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PLANNING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

REF: MIDS/25/01

ERECTION OF NEW SELF BUILD DWELLING

WOODCOTE YEW LANE EAST GRINSTEAD WEST SUSSEX RH19 2AZ

APPLICANT: MR D. HALL

JUNE 2025

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1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support the proposal for the erection of a new self build dwelling at Woodcote, Yew Lane, East Grinstead.
- 1.2 The proposal is for a self build project in the garden of Woodcote. The current owners and occupiers of Woodcote plan to erect the new dwelling upon the granting of planning permission and move into it upon the sale of the existing dwelling. The Self and Custom Build Statement accompanies this application to confirm the self build status of the development.
- 1.3 The proposed development will make a small but positive contribution to the strategic housing land supply requirement of the Council. This Planning Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposal complies with the policies of the current development plan where they are relevant, and the NPPF, published in December 2024, and falls within the definition of sustainable development, and should therefore be granted planning permission without delay.



2.0 SITE AND CHARACTER APPRAISAL

- 2.1 The site is located in East Grinstead on the corner of Yew Lane and Lowdells Lane, although the access to the property comes out onto Yew Lane. The plot is square in shape and has a frontage onto both Yew Lane and Lowdells Lane. The dwelling is located to the back of the plot, with a larger side and front garden area. The boundaries of the site are made up of hedges and landscape features approximately 4m in height and result in the plot being secluded and with limited views into it.
- 2.2 The existing property itself is a two storey detached dwelling finished in brown brick and tile hanging to the elevations and brown clay tiles to the roof. The character of the surrounding area is residential, with a variety of designs, scales and massing of the dwellings, and differences in the relationships between dwellings one to another and to the highway. Some of the properties are single storey bungalows and some are two storey dwellings.
- 2.3 In relation to public transport, the nearest train station at East Grinstead is approximately 1.9km to the south, and there are bus stops in London Road (220m to the south) with numerous services to other town and regional centres. The site is in a sustainable and accessible location.



3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 According to the Council's website, there are a number of historic planning applications submitted for development at the site;

- 03/00804/FUL- Alterations and extensions. Withdrawn.
- 03/01283/FUL- Alterations and extensions. Granted 30.06.03.
- 04/00729/FUL- To erect a wooden outbuilding in rear garden on site of existing greenhouse. Granted 10.05.04.
- DM/22/3293- First floor rear extension. Granted 02.12.22.

3.2 In addition to the above, a relatively recent planning permission was granted for the erection of a new detached dwelling at The Grange, with access onto Furze Lane. This will be referred to in more detail below;

- DM/21/0069- Erection of a detached 3 bed chalet style property on land adjacent to The Grange. Creation of new access point onto Furze Lane. Granted 17.06.21.



4.0 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposed development is for the sub-division of the existing plot and the erection of a new dwelling as a self build project for the current occupiers of Woodcote. The current plot amounts to 0.2ha. The subdivision of the plot will retain a curtilage area for Woodcote of 0.14ha, and a curtilage for the new dwelling of 0.06ha.
- 4.2 The proposed building will have a floor area over both floors (measured internally) of 317.5 sqm and a footprint of 158.7 sqm. The proposed dwelling is to be a two storey dwelling, but with a low eaves line to ensure that part of the first floor is within the roofspace and to reduce the scale and bulk of the dwelling. The design includes a catslide roof and dormers to add interest to the design and to articulate the building, keeping the overall height to a minimum and to break up the scale and massing. The proposed dwelling has a maximum height from ground floor to the ridge of 8.2m.
- 4.3 The proposed dwelling will have five bedrooms at first floor and a kitchen/living area, drawing room, utility room, cloakroom, study and pantry on the ground floor. The floorspace of the dwelling exceeds the Nationally Described Space Standards for a 5 bed/8 person dwelling (128 sqm)- there are no minimum



standards for a 5 bed/10 person dwelling.

- 4.4 The proposed dwelling will be located to the southern part within the sub divided plot, with a new access and retain the existing landscaping around the periphery of the site, to minimise the impact on the character of the area and the amenities of the occupiers of the surrounding properties. Four car parking spaces are provided in the front of the property accessed via a new crossover onto Yew Lane.
- 4.5 The external finishing materials for the proposed building will be brick and a roof tile to reflect the character of the surrounding area. The exact specification of the bricks and roof covering can be secured by a suitably worded condition.



5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

Development plan

5.1 The development plan consists of the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan (adopted March 2018), and the East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan, made in November 2016. Having regard to the proposed development the relevant policies are set out below.

5.2 District Local Plan;

- DP4: Housing
- DP6: Settlement Hierarchy
- DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- DP21: Transport
- DP26: Character and Design
- DP27: Dwelling Space Standards
- DP30: Housing Mix



5.3 East Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan;

- EG3: Promoting Good Design
- EG5: Housing
- EG7: Housing mix and density
- EG11: Highway Impact
- EG12: Car Parking
- EG16: Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA

5.4 The policies of the Affordable Housing Delivery Plan are not relevant for the proposed development as the number of units is below the threshold for the provision of affordable housing.

