

Mid Sussex District Council
Oaklands
Oaklands Road
Haywards Heath
West Sussex
RH16 1SS

27th January 2026

Dear Planning Department,

APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A SHARED PORCH TO SERVE 'THE COTTAGE' AND 'THE OLD BARN' AT SOUTHBROOKS FARM, DANWORTH LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT, HASSOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9LW.

This letter has been prepared for our client, Mr Nyk Ellis-Lawson, in support of an application for full planning permission to provide a shared porch for the two dwellings known as 'The Cottage' and 'The Old Barn', both located at Southbrooks Farm. Planning permission was granted in 2019 and 2022 respectively for the change of use of two agricultural buildings and the land within their curtilage to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouse), referenced DM/18/5128 and DM/22/0642. This application now seeks permission to erect a shared porch between these two properties.

Site Context



Figure 1 – Extract from Google Earth of Southbrooks Farm, highlighted in the red box.

Southbrooks Farm is located in a rural position mid-way between Hurstpierpoint and Goddards Green. The holding comprises permanent pasture with a small woodland corpse extending in all to some 13 acres, which is utilised for the grazing of livestock and producing a hay crop.

There are a small number of buildings located on the far side of the land which have access from Danworth Lane via an existing access track. Once used for agricultural storage in association with the maintenance of the land, two of the buildings are now in residential use, whilst the third is used as an office. **Figure 1** above is an aerial extract from Google Earth of the site, with the application buildings highlighted in the red box.

The application site is located entirely within a Flood Risk Zone 1, an area identified to have a low probability of flooding (less than 0.1% chance of flooding from rivers or the sea). There are no other landscape designations that may affect development or any future use of the land or buildings on the land.

Planning History

There are a number of applications submitted at Southbrooks Farm considered to be pertinent to this proposal. Three applications of note are the two applications that obtained Prior Approval for the change of use of buildings and land within their curtilage from an agricultural use to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouse), and the application that obtained Prior Approval for the change of use of the agricultural building to an office. The two applications for dwellings are referenced DM/18/5128 and DM/22/0642 and were submitted in 2018 and 2022 respectively. For both applications, Prior Approval was granted under delegated powers. The dwellings are known as “The Old Barn” and “The Cottage”.

Applications followed in 2023 to discharge Conditions 3 and 4 for each of the previously mentioned permissions, referenced DM/23/2381 (in relation to DM/18/5128) and DM/23/2384 (in relation to DM/22/0642). Both related to the car parking spaces and bicycle stores and were approved in September 2023.

Prior Approval was also granted in October 2023 for the conversion of an agricultural building to an office, referenced DM/23/366.

Full planning permission was then approved in 2025 for the “Relocation of car parking spaces, electric vehicle charging points and cycle stores, facilitated by amendments to the residential curtilage of two dwellings and an office.” Within this application it was confirmed that the reason for the application was to *‘better utilise the land around the dwellings, to improve the amenity these properties are afforded, whilst protecting the wider landscape and countryside.’* Likewise, the reason behind the current proposal is to improve amenity for occupants of the residential properties, and consequently, it is respectfully submitted that it should therefore be supported under Delegated Powers.

Policy Considerations

The Development Plan incorporates the saved policies of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018, the relevant policies from the plan have been set out and considered below:

- Policy DP1 – Sustainable Economic Development
- Policy DP12 – Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
- Policy DP20 – Securing Infrastructure
- Policy DP26 – Character and Design
- Policy DP38 – Biodiversity
- Policy DP39 – Sustainable Design and Construction

Analysis

This application seeks planning consent for the erection of a shared entrance porch between The Old Barn and The Cottage. While the site would remain as two dwellings, the shared porch offers the two units' additional space for a 'muddy room', for storage and aesthetic purposes.

Furthermore, as aforementioned, there are no designated landscape constraints that would impact any future development or use of the application site. The site is also solely situated in a Flood Zone 1, meaning there is a low probability of flooding.

