

buchan rum

Architecture & Interior Design

info@buchanrumarchitects.co.uk

www.buchanrumarchitects.co.uk

9 Savill Road, West Sussex, RH16 2NY

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT Rev02

First Floor Rear Extension

Rocklands, Church Lane, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6UP

First floor extension over existing single storey rear projection

Prepared on behalf of Mr & Mrs Moon

October 2026 | Job ref. 25_114

Document Control

Site	Rocklands, Church Lane, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6UP
Client	Mr & Mrs Moon
Proposal	First floor extension over existing single storey rear projection
Local planning authority	Mid Sussex District Council
Type of report	Planning, Design and Access Statement
Prepared by	Emma Buchan, Director – Buchan Rum Architects Ltd
Job reference	25_114
Date	October 2026

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Buchan Rum Architects Ltd on behalf of Mr & Mrs Moon in support of a householder planning application for a first floor extension above the existing single storey rear projection at Rocklands, Church Lane, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6UP.
- 1.2 The proposal would raise the existing single storey element at the south-east corner of the house to two storeys, replacing its low hipped roof and rear dormer with a modest gabled first floor addition. The extension would provide an en-suite shower room and dressing area to the principal bedroom, and would be finished in materials to match the host dwelling.
- 1.3 This statement describes the site and its context, sets out the relevant planning history and policy framework, and assesses the proposal against the development plan and other material considerations. Section 7 comprises the Design and Access Statement.
- 1.4 The application is accompanied by the following documents and drawings:
- Planning application forms and ownership certificate (via the Planning Portal);
 - Planning, Design and Access Statement – Buchan Rum Architects Ltd (this document);
 - 25_114_PL_00_105 Rev 00 – Existing and Proposed Site Location and Block Plans;
 - 25_114_PL_010 Rev 01 – Existing Plans;
 - 25_114_PL_011 Rev 03 – Existing Elevations;
 - 25_114_PL_110 Rev 00 – Proposed Plans;
 - 25_114_PL_104 Rev 00 – Proposed Elevations.

2. Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 Rocklands is a substantial detached two-storey dwelling set within a generous and well-landscaped plot on the eastern side of Church Lane, at the western edge of Ardingly village. The house is set well back from the lane behind a private drive and is substantially screened from public view by mature trees, hedgerows and boundary planting.
- 2.2 The dwelling is of traditional form, with a long hipped main roof finished in plain clay tiles and two tall chimney stacks. The elevations are of facing brick at ground floor with clay tile hanging above, and the windows are multi-paned casements. A single storey flat-roofed wing adjoins the northern end of the house. At the south-east corner, a single storey rear projection is covered by a hipped roof which sweeps down from the main eaves and incorporates a small east-facing dormer. It is this projection which is the subject of this application.
- 2.3 Rocklands is not a listed building. The site lies within the western part of the Ardingly Conservation Area, which is centred on the junction of Church Lane and Street Lane and St Peter's Church. The Council's description of the conservation area highlights the contribution

- made by the spacious, secluded gardens of Church Lane, with their abundance of mature trees and hedgerows. The nearest listed building is The Croft (Grade II), which lies to the north-west of the site.
- 2.4 The site lies outside the built-up area boundary and is therefore within the countryside for planning policy purposes. It is also within the High Weald National Landscape (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and within 7km of the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation.
- 2.5 The nearest neighbouring dwellings are Knowles Mead Cottage to the north-west and Kitfield Cottage to the south. As measured from the block plan, the rear projection lies approximately 17m from the southern site boundary and more than 30m from the dwelling at Kitfield Cottage.
- 2.6 The wider curtilage contains a number of outbuildings, including the former stables to the north-east of the house, which are the subject of a separate proposal (see Section 3).

3. Planning History

- 3.1 The planning history for the site is summarised in Table 1 below.

