



Town & Country Planning Act 1990

**Change of use from boarding house (C2) to single dwellinghouse
(C3)**

Avondale, Glendale Road, Burgess Hill

Burgess Hill Girls

PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

October 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared on behalf of Burgess Hill Girls (the applicant) in support of an application at Avondale, Glendale Road. Planning permission is sought, from Mid Sussex District Council (the LPA), for a change of use from boarding house (C2) to single dwellinghouse with integral annexe (C3).
- 1.2 This change of use application arises from the school's review of its boarding facilities which, in addition to Avondale, is located at no's 8 & 10 Silverdale Road. No.12 Silverdale Road has recently been granted permission by the District Council for change of use from a single dwelling to boarding accommodation for 10 pupils. The boarding provision of Avondale can be transferred to no. 12 Silverdale Road. The centralisation of boarding accommodation allows for better overall management and provides the opportunity to re-instate Avondale as a single detached dwelling with ancillary annex.
- 1.3 Avondale will return to its original residential use with no external alterations required. There will be no loss of trees or hedgerows on the site. No adverse impact will be caused to the Conservation Area location or environment.
- 1.4 Burgess Hill Girls is a girls only independent school with some 450 pupils between the ages of 2 and 18 years. The school campus includes a nursery. The campus is bordered by Keymer Road, Ferndale Road, Glendale Road and Silverdale Road. It is currently one of the top performing independent schools in Sussex.
- 1.5 The following documents are submitted in support of the application:
 - This Planning & Heritage Statement
 - Application Form
 - Drawings:
 - 3169.01: Existing ground and first floor plans
 - 3169.02: Existing elevations and second floor plan with site location plan
 - 3169.03: Proposed ground and first floor plans
 - 3169.04: Proposed elevations and second floor plan with block plan

2.0 SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 Avondale is a substantial, detached building to the east of Glendale Road, located just outside of the main school campus. The substantial part two/part three storey Edwardian building is of red brick with red hung tile to parts. It has a long, hipped main roof of clay tile with several tall chimneys.
- 2.2 The property provided accommodation for up to 16 pupils and two staff. It ceased this use at the end of the last academic year ie July 2025.
- 2.3 The property sits on a plot of 0.2 hectares. An 'in and out' driveway to the front gives access onto Glendale Road. Mature hedgerows form the front and side boundaries. A mainly lawned rear garden leads to a treed area to the rear, which is the subject of a group Tree Preservation Order (BH/02/TPO/92).

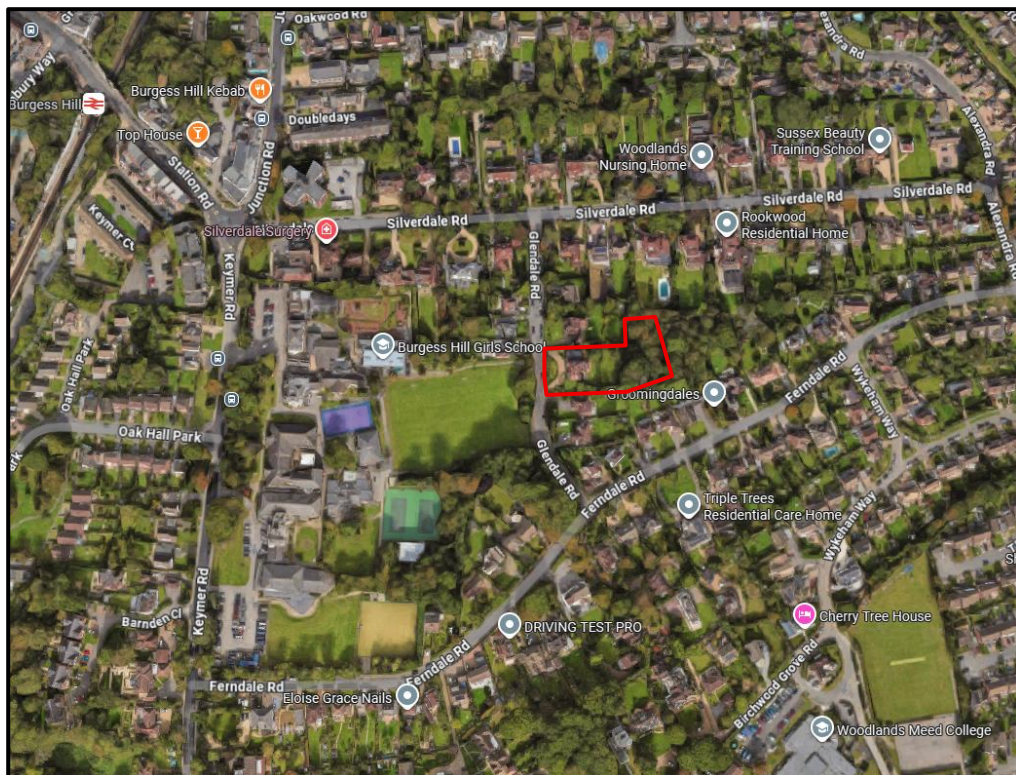


(Avondale – front elevation)



