



Ashdown Planning Consultants

Architectural Design and Planning

**PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT AND
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR**

**CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING INTERNAL AREAS TO FORM
2 ADDITIONAL FLATS, 1 PERSON 1 BED FLAT 10 AND
2 PERSON 1 BED FLAT 11**

TOBIAS PLACE,

COOMBE HILL ROAD, EAST GRINSTEAD, RH19 4LZ

September 2026

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Site: Tobias Place, Coombe Hill Road, East Grinstead

INTRODUCTION

This Planning Support and Design and Access Statement supports an application for conversion of an existing communal space and regularisation of a previously converted area to form 2 additional residential flats within the existing building.

A pre-application submission was held with officers of Mid Sussex District Council with a formal written report received on 04/04/2025. This full application follows the advice given and now seeks formal approval for the scheme as submitted. The council considered that this proposed change of use could be considered favourably.

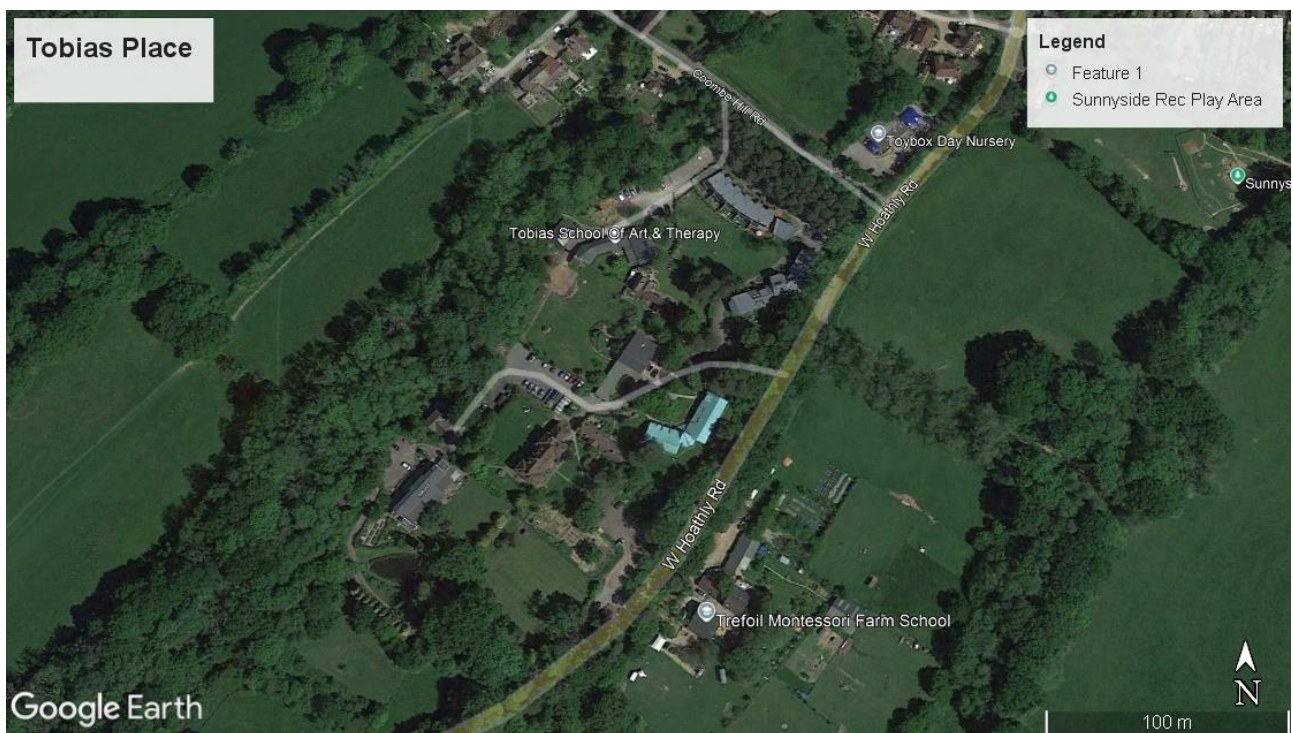
Approval for conversion to 9 units was granted under 09/02535/FUL. A modification/amendment was submitted to allow for the creation of Flat 10 which was not approved at that time. However this has evolved naturally and although this was well over 10 years ago, the planning authority have advised within the pre-application discussions that this should now be included within this new formal proposal.

