



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

Our ref MIDS/23/01
Your ref
04.10.24

Dear Miss Lynn,

Development at Great Thorndean Barn, Slough Green Lane, Warninglid, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 5SL

I refer to the above site. I have been instructed by the owner of the property, Mr James Clarke, to submit a Householder application for the erection of a stable within the curtilage of the dwelling. Mr Clarke owns the adjoining field and keeps a donkey, and the stable will be used as shelter and for storing feed and associated items.

SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

The application site consists of Great Thorndean Barn, a grade II listed barn, that has been converted to residential accommodation. To the southwest of the listed barn lies The Old Dairy which is a brick built structure and is considered to be curtilage listed. The buildings previously formed part of an agricultural complex. The buildings are set within a cluster of buildings and are accessed via a private track to the south of Slough Green Lane. A grade II listed property, Great Thorndean Farmhouse, lies further to the north east, with Oakwood House lying further east, to the east of the access track. Agricultural land lies to the west of the site with land levels of the adjoining field rising westwards.

The stable is to be located on raised ground to the south west corner of the site.

The site was subdivided and sold separately prior to conversion works taking place and therefore the buildings at Great Thorndean Barn and The Old Dairy lie in separate ownership.

PLANNING HISTORY

The site was originally in single ownership prior to the submission of planning applications to convert the two buildings (The Barn- the current application site, and The Dairy- the adjacent building). The details of the relevant planning applications are set out below;



Reference	Site	Description	Decision	Date
Planning permissions				
DM/17/1837	The Barn and the Dairy	Demolition of buildings, conversion and alteration of buildings to form two dwellings and erection of car ports. Site address amended 22.05.2017 (previously given as Great Thorndean Farm).	Grant	23.08.2017
DM/17/5102	The Barn	Discharge of conditions 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 11 relating to DM/17/1837.	Details approved	18.04.2018
DM/20/2681	The Barn	Conversion of Barn to residential.	Refused; appeal dismissed	09.08.2021
DM/21/3687	The Barn	Repositioning of garage, changes to fenestration, alteration of the landscaping (from previously approved application DM/17/1837). As well as several internal alterations to the layout of the main dwelling, this includes the relocation of staircases, kitchen and downsizing the number of bedrooms from 6 to 5.	Granted	06.06.2022
DM/22/2018	The Barn and The Dairy	Variation of condition 5 of planning application DM/22/2243 - to allow a different finish to the courtyard. Updated landscaping plan received.	Granted	08.11.2022

POLICY CONTEXT

Decisions on planning applications should be made in accordance with the policies of the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plan consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan, adopted in 2018, and the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, “made” in 2017. According to the Local Plan proposals map, the application site is within the countryside and within an area designated as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty- although these areas are now known as National Landscapes.

The following policies of the District Plan are relevant;

- DP12- Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
- DP16- High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- DP26- Character and Design
- DP34- Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

The following policy of the Neighbourhood Plan is relevant;

- AS3- High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Other material considerations

NPPF- the NPPF was published in December 2023 and sets out the Governments policy approach. It is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Paragraphs 10 and 11 define sustainable development as those which do not result in conflict with the policies of the development plan.

Paragraphs 180- 184 relate to guidance for conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now National Landscapes).

Significant weight should be attached to the NPPF as a material consideration.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application is for the erection of a stable building in the south west corner of the curtilage of the dwelling. The stable is to house a donkey which is grazed in the adjoining field, also within the ownership of the applicant.

The stable building would be 7.328m in length and 2.479m in width, giving a floor area of 18.16 sqm. The structure has a ridged roof, with a maximum height of 3.827m to the ridge. As the land is slightly sloping around the siting of the stable, the building will appear lower from other viewpoints.

The building will be clad externally with timber painted black.

MAIN ISSUES

Given the policy context above, the main issues for consideration are;

- The principle of development
- Impact on the character of the area
- Impact on the amenities of adjoining properties
- Impact on the setting of nearby heritage assets.

Principle of development

Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District 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 stable will be sited in the south west corner of the site adjacent to the field in which the donkey is grazed and exercised. The structure is relatively small in scale with a limited scale and bulk, and the external materials are essentially rural in character.

Whilst the proposal would not be used for an agricultural purpose, due to the low key design and the positioning of the structure, it would protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside which is the core objective of policy DP12. Policy DP16 sets out that development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now National Landscapes), will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty. Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the National Landscapes that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.

Policy AS3 of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out a similar approach, with the prime aim of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the National Landscapes. One of the criteria is to demonstrate the need for the development. The need for the development is required as the keeping of equines is, by definition, an activity that has to take place in the countryside, and a stable for the keeping of horses or donkeys is normally considered to be an essential requirement.

Given the overall scale, materials and form, it is submitted that there will not be a harmful impact on the rural and landscape character of the area and the proposal will accord with policies DP12, DP16 and AS3.

Character and appearance of the area

Policy DP26 requires all development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. The policy has a number of criteria that are required to be complied with, however, due to the scale and nature of the proposal, not all are relevant to the consideration of this application.

As highlighted above, the structure is small scale, well designed and sited in a discrete location in the south western corner of the site away from general public views. The structure is therefore of high quality design reflecting the function that the building is designed to perform.

In addition, the proposal will contribute positively to the surrounding area (despite being not highly visible from general public vantage points), and the structure will be subservient to the character and scale of the surrounding buildings.

As a result, the development does not conflict with the relevant parts of policy DP26.

Amenities of adjoining properties

Policy DP26 also contains a criterion that requires development to not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution.

The proposed structure is located in the south western corner of the site. the nearest proposed siting is The Dairy- now converted to a residential property. However, the structure is approximately 5m from the nearest point on the shared boundary between the properties, and the doors face away from The Dairy. In addition, the structure is to house a donkey that is currently grazed and exercised in the adjoining field. The small scale and design of the structure will ensure that there is no harmful impact on the occupiers of the adjoining property by way of loss of light, overbearing impact, or loss of privacy.

As a result, there will be no conflict with the relevant section of policy DP26.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Impact on heritage assets

Policy DP34 is aimed at protecting listed buildings and their settings. The Barn is a listed building and therefore a designated heritage asset. The policy requires a thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal. Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building.

The Barn is a former agricultural building that was part of an agricultural context focussed on Great Thorndean Farm. As with historical farm complexes, there would have been historically a number of buildings and structures to house livestock, crops, plant, equipment and working animals. Whilst the building is not required for a “working” animal, it nevertheless reflects and responds to the historic significance of the heritage asset, and would not be out of place in the historic development of the former agricultural land use.

The structure is small scale and sited away from The Barn and separated from it by the existing access drive that serves the property. As a result, it is submitted that the proposed development will not result in harm to the setting or appearance of the heritage asset, and there will be no conflict with policy DP34.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the above, it is submitted that the proposal should be considered acceptable in principle, as there will be no harm to the intrinsic rural character of the countryside, and no harm to the landscape character of the National Landscape. There will be no harm to the wider character and appearance of the area given the small scale, siting and design of the structure. The development will not result in harm to the amenities of the occupiers of the adjoining dwelling, and no harm to the setting of the Grade II Listed building (The Barn).

As a result of the above, the proposed development does not conflict with the policies of the development plan, and consequently falls within the definition of sustainable development, as set out in paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF. The proposed development should therefore be granted planning permission without delay.

Should you wish to make a site visit, please feel free to contact me to arrange access, or to discuss any aspect of the proposed development.

Yours sincerely,



colinsmithplanning

Colin Smith