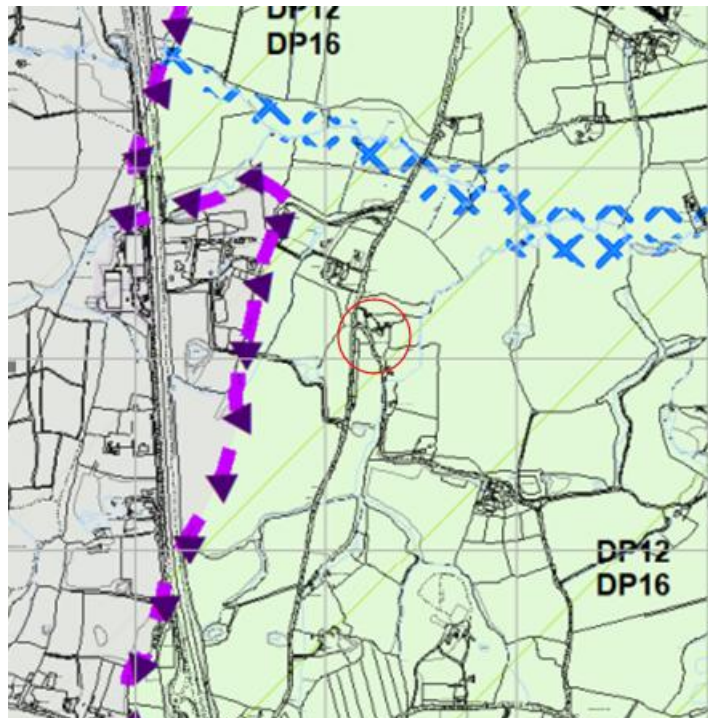
#### *Mid-Sussex District Plan (2018) (MSDP)*

- DP15 – New Homes in the Countryside
- DP16 – High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- DP26 – Character and Design
- DP34 – Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

*Supplementary Guidance*

- Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (2020)
- The Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan (AS3),

*District Plan Policy Designations*



- Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
- High Weald AONB

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions must be made in accordance with the Local Development Plan unless material considerations suggest otherwise.

**PROPOSALS**

19. These application proposals have been informed by pre-application advice received from Mid-Sussex in June 2025 and heritage advice from Desbruslais



Chartered Surveyors, who undertook a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the pre-application comments.

20. The proposed works to facilitate the conversion of the two-storey outbuilding known as the Granary into ancillary accommodation to the main dwelling house:

21. The description of development is as follows: *“Conversion of the first floor of the Granary to facilitate ancillary accommodation to the main house together with associated minor external alterations”*

22. The scope of works is summarised below:

- Rooflights repositioned to the southern (rear) roof slope, reducing visual impact and avoiding interference with historic roof timbers.
- Flue relocated to a less prominent position on the south slope and specified as a slim matt-black finish to minimise visibility
- South-east window enlargement omitted to prevent the loss of original timber framing and to retain the building’s agricultural character.
- New east-facing window positioned between existing studs to limit any disturbance to historic fabric.
- Internal wall finishes have been specified in detail. New plasterboard will be fixed to independent stud framing, set a minimum of 50mm clear of the existing walls to preserve the historic fabric. The lining system will be fully removable, ensuring no physical impact on the original structure

23. The purpose of the annexe conversion remains as ‘to serve as an ancillary space to the main dwelling, providing space for an office, gym/games room’.

24. The proposed annexe will not have any separate or independent:

- Address

- Post box
- Utility meters
- Garden area or residential curtilage
- Access

25. The ground floor garages/storage use would remain as existing.

## **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

### **Principle of use for ancillary purposes**

26. Policy DP6 of the MSDP states ‘Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design), and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement.’
27. The pre-app advice noted that proposed development should not include the facilities that would enable it to be used as an independent residential unit as policy DP15 of the MSDP does state that where a granny annexe is proposed it should be assessed as an independent dwelling.
28. The proposed conversion of the existing first floor of the Granary would be used for ancillary purposes to the main dwellinghouse. The ancillary use would be reliant on the host dwelling and will not constitute a separate, standalone dwelling/residential unit, and it could not operate as such, given the reliance on the host dwelling.
29. The pre-application advice was clear that, providing that the proposed development does comprise facilities that would enable it to be used as an independent residential, the principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

30. Consistent with other similar uses in the district, the ancillary use of the Granary could be secured by a suitably worded condition.