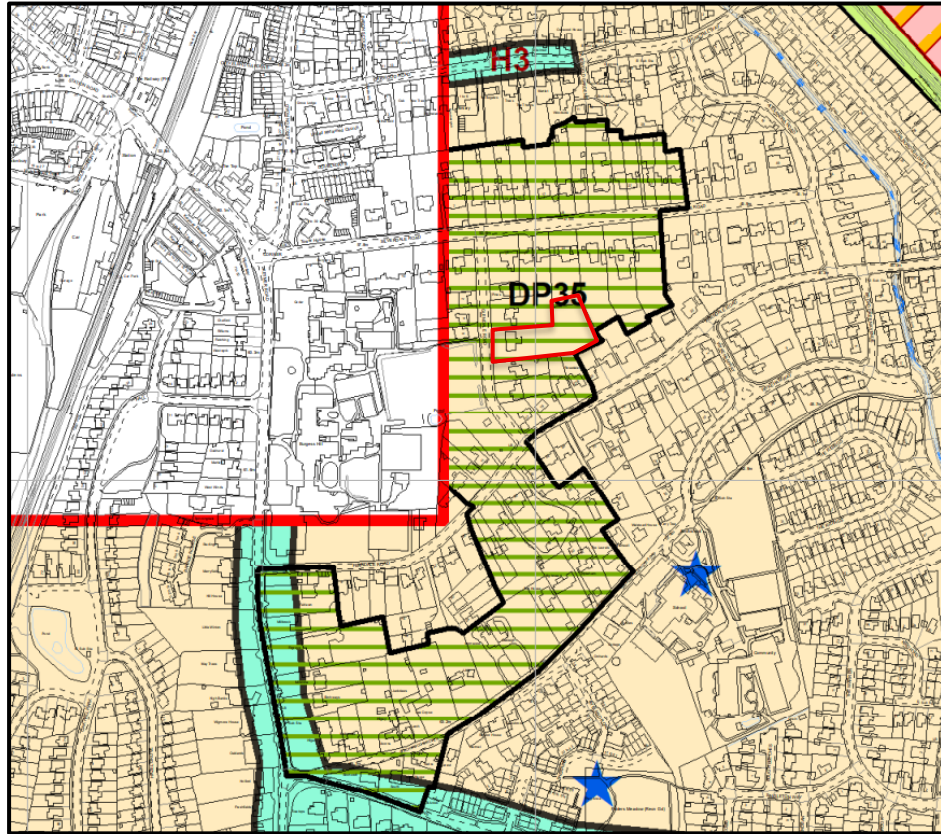
(Avondale – rear elevation)

- 2.4 The site lies within a residential area to the south-east of Burgess Hill, approximately 350 metres from the railway station and 500 metres from the main town centre.
- 2.5 The area around the school campus is characterised by large detached dwellinghouses set in substantial plots. Most of the houses were built in the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods. They display a variety of architectural styles and are constructed in traditional materials. The plan below identifies the site in the context of surrounding properties.



(Aerial image of site and area: Google Earth)

- 2.6 The application site is within the built-up area boundary of Burgess Hill – see extract below of the District Plan 2018 Policies Map for Burgess Hill. The site also lies within the Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area.



(Extract District Plan Policies Map – Burgess Hill: main map (June 2022))

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The following planning applications relating to Avondale, 3 Glendale Road are listed on Mid Sussex District Council's online planning register. Several consents relating to works to trees on and around Avondale are also listed on the register.

- *BH/017/83: Fire escape to rear of house.* Approved, March 1983.
- *BH/262/92: Removal of one chimney stack from Avondale. Removal of one chimney stack from Silverdale West. Removal of one chimney stack from Silverdale East. Reconstruction of three other stacks to original specifications.* Approved, January 1993.
- *BH/158/95: Replace existing wooden fire escape ladder with a galvanised spiral staircase.* Approved, October 1995.
- *BH/066/96: Change of use of ground floor as nursery school and construction of car parking spaces.* Refused, May 1996. Subsequently allowed at Appeal.
- *BH/036/98: Demolition of wooden conservatory and building of UPVC conservatory to match existing on brick base.* Approved, March 1998.
- *BH/037/98: Conservation Area Consent for the same.* Approved, March 1998.

