



Planning Statement

Written and prepared by Breen Planning

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Introduction

Breen Planning (**the agent**) has been instructed by Mr Jonathan Bickerdike (**the applicant**) to prepare and submit a retrospective planning application to Mid Sussex District Council (**the Planning Authority**) to seek planning consent for a partial change of use of existing land to a residential paddock area (**the proposal /development**) at: Agricultural land south of Meadow Cottage, Branntridge Lane, Staplefield RH17 6EW (**the site location**). The provision of this Planning Statement report has been prepared to support this retrospective planning application and seeks to demonstrate the appropriate nature of this development, in line with planning policy along with any relevant material considerations.

Site Location

The site is located is on agricultural land south of Meadow Cottage, Branntridge Lane, Staplefield, RH17 6EW with the exact position of the existing outbuilding being located along the mid-northern edge of the site. The existing land is bounded by a high volume of natural landscape componentises including hedges along with mature and semi-mature trees which are densely located particularly along the sites western and south boundaries. The existence of these existing landscape features provides the site with effective screening opportunities which have a proven benefit to significantly mitigate against any visual change to this area. As per the Mid Sussex Local Plan, the site resides within the countryside and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site resides outside of the Staplefield Conservation Area.

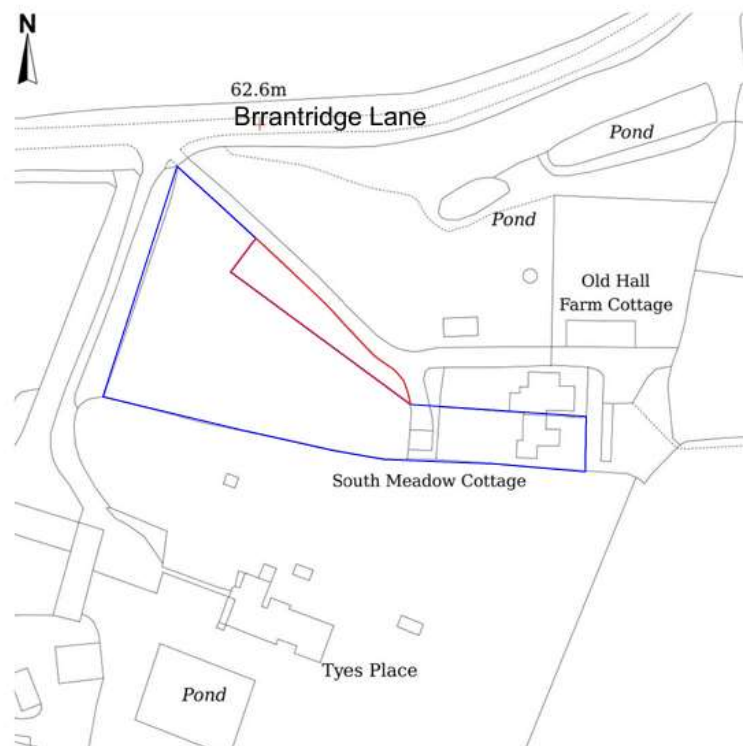


Figure 1: Site Location Plan (Not to scale, see planning drawings)

The Proposal

The provision of this full planning application seeks a partial change of use of land under the applicant's ownership to a residential paddock area as this part of the sites land is regularly used by the applicant for various domestic purposes. This includes recreational sport, outdoor stimulation and the use of the existing garden room which is in situ at this part of the land and currently has a retrospective planning application under assessment.

The purpose of this full planning application is to enable the land to have a wider function to the main dwelling so that the principle of development to retain the existing outbuilding structure will be acceptable. The existing garden room is primarily used for bird watching and further detail of this is provided in the pending planning application ref: DM/22/3875. The applicant has no intention to further develop this land or set any precedent for any further residential development at this site and would be happy accepting a conditional grant in planning permission to restrict any further development on this site as the primary intention is to retain the modest garden room which remains on site.

To limit the extent of the proposed change of use, the applicant has agreed to only propose a partial change of use of the land and a small strip of land where the garden room is positioned has been selected for the chosen area. This will ensure that the rest of the field undergoes no change as a result of this proposal, the provided plans highlight the extent of the proposal in further detail.

Policy Assessment

The following policy and guidance documents are recognized as primary considerations for the decision of the associated application at the site location

- National Planning Policy Framework;
- National Planning Practice Guidance;
- Mid Sussex District Plan 2018;
- Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF explains that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- i) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- ii) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with

- accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- iii) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimizing waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Analysis: *The development represents sustainable development through the promotion of all three primary objectives of the NPPF as the proposed change of use will yield significant social value while not resulting in any detrimental environmental impacts.*

Section 12 of the NPPF relates to achieving Well-designed Places which states that “The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”

Analysis: *The development represents sustainable development through the promotion of all three primary objectives of the NPPF as the proposed change of use will yield no visual change to the area*

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF describes the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 specifically states that for decision-making this means (amongst other things):

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or:
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

Breen Planning kindly request that this planning application is examined and accessed within a suitable timeframe in line with paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031

The Plan sets out a vision for how Mid Sussex wants to evolve and a delivery strategy for how that will be achieved. It supports the National Planning Policy Framework's 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. As such, it sets out broad guidance on the distribution and quality of development in the form of 'higher level' strategic policies. It also provides the framework for all subsequent planning documents, including Neighbourhood Plans. The District Plan covers the period up to 2031 and will replace the majority of the Mid Sussex Local Plan adopted in 2004. The Local Plan policies that will continue to apply are listed in Appendix C. From the councils local plan, the following planning policies are recognised as relevant considerations for the assessment of this application:

- DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside;
- DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- DP26: Character and Design;

DP12: Protection and enhancement of countryside

The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.

The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.

Analysis:

Policy DP12 (Protection and Enhancement of Countryside) of the Local Plan states that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or, where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture or it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan

The proposed change of use is considered to be compliant with Policy DP12 of the at the site serves significant practical benefits in the use and running of this agricultural land as a means of rest and recreation. To ensure compliance with Policy DP12, the applicant is requesting a material change of use to a residential paddock area solely, opting to seek consent for this to apply to only a short strip of land where the current Garden Room is located. The applicant does not intend to pursue any future development on the land and is happy to comply with any necessary planning restrictions by way of planning conditions.

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;

- the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
- the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;
- character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and
- the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported. Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design.

Analysis: Policy DP16 (High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) of the Local Plan states that development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular, the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting; the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management; character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage. Small-scale proposals that support the economy and social well-being of the AONB and are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

As the proposed change of use will not result in any visual change to the site, the proposal is fully compliant with Policy DP16, additionally to ensure future support of this policy, the applicant is willing to adhere to any reasonable planning conditions restricting any future development on this plot as the primary objective is to retain the existing Garden Room which is used for bird watching and currently under assessment by the council.

Conclusion

In considering this application, it is hoped that the Planning Authority recognised this proposed change of use has been scaled appropriately in line with the site and surrounding area. The purpose of the purpose of the development is to bring in additional incidental living space to the property for any current and future occupants.

Should any additional information or specialist reports be necessary to assist with the progression of this application, please do not hesitate to contact Breen Planning directly as the acting agent on behalf of the Applicant.