

Delegated Decision

Sign off Sheet

Ref. No:	DM/26/1446	Case Officer:	Catherine Cardin
Application Type:	Householder Application		
Proposal:	Conversion of stables to ancillary residential annex		
Site:	Little Shovelstrode Hall, Holtye Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3PP, , ,		
Validation Date	11 Jun 2026	Overall Expiry Date:	31 Aug 2026
Pre-Commencement Conditions Required:		Pre-Com Conditions Date Agreed:	
Recommendation:	Permission	Recommendation Date:	15 Sep 2026
Target Date:	6 Aug 2026	Recommending Officer Signature:	<i>Catherine Cardin</i>

Date Legal Agreement Completed: (if applicable)		No of Representations:	0
--	--	-------------------------------	---

Signed and Agreed By:	<i>Stephen Ashdown</i>	Date:	17 Sep 2026
Comments:			

MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

DM/26/1446

**Little Shovelstrode Hall, Holtye Road, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 3PP, ,
Conversion of stables to ancillary residential annex
Mr And Mrs Robert And Catherine Wall**

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTTEES

MSDC Conservation Officer

Little Shovelstrode Hall is a Grade II listed 17th century former farmhouse located in a rural position outside East Grinstead. Formerly known as Goodwin's Farm, then Orchards Farm, the farmstead associated with the house was located to the west. Latterly, this became separated from the original farmhouse, which was renamed as Orchards Cottage, while the farmstead, with a new farmhouse constructed, became known as Cherry Tree Farm. Of the historic farm buildings originally associated with the listed building, only a possibly 19th century barn now part of Cherry Tree Farm appears to survive. The farmstead is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character assessment as a historic farmstead of the post medieval period.

The current proposal relates to a relatively modern, mid-late 20th century, stable block located to the northeast of the listed building.

Based on the limited information in front of us, Little Shovelstrode Hall is likely to be considered to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of rural Sussex farmhouse, later country residence, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials viewed within the landscape from which they were drawn. As such, the surviving rural character of the setting of the house, including any surviving historic elements of the historic farmstead, will be considered to make a strong positive contribution to the special interest of the listed building and the manner in which it is appreciated.

The current proposal is for the conversion of the 20th century stable building to annexe accommodation, including associated external and internal alterations.

The stable building is relatively modern, and would not be regarded as curtilage listed. It is not of any particular architectural or historical value in its own right, but it has an agricultural character which is sympathetic to the broader rural setting of the listed building. It is visible in public views of the listed building and its gardens looking along the access driveway from Holtye Road.

Although I would not have any objection in principle to the conversion of the building to a residential annexe, I do have some concerns regarding the proposed external works, some of which in my opinion have a domesticating impact on its character, which will detract from its contribution to the setting of Little Shovelstrode Hall. In particular:

- The works to the northeast facing elevation of the building introduce fenestration which is domestic in nature. I would suggest that these works are amended to retain and glaze within the stable door openings, rather than replacing the doors with windows. The stable doors themselves could be retained and fixed open. The two new rooflights appear over-sized, and should be reduced in scale.
- The new window opening to the northwest elevation is overscaled and also domestic in character- I would suggest this reduced to a set of French windows with external shutters, to retain something of the agricultural character of the building.

- Can the applicant also please provide details of any works to the garden area around the building, or between the building and the existing house, e.g. new patio or decked areas, new pathways, or lighting.
- The applicant also needs to provide details of the external materials to be used in terms of window and door frames, which we would expect to be timber or possibly metal, although this could possibly be controlled by condition.

As it stands, I consider that the proposal, due to the domesticating impact of the works on the stables building and the adverse impact on the rural character of the setting of the listed building, results in harm to the special interest of Little Shovelstrode Hall. This is contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policy DP34. In terms of the NPPF, it results in less than substantial harm at the lower end of that scale, such that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 of the NPPF will apply.

Further comments on the above planning application.

The application has been amended to reuse more of the existing openings to the northeast elevation in their current form. In addition, the proposed new opening to the northwest end of the building has been reduced in scale and external shutters added (although these do not appear to be shown on the proposed plan). As a result, more of the agricultural character of the building is retained.

The applicant has also confirmed that there will be no change to the landscaping around the building or between it and the house.

Subject to detail which could be reserved by condition, the proposal is now considered to preserve the setting of the listed farmhouse, meeting the requirements of NPPF paragraphs HE4-HE6 and of District Plan Policy DP34.