Other material considerations

5.5 **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – a revised version of the NPPF was published in December 2024, and therefore carries considerable weight as a material consideration. Paragraph 10 of the NPPF sets out that;



“at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”

5.6 Paragraph 11 goes on to say that for decision taking this means;

“approving development proposals that accord with an up to date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”*

5.7 Paragraph 129 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account (amongst other matters) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it and the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens).

5.8 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF is part of the section relating to achieving well designed places. A number of



bullet points require planning decisions to ensure that developments;

- “are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development.....”*

Mid Sussex Design Guide- the Council adopted the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD in 2020.



6.0 MAIN ISSUES

6.1 Having regard to the policy context, the main issues raised by the application are;

- Principle of development;
- Impact on the character of the area;
- Impact on residential amenity and environment created for future residents;
- Access and parking.
- Impact on the Ashdown Forest

Principle of development

6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004) states *“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”*.

6.3 Policy DP4 of the District Plan sets out that within Category 1 settlements (such as East Grinstead) there is a



minimum requirement of 10,653 new dwellings over the plan period. Whilst the Council can demonstrate a five year housing supply, it is of note that the requirement is a minimum, and this should be seen in the context of the Government's current encouragement to boost housing supply.

- 6.4 Policy DP6 of the District Plan relates to the Settlement Hierarchy and designates East Grinstead as a Category 1 Settlement. It states that development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design) and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement.
- 6.5 In summary, the provision of new housing within the settlement boundary of East Grinstead should be considered acceptable in principle as it will make a contribution to the required housing supply. In addition, designating East Grinstead as a Category 1 settlement acknowledges that it is a highly sustainable and accessible settlement, particularly suitable for growth, particularly housing growth.

Policy DP30 of the District Plan relates to housing mix and states that to support sustainable communities, housing development will provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development (including affordable housing) that reflects current and future local housing needs, and meet the current and future needs of different groups in the community including older people, vulnerable groups and those wishing to build their own homes. This could include the provision of bungalows and other forms of suitable accommodation, and the provision of



serviced self-build plots. As this is a self build plot in a sustainable location, there should be a presumption in favour of it.

- 6.6 The Neighbourhood Plan also contains policies in relation to development within the settlement boundary. Policy EG5 sets out that new housing development will only be supported if a number of criteria are met, relating to the environmental, visual and transport impact of the development, and that the development is well designed and contributes to sustainable development.
- 6.7 Policy EG7 refers to the density of housing development within the settlement area of East Grinstead and supports infill development in the built up area of the town which accords with a series of criteria, including a minimum density.
- 6.8 This approach is supported by the NPPF which allows for developments that are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).
- 6.9 Overall, the provision of a new dwelling in this location should be considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with the other relevant policies of the development plan, in relation to character, design, impact on amenities and impact on neighbouring properties.



Impact on the character of the area

- 6.10 Policy DP26 of the District Plan relates to the character and design of new development and sets out all development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. A number of criteria need to be met, including that the development is a high quality design, creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape, protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area, and optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.
- 6.11 Policy EG3 of the Neighbourhood Plan is also relevant and contains criteria to meet, including that the form of the proposed development is proportionate and in keeping with the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the surrounding area, the layout of the proposed development respects the topography and character of the site, the proposal does not result in the loss of buildings or spaces that would have an unacceptable impact on the character of the area.
- 6.12 The proposed development is for the subdivision of the plot and the erection of a new self build property. The subdivision of the plot would not in itself result in harm. The plot at Woodcote was originally two plots on the



original development scheme. The original owner purchased the two plots and combined as one when the properties were first constructed. The character of the area, in relation to plot size and shape is characterised by variety and difference. The plot sizes are of a variety of sizes, and the buildings within them (which consist of both single storey and two storey dwellings) have a variety of relationships with the adjoining properties. The application site is located at the junction of Furze Lane and Yew Lane. Most of the surrounding properties have hedges fronting the highways to form boundaries (with one or two exceptions). Whilst a section of the existing hedge will need to be removed to accommodate the new access. The existing verdant and soft landscaped character will not be lost.

