



Planning, Design and Access Statement
Including the Sustainability Statement

The Barn House, Cuckfield Road, Ansty

Conversion of the existing timber framed barn
outbuilding in to living accommodation for guests of
the main house

at

The Old Barn, The Barn House, Cuckfield Road, Ansty

Planning, Design and Access Statement

on Behalf of

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a Planning, Design and Access Statement prepared to accompany a Householder Planning and Listed Building Consent application for the conversion of the existing detached barn to provide guest accommodation for the main house within The Old Barn, at The Barn House, Cuckfield Road, Ansty.
- 1.2 The Old Barn is part of a former farmyard, serving what was for some time Ansty Farm. As described in the accompanying Heritage Statement, the subject building is a cattle shelter and is typically situated across the yard from a threshing barn and forming a quadrangle with other nearby buildings, but looking out north to grazing fields. The farm pond is also only just to the north and this was, again, a fairly typical arrangement allowing the cows to be sheltered in security, but with easy access to watering and for milking (which will have been carried out elsewhere).
- 1.3 The Old Barn has its open side facing east, directly towards The Barn House and the south side containing a large opening beneath the pitched clay tiled roof. The Barn House, which is the host dwelling to The Old Barn, is Grade II listed and derives from the conversion of the former Barn Theatre to a separate domestic dwelling (from Old Place) in 1986. The Old Barn is therefore considered to be curtilage listed.
- 1.4 The Old Barn was restored in 2005/6 and has been used for general storage purposes since then.
- 1.5 This application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement, prepared by Desbruslais Chartered Surveyors, and explains the history of the building. The recommendations for adjustments to the design were carried out as part of the 2020 planning and listed building consent submission. The scheme submitted herein is the same as that approved under references DM/20/1718 and DM/20/1719.
- 1.6 The previous applications were supported by a Bat Survey, which did not note any bat activity. The Applicant commissioned new Phase 1 and Phase 2 bat surveys, which were carried out in July 2025. These surveys necessitated a further emergence survey, undertaken in September 2025, which confirmed the species and extent of the bat use. The findings and conclusions of these reports, prepared by Batscan Ltd, are discussed in more detail within this statement.
- 1.7 This Householder Planning and Listed Building Consent application demonstrates the following:
 - a) The detailing of the conversion is sensitive to the existing structural frame, allowing it to remain expressed;
 - b) The proposed conversion is sensitive in its scale, its external dimensions being unchanged so as to remain subservient to the neighbouring properties;

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- c) The proposed conversion will not affect the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers owing to its distancing from the nearest neighbouring property;
 - d) The proposed conversion will be highly sustainable in both its construction and in its energy use, sensitively incorporating thermal insulation within its fabric to balance sustainability with heritage considerations;
 - e) The existing landscaping will remain unchanged, thus protecting the character and integrity of its historic farmstead setting;
 - f) The proposals, through their sensitive mitigation measures in respect of bat habitats, are able to demonstrate that they will not cause harm to protected species.

2. Use

- 2.1 The proposal will convert the existing storage barn to ancillary residential accommodation related to the existing dwelling (C3 use class).

3. Amount

- 3.1 The proposals are for the conversion of the existing barn to provide ancillary accommodation for the main dwelling.

4. Layout

- 4.1 The layout of the existing barn can be viewed on the accompanying existing plan and elevation drawings. The proposals allow for the removal of the existing internal partition wall, which is a modern addition.
- 4.2 The floor plan layout of the converted barn provides a centrally-positioned Living Room, to the south of which is a separate Kitchen area and a separate Bathroom, while to the north is a Bedroom. The living space benefits from access to the existing garden via two sets of double doors.

5. Planning Statement/Scale

5.1 **Planning Policies**

The following planning policies are relevant to this application:

Mid Sussex District Plan

Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside Policy

DP15: New Homes in the Countryside

Policy DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Policy
DP26: Character and Design Policy
DP27: Dwelling Space Standards Policy
DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets Policy
DP38: Biodiversity

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Nov 2020)

The relevant design principles include:

Principle DG1: Character Study

Principle DG11: Respond to the existing townscape, heritage assets and historic landscape Principle

DG53: Principles for conversions of traditional buildings with heritage value

5.2 **Planning History**

The most relevant recent approvals are as follows:

06/00409/FUL - Conversion of single storey timber framed barn outbuilding to ancillary granny annex incorporating lounge, bedroom, kitchen and bathroom – APPROVED

09/00849/LBC - Conversion of barn timber frame barn outbuilding in to living accommodation for visitors to the main house - APPROVED

DM/20/1718 - Conversion of timber frame barn outbuilding in to living accommodation for visitors to the main house (Amended plan received 8 January 2021) (Amended plan received 24 February 2021) (Householder Planning) – APPROVED

DM/20/1719 - Conversion of timber frame barn outbuilding in to living accommodation for visitors to the main house (Amended plan received 8 January 2021) (Amended plan received 24 February 2021) (Listed Building Consent) - APPROVED

None of the aforementioned planning and LBC applications have been implemented.