Reference	Description	Decision	Date
AP/26/0011	Appeal against the Council's decision on the conversion of existing stables to form a new two-bedroom detached dwelling	Appeal refused	January 2026
AR/025/99/API	Amended plans: two storey flank extension to provide additional bedroom over enlarged kitchen and utility room	Granted	21/01/2000
AR/025/99	Two storey flank extension to provide additional bedroom over enlarged kitchen and utility room	Granted	18/06/1999
AR/005/86	To retain a barn for hay and general storage	Granted	04/04/1986
AR/015/80/API	Amended plans: timber framed and clad stable and fodder store – alteration to roof	Granted	19/01/1981
AR/015/80	Timber framed and clad stable and fodder store	Granted	12/05/1980

Table 1: Planning history

- 3.2 The 1999 and 2000 permissions are of particular relevance. They show that the Council has previously accepted a two-storey addition to this dwelling within the conservation area, of a scale considerably larger than the present proposal.
- 3.3 In October 2024 a separate application was made for the conversion of the existing stables to a two-bedroom dwelling. That proposal was refused at an appeal (ref. AP/26/0011, lodged January 2026). It concerns a separate building some distance from the house and is

independent of this application. Neither proposal depends on, or affects the assessment of, the other.

- 3.4 Before that application, pre-application advice was received from the Council in February 2024 for a new dwelling on the stables site. Although that advice related to a different form of development, it identified the heritage and landscape sensitivities of the site. The Council confirmed the site's location within the conservation area and the setting of The Croft. It encouraged development that reflects the special characteristics of the area in its scale, design and use of complementary materials, and recommended reference to the High Weald AONB Management Plan. Those principles have informed the design of this proposal.

4. The Proposal

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for a first floor extension above the existing single storey rear projection at the south-east corner of Rocklands and replacing a door in the front elevation with a window.
- 4.2 The existing projection measures approximately 3.8m wide by 2.4m deep. Its hipped roof sweeps down from the main eaves and contains a small east-facing dormer, which lights a restricted room-in-roof space off the principal bedroom. Because of the limited headroom, that space has little practical use.
- 4.3 The proposal would raise the walls of the projection to first floor level, with the eaves line continuing that of the main house. The projection would be covered by a new pitched roof with a gable facing east (to the rear), its ridge set well below the main ridge. The ground floor footprint is unchanged, so the proposal takes no further garden land. The extension would add approximately 9 sqm of first floor accommodation.
- 4.4 Internally, the extension would provide an en-suite shower room (shower, WC and basin) and a dressing area with fitted wardrobes, both opening off the principal bedroom. The number of bedrooms in the dwelling would not change.
- 4.5 New windows would be limited to the following:
- a three-light casement in the east (rear) gable, in the position of the existing dormer window and facing the same direction;
 - a two-light casement in the south elevation.
- 4.6 The proposed elevations also show a minor change to the front (west) elevation, where a secondary ground floor door and side light are replaced by a two-light casement window matching those adjacent.
- 4.7 External materials would match the existing dwelling: clay tile hanging at first floor, plain clay roof tiles, facing brick at ground floor, and painted casement windows of matching pattern and proportion.
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5. Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For this site, the development plan comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031 (adopted March 2018) and the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan.

Statutory duties

- 5.2 Because the site is within a conservation area, section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. Section 66 of the same Act requires special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings.
- 5.3 Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, as amended by section 245 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, requires decision makers to seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014–2031

- 5.4 The following policies are relevant to this proposal:
- **DP12 – Protection and Enhancement of Countryside:** development in the countryside will be permitted where it maintains, or where possible enhances, the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District.
 - **DP16 – High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty:** development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty, having regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, including its character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern and sense of place.
 - **DP21 – Transport:** development should provide safe and convenient access and appropriate parking.
 - **DP26 – Character and Design:** all development is required to be of high quality design that creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape. It must not cause significant harm to the amenities of nearby residents, including their privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight.
 - **DP34 – Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets:** special regard is to be given to protecting the setting of listed buildings.
 - **DP35 – Conservation Areas:** development within a conservation area must preserve or enhance its special character and appearance, using building materials, detailing and scale that reflect the area.
 - **DP37 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows** and **DP38 – Biodiversity:** development should protect existing trees and biodiversity and take opportunities for enhancement.

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.5 Policy ARD 5 (Housing Design) requires all development, including alterations to existing buildings, to be sympathetic to the character and scale of surrounding buildings and landscape. Policy ARD 9 (Heritage Assets) requires proposals affecting a listed building or conservation area, or their setting, to conserve or enhance their special quality and distinctive character.

Supplementary guidance

- 5.6 The **Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (2020)** contains principles for householder extensions, notably Principle DG49 (General principles for extensions) and Principle DG51 (Rear extensions). These seek extensions that respond to the design of the original dwelling, remain subordinate to it, use matching or complementary materials and avoid unacceptable overlooking of neighbours.
- 5.7 The **High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024–2029** identifies the components of the area's natural beauty. Among them are the historic settlement pattern and a distinctive local building tradition that uses materials such as clay tile hanging, plain clay roof tiles and brick.