- 6.13 The layout of the development will result in the proposed dwelling being aligned with the front elevation of the host dwelling (Woodcote) suited to the position of the corner plot. This will ensure that the proposed layout will accommodate the required parking and turning space in the frontage, and to allow for sufficient amenity space to the rear. Whilst the proposed dwelling will be in front of the front elevation of the adjoining property to the south (Charnwood), the character of the area does not exhibit a uniformity to the building line or relationships between dwellings. A map extract below sets out the building lines to the frontage of the surrounding properties, and although the proposed building line replicates the relationship between Woodcote and Hedgerows, it is clear that there is little uniformity and a high degree of variety;



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Building lines of the surrounding area in red

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- 6.14 The design of the dwelling itself is of high quality and reflects the design of the surrounding dwellings in some of the key design features. Woodcote (the host dwelling) is a two storey dwelling with projecting two storey bay features at each corner to the front elevation, but with a recessed central section with a lower eaves line and front facing dormers. The proposed dwelling has a catslide roof to the front elevation over the proposed study, and a lower eaves line over the drawing room, which is set back from the main two storey element, with the master bedroom located partly within the roofspace, with forward facing dormers.
- 6.15 Principle DG38 in the Mid Sussex District Council Design Guide (MSDG) is relevant in the determination of this application. It requires developments to establish an architectural approach and identity in the design of building that is borne from the place. The facade and elevational treatment, roofscape fenestration and materials used in existing buildings within the locality should be a starting point for the consideration of architectural design of new buildings. However, this should not result in pastiche replicas of traditional buildings. Instead, a re-interpretation of key aspects of their form should be demonstrated.
- 6.16 In this case, there is a wide variety of building designs and appearances, from single storey bungalows with gable ended roofs, to larger two storey dwellings with hipped roofs and projecting bays and dormer features. The proposed dwelling reflects some of the features of the host dwelling in terms of the lowered eaves lines and front facing dormers, but does not replicate these features. Rather the design is individual, but reflective of the host dwelling. The inclusion of the upper floor partially within the roof space allows for the height of the dwelling to be



limited to 7.3m, although the heights of the surrounding buildings are varied and of different character, and the proposed development would reflect this.

- 6.17 Policy EG7 requires housing schemes to meet a minimum density of 30 dwellings per ha. Whilst this is not a “housing scheme”, but rather a self build single dwelling, the density amounts to 16.6 dw/ha. This is lower than the Neighbourhood Plan policy requirement, but as the area is defined within the MSDG recognises that this area of East Grinstead is characterised by low density suburban development. As a result, it is submitted that the lower density proposed is appropriate.
- 6.18 Overall, it is submitted that the design and appearance of the proposed dwelling, and the layout, will not result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. The reduced density is considered to be appropriate and acceptable, and the design and appearance of the proposed dwelling reflects some of the features of the host dwelling (Woodcote) without replicating them, and therefore the proposal adds to the variety which is part of the distinctive character of the area. There is therefore no conflict with the policies of the development plan in this regard.

Impact on residential amenity and environment created for future residents

- 6.19 Policy DP26 of the District Plan requires new developments 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. Policy EG3 of the Neighbourhood Plan similarly requires new development to not harm adjoining amenity.

- 6.20 Layout of the proposed dwelling within the plot is such that it will not extend beyond the rear elevation of Woodcote to the north. Similarly, the proposed dwelling will not extend beyond the rear elevation of the property to the south (Charnwood). There are no flank windows in the elevation of Charnwood facing the proposed dwelling, and therefore there will be no loss of light or overbearing impact. Whilst there is a window in the flank elevation of Woodcote facing the proposed dwelling, this is the only window and is to a non habitable dressing room. As this is a non habitable room, there is no significant harm caused in relation to any loss of light or overbearing impact. In order to avoid any issues of overlooking from Woodcote to the proposed plot, it is proposed to change the glass in the dressing room window to obscure glazed. As the whole site is in the ownership of the applicant, it is possible to secure this by way of a condition.
- 6.21 There will be no overlooking or loss of privacy to adjoining properties. The rear elevations of the proposed dwelling and Woodcote are aligned, so there will be oblique views from the rear facing upper floor window to the end of the garden at Woodcote, but the main area to be protected for privacy (immediately adjacent to the rear of the dwelling) will not be directly overlooked. In the same way, although the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling will face more towards Charnwood due to the angle of the site, the rear elevation will face towards the end of the rear garden. There is a single window in the upper floor of the rear elevation of the proposed dwelling



(to bedroom 2), but this is to the northern side of the proposed dwelling and therefore will not overlook directly the main private amenity space of Charnwood. The window to bedroom 3 in the proposed dwelling is in the southern flank elevation, and will face forward, towards the driveway of Charnwood. Whilst there may be a degree of overlooking to this part of the plot, this is not considered to be significantly harmful, as the front driveway area is a semi public space in any event, with views into the plot from the road through the access gate and over the hedge that bounds the front of the site. It is submitted therefore that the proposed development does not result in significant harm to the amenities of the occupiers of the adjoining dwellings.