Permission was approved in 2019, 2022 and 2023 for the change of use of the two agricultural buildings to dwellings (now known as "The Old Barn" and "The Cottage") and a third to an office use, the respective buildings have been or are in the process of being converted to the approved uses. However, since applications to discharge the conditions at the two properties have been approved, it has become apparent that a far more suitable layout would be to provide a connecting porch between the two dwellings, due to the impracticalities of the existing entrances to both units. Due to the southerly exposure of winds and rain, and the need for a 'muddy room' for both properties to store shoes, umbrellas and buggies, the connecting porch offers both dwellings this space.

Single storey, flat roofed (with two roof lights) and walls clad in composite boarding, the porch is certainly modest in size and scale. Erected on top of an existing concrete slab, there would be no impact on biodiversity or the wider countryside, with the development shielded from outside views by existing built form or vegetation to the north. Approximately 12.5 sqm in size, the proposed porch would result in an improved residential development, whilst would not appear out of character in this locality.

Given the modest nature of the porch extension, its orientation within the site and separation distances afforded to the nearest neighbours (beyond the application site), it is respectfully submitted that the proposal will have limited impacts outside of the immediate site.

In accordance with local and national planning policy, proposals should show that they are a sustainable form of development. With the social and economic benefits that would result from the proposal, and the minimal environmental impacts, the scheme would undoubtedly qualify as a sustainable form of development and should therefore be met with support.

Other Material Considerations

Ecology:

This proposal is considered to be exempt from providing the Mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), due to the application satisfying the *de minimis* exemption. There is currently a concrete slab on the land where the shared porch is proposed. This slab has been in situ for a period in excess of 2 years, confirmed by the Historic Google Earth image produced below at **Figure 2**, taken in September 2023.



Figure 2 – Historic Google Earth imagery of the site, dated September 2023.

Given that the porch would be erected on top of this concrete slab, there would be no impact on any habitat. Notwithstanding this, the proposed porch is approximately 12.5 sqm in size, so would be under the necessary 25 sqm limit for which BNG is required. Therefore, it cannot reasonably be requested that this proposal meets BNG requirements.

Arboriculture:

An arboricultural report was undertaken to accompany the application referenced DM/25/0818, to ensure that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the trees surrounding the site. Within this report, a Root Protection Plan was included, this is reproduced below at **Figure 3**.