31. It is considered that, subject to further assessment on character, design and amenity, the principle of development is acceptable.

### **Heritage**

32. Policy DP26 of the MSDP states that proposals need to demonstrate that the development addresses the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape.

33. Policy DP34 of the MSDP requires development to protect listed buildings.

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

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

- *Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- *Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.*

34. The Granary is not specifically listed, however, it is within the curtilage of two Grade II listed buildings and sits in between these buildings. As a later addition on the site, the Granary comprises similar materials to the listed Barn and is considered to contribute positively to the setting of both listed buildings.

35. In terms of the proposed works, the alterations are considered to be sympathetic to the host building and surrounding heritage assets. The proposed materials would be high quality and in keeping with the heritage context. From public vantage points, the proposed alterations designed to ensure they would be barely visible and would not represent any material harm to the setting of the adjacent heritage assets.

36. Key alterations to building, including the proposed flue and rooflights have been amended in accordance with the pre-app advice. This has involved moving such elements to less prominent locations on the south-west roof slope.

37. The south east window had been proposed to be enlarged at pre-app, but is now proposed to be replaced within the existing opening to ensure historic fabric around the opening is retained. The window casement itself is wrought iron, late 19<sup>th</sup> century, and is thought to be a reclaimed element that had been installed in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century.

38. The proposals include the insertion of a very small shower room window to the north east façade. New openings can be acceptable if assessed as not overly impactful or damaging to heritage assets. In this case, the proposed window is very small and located on a side elevation. The window would also be inserted in between studs, ensuring there is no significant material/fabric loss.

39. The new window would also be positioned almost immediately adjacent to a similar window on the main house. It is considered that the introduction of a smaller, square opening in the Granary adds a degree of symmetry and a tangible link between the main house and this unit.
40. Overall, the addition of the small side light window does not alter one's perception of the building as primarily an agricultural outbuilding and the impact is minimised upon noting the reciprocal square window on the main house in this instance. The window could also be removed/patched over in the future, therefore, the alteration is easily reversible if necessary.
41. In terms of the internal works, pre-application advice stated that evidence of internal historic lath and plaster should be explored. Heritage advice has confirmed that the walls previously had lath-and-plaster lining, but it is unclear whether this was original or added later. The current exposed timber framing is not likely to have been intended as a visible feature, as 18th–19th-century studwork was typically utilitarian and fully concealed. If the walls are re-clad, any historic import marks on the timbers would be hidden. From a heritage standpoint, there is no objection to cladding; it would in fact be more typical for such framing to be fully covered. Either lath and plaster or plasterboard would be acceptable, as both are reversible. With new insulation, appropriate breathability, air movement, and a ventilated cavity should be included to manage moisture and prevent condensation.
42. This application includes details of the proposed internal wall finishes, comprising new plasterboard fixed to independent stud framing, set a minimum of 50mm clear of the existing walls to preserve the historic fabric. The lining system will be fully removable, ensuring no physical impact on the original structure.
43. The Heritage Assessment considers that whilst the proposed internal lining would alter the building's current barn-like appearance, this would reflect an earlier phase of the building's history and is as valid as the present exposed aesthetic. As such, the proposed wall cladding approach was considered to be appropriate,

provided the insulation and construction manage vapour and moisture appropriately, as is addressed in the design.