- 6.22 The proposed development is required by policy DP27 to meet the national minimum standards for new dwellings. Whilst there is no standard for a five bedroom/ten person dwelling, the proposed development exceeds the minimum floorspace for the nearest defined standard for a five bedroom/eight person dwelling (128 sqm). In addition, whilst there is no adopted standard for amenity space and garden areas, the rear garden is 122 sqm, with a maximum depth of 19.7m. This rear garden size is considered to be suitable and appropriate for the size and function of the proposed dwelling.
- 6.23 It is submitted that the amenity provided for future occupiers of the site is suitable and appropriate, and there is no significantly harmful impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining properties, and therefore no conflict with the relevant policies of the development plan.



Access and parking

- 6.24 Policy DP21 of the District Plan addresses transport matters in general. However, one of the bullet points requires schemes to be sustainably located to minimise the need for travel. In addition, the policy requires the provision of adequate car parking taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport and having regard to any relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable.
- 6.25 Policy EG11 of the Neighbourhood Plan sets out that due to the identified highway constraints within the Neighbourhood Plan Area all new housing development proposals will be expected to be supported by an appropriate assessment of the impact of the proposal on the highway network. Access arrangements should be appropriately designed and include adequate visibility splays. Policy EG12 requires parking provision to be provided in accordance with the West Sussex County Council adopted standards.
- 6.26 In relation to policy DP21, the site is sustainably located in that it is within the settlement boundary of East Grinstead (a Category 1 settlement). In relation to public transport, the nearest train station at East Grinstead is approximately 1.9km to the south, and there are bus stops in London Road (220m to the south). There are also local shops and services at The Parade in London Road (approximately 200m away, including a petrol filling station with a Marks and Spencer outlet, and a retail warehouse outlet just behind. The High Street in East



Grinstead is approximately 2.5km away, and although this would represent a walk of approximately 30 minutes, it is easily reached by bicycle and public transport.

- 6.27 The Neighbourhood Plan requires an appropriate assessment of the impact of the proposal on the highway network. It is noted that the proposal is for a single dwelling, and in the context of the wider area, which is predominantly residential, the additional traffic generated by the proposal will not result in a material increase in traffic or result in the cumulative impacts being severe. It is of note that the Highway Authority in their response to the planning application reference DM/21/0069 for a single dwelling on land adjoining The Grange, Furze Lane- just to the west of the current application site, noted that *“access to the maintained highway network is at the junction with London Road, an A-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph in this location. There are no apparent visibility issues at this junction. The LHA does not anticipate that the addition of one dwelling would give rise to a significant intensification of movements using this junction”*. Although the junction of Yew Lane with London Road is further to the south than the junction of Furze Lane with London Road, visibility is also good, and it is anticipated that the Highway Authority will come to the same conclusion in relation to this application.
- 6.28 Having regard to the Highway Authority’s parking demand calculator, it would appear that in this location four parking spaces are required to meet the adopted standards. These are provided on site, and electric vehicle charging facilities and cycle parking can be secured by way of a condition.



- 6.29 In the light of the above, it is submitted that there will be no adverse impact on the local highway network, and that parking and access to the site can be provided and secured by condition. There is therefore no conflict with the policies of the development plan in relation to highway and parking matters.

Impact on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC

- 6.30 Policy DP17 of the District Plan sets out that mitigation measures are necessary to counteract the effects of a potential increase in recreational pressure and are required for developments resulting in a net increase in dwellings within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA. A Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) mitigation approach has been developed and agreed with Natural England. Policy EG16 of the Neighbourhood Plan has a similar requirement.
- 6.31 The application site is within the 7km zone of influence and generates a net increase of one dwelling, and as such, mitigation is required.
- 6.32 In order to meet the mitigation requirements of the policies of the development plan, in the event that the Council are minded to grant planning permission, a s106 obligation will be drafted and submitted in order to enable the mitigation, in the form of financial contributions to be secured.



7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposed development should be considered acceptable in principle, as the Council's policies encourage the provision of housing within settlement boundaries, particularly within East Grinstead, which is a Category 1 settlement. In addition, the proposal will add to the provision of self build units, for which there is a policy presumption in favour.
- 7.2 The development will not result in harm to the overall character of the area, which is characterised by variety in terms of plot size and shape, and design and appearance of dwellings. Features of the host property are reflected in the design, and the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.3 In addition, there will be no harm to the amenities of adjoining properties due to the relationship of the proposed dwelling and the existing adjoining properties, and the environment created for future occupiers of the development will be satisfactory.
- 7.4 Car parking is provided in accordance with the adopted standards, and the access will not result in any



increased danger to other highway users. There will be no adverse impact on the local highway network.

- 7.5 In the event that planning permission is likely to be granted, a s106 obligation will be submitted in order to secure the required mitigation.
- 7.6 It is submitted therefore that the proposed development does not conflict with the policies of the development plan. As a result, it falls within the definition of sustainable development set out in paragraph 11 of the NPPF and should therefore be granted planning permission without delay.