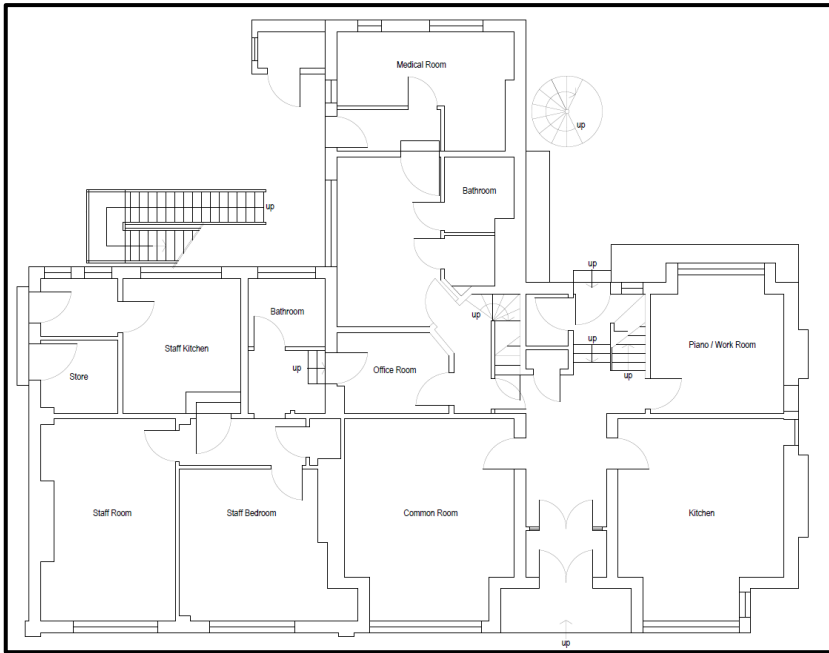
3.2 These applications show that a number of modest alterations have been made to Avondale over recent decades in support of the boarding house use.

3.3 As referred to above, no. 12 Silverdale Road has the benefit of permission for change of use to boarding accommodation for the school. This consent provides a suitable and appropriate replacement facility to replace the boarding accommodation previously provided at Avondale. Whilst the level of boarding is a little less than at Avondale, this reflects the level of need for boarding at the school.

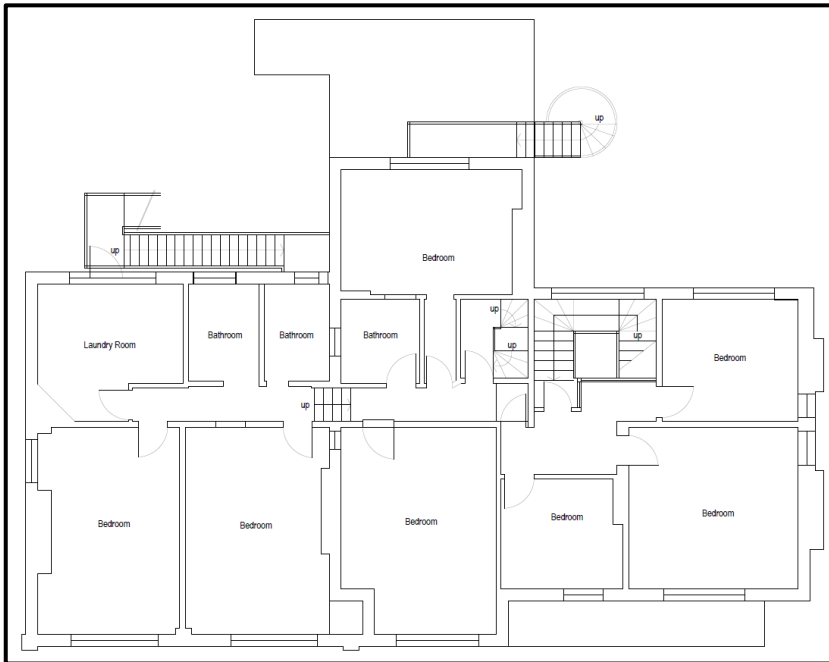
3.4 It is noted that planning permission (DM/20/4273) was also granted permission in April 2021 at no. 14 Silverdale Road (immediately south of no. 12) for a change of use from residential (C3) to a boarding house (C2) together with single storey extensions. The approved scheme provided boarding accommodation for up to 16 pupils with a self-contained staff flat on the ground floor. This permission was not implemented and has now lapsed.

