



Planning Statement

Extension of residential curtilage

Cedar Cottage, Ardingly Road, Lindfield

prepared by

WPS Planning

Planning Statement
Cedar Cottage



Prepared by:	Doug Wright
Date:	March 2026
Project Number:	122/2026

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA	2
3.0 PLANNING HISTORY OF THE SITE	3
4.0 THE PROPOSAL	4
5.0 PLANNING POLICY	5
6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT	6
7.0 CONCLUSION	11

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the extension of the residential curtilage at Cedar Cottage, Ardingly Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath.
- 1.2 The purpose of this application is to regularise the use of land adjacent to the dwelling which has, since the applicants' purchase of the property in July 2022, been used as domestic garden space. The application seeks to formally incorporate this land into the lawful residential curtilage of the dwelling.
- 1.3 The proposal has been carefully developed in response to the previous refusal under application reference DM/23/0325, with particular regard to the concerns raised in relation to impact on the countryside and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Notably, this application excludes built development and instead focuses solely on the use of land.
- 1.4 This statement demonstrates that the proposal:
- Represents a modest and proportionate adjustment to the residential curtilage
 - Reflects the established and ongoing use of the land
 - Responds to the changed character of the area, including nearby residential development
 - Complies with the relevant development plan policies and national guidance
- 1.5 The application should therefore be assessed in light of current site conditions, material considerations, and the planning balance.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 Cedar Cottage is a detached two-storey dwelling located on the northern side of a shared access off Ardingly Road (B2028), within a rural area of Lindfield. The property is one of a pair of similarly designed dwellings, with Orchard Cottage located immediately to the west.
- 2.2 The dwelling is set back from the access road behind a landscaped frontage, with the majority of the established residential curtilage historically located to the rear. The site is characterised by a mix of domestic garden space, boundary planting, and open land beyond.
- 2.3 The land subject to this application lies adjacent to the existing curtilage and forms part of the applicant's ownership. It has been maintained and used as garden space since at least July 2022 and appears as such in aerial imagery.
- 2.4 The wider area is characterised by a transitional landscape, comprising residential properties set within a rural context. This character has evolved in recent years, most notably through the implementation of development to the south under planning permission DM/20/0979, which introduced new dwellings, reconfigured existing buildings, and associated residential landscaping.
- 2.5 As a result, the site is no longer experienced as being within an isolated or undeveloped rural setting, but rather as part of an area where domestic and countryside characteristics coexist.
- 2.6 A Public Right of Way runs to the south of the site, although its relationship with the application land is limited due to distance, orientation, and intervening features.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The most relevant planning history for the site is as follows:

- DM/23/0325 – Demolition of existing shed, erection of a detached garage building, extension of driveway, and change of use of land to enlarge residential curtilage - Refused (May 2023).

3.2 The refusal was primarily based on:

- The perceived harmful encroachment of residential curtilage into the countryside
- The impact on the character and appearance of the AONB
- The scale, siting, and prominence of the proposed garage

3.3 Importantly, the current application differs materially from the refused scheme in that it excludes all built development, focusing solely on the use of land. As such, the key concerns relating to built form, scale, and visual dominance have been directly addressed.

- DM/20/1094 – Two-storey rear extension and associated alterations to Cedar Cottage - Approved.
- DM/20/0979 – Change of use, refurbishment, and redevelopment of the Buxshalls site to the south, including the construction of new dwellings and associated landscaping - Approved and implemented.

3.4 The development approved under DM/20/0979 is a significant material consideration, as it has introduced a substantial residential presence into the immediate vicinity of the application site.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of land to extend the residential curtilage of Cedar Cottage.

4.2 The proposal relates solely to land use and does not include:

- The erection of buildings or structures
- Engineering operations
- Significant hardstanding or urbanising features

4.3 The land will continue to be used as informal garden space, maintained in a manner consistent with the existing residential use of the property.

