

Client: Mr & Mrs Musker

Project: Lullings Cottage

Date: 17/05/2025

Design & Access Statement

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WillGamble/Architects.

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Will Gamble Architects is an award winning, design-led architecture and interiors practice based in Barnes, London.

The studio specialises in residential projects ranging from townhouse refurbishments and extensions to rural conversions, adaptations and new build properties.

As a practice, Will Gamble Architects strive to deliver high quality architecture that is well-considered, sensitive in design and rich in materiality and have built a portfolio of work that extends throughout the UK.

The practice has a particular interest in working with sensitive environments by creating architecture that enhances it's historic and natural setting. It has a strong belief in the sensitive application of contemporary design, delivering well considered interventions which are both culturally and environmentally sustainable.

RIBA National Award 2022 – Winner

RIBA East Midlands Award 2022 – Winner

RIBA Small Project of the Year Award 2022 - Winner

RIBA Conservation Award 2022 - Winner

RIBA Stephen Lawrence Prize 2022 - Shortlisted

Architizer – Popular Choice, Medium Private House 2021 - Winner

British Homes Awards - Home Extension of the Year 2020 - Winner

British Homes Awards - Interior Designer of the Year 2020 - Winner



Figure Desc. Will Gamble Architects, Selected Project - Extension to a grade 2 listed house within the ruins of a parchment factory and scheduled monument

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CONTENTS.

01. Introduction	01	04. Design	17
02. Site & Surrounding Area	02	- Design Rationale	
- Surrounding Area		- Alternative Proposals	
- Travel Distances		- Site Layout	
- The Site		- Internal Arrangement	
- Lullings Cottage		- Massing, Scale & Height	
- Access		- Appearance & Materiality	
- Heritage and Lullings		05. Access & Landscape	26
- Ecology and Trees		- Vehicular Access	
- Site Analysis		- Parking	
03. Planning	12	- Pedestrian Access	
- Influential Policies		- Refuse and Recycling	
- Pre Application		- Trees and Planting	
		- Ecology	
		- Drainage	
		- Sustainability	
		07. Conclusion	29

01. INTRODUCTION

Development Description - Replacement of existing cottage for a single storey replacement dwelling with associated landscaping.

This design and access statement has been prepared to support the application for works described above at Lullings Cottage, West Hill, Balcombe, RH17 6QY.

The proposal replaces an existing cottage and two ancillary outbuildings for a new dwelling. The layout, appearance and scale of the proposal has been carefully developed to respond sensitively to the characteristics of the site and the wider area, creating a proposal that is appropriate for a unique setting.

This design and access statement sets out detailed analysis of the site and context, a thorough pre-application process and supplementary information from supporting consultants. It explains how these undertakings have informed the design of the proposal.



Artistic Impression of Proposal - View from East

02. SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

Surrounding Area

The application site is located between the rural villages of Balcombe (to the west) and Ardingly (to the east). The site is within West Sussex and forms part of the Mid Sussex District area.