5.3 **Planning Principles**

The proposal to convert the curtilage listed barn into ancillary accommodation is supported by the various MSDC planning policies. In the delegated report relating to the most recent approvals, the scheme was deemed to be in accordance with Mid Sussex District Plan policies DP26 and DP34, as well as Design Principles DG1, DG11 and DG53 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

5.4 **Character and Appearance**

The proposed conversion has been sensitively detailed to preserve the key framing members of the barn, with the east-facing doors positioned to allow the existing posts and brick stools to remain expressed. Likewise, the internal partition walls are spaced 100mm from the existing oak trusses, which remain visible within the vaulted central portion of the barn. The proposed window openings to the end elevations reflect the dimensions and form of the existing apertures, thus preserving the character of the building.

The design of the barn conversion is discussed in greater detail in Section 7, Appearance.

5.5 **Neighbour Amenity**

The proposals will not have any impact upon the amenity of the neighbouring properties, owing to the comfortable spacing of the barn from the neighbouring properties. This spacing was deemed acceptable in determining the most recent applications, thereby ensuring the proposal complies with district plan policy DP26.

5.6 **Sustainability**

The proposed converted barn has been designed to offer a high level of sustainability, doing so both actively and passively. The layout and form of the conversion is very much governed by its form and the positions of the existing openings. In arranging the primary living room within the central portion of the barn, it benefits most from the natural light and solar gain. Each of the rooms within the conversion are naturally lit, reducing the need for artificial lighting and increasing the opportunities for solar gain.

This aspect is discussed in further detail in Section 10, Sustainability Statement.

5.7 **Ecology**

This application is accompanied by Bat Survey reports prepared by Batscan Ltd. Phase 1 and Phase 2 surveys were carried out in July 2025, with the findings necessitating an additional emergence survey. As concluded in their report of September 2025, the barn is used as a bat feeding perch, and two calls from a brown long-eared bat were recorded over four dusk to dawn periods. This confirms that the roost remains in use, at least as a feeding perch, in the autumn months.

The latest Bat Survey report recommends the following provisions for bats be incorporated into the proposed conversion, to account for the survey findings and as an aid to local biodiversity:

- Temporary Bat Roost: As a temporary roosting option and prior to the commencement of works, a good quality bat box will be erected on a nearby mature tree or building. Suitable models include the Schwegler woodcrete boxes or the Eco Kent box, which are widely available from

online sites such as Wildlife and Countryside Services or NHBS Ltd. The box should be fitted at a height of *at least* 3m, where there is a clear flight path for bats, in and out of the box. Bat boxes, provided as compensation, must remain in place for a minimum of five years

- Permanent Bat Roosts: Provisions for both crevice-dwelling and void dwelling bats should be incorporated into the redeveloped building. A bat loft could be provided for the long-eared bat, possibly in the neighbouring, unconverted former cowshed. (Alternatively, see links, with roosting options for long-eared bats).
- Consideration could also be given to the provision of roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bats, such as pipistrelles. These could be achieved by fitting, purpose-made bat access tile sets, into the refurbished roof of the barn. If roofing felt, or a certified 'bat-safe' membrane, rather than a standard breathable membrane, must be used beneath tiles or weather-boarding in all areas where bats might roost. This is because bats can become fatally trapped in woven membranes (BRMs).

6 Landscaping

- 6.1 The proposals will not result in any changes to the existing garden landscaping, which will remain as existing.

7 Heritage Statement

- 7.1 This application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement prepared by Desbruslais Chartered Surveyors, which was prepared for the previous application. As there have been no changes to the building in the intervening period, the information contained within it remains valid.

8 Appearance

- 8.1 The current appearance of the barn can be reviewed from the existing plans supplied with this application. The proposed conversion, by virtue of its sensitive design and detailing, is able to demonstrate an extremely high standard of design quality.
- 8.2 The proposed conversion will be retain its existing appearance of horizontal featheredge timber boards over a brick plinth, with the existing openings also retained. It is not proposed to form any new openings within the existing structure, thus preserving the existing character and appearance of the barn.