Emerging Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2039

- 5.8 The replacement District Plan is at an advanced stage of examination. Consultation on the proposed Main Modifications closed on 7 September 2026, and hearings are due to resume in November 2026. The emerging policies on character and design, heritage and the High Weald are broadly consistent with the adopted policies above and do not alter the assessment of this proposal. They are afforded weight in proportion to their stage of preparation.

National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026)

- 5.9 The revised National Planning Policy Framework was published on 17 August 2026, and its decision-making policies took effect on that date. The following policies are relevant:
- **DP3 (Key principles for well-designed places):** development should respond to its context, including the history, character and features of the site and its setting, so that it integrates with and enhances its surroundings.
 - **HE4–HE6 (Heritage assets):** harm to the significance of designated heritage assets should be avoided or minimised, and great weight given to their conservation. **HE9 (Conservation areas)** seeks to retain and conserve features which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the area.
 - **N4 (Protected Landscapes):** development within National Landscapes should be limited in scale and extent and be sensitively located and designed to avoid harm to their statutory purposes.

6. Planning Assessment

6.1 The main issues for this application are:

- a) the principle of development;
- b) design and the character of the host dwelling;
- c) heritage – the Ardingly Conservation Area and the setting of The Croft;
- d) the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald National Landscape;
- e) residential amenity;
- f) trees, ecology and biodiversity; and
- g) access and parking.

Principle of development

6.2 The proposal is a modest extension to an existing dwelling within its established residential curtilage. It is built entirely over the existing footprint and does not extend into the surrounding garden or the wider countryside. Policy DP12 does not restrict proportionate householder extensions of this kind, which have no effect on rural or landscape character beyond the immediate curtilage. The principle of the development is therefore acceptable, subject to the detailed considerations below.

Design and character

6.3 The extension has been designed to respond directly to the form and detailing of Rocklands, in accordance with Policy DP26, Policy ARD 5 and Principles DG49 and DG51 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide:

- **Subordinate scale:** the addition is small in relation to the host dwelling and its ridge sits well below the main ridge, so the main hipped roof remains the dominant element of the rear and side elevations.
- **Coherent form:** the existing arrangement of a low hipped roof, catslide and small dormer at this corner is awkward and of limited practical use. A simple gable, with eaves continuing those of the main house, creates a more legible and balanced rear elevation. Gabled rear projections are a familiar feature of Wealden houses.
- **Matching materials:** clay tile hanging, plain clay roof tiles, facing brick and multi-paned casement windows would match the existing house exactly, so the extension reads as an integral part of the building.
- **No increase in footprint:** the extension is contained entirely over the existing single storey element, so the spacious garden setting of the house is unaffected.

6.4 The proposal is a well-considered, proportionate addition that respects and improves the character and appearance of the host dwelling. It accords with Policy DP26, Policy ARD 5, the Mid Sussex Design Guide and NPPF Policy DP3.

Heritage – Ardingly Conservation Area

- 6.5 The significance of this part of the conservation area lies mainly in the historic grouping around St Peter's Church and the Church Lane / Street Lane junction. Its character is defined by spacious, secluded gardens with mature trees and hedgerows, and by the traditional materials of its buildings.
- 6.6 Rocklands is set well back from Church Lane and is heavily screened by planting. The extension is on the rear (east) and south side of the house, away from the lane, and would not be visible from Church Lane or any other public vantage point. Where glimpsed, it would appear as a traditional pitched-roof element in matching materials, entirely consistent with the existing building and the vernacular of the area. No trees, hedgerows or garden spaces that contribute to the character of the conservation area would be affected.
- 6.7 The proposal would therefore preserve the character and appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area. It would cause no harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset, satisfying section 72 of the 1990 Act, Policies DP35 and ARD 9, and NPPF Policies HE4–HE6 and HE9.

Heritage – setting of The Croft (Grade II)

- 6.8 The Croft lies to the north-west of the site. The extension is on the opposite (south-east) side of Rocklands and is separated from The Croft by distance, by the house itself and by intervening buildings and mature vegetation. There is no meaningful visual or functional relationship between the extension and the listed building, and the proposal would not affect how its significance is experienced. The setting of The Croft would be preserved, in accordance with section 66 of the 1990 Act, Policy DP34 and NPPF Policy HE6.