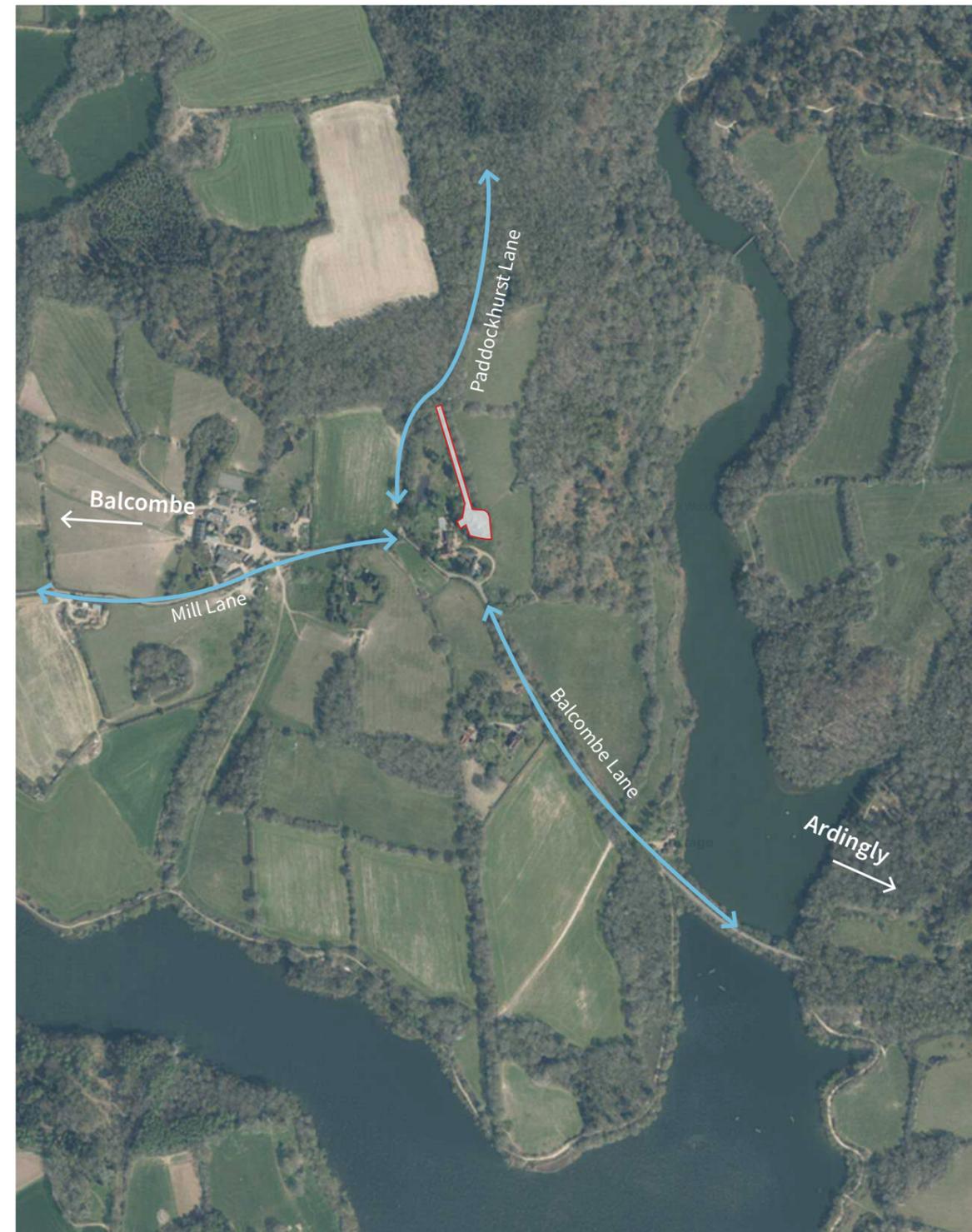
Balcombe Lane and Mill Lane connect these rural villages to one-another. Both have public transport connections to Haywards Heath to the south and Crawley to the north. Balcombe runs services to the centre of London and Brighton via the Thameslink Railway, at 30 minute intervals 6 days a week.

The site lies within the natural 'V shape' formed by the Ardingly Reservoir. It's location, to the west of the eastern most fork of the reservoir allows generous views over woodland into the reservoir's valley.

The site is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and it's surroundings are typical of this categorisation. The immediate surroundings are rural with intermittent, irregular patches of historic development, where they have changed over time this has been gradual with farm yards and hamlets often forming the catalyst for modest and piecemeal development.

Travel Distances

Destination	By Car	By Bike	By Bus	By Foot
Ardingly	6mins	13mins	N/A	35mins
Balcombe	5mins	9mins	N/A	30mins
Haywards Heath	11mins	35mins	15mins (via Ardingly by foot)	N/A
Crawley	22mins	55mins	11mins (Three Bridges, via Balcombe by foot)	N/A



Lullings Cottage Location

The Site

The site is located at Lullings Cottage, West Hill, Balcombe, RH17 6QL. The map opposite describes the extent of the application site and the applicant's land ownership.

The site is accessed from Paddockhurst Lane via gates and a private driveway to the north. Paddockhurst Lane serves Mill Lane (to Balcombe) and Balcombe Lane (to Ardingly).

The private driveway leads to an existing dwelling; Lullings Cottage (*The Cottage*) and two ancillary outbuildings. The driveway runs north to south and intersects the land associated with a larger property adjacent; *Lullings*.

The Cottage is located to the south of the application site, nestled within an alcove of trees and vegetation forming the southern and western boundary. The Cottage is orientated to face eastwards, turning it's back on the vegetation and addressing what is assumed to be open agricultural land to the east. The land falls away steeply to the east which benefits the Cottage, allowing long ranging views over the Ardingly Reservoir valley.