4.4 The proposal effectively:

- Regularises an established pattern of use
- Aligns the curtilage more logically with the ownership boundary
- Reflects the functional relationship between the land and the dwelling

4.5 The use of the land will remain low intensity and domestic in nature, with no material increase in activity or visual impact.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that this should run through both plan making and decision taking. In terms of the determination of planning applications this should mean the approval of developments that accord with the development plan without delay, and that where the development plan is silent or relevant policies are out of date, that permission be granted unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or policies of the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 Sustainable development is seen within the NPPF as having three roles, namely an economic, social and environmental role which should be a golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking.
- 5.3 The following sections within the NPPF (2024) are important factors in the assessment of the proposal:
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
 - Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
 - Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Local Plan

- 5.4 In terms of the local planning policy context for the Application Site, the adopted Development Plan for the Mid Sussex District is composed of the following relevant documents:
- Mid Sussex District Plan (MSDP) –2014-2031.
 - DP12 – Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
 - DP16 – High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- DP26 – Character and Design
- Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Impact on the Countryside and AONB

- 6.1 The application site lies within the countryside and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), where Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and Policy DP16 requires development to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB.
- 6.2 Notwithstanding this policy context, it is important that the assessment of impact is undertaken with regard to the specific characteristics of the site and its immediate surroundings, rather than applying policy in isolation. In this regard, the applicants purchased Cedar Cottage in July 2022, at which point the land subject to this application was already being presented and used as part of the residential curtilage. Since that time, the land has continued to function as domestic garden space, forming a natural and functional extension to the dwelling. This is not a recent or speculative change, but an established pattern of use which is clearly evidenced through aerial imagery, including Google Earth, showing consistent maintenance and domestic use of the land.
- 6.3 Furthermore, the site does not exist within a static rural environment. The approval and implementation of planning permission DM/20/0979 to the south has introduced a significant level of residential development, including new dwellings, domestic curtilages, access roads, and associated landscaping. This has materially altered the immediate context of the site, introducing a more domestic and suburbanising influence into what was previously a more open rural setting.

- 6.4 In light of these factors, the proposal does not represent a new or harmful encroachment into undeveloped countryside. Rather, it seeks to regularise an existing and established domestic use within a context that has already evolved. The land will remain free from built development, ensuring that it retains a predominantly open and green character. There will be no loss of important landscape features, and no interruption to wider landscape views or key characteristics of the AONB.
- 6.5 Accordingly, when assessed in its proper context, the proposal is considered to comply with the aims of Policies DP12 and DP16 and the NPPF, as it does not result in any material harm to the intrinsic character, beauty, or scenic quality of the countryside or the AONB.

Landscape Character

- 6.6 Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires development to be of high quality design that responds positively to local character and is sensitive to the countryside. The High Weald AONB Management Plan further emphasises the importance of conserving landscape character, including the relationship between settlements and surrounding land, and maintaining a strong sense of place.
- 6.7 The character of the application site and its surroundings is best understood as a transitional landscape, where domestic and rural elements coexist. This transitional nature has been significantly reinforced by the implementation of development under DM/20/0979, which has introduced a clearly defined residential environment immediately to the south of the site. This includes not only built form but also associated garden areas, landscaping, and domestic activity, all of which contribute to a perceptible shift in local character.
- 6.8 The application site itself already exhibits characteristics associated with residential garden use. Since July 2022, the land has been maintained, managed, and experienced as part of the domestic setting of Cedar Cottage. It does not appear as agricultural or unmanaged land, but rather as part of a coherent

residential plot.

- 6.9 Importantly, the neighbouring property, Orchard Cottage, benefits from a residential garden of similar depth and extent, which establishes a clear and highly relevant local precedent. The proposed extension of curtilage would therefore align with this existing pattern, creating a more consistent and balanced relationship between neighbouring properties.
- 6.10 In this respect, the proposal not only preserves but also responds positively to the evolving landscape character of the area, ensuring compliance with Policy DP26 and the objectives of the AONB Management Plan.

Scale and Extent of Curtilage

- 6.11 Policy DP12 requires that development within the countryside maintains or enhances landscape character, while Policy DP26 requires that proposals respect the scale, layout, and pattern of surrounding development.
- 6.12 The proposed extension of the residential curtilage is proportionate to the size and function of the host dwelling and reflects a reasonable level of outdoor amenity space for a property in this location. It does not represent an excessive or disproportionate increase in curtilage when considered in the context of the site and its surroundings.
- 6.13 The comparison with Orchard Cottage is particularly instructive, as it demonstrates that a garden of similar depth already exists within the immediate context. The proposal therefore does not introduce a new or alien form of development, but rather brings the application site into alignment with an established and accepted pattern.
- 6.14 Furthermore, the land has already functioned as part of the residential curtilage since at least July 2022, without giving rise to any adverse impacts. The proposal simply formalises this arrangement, providing clarity and consistency in land use.
- 6.15 The extension also represents a logical rounding-off of the residential boundary,

avoiding irregular or fragmented land parcels. It ensures that the curtilage is coherent and functional, which is a key consideration in planning terms.