High Weald National Landscape

- 6.9 The extension is small in scale and extent and lies entirely within the existing built footprint of a dwelling in a long-established residential curtilage. It would not affect any of the defining components of the High Weald's natural beauty identified in the Management Plan, such as its geology and landform, woodland, field and heath, routeways or settlement pattern. Its materials (clay tile hanging, plain clay roof tiles and brick) reflect the local building tradition the Management Plan seeks to sustain.
- 6.10 The proposal would conserve the natural beauty of the National Landscape, in accordance with Policy DP16, NPPF Policy N4 and the duty to seek to further the purposes of the designation under section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

Residential amenity

- 6.11 Policy DP26 requires development not to cause significant harm to the amenities of nearby residents. The extension would have no adverse effect on neighbouring occupiers, for the following reasons:
- The extension is approximately 17m from the southern boundary and more than 30m from the nearest neighbouring dwelling, Kitfield Cottage. At these distances, and given

its modest height, it would have no overbearing effect and would not cause any material loss of daylight or sunlight to any neighbouring property.

- The new east-facing gable window replaces the existing dormer window in the same position and faces the same direction, over the applicants' own garden. It creates no new outlook towards any neighbour.

- 6.12 The proposal accords with the amenity requirements of Policy DP26 and Principle DG49 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide.

Trees, ecology and biodiversity

- 6.13 The extension is built over the existing single storey footprint, and no trees or hedgerows would be removed or affected. Householder applications are exempt from the statutory biodiversity net gain requirement.
- 6.14 The works involve the removal and replacement of the existing roof over the projection. Given the site's semi-rural setting near mature trees, the works would be carried out using precautionary working methods. Should any bats be discovered, work would stop and advice would be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. The applicants would also be happy to provide an integrated bat or bird box within the new gable as a biodiversity enhancement, which could be secured by condition. The proposal therefore accords with Policies DP37 and DP38.

Access and parking

- 6.15 The proposal does not alter the existing access or parking arrangements, and it does not increase the number of bedrooms. It would have no effect on highway safety or parking demand, in accordance with Policy DP21.

Other matters

- 6.16 The proposal does not create a new dwelling, so no mitigation is required for the Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC. The extension would be built to current Building Regulations standards, including Part L thermal performance, which would improve the energy efficiency of this part of the house.

7. Design and Access Statement

- 7.1 This section addresses the design and access considerations for the proposal.
- 7.2 **Use** – The property is, and would remain, a single private dwellinghouse (Use Class C3). The extension provides an en-suite and dressing area to the principal bedroom.
- 7.3 **Amount** – The extension adds approximately 9 sqm of first floor accommodation over the existing single storey projection, with no increase in the building footprint.

- 7.4 **Layout** – The en-suite and dressing area are reached from the principal bedroom. The ground floor layout of the house is unchanged.
- 7.5 **Scale** – The extension is one storeys in height, sitting above the existing ground floor, with eaves matching the main house and a ridge set well below the main ridge. It is clearly subordinate to the host dwelling.
- 7.6 **Appearance** – A simple gabled form finished in clay tile hanging, plain clay roof tiles and facing brick, with multi-paned casement windows to match the existing. It replaces an awkward roof and dormer arrangement with a coherent, traditional rear elevation.
- 7.7 **Landscaping** – No trees, hedges or soft landscaping are affected, and the garden setting of the house is retained in full.
- 7.8 **Access** – Vehicular and pedestrian access to the property is unchanged. Internal circulation would meet the requirements of the Building Regulations.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This application seeks permission for a modest first floor extension above the existing single storey rear projection at Rocklands, providing an en-suite and dressing area to the principal bedroom. The extension is contained within the existing footprint, is clearly subordinate to the host dwelling and is finished in matching traditional materials. It would improve the appearance of the rear of the house by replacing an awkward roof and dormer arrangement with a well-proportioned gable.
- 8.2 The proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Ardingly Conservation Area and the setting of The Croft, and would conserve the natural beauty of the High Weald National Landscape. It would cause no harm to the amenity of neighbouring residents and would have no effect on trees, highways or parking.
- 8.3 The proposal accords with Policies DP12, DP16, DP21, DP26, DP34, DP35, DP37 and DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Policies ARD 5 and ARD 9 of the Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan, the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework. It is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.