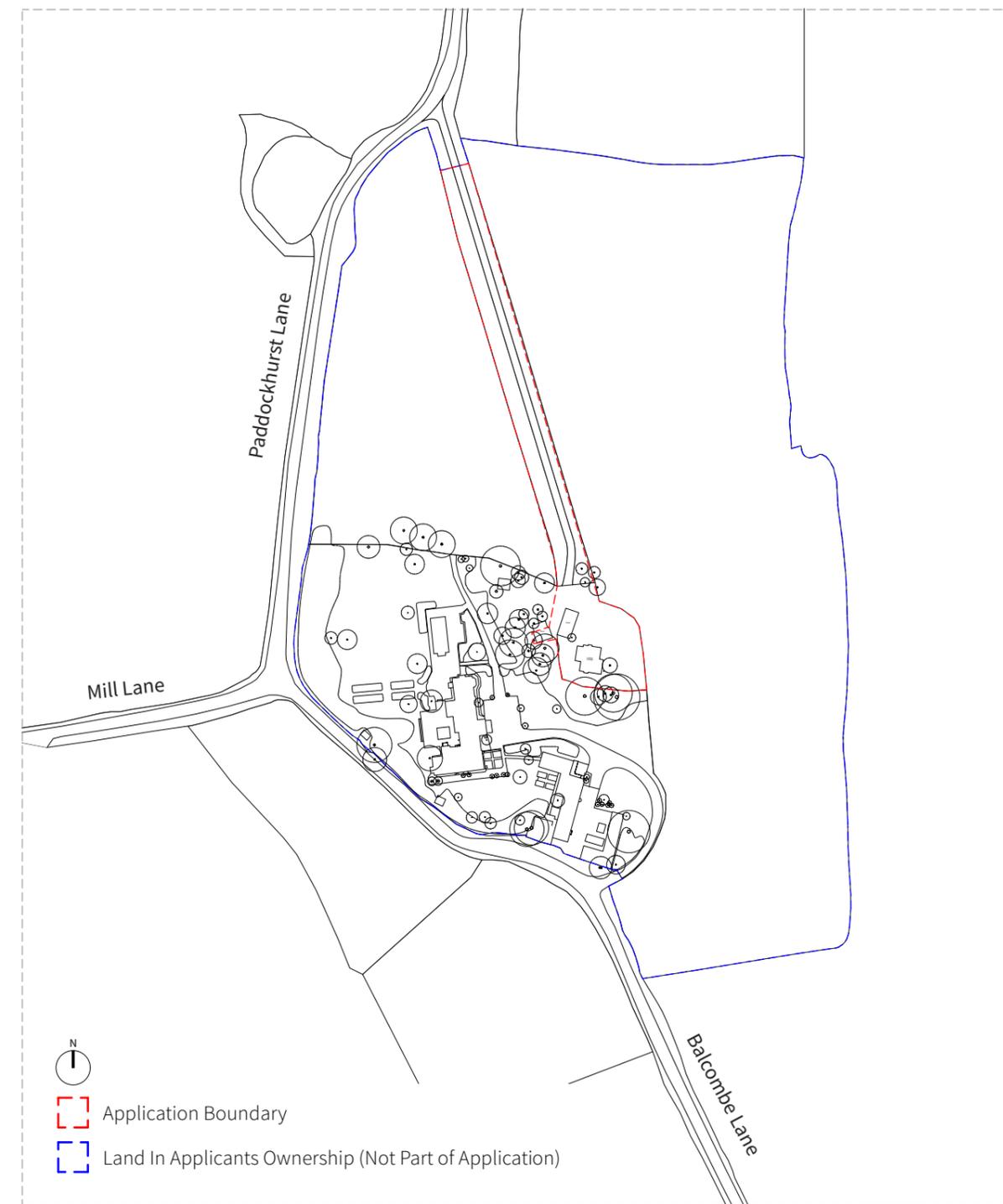
The site's boundary to the west, south and along the private driveway are defined by dense vegetation and a dilapidated fence line. The site's boundary to the north is defined by low level shrubbery. Whilst the boundary to the east is not defined by any natural or man made partition.