- 6.16 The level of activity associated with the extended curtilage will remain low-key and typical of domestic garden use. There will be no intensification of use that would result in noise, disturbance, or visual harm. As such, the proposal accords with both Policy DP12 and Policy DP26.

Nature of the Proposed Use

- 6.17 The proposal relates solely to the change of use of land to residential garden, with no operational development proposed. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF requires that development be sympathetic to local character and establish a strong sense of place, while Policy DP26 seeks to ensure that development does not result in harm through inappropriate form or design.
- 6.18 In this case, the absence of built development is a critical factor in assessing the level of impact. The land will remain open, permeable, and predominantly green in appearance, ensuring that it does not introduce visual clutter or urbanising elements into the countryside.
- 6.19 The use of the land as garden space is consistent with its established use since July 2022 and reflects its functional relationship with the dwelling. The proposal therefore represents a continuation and formalisation of an existing use, rather than a material or harmful change.
- 6.20 It is acknowledged that concerns may arise regarding the potential for future domestic structures within the extended curtilage. However, this can be effectively addressed through the imposition of a planning condition removing permitted development rights for buildings, enclosures, and other domestic paraphernalia. Such a condition would ensure that any future development is subject to full planning control, allowing the Local Planning Authority to assess its impact on the countryside and AONB.
- 6.21 This approach represents a proportionate and reasonable safeguard, ensuring

that the extended curtilage remains appropriately controlled and that the character of the area is protected in the long term.

Impact on Public Right of Way

- 6.22 Policy DP26 requires development to protect the amenity of users of public spaces, and the NPPF places importance on maintaining the quality and enjoyment of Public Rights of Way.
- 6.23 The Public Right of Way runs to the south of the application site, and therefore its relationship with the proposed curtilage is limited. Due to this spatial arrangement, views of the site from the route are restricted, oblique, and filtered, rather than direct or prominent.
- 6.24 The experience of users of the Public Right of Way has already evolved as a result of the implementation of development under DM/20/0979, which has introduced residential built form and associated domestic features into the setting. The route is therefore no longer experienced solely within a purely rural context.
- 6.25 In this context, the proposed extension of residential curtilage will not result in any material additional impact. The absence of built development ensures that the land will remain visually recessive and will continue to appear as part of a green and landscaped setting.
- 6.26 Furthermore, the alignment of the curtilage with that of Orchard Cottage will create a more consistent and coherent visual edge to the residential plots, which will be perceived as a natural continuation of the existing pattern.
- 6.27 Overall, the proposal preserves the amenity, outlook, and enjoyment of users of the Public Right of Way and fully complies with Policy DP26 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed extension of the residential curtilage at Cedar Cottage represents a modest, logical, and well-justified development that responds positively to both the site-specific circumstances and the evolving character of the surrounding area.
- 7.2 The application does not introduce built form or urbanising features and instead seeks to formalise a pattern of residential use that has been established since the applicants' purchase of the property in July 2022. This use is clearly evidenced through aerial imagery and reflects the functional relationship between the land and the dwelling. The proposal therefore does not result in new encroachment into the countryside but regularises an existing and established domestic arrangement.
- 7.3 Furthermore, the planning context has materially changed following the approval and implementation of residential development to the south under DM/20/0979, which has introduced a more domestic character into the immediate locality. In addition, the neighbouring property, Orchard Cottage, benefits from a residential garden of comparable depth, demonstrating that the proposed curtilage is consistent with the established pattern of development.
- 7.4 The proposal preserves the open and green character of the site, safeguards the wider landscape, and does not harm the scenic qualities of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In respect of the Public Right of Way, its position to the south of the site results in limited and filtered views of the extended curtilage, and the absence of built development ensures that there is no material impact on the amenity or experience of users.
- 7.5 Importantly, the imposition of a condition removing permitted development rights would provide a robust mechanism to control any future domestic development, ensuring that the extended curtilage remains free from inappropriate built form and continues to respect its countryside setting.

- 7.6 Taking all matters into account, the proposal accords with the overarching aims of Policies DP12, DP16 and DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policy 1 of the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan, and the National Planning Policy Framework. Any limited policy conflict is clearly outweighed by the material considerations outlined above.
- 7.7 Accordingly, the application is considered to be sustainable development and planning permission should be granted.