Lengthy discussions have subsequently been held by the applicant with the existing current tenants regarding the use of the communal area and there have been no objections or concerns from them regarding conversion to form Flat 11.

This statement should be considered alongside the following plans submitted:

Dwg no 5442 100	Proposed Plan GF Flat 11 Issue 2 on A3
Dwg No 5442 110	Proposed Plan GF Flat 10 Issue 2 on A3
Dwg No 5442 200	Existing Plan GF Issue 2 on A3
Dwg No 5442 210	Proposed and Existing Elevations Flat 10 Issue 2 on A3
Dwg No 5442 210	Proposed and Existing Elevations Flat 11 Issue 2 on A3
Dwg No 5442 1000	Block Plan Issue 1 on A3
Site Location Plan at 1:2500 on A4	

SITE



The site is located on the north-west corner of the junction between Coombe Hill Road and West Hoathly Road, within the countryside and some 104 metres from the built up area boundary of East Grinstead. In pure policy terms the site is not contiguous with the built up area boundary of an existing settlement, however given the existing surrounding residential uses and the close proximity to the built up area of East Grinstead along with a

footpath into the town, the principle of the conversion can be considered acceptable in this instance.

DESIGN AND SCALE

There are no proposed external alterations to facilitate the change of use which keeps in keeping with the character of the building. With regards to neighbour amenity this proposal would not cause any harm. Please refer to submitted Dwg No 5442 210 Proposed and Existing Elevations Flat 10 and Dwg No 5442 210 Proposed and Existing Elevations Flat 11 to view highlighted external areas relevant to each flat .

The units comply with or exceed National Space Standards for a 2 person 1 bed self contained unit at Flat 11 and a 1 person 1 bed self contained unit for Flat 10, as existing but unapproved. Flat 11 amounts to 70 sq m internal area while Flat 10 contains 40 sq m internally.

ACCESS

This application has absolutely no effect on the current access which will remain as existing. No notable additional traffic will occur locally by approval.

The creation of 2 x 1 bed Flats requires provision of an addition 1.5 car parking spaces. In this regard 2 additional dedicated spaces are being provided at the northern end of the site immediately adjacent to existing laid out parking. These are shown on Dwg No 5442 1000 the Site Block Plan.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

This proposal meets the requirements of current National and District Policies as follows:

Mid Sussex District Plan

DP4 – Housing
DP5 – Planning to Meet Future Housing Need
DP6 – Settlement Hierarchy
DP12 – Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
DP15 – New Homes in the Countryside
DP16 – High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
DP17 – Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
DP21 – Transport
DP26 – Character and Design
DP27 – Dwelling Space Standards
DP28 – Accessibility
DP37 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
DP38 - Biodiversity
DP39 – Sustainable Design and Construction
DP40 – Renewable Energy Schemes
DP41 – Flood Risk and Drainage

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan

EG1 - Protection of the High weald AONB (Now National Landscape)
EG2 - Areas of Development Constraint
EG3 – Promoting Good Design
EG5 – Housing Proposals
EG12 – Car Parking
EG16 - Ashdown Forest Protection

In addition, with regard to the High Weald National Landscape and Ashdown Forest Protection, financial contributions are required in respect of new dwellings within 7km of the forest and potential visitor and recreational use of the area. This is normally secured by a Section 106 Legal Agreement which is completed with the council once approval is recommended. Usually once the agreement is finalised, the final planning decision can be formally issued. The applicant agrees to pursue this route.

CONCLUSION

This application for 2 x smaller units of accommodation within an existing complex which is specifically set up and also arranged for those with particular needs or disabilities is completely within policy requirements.

The proposal will have no effect on the landscape in general, or the setting of Tobias Place itself, being completely tree screened.

The use is already in place since conversion was approved in 2009 and finalised in 2012 for 9 similar units, this proposal simply utilises existing built form within this building to better advantage for all.

The existing inhabitants and tenants have no concerns in respect of the use of the communal area, this has been consistently underused over the years. The external amenity areas and easy links to the town are ample here. The applicant ensures that immediate outside amenity areas including wildlife and grassed areas, along with maintained wooded sections are all well maintained and accessible, with seating areas. We trust this application can obtain approval from the council, particularly following a previous positive pre-application assessment.