The Lullings Cottage property is almost entirely surrounded by the Lullings property. The Lullings property includes a large detached house and stable buildings, to the west of the site and south of the site respectively. To the north west of the site is the primary residential garden of the Lullings property.

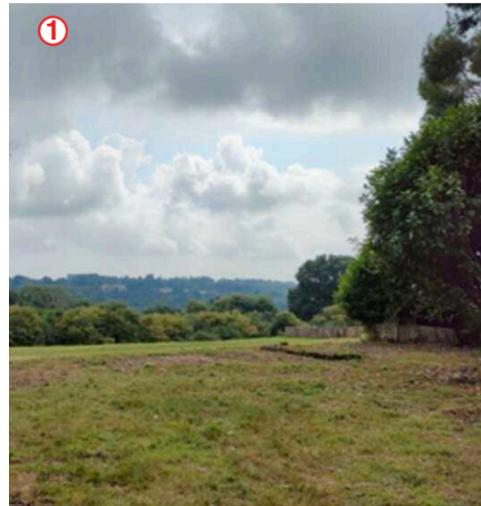
The Lullings property enjoys views to the east over open fields. To the north east its outlook is screened by a series of mature trees which define the boundary between Lullings Cottage and the Lullings property. The mature trees and dense vegetation along this boundary obscure views between the properties.

Lullings is Grade II listed building and includes a portion dating to the C15th, located to the south of the building. Later additions to the Lullings property extend out to the north of this dwelling, please refer to the accompanying Heritage report prepared by Stantec for further details.

Unlike Lullings, Lullings Cottage benefits from wide ranging views to the north east, east and south east. The south east in particular includes views towards the Ardingly Reservoir.