I would recommend the following conditions:

- Details of roofing and facing materials (if altered).
- Detailed drawings, at an appropriate large scale, including sections and annotated to show materials and finishes of typical examples of new windows and external doors. Your drawings should as appropriate show details of glazing bars and depth of reveal.
- Detailed drawings, at an appropriate large scale, including sections and annotated to show materials and finishes of the shutters to the new windows to the northwest elevation.
- Rooflights to be flush fitting, metal framed, conservation style rooflights.
- Rainwater goods and other new external pipework to be of painted metal.

TOWN COUNCIL OBSERVATIONS

No comment.

INTRODUCTION

The application seeks planning permission for the conversion of a stable block to an ancillary residential annexe.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant history.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The application site comprises a detached dwelling known as Little Shovelstrode Hall together with an ancillary stable block located approximately 28m to the north-east of the dwelling. Little Shovelstrode Hall is a Grade II listed two-storey dwelling characterised by red brick, tile hanging to the first floor, white fenestration and a plain tile roof. The stable block is characterised by timber and a slate tile roof. The property benefits from a parking area which can accommodate approximately four cars. The stables are accessed via a driveway from Holtye Road. Immediately to the west of the stables is a pond.

The property lies outside the built-up area boundary of East Grinstead and lies within the setting of Little Shovelstrode Hall, a Grade II listed building. Neighbouring properties are located to the east and west. The public highway lies to the south.

APPLICATION DETAILS

The proposal seeks permission for the conversion of stables to ancillary residential annexe.

The conversion of the stables would incorporate the removal of double doors on the north-east (front) elevation and the installation of three windows and one single door. It also seeks to install one floor-to-ceiling window with external shutters on the northwest (side) elevation. Finally, it is proposed to install two Velux Rooflights on the northeast roof pitch.

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND LIST OF POLICIES

Planning legislation holds that the determination of a planning application shall be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Using this as the starting point the development plan for this part of Mid Sussex consists of the District Plan, Site Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan.

National policy (which is contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Policy Guidance) does not form part of the development plan, but is an important material consideration.

Mid Sussex District Plan

The District Plan was adopted at Full Council on 28th March 2018.

Relevant policies:

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

Site Allocations DPD

The SADPD was adopted on 29th June 2022. It allocates sufficient housing and employment land to meet identified needs to 2031.

Relevant policies:

No relevant policies

Neighbourhood Plan

East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2016.

Relevant policies:

EG1 - Protection of the High Weald AONB
EG3 - Promoting Good Design
EG4 - Heritage Assets

Other Material Considerations

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039 - Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In

accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 is currently at Examination with initial hearings held in February/March 2026. The Council is consulting on Main Modifications which are required to ensure the plan is legally compliant and sound. The District Plan remains at Examination until the Inspector has published his report, until that time only minimal weight can be given to the Plan and this planning application has been assessed against the policies of the adopted District Plan.

Relevant policies:

DPS2 - Sustainable Design and Construction

DPB1 - Character and Design

DPB2 - Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

DPC4 - High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (August 2026)

ASSESSMENT

It is considered that the main issues that need to be considered in the determination of this application are as follows;

- Design and Impact on the Setting of the Listed Building
- Impact on the High Weald AONB
- Neighbouring Amenities
- Biodiversity Net Gain

Design and Impact on the Setting of the Listed Building

S.66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'

With regard to the setting of the listed building, Policy DP34 requires development to protect listed buildings and their settings by demonstrating an understanding of their significance, ensuring that alterations respect their form, character and fabric, and using appropriate traditional materials. Policy EG4 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires that proposals affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets be supported by an appropriately detailed assessment of their heritage significance and the impact of the proposals on that significance. Due to the publication of the NPPF these policies are considered to be materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies and should be given very limited weight. Greater weight should be given to policy HE6 of the NPPF.

As the site falls outside of the built-up area (within the countryside) it is therefore necessary to consider the impact of the proposal in the local landscape in terms of the visual impact on the area. Policy DP12 of the District Plan relates to these issues. Due to the publication of the NPPF this policy is considered to be materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies and should be given very limited weight. Greater weight should be given to Policies S5 and N4 of the NPPF.

Policy DP26 of the District Plan relates to character and design. Policy EG3 of the Neighbourhood Plan contains a similar ethos. However, these policies are considered to have very limited weight as they are materially inconsistent with the NPPF, and greater weight should be given to policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Principle DG11 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide seeks to ensure that heritage assets and historic landscapes are conserved and enhanced, and carefully integrated into development proposals where this can be achieved without harm. New development should respond positively to its context, reflecting the scale and character of the surrounding area to maintain a coherent and consistent built form.

Policy DP3 of the NPPF sets out the key principles for well-designed places. This sets out in part that proposals should respond to their context, so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets.