4.0 THE APPLICATION PROPOSALS

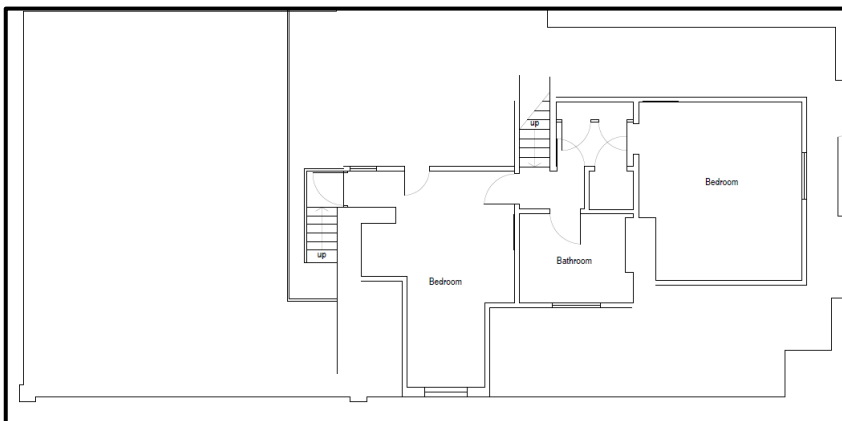
- 4.1 Burgess Hill Girls is a well-established independent girls' school. It has 450 pupils and provides employment for 120 persons including 62 teachers and a wide range of ancillary staff.
- 4.2 Several new buildings and facilities have been introduced at the school over the last 10-15 years or so. These include a new infants' school, sports pitches (including all weather pitch and tennis courts) and Little Oaks (pre-school). The main school hall has also been extended. These developments have responded to the school's needs and the planning proposals have been supported by the District Council.
- 4.3 The majority of the school pupils are day pupils. The demand for boarding places has decreased recently. The school expects to have circa 60 boarders over the next few years. Existing boarders are accommodated at no's 8 & 10 Silverdale Road, which have space for 47 pupils. These substantial detached properties were historically converted for boarding use by the school. As noted, 12 Silverdale Road also has consent be converted to a boarding house and can accommodate around 10 pupils. These three adjoined properties will create a boarding house cluster to the north side of the school's campus. Avondale is no longer required for boarding accommodation at the school.
- 4.4 The proposal therefore is to convert Avondale from a boarding house (C2) back to a single dwellinghouse with integral annexe (C3). The property will convert readily into a substantial, four / five-bedroom dwelling with accommodation over three floors. The ground floor will provide kitchen-dining, living room, office and utility. The integral annexe will be to the northern part of the ground floor – in place of the staff accommodation.
- 4.5 The annexe will be accessed by an existing external door to the north side of the building. It will provide bedroom, sitting room, kitchenette, store and bathroom. It is intended to provide semi-independent living accommodation for an elderly or extended family member.
- 4.6 The first and second floors will provide bedrooms and bathrooms. The conversion will require the removal and erection of internal walls with existing window openings to be utilised. The obscure glazing/film on the lower half of the existing windows will be removed.
- 4.7 No external alterations are required, except for the removal of two metal fire escapes to the rear. The details of the fire escape removal can be dealt with via planning condition. The existing architectural features and boundary treatments will remain.



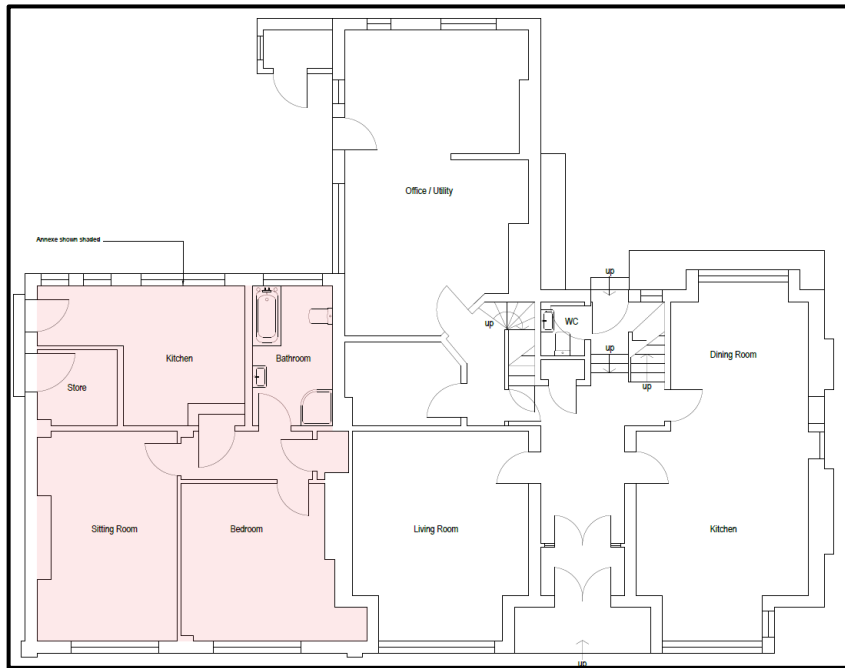
(Existing ground floor plan)