Existing Site Context Plan



View to south east from site



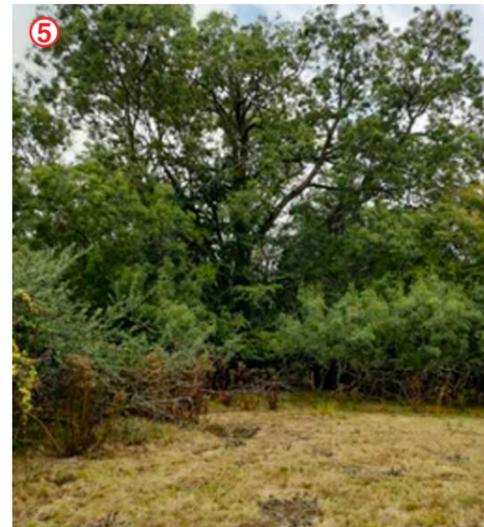
View to north from site



Lullings Domestic Garden



View to east from site



View towards private drive - concealed by foliage



View west into site, showing dense mature vegetation along western boundary

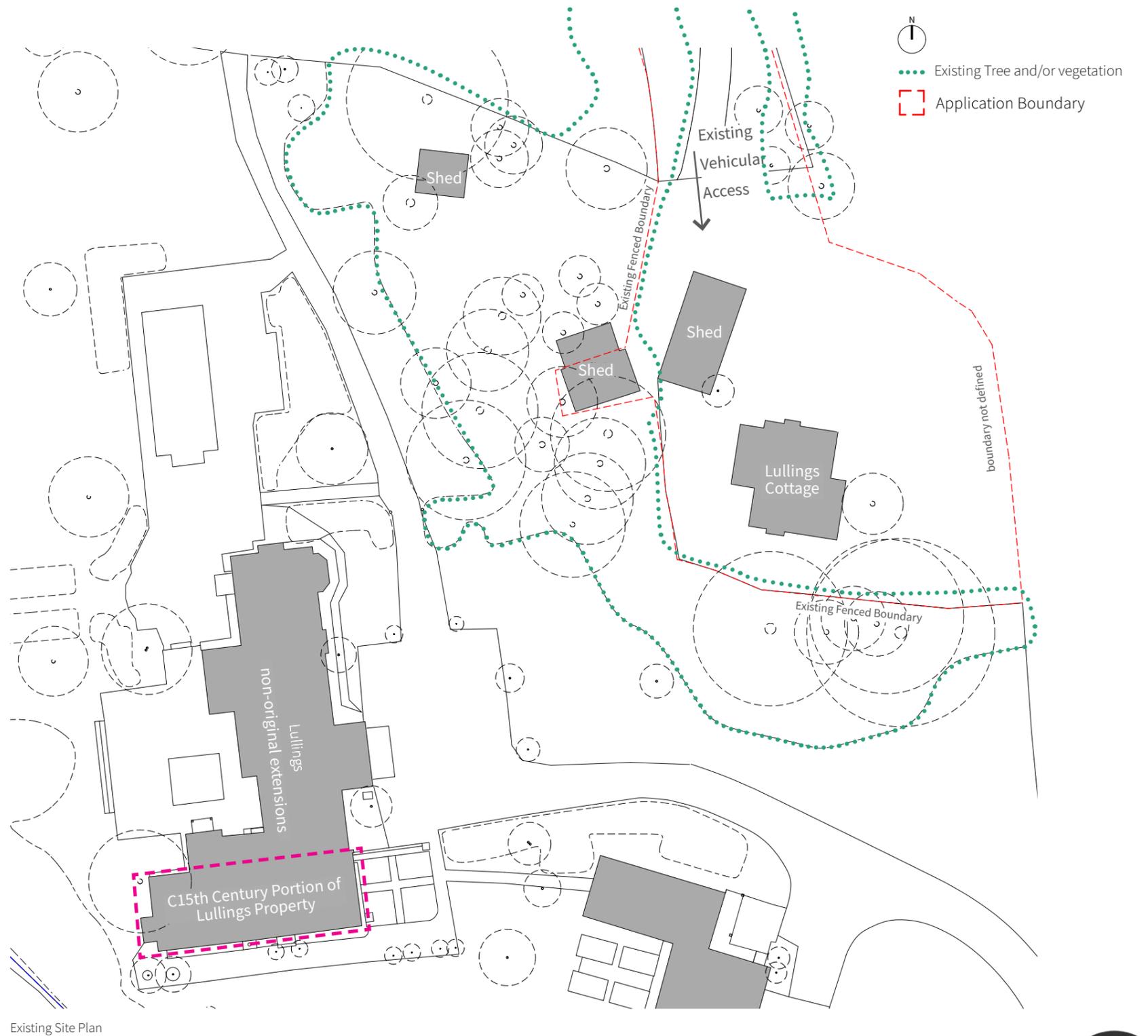


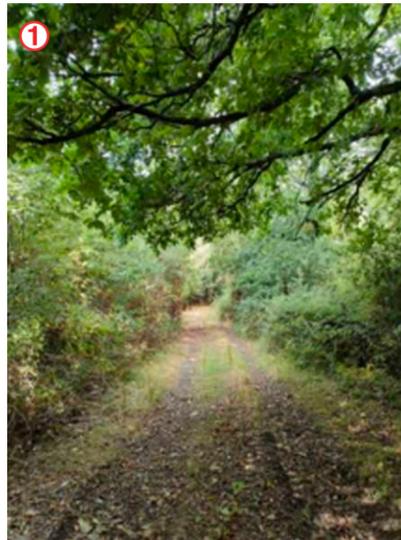
Site Photos and Associated Locations

The application site includes 3 existing structures: 2 single storey sheds/ outbuildings and Lullings Cottage.

The structures are organised in an ad-hoc arrangement in the south west of the application site. This corner of the site is defined by boundary planting which includes mature trees and dense mid-to-high level vegetation. The boundary planting forms natural screening between the Lullings Cottage property and the Lullings property.

The private driveway on the Lullings Cottage property provides a point of vehicular and pedestrian access to the north. The access driveway is bound by dense planting on both the east and the west, concealing it from view. At the southern end of the driveway the site opens out to the east with wide ranging views over the lower topography in this direction. The arrangement of trees and vegetation informally directs views out eastwards, away from the listed building in the west.





View of existing driveway



Outbuilding



Lullings Cottage (East and North Elevations)



Lullings Cottage (East Elevation)



Lullings Cottage (East and South Elevation)



Lullings Cottage - West elevation lean-to porch



Lullings Cottage - West Elevation



Outbuilding



Site Photos and Associated Locations

Design & Access Statement.

Lullings Cottage

The Cottage is arranged over two storey's with a dual pitched roof, including a hipped gable on the south elevation and a gable end on the north elevation. It is of masonry construction with white painted brick walls and slate tiles on the roof. There are a series of brick chimney stacks. The windows vary, from timber framed sash, to UPVC, to steel framed casements.