Policy HE6 of the NPPF requires substantial weight to be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and requires any harm to be clearly justified and weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal.

Policy N4 of the NPPF relates to protected landscapes. This requires that *'substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.*

Policy S5 requires that certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse impacts when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework. This includes the *'reuse, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, provided that the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, is lawful in planning terms, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building'.*

The below assessment is made whilst being mindful of this guidance and having regard to the statutory duty of the Council, as Local Planning Authority, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting in accordance with the requirements of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The property lies outside the built-up area boundary of East Grinstead.

As the site lies outside the built-up area boundary, consideration must be given to whether the proposed development represents an acceptable form of development in the countryside. The proposal does not involve the construction of a new dwelling or the creation of a separate residential planning unit. Instead, it seeks the re-use and conversion of an existing lawful building of permanent and substantial construction to provide accommodation ancillary to the occupation of Little Shovelstrode Hall. The building would remain within the same planning unit as the host dwelling, sharing the existing access, parking arrangements and residential curtilage, with no subdivision of the site proposed. As such, the proposal would not create a new dwellinghouse or separate residential planning unit in the countryside and represents an appropriate re-use of an existing building in accordance with the aims of Policy S5 of the NPPF.

The proposal seeks to convert the existing detached stable building to residential accommodation. The annexe would be accessed by the existing private driveway, with an existing parking area provided to the south of the stables. The proposal includes modest alterations and is considered in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding area.

The Conservation Officer was consulted on the proposal and has provided a response. Whilst the Officer did not object in principle to the proposal, concerns were raised regarding the proposed external works, concluding that the proposed alterations would cause less harm at the lower end of the scale to the significance of the listed building through their impact on its rural setting and character. During the course of the application, revised plans were received which seek to reuse more of the existing openings to the northeast elevation in their current form. In addition, the proposed new opening to the northwest end of the building has been reduced in scale and external shutters added. The applicant has also

confirmed that there will be no change to the landscaping around the building or between it and the house. As a result, the Conservation Officer now considers that the agricultural character of the building is retained. Subject to detail which could be reserved by condition, the proposal is now considered by the Officer to preserve the setting of the listed farmhouse, meeting the requirements of NPPF Policies HE4-HE6 and of District Plan Policy DP34. This conclusion is agreed with.

Whilst the annexe contains facilities that could support independent day-to-day living, it would remain functionally and physically linked to the host dwelling. It would share access, parking and services, and no separate planning unit or curtilage is proposed. Furthermore, the absence of a clear physical or legal subdivision of the site would limit its ability to operate as a separate unit. The ancillary relationship would be secured by condition. The provision of a condition restricting occupation to ancillary purposes is both necessary and reasonable to prevent the formation of a separate planning unit. Significant weight is given to the fact that the accommodation would remain subordinate to the host dwelling in both functional and physical terms. The proposed development would not result in the establishment of a separate dwellinghouse and would not materially alter the established character of the site as a single residential planning unit.

Overall, the proposal represents an appropriate re-use of an existing building, is of an appropriate scale, form and design, and would not result in harm to the character and appearance of the site, the setting of Little Shovelstrode Hall or surrounding area. It is therefore considered to comply with Policy DP26 and DP34 of the District Plan, Policies EG3 and EG4 of the Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant principles of the Mid Sussex Design Guide, and Policies DP3, HE6, N4 and S5 of the NPPF.

Impact on the High Weald AONB

The legal framework for AONBs, (also known as National Landscapes) in England and Wales is provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 which at Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Section 84 of the CRoW requires Local Planning Authorities to *'take all such action as appears to them expedient for accomplishment of the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB'*. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act (2023) amended section 85 of the CRoW Act, to create a new duty on relevant authorities to *'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area when discharging their functions in AONBs'*. A similar ethos is found within The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan which is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the AONB.

Policy DP12 in the District Plan seeks to protect the character of the countryside and states that development will be permitted where it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District and is supported by a specific policy reference in the District Plan, Neighbourhood Plan or Development Plan Document. In this case policy DP26 is the relevant policy that supports high quality development. It is considered that these policies have very limited weight due to the publication of the NPPF and greater weight should be given to policy N4 of the NPPF.

Policy EG1 of the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It is considered that this policy has very limited weight due to the publication of the NPPF and greater weight should be given to policy N4 of the NPPF.

Policy N4 of the NPPF states:

'Substantial weight should be placed on the importance of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of these areas, and to conserving and enhancing wildlife and cultural heritage in National Parks and the Broads.'