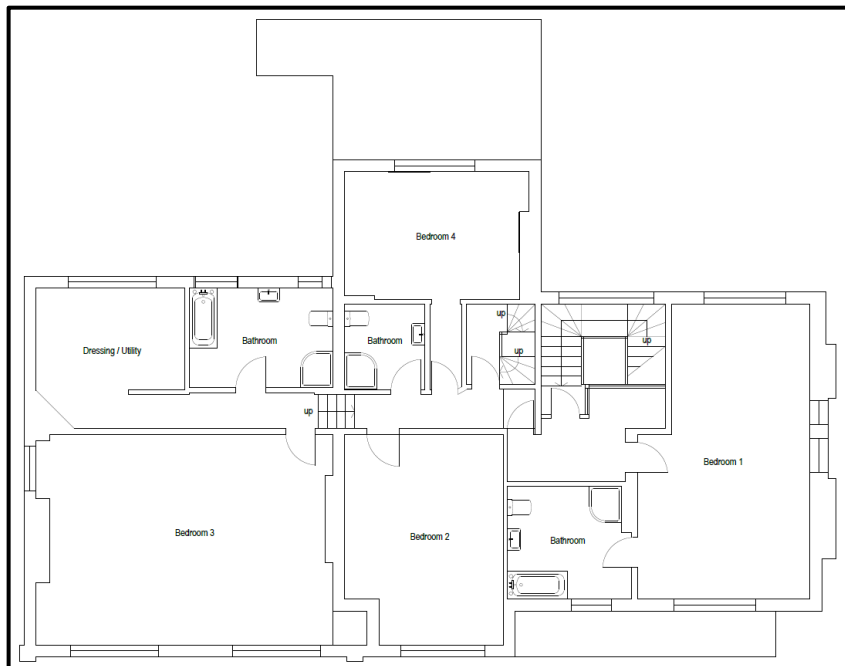
(Existing first floor plan)



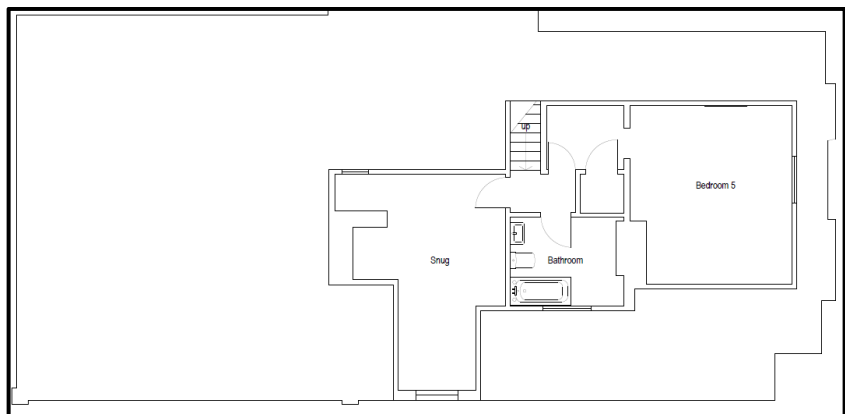
(Existing second floor plan)



(Proposed ground floor plan)



(Proposed first floor plan)



(Proposed second floor plan)

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 Applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 5.2 Where a proposal accords with an up-to-date development plan it should be approved without delay, as required by the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024.
- 5.3 The development plan consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 which was adopted in 2018 and the Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan which was 'made' in January 2016. The relevant policies of the development plan are noted below.
- 5.4 In addition, the national guidance provided in the NPPF and the associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are relevant to the consideration of this application.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

- 5.5 Policy *DP1: Sustainable Economic Development* confirms the Council's support for existing businesses, allowing them room to expand and encouraging development to meet the needs of 21st century business.
- 5.6 Policy *DP4: Housing* sets out the LPA's strategy for delivering 1,090 dwellings per year between 2024 and 2031. A portion of this delivery is to be through windfall developments.
- 5.7 Policy *DP6: Settlement Hierarchy* states that development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Burgess Hill is listed as a Category 1 settlement, the highest level of sustainability, with a comprehensive range of services and facilities.
- 5.8 Policy *DP21: Transport* requires development to be sustainably located to minimise the need for travel and to promote alternative means of transport to the private car.
- 5.9 Policy *DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services* allows for the loss of a community facility (which includes education facilities and specialist accommodation) where:
- The use is no longer viable; or
 - There is an existing duplicate facility in the locality which can accommodate the impact of the loss; or
 - A replacement facility will be provided in the locality.
- 5.10 Policy *DP26: Character and Design* requires new development to display high-quality design which respects the character and scale of the surrounding buildings, protects

trees which contribute to the character of the area and avoids harm to neighbouring amenity.