44. The Heritage Assessment considers that the proposals result in a very minor effect upon some historic fabric and a minimal change to outward appearance of the building. Overall, it is concluded that through following the detailed heritage advice at pre-application and as set out in the Heritage Statement and Impact Assessment, the significance and setting of the building would be fully preserved.
45. We therefore consider that the proposed minor alteration to the Granary are consistent with the objectives set out in the NPPF, stating: The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. The proposals also accord with local Policy DP34.

### **Character and Design**

46. Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan states:

47. *"All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside.*

48. The proposal comprises minor alterations to the existing building. The alterations would be sympathetic to the existing building and surrounding heritage assets, preserving their character and appearance.

### **Ecology/Bats**

49. Policy DP38 states that *"Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:*

- *Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally*

*relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*

- *Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances);”*

50. A Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys (BERS) (October 2025) have been undertaken following a Preliminary Roost Assessment report (2025).

51. The BERS states that both the Granary (B1) and the main house (B2) have been subject to emergence/re-entry surveys.

52. The main house was found to be ‘high value, confirmed roosts’. Although no works are proposed to the main house, due to its close proximity to the Granary, there is considered to be potential for disturbance to bats within this building or functionally connected roosts across multiple buildings on site.

53. Due to the high habitat value of Granary and the confirmed presence of bats roosting within the main house, adjacent building, there remains an elevated risk that bats could be present during the works, as bats are highly mobile creatures known to roost switch regularly. In addition, bats roosting within the adjacent building may be disturbed during works. As such, a bespoke Bat Mitigation Plan (BMP) is recommended and can be secured by planning conditions. It is suggested that the BMP includes the following measures:

- A disturbance notice should be sent to Natural England prior to commencement of works to inform them of the potential disturbance of roosts present within B2.

- Timing of works to avoid the maternity season (May to September) due to the likely presence of a maternity roost within B2 to limit the potential for disturbance.
- The provision of a toolbox talk to contractors, by a suitably qualified ecologist, to inform them of the presence of bat roosts.
- A pre-commencement inspection of any roost features by a suitably qualified ecologist using a torch and an endoscope (this may be via ladders, scaffolding or a mobile elevated platform).
- The removal of all roof and ridge tiles and timber cladding by hand under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.
- No roosting features identified on B2 will be blocked during or post development. Exclusion zones will be identified to ensure this is adhered to.
- Avoiding the use of unnecessary lighting, particularly at night, or implementing a low impact lighting strategy to avoid illumination of retained or newly created roosts or roost features. Avoiding excessive noise or vibration disturbance e.g. from power tools or radios, within close proximity of retained or newly created roosts or roost features.
- If works are started after May 2026 – an updated inspection and dusk emergence survey will be carried out in the June/July prior to the start of works to check for any changes in roost status. If evidence of roosting bats is found within B1 then further surveys and a licence will be required to proceed with the works.

### **Neighbouring amenity**

54. Policy DP26 in part seeks to ensure that development: "*does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new*



*dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);"*

55. Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD reaffirms the above policy position.

56. The application site is not located near neighbouring properties, therefore no neighbours would be impacted by the proposal in any way.

57. As the proposal would have no impact on neighbouring amenity, it is considered to be compliant with policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

## **CONCLUSION**

58. This application has been prepared in line with the Mid-Sussex District Development Plan and national guidance to support the conversion of the first floor of the existing outbuilding known as the Granary at North Hall to facilitate its use as ancillary accommodation.

59. The proposed development has been informed by the pre-application advice received from Mid-Sussex in June 2025 and heritage advice from Desbruslais Chartered Surveyors who undertook a Heritage Impact Assessment in accordance with the pre-application comments.

60. For all the reasons outlined in this report, we consider that the relevant development plan policies have been fully satisfied. We, therefore, consider that the application proposals pass the Section 38 Test of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and that Planning Permission and Listed Building consent should be granted accordingly.

APPENDIX A – THE GRANARY PHOTOGRAPHS



The Granary front (NW) elevation.



The Granary side (SW) elevation.



The Granary rear (SE) elevation.



The Granary side (NE) elevation.



First floor games room