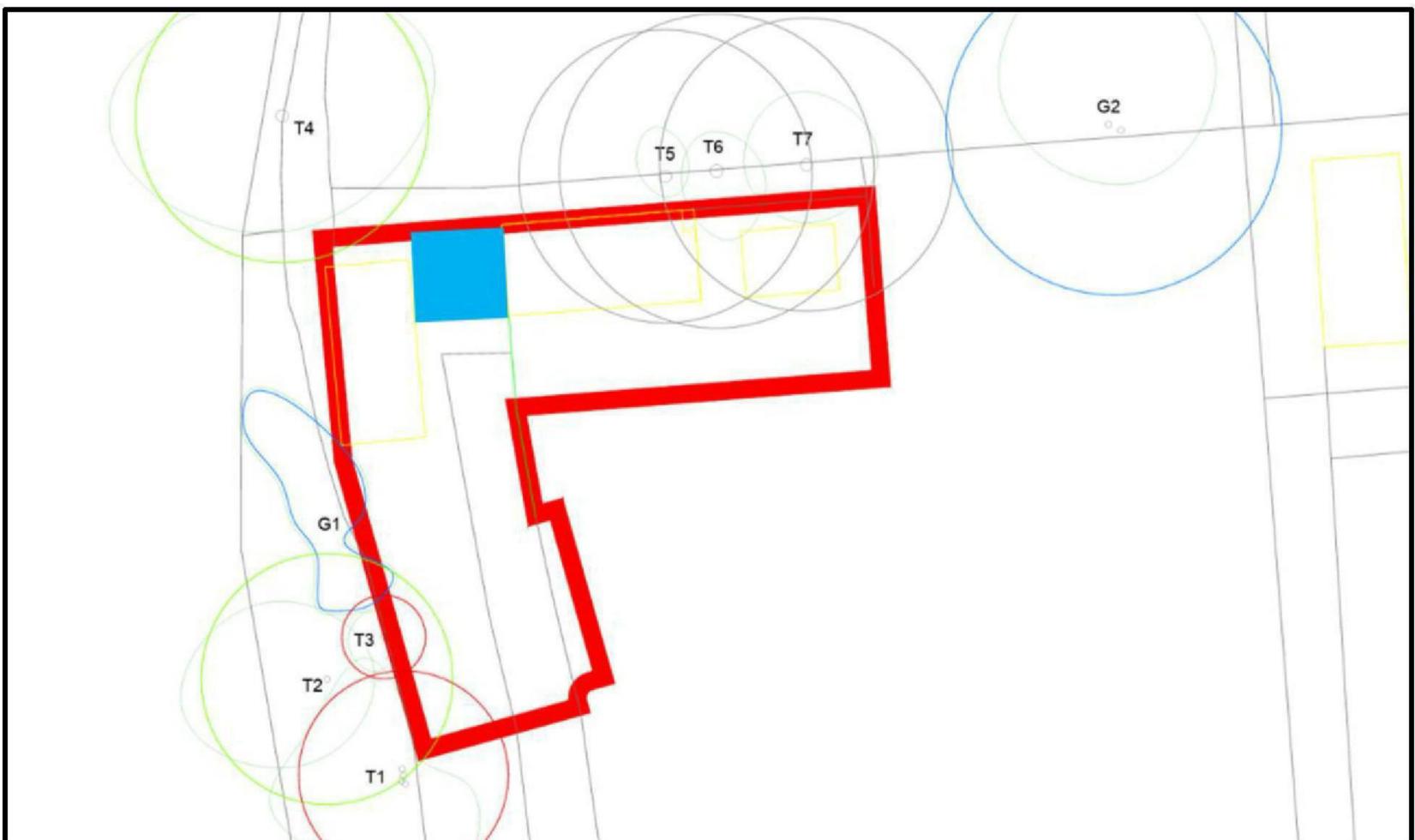


Figure 3 – The Root Protection Plan for the application referenced DM/25/0818.

As is visible above in the blue box (proposed porch), the development proposed would be located outside any of the pertinent Root Protection Zones. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not have any detrimental impact on the surrounding trees, or their roots. Furthermore, the porch would be located on top of an existing concrete slab, so little excavation work would be required in the construction of the porch.

As such, with regards to any perceived arboricultural impacts of the development, the scheme is acceptable.

Summary

This letter has been prepared in support of an application for full planning permission to provide a shared porch between two dwellings at Southbrooks Farm, known as 'The Cottage' and 'The Old Barn'.

The adopted Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) identifies the site as falling within the open countryside, outside any settlement boundary. The site is therefore subject to more restrictive policy compliances, where development is resisted unless it complies with both national and local planning policy, and it can be demonstrated that there would be no detrimental impact on the landscape or the surrounding countryside.

To this extent, a modest, single storey, 12.5 sqm shared porch is not considered to result in harm to the character and appearance of the area, proposing instead to better layout the application site and to improve the setting of Southbrooks Farm, allowing the residential development to better assimilate into the countryside in which it is located. The scheme would result in improved amenity to the occupants of the properties by affording a sheltered entrance porch, whilst also being of a design in-keeping with the character and appearance of the existing properties and these found in the locality.

Like the previous application to relocate car parking spaces, EV charging points and bike stores, referenced DM/25/0818, this proposal will better utilise the land around the dwellings, to improve the amenity these properties are afforded, whilst protecting the wider landscape and countryside. Consequently, the scheme accords with local and national planning policies. As such, the application should be approved under delegated powers.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