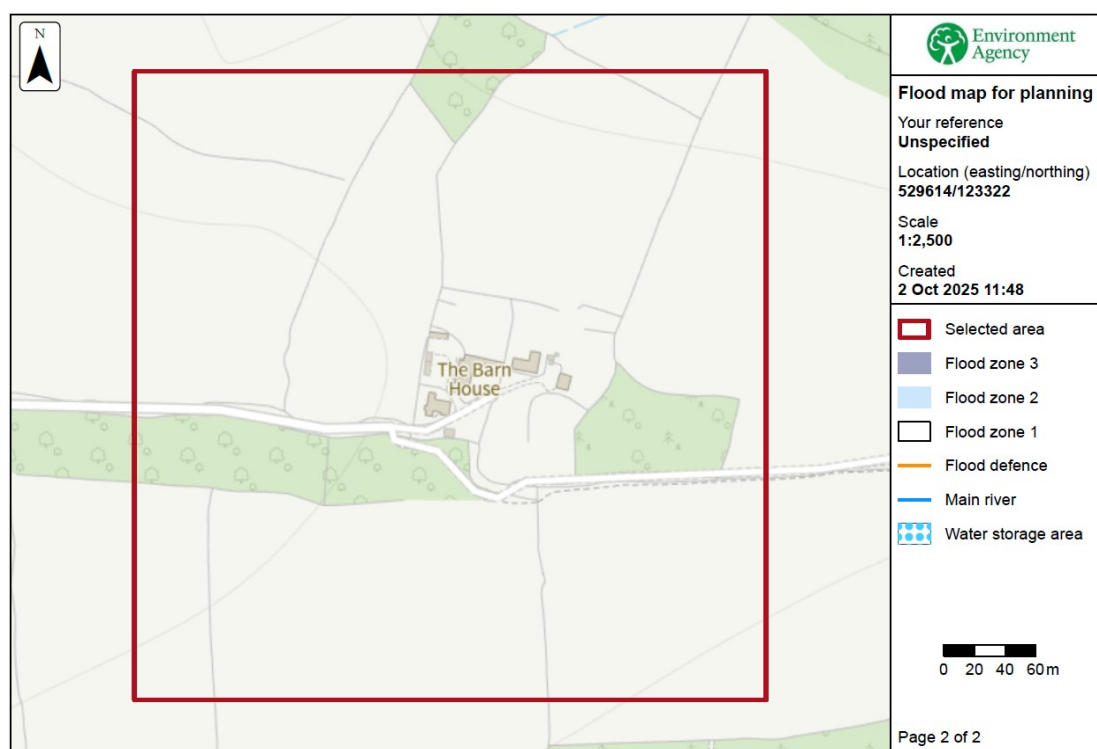
- 8.3 The new windows and doors will be of timber construction with an oiled finish, allowing them to remain sympathetic to the existing barn and its curtilage listed setting.

9 Access

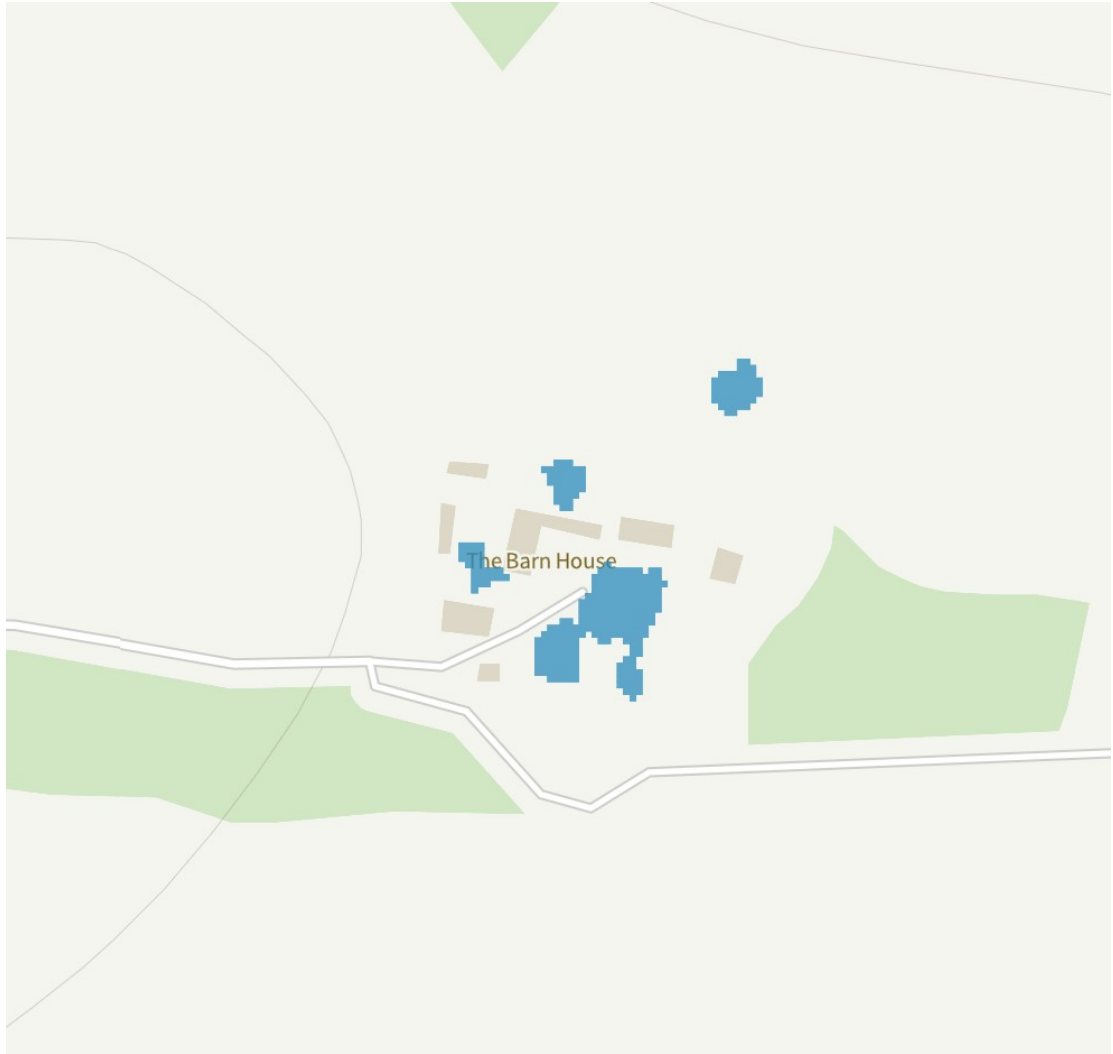
- 9.1 The proposed barn conversion will be accessed from the garden via two sets of double doors to the east elevation. Level access is available through the barn via the internal doors of suitable width.