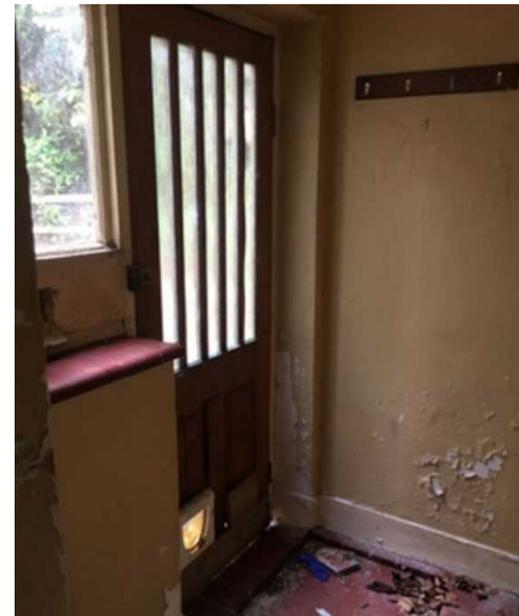
There are 4 rooms at first floor and 4 at ground floor with a single storey lean-to the front and rear. The property is in a poor condition.

The Cottage's ownership was transferred to the applicant in March 2021 and was in a very poor condition, as pictured adjacent. The Cottage remained occupied by the previous owner in this condition until September 2021. The applicant continues to pay council tax and utility bills on the property. The outbuildings on site are used infrequently for storage of gardening equipment from the Lullings property. Please refer to pages 6, 7 and 8 for imagery.

A combined structural and condition survey has been undertaken at the property by Stantec, by a suitably qualified conservation engineer. The full report is enclosed as part of this application.