- 5.11 Policy *DP27: Dwelling Space Standards* stipulates that all new residential development complies with Nationally Described Space Standards.
- 5.12 Policy *DP30: Housing Mix* states that 30% of the District's housing need is for family sized housing, with 50% of this need being larger homes with more than three bedrooms.
- 5.13 Policy *DP35: Conservation Areas* states that development within a Conservation Area will be required to conserve or enhance its special character and appearance. Landscaping and boundary features which contribute to the special character of the area must also be protected.
- 5.14 Policy *DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows* protects existing natural features and asks they be incorporated into development schemes.

Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2031)

- 5.15 Policy *S3: Protect and Enhance Existing Community Facilities* resists the loss of community facilities unless adequate alternative provision will be made.
- 5.16 Policy *H1: Protecting and Enhancing Heritage Assets* requires proposals within Conservation Areas to preserve and enhance their special character or appearance. The policy notes buildings in Burgess Hill which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit. The application site is not included in this list.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 5.17 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are to be applied.
- 5.18 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 sets out the 3 interdependent objectives of sustainable development: social, economic and environmental.
- 5.19 Paragraph 100 requires local planning authorities to take a positive approach to development that will widen choice in education and states that they should (inter alia) give great weight to the need to expand schools.
- 5.20 Chapter 16 refers to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 The key issues in the determination of this application are:

- Principle of development
- Character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- Residential amenity
- Trees and hedgerows

Principle of development

6.2 The loss of the boarding house at Avondale is acceptable as a replacement facility can be provided in the immediate locality. As noted, boarding accommodation can be created at 12 Silverdale Road following the approved changes of use there. Policy DP25 therefore allows for the conversion of Avondale out of (C2) use.

6.3 Whilst the existing house is defined as a community facility, being related to an educational business and not accessible to the public, it is not usable by the wider community. In this vein, the conversion supports the needs of an existing business. The new boarding house cluster enables the school to better provide for 21st century needs, as supported by Policy DP1.

6.4 A larger family-sized home will be provided in an established residential area characterised by similar dwellinghouses and plots. The integral annexe provides space for an elderly family member to reside on site. Policies DP4, DP6 and DP30 direct this type of housing to this type of location, within a Category 1 settlement.

6.5 The proximity of the location to public transport options reiterates its suitability for new housing and compliance with Policy DP21. Burgess Hill mainline railway station is a short walk to the north-west. The retail and employment opportunities of the town centre are just beyond the railway station. Several bus routes alight at the bus stop outside the school gates on Keymer Road. Avondale is well located to minimise the need to travel by private car.

6.6 The conversion of Avondale to a single dwellinghouse is acceptable in principle.

Character and appearance of the Conservation Area

6.7 The proposed change of use does not involve any changes to the external appearance or elevations. The visual impact upon the Conservation Area will be very limited.

6.8 The existing access and frontage parking area would be retained, as would all of the existing hedgerows and trees which contribute to the appearance of the Conservation Area.

- 6.9 The Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area comprises large, individually designed, detached dwellinghouses set in large, verdant plots. The reversion of Avondale back to a large dwelling without any loss of its garden setting supports the identifiable character of the conservation area.
- 6.10 Accordingly, the proposals will preserve the appearance and character of the Conservation Area, complying with Policy DP35 and Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1.