10 Foul, Surface Water, and Flood Risk Assessment

- 10.1 The application site sits within Flood Zone 1, meaning that it has a low probability of flooding from Rivers or the Sea. An extract of the map that illustrates this is provided below:



- 10.2 The map below identifies a small element at *Low Risk* of surface water flooding. Owing to the topography and ground levels relative to the property, this surface water would flow down and away from the property towards the stream along its northern field edge boundary.



- 10.3 The above confirms that the proposed barn conversion is not shown to be at risk of surface water flooding. The proposals will discharge surface water to a soakaway system, to be designed based upon the requirements of BRE Digest 365. There is sufficient space within the grounds of the property to achieve this.
- 10.4 The existing private drainage system serving the main dwelling will receive the discharge from the barn conversion. The outflow from the existing tank will retain its current arrangement, with the additional occasional discharge from the barn conversion deemed to be low level, and will not therefore increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

11 Sustainability Statement

- 11.1 The proposals have been developed to ensure the proposed conversion achieves a very high level of sustainability, primarily through its low energy use. It is envisaged the following will be incorporated:
- a) The existing building fabric will be highly insulated to reduce heat loss. The high levels of thermal insulation to its walls, roof and floor, will be balanced against the need to preserve the historic timber frame. Where there are conflicts between heritage and sustainability, the heritage considerations will prevail;
 - b) High performance double-glazed windows and doors with gas-filled cavities, formed in sympathetic, oiled timber frames;
 - c) Water usage will be reduced through the installation of flow reducing / aerating taps, reduced capacity showers, and low-flush cisterns.
 - d) The installation of low energy light fittings throughout the conversion, to reduce electricity consumption;
 - e) The proposed conversion will use highly efficient electric space heaters to provide for its space heating requirements, with an electric immersion for its hot water heating.

12 Conclusion

- 12.1 By virtue of its design and detailing, the proposed converted barn demonstrates an exceptionally **high standard of design**. The proposals will result in a building of strong architectural merit.
- 12.2 This Householder Planning and Listed Building Consent application demonstrates the following:
- a) The detailing of the conversion is sensitive to the existing structural frame, allowing it to remain expressed;
 - b) The proposed conversion is sensitive in its scale, its external dimensions being unchanged so as to remain subservient to the neighbouring properties;
 - c) The proposed conversion will not affect the amenity of the neighbouring occupiers owing to its distancing from the nearest neighbouring property;
 - d) The proposed conversion will be highly sustainable in both its construction and in its energy use, sensitively incorporating thermal insulation within its fabric to balance sustainability with heritage considerations;
 - e) The existing landscaping will remain unchanged, thus protecting the character and integrity of its historic farmstead setting;
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