Cottage - Ground Floor 1



Cottage - Ground Floor 2



Cottage - First Floor 1



Cottage - First Floor 2



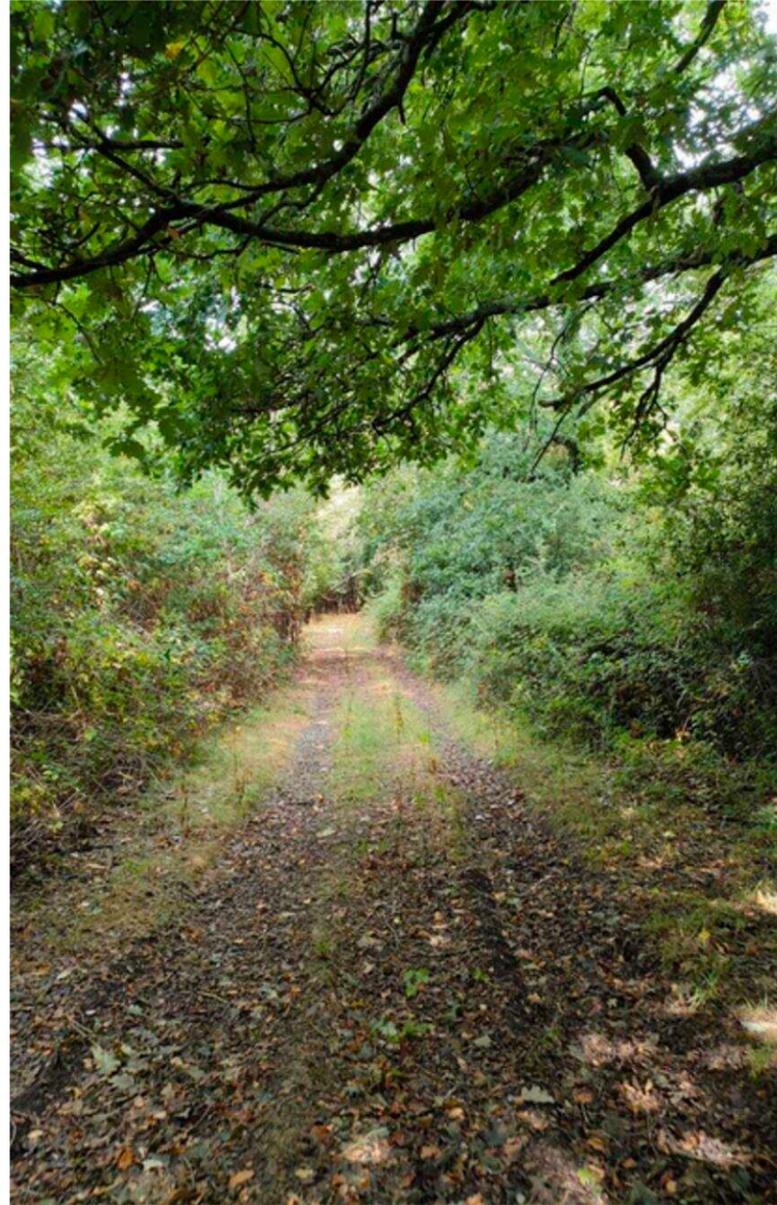
Cottage - First Floor 3

Access

Vehicular access is currently provided via a private driveway from Paddockhurst Lane on the north.

The existing point of access includes brick pillars and a mid-level garden wall with black railings. The brick pillars support a temporary metal gate.

The driveway is gravelled and is becoming increasingly overgrown and unkept. It includes dense boundary planting on either side, including bushes and small trees. This vegetation conceals the access from the Lullings property. It is possible to gain pedestrian access to the site from the agricultural land to the east as there is no physical boundary defining its eastern edge.



Existing overgrown driveway (view taken looking north from site)



Existing overgrown driveway (view taken from point of access on Paddockhurst Lane looking south)

Heritage and Lullings

Lullings Cottage is located adjacent to Lullings, a large detached property which is Grade II listed. The original portion of the Lullings property is located on the plan below. Historic England's listing describes:

The original portion is a C15 timber-framed building, now tile-hung. Half-hipped tiled roof. Casement windows, Two storeys. Five windows. Crown-post roof inside. Modern L wing to north east.

As part of a pre-application submission, Orion Heritage undertook a heritage assessment of the application site and it's relationship with Lullings itself.

As part of this planning application, Stantec have provided a Heritage statement including; a detailed history of the site, a heritage asset plan and heritage decision making framework, statement of significance of Lullings and Lullings Cottage, settings assessment and heritage impact assessment. Please refer to the enclosed report for full details.

The application site does not lie within a conservation area.

The Lullings property includes a series of outbuildings to the east. These includes stables, garages and an annexe building.



Lullings - East Elevation



Outbuilding - currently accessible via Lullings property



Lullings - East Elevation



Lullings - North and West Elevation



Stables buildings



View towards site from the south



Aerial Photograph indicating C15 portion of Lullings Property

Ecology and Trees

There are no Tree Preservation Order's within the site boundary.

There are a number of trees within the site boundary and within the neighbouring garden. These are primarily located in a dense band that bounds the site to the south and west.

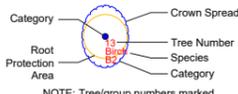
An arboricultural survey and impact assessment has been undertaken by GHA Trees Consulting and is enclosed as part of this application.

For a pre application submission made in February 2024, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was undertaken by Phlorum consulting. Following these assessments, stage 2 Great Crested Newt surveys and Bat Emergence and Re-Entry Surveys were undertaken by Arbtech consulting.

In preparation for this planning application, Arbtech have been re-appointed by the applicant and have undertaken a Baseline Habitats Condition Assessment, a Part 1 BNG Evaluation and a Part 2 Post Development Evaluation. They have also included a file note which gives details on each report and survey taken to date.

Each of the aforementioned reports are enclosed as part of this application and should be referred to for detailed assessment of Ecology.



 t: 07884 056 025 e: glen@ghatrees.co.uk www.ghatrees.co.uk	
Site: Lullings, West Hill, Balcombe, RH17 6QY	1-250@A1
Drawing Title: Tree Constraints Plan	January 2024 Rev A
Key: ● Category A ● Category B ● Category C ● Category U	
 Crown Spread Tree Number Species Category Root Protection Area	
NOTE: Tree/group numbers marked with an * have approximate locations.	

Tree Constraints Plan - GHA Trees.



View into existing site from the east.



Southern boundary planting.