Whilst the site lies within the countryside, the proposal relates to the conversion of an existing stable block and does not represent new isolated residential development. The proposal comprises alterations to an existing building and would be viewed in the context of existing residential development. Given its domestic scale, sympathetic design and use of matching materials, the development would not result in any material harm to the landscape character, scenic beauty or natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape.

As such the proposal would comply with the requirements of Policy DP16 of the District Plan, Policy EG1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, The High Weald AONB Management Plan and Policy N4 of the NPPF.

Neighbouring Amenities

Policy DP26 in part seeks to ensure that new development does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings. Policy EG3 of the Neighbourhood Plan requires that development does not harm adjoining amenity. It is considered that these policies have very limited weight due to the publication of the NPPF and greater weight should be given to policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF.

Policy L2 of the NPPF relates to making effective use of land. Part L2(1dii) requires proposals to have '*acceptable living standards for residents and neighbours in terms of access to daylight, sunlight, privacy and external amenity space*'.

Policy P3 of the NPPF relates to living conditions and pollution. Part 2(b) of this policy requires proposals '*Not give rise to, or contribute to, an unacceptable level of access to daylight and sunlight for neighbouring residents and occupiers, or unacceptable levels of air, noise, artificial light, water, soil or other forms of pollution on or beyond the site*'.

To the east of the application site lies Orchards Farm. It is proposed to install three windows on the front (northeast) elevation and one floor-to-ceiling on the side (northwest) elevation. Given the existing boundary treatments and the arrangement of the properties, it is considered that this would only provide oblique views into the private amenity space of Orchards Farm. Having regard to the separation distances involved, existing landscaping and the angle of view from the proposed openings, no unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy or overbearing impact would arise.

To the west of the application site lies Cherry Tree Farm. It is proposed to install three high-level windows on the rear (southwest) elevation. Having regard to the separation distances involved, the elevated position of the windows above eye level, and the existing relationship between the properties, it is considered that the proposed openings would not afford direct views towards habitable rooms or private amenity areas of Cherry Tree Farm. Consequently, no unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy or overbearing impact would arise.

Due to the domestic nature of the proposed development, it is considered that there would not be unacceptable harm in terms of noise, air and light pollution.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal is therefore deemed to accord with the above-mentioned part of policy DP26 of the District Plan and Policy EG3 of the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan, and Policies L2 and P3 of the NPPF.

Parking arrangements

Policy DP21 of the District Plan seeks development to provide adequate car parking taking into account accessibility of development, the type, mix and use, and the availability and opportunities for public transport. It is considered that this policy has very limited weight as it is considered to be materially inconsistent with the NPPF and greater weight should be given to policies TR2 and TR6 of the NPPF.

Policy TR4 of the NPPF relates to street design, access and parking. Part TR4 (1e) requires proposals to '*Provide a suitable number of parking spaces for a range of transport modes where appropriate, reflecting the location and nature of the development (including its connectivity), any locally-set standards in the development plan, and including adequate provision of spaces and infrastructure that allow for the charging of electric vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.*'

Policy TR6 of the NPPF relates to assessing transport impacts. Policy TR6(4) states '*Development proposals should be refused if they would have a severe adverse impact on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion, including cumulative impacts), or an unacceptable impact on highway*

safety; taking into account any mitigation measures proposed as well as any wider network improvements, including measures to support sustainable patterns of movement. This applies both during the construction phase and following completion.'

The host dwelling is a four-bedroom property. Whilst the proposal introduces additional ancillary accommodation, it would not result in the creation of a separate planning unit or independent dwelling. West Sussex County Council Parking Standards Guidance (2020) indicates that a 4-bedroom dwelling in this location should provide three parking spaces. The proposal would retain four parking spaces on the site. The site layout demonstrates that sufficient space is available for vehicles to manoeuvre within the site.

As such the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of highway safety and parking provision. The proposal therefore complies with policies TR4 and TR6 of the NPPF and policy DP21 of the District Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This is a householder application within the meaning of article 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. As a householder application this development is exempt from the requirement to provide biodiversity net gain.

PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

The proposal reuses an existing permanent building, secures a viable ancillary use for the structure, preserves the setting of the Grade II listed building, and would not give rise to material harm to landscape character, neighbouring amenity, highway safety or other planning interests. There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh these benefits.

In conclusion, the proposal represents an acceptable conversion of an existing stable building to ancillary residential accommodation. Subject to conditions, including a restriction preventing occupation of the annexe as an independent dwelling, the development would preserve the setting of the Grade II listed building, conserve the character of the High Weald National Landscape, safeguard neighbouring amenity and provide adequate parking. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the development plan, read as a whole, and the relevant policies of the NPPF. Approval is recommended.

Decision: Permission

Case Officer: Catherine Cardin