Residential amenity

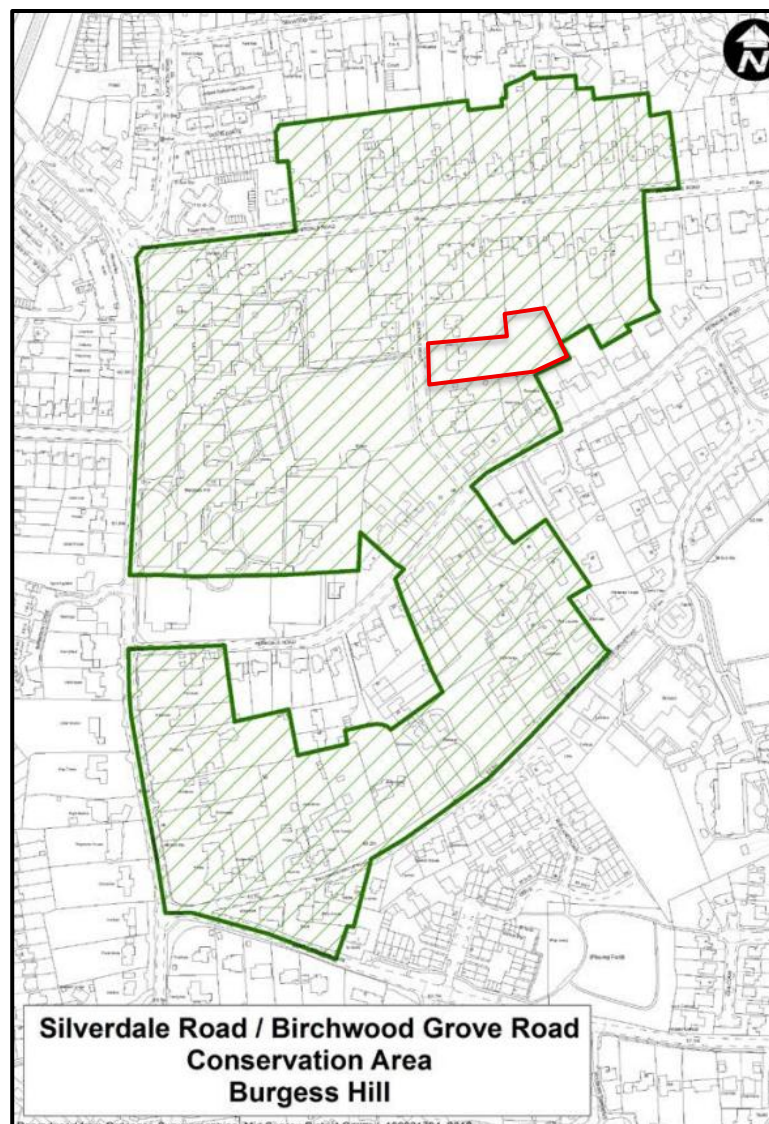
- 6.11 The change to residential use (from C2 to C3) will cause no adverse impacts to residential neighbours by way of noise or activity. Similarly, there would be no overlooking of neighbours over that expected of a suburban setting. The details of obscure film removal to windows across Avondale can be dealt with by condition. The current arrangement is in place for safeguarding reasons.
- 6.12 The use of Avondale as a single dwelling is an appropriate re-use of the building and wholly suitable for the location. Policy DP26, which requires new development to avoid harm to the amenity of neighbours, is complied with.
- 6.13 The converted building will provide spacious, high-quality residential accommodation. The integral annexe will offer some 66m² of floorspace. This is higher than Nationally Described Space Standards for a self-contained one-bedroom flat (50m²). The main house will also comfortably exceed the expected size. National space standards, which are stipulated locally by Policy DP27, require a five-bedroom house over three floors to be 134m². The converted house at Avondale will be circa 320m².
- 6.14 All rooms will benefit from large windows affording ample natural light and outlook.

Trees and hedgerows

- 6.15 The site is located within a Conservation Area, therefore, the existing trees are protected by this designation.
- 6.16 As noted, the proposals do not affect the existing vegetation on the application site. All of the existing hedgerows and trees are to be retained. The development does not impact on the protected group of trees to the east / rear of the plot. The proposal accords with the requirements of policies DP26, DP35 and DP37 to retain and protect trees, landscaping and boundary features which contribute to the character of the area.
- 6.17 As no habitat on site is affected by the development, the proposal is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain requirements. Similarly, as no works are proposed to historic roofs or external building features there is no need to provide an Ecology Appraisal.

7.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

- 7.1 NPPF paragraph 207 requires Applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development. The level of detail included should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the identified significance.
- 7.2 Avondale is located in the Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area. The heritage asset was designated in 1982 in recognition of its special character. The introduction of the railway station in 1889 attracted wealthy new residents to the town, who built large houses within spacious plots. The new suburb contrasted with the artisans' cottages north and south of the town centre, which were mainly occupied by employees of local brick manufacturing companies.



(Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area Map)

- 7.3 The main features of the conservation are set out in the *Conservation Areas in Mid Sussex* document published by the LPA in 2018.

Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area
This area was designated a Conservation Area in 1982 in recognition of its special character. The development of a station in 1889 attracted wealthy new residents to the town who built large new houses with large gardens, in contrast to the existing artisans' cottages to the north and west of the town centre which were occupied mainly by employees of the local brick manufacturing companies. Although some infilling has taken place, the character of this area has remained largely intact. The buildings, mostly in Victorian and Edwardian styles, are generally in good repair and are set in large gardens with many mature trees. The character of the area which the Council wishes to conserve depends upon the relationship between the buildings and their settings. The following features contribute to the character of the Conservation Area: • the variety in styles of the substantial Victorian and Edwardian houses, set in spacious gardens; • the predominant use of traditional building materials e.g. brick, clay tile hanging and render; • the use of ornamental roof ridge tiles; • the abundance of trees and hedges in the area; • the grass verges dotted with trees alongside Birchwood Grove Road, which has the appearance of a semi-rural lane; • the impressive buildings of the Burgess Hill School for Girls set in extensive and attractive grounds; and • the views from within the Conservation Area, particularly looking to the west from Keymer Road.

(Characteristic features of Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area)

- 7.4 The significance of the heritage asset derives from:
- The abundance of mature trees and hedges.
 - The impressive buildings of the school, their setting and attractive grounds.
 - Substantial Victorian and Edwardian houses in spacious plots.
 - Use of traditional materials, with brick, hung tile and render prominent.
 - The relationship between large, impressive buildings and their verdant setting.

- 7.5 Returning Avondale to a single, large dwelling respects the historic character of the area. It is most probable that the original use of Avondale was as a large single house. Its conversion back to such is appropriate for the historic and contemporary character of area.

- 7.6 As minimal external alterations are proposed there will be no harmful impacts on the appearance of the building. The handsome street frontage will continue to contribute to the appearance of the area. There will be no loss of trees or boundary features, so that the relationship of the existing building to its setting will be preserved.
- 7.7 The only notable alterations to the exterior of Avondale is the removal of metal fire escape stairs to the rear. The removal of these modern interventions will improve the appearance of the building in heritage terms.
- 7.8 For these reasons, the proposal will preserve the significance of the Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area and is justified in heritage terms. As no harm is caused to the significance of the heritage asset there is no need to balance any degree of harm against public benefits (as per NPPF paragraph 215).

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Full planning permission is sought on behalf of Burgess Hill Girls for the change of use of Avondale, Glendale Road from boarding house (C2) to a single dwelling with integral annexe (C3).
- 8.2 The substantial building is no longer needed for boarding accommodation. A replacement facility at 12 Silverdale Road, better suited to current needs, has recently been granted planning permission for boarding house use. The new boarding house is part of a centralised boarding cluster within the main school campus.
- 8.3 Avondale sits amongst other large, detached houses set in spacious plots within the Silverdale Road / Birchwood Grove Road Conservation Area to the south-east of Burgess Hill.
- 8.4 Local policy *DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services* allows for the change of use where the facility is no longer needed, or a replacement facility is provided in the locality. The change in boarding needs at the school and availability of 12 Silverdale Road fulfils both criteria.
- 8.5 In addition, a larger family house (with annexe accommodation for elderly relatives or extended family) will be provided within the built-up area and in a location typified by similar properties. The proposal complies with local policies *DP4: Housing*, *DP6: Settlement Hierarchy* and *DP30: Housing Mix* in this regard.
- 8.6 Except for the removal of rear fire escape stairs, there will be no external alterations to the building. As there will be no discernible change to the elevations, the proposals would conserve the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Local policies *DP26: Character and Design* and *DP35: Conservation Areas* are complied with.
- 8.7 The proposed main house and integral annexe will each (and together) comfortably exceed Nationally Described Space Standards. High-quality residential accommodation will be provided and local policy *DP27: Dwelling Space Standards* is complied with.
- 8.8 All existing trees and hedgerows on the site will be retained including the mature vegetation to the site boundaries. Appropriate protection of the trees can be provided through the construction stage and secured by planning condition. The requirements of local policies *DP35* and *DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows* are met.
- 8.9 The Heritage Statement describes the significance of the relevant conservation area and assesses the impact of the proposal upon that significance – as required by NPPF chapter 16. The main significance of the designated area is the relationship of the existing buildings with their verdant and spacious settings. The proposal will cause no harm to the identifiable characteristics of the area and therefore preserves the significance of the heritage asset.

- 8.10 In conclusion, the change of use of Avondale to a single dwelling with annexe will avoid any harmful impacts on the area and satisfies the relevant development plan policies. The proposals will provide a new dwelling for the area and contribute to the housing mix of Burgess Hill and the significance of the Silverdale Road / Birchgrove Road Conservation Area.
- 8.11 Mid Sussex District Council is therefore, respectfully requested to grant planning permission.