Site Analysis

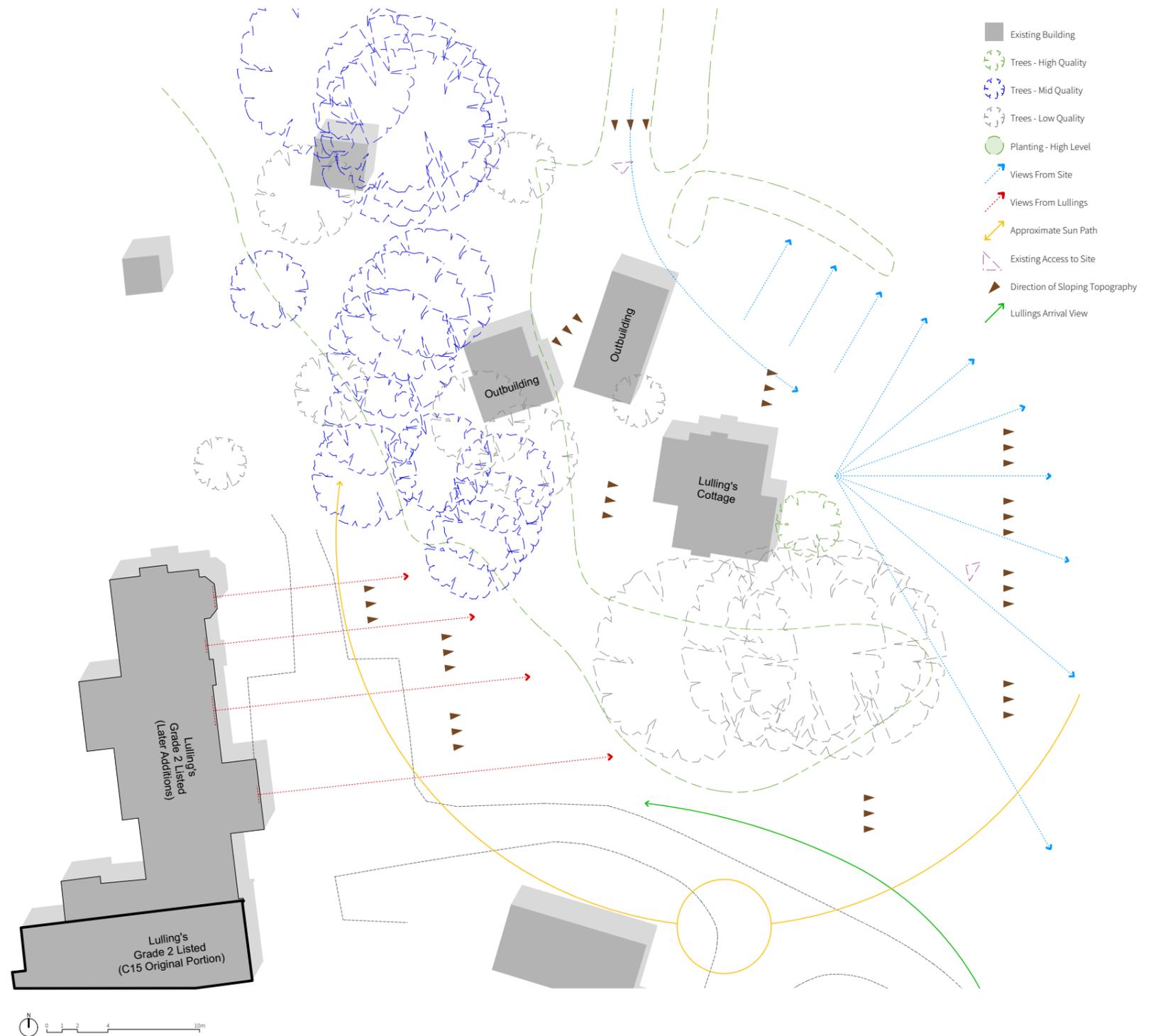
The site sits within an alcove of trees and vegetation along the sites western boundary, naturally orientating the site out towards long range views to the east.

The layout of vegetation, including mature trees and mid-level planting creates a natural barrier and a setting characteristic of the wider surroundings and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The topography of the site follows a similar principal, whereby the natural lay of the land slopes towards the east, encouraging views in this direction. The existing driveway slopes gently towards the site where the land plateaus around the first outbuilding, before falling away again further to the east.

Three existing buildings (Lullings Cottage and 2x outbuildings) are clustered in the centre of the natural alcove in an ad-hoc arrangement. Lullings cottage itself addresses the sloping topography and the views to the east.

The Grade 2 listed Lullings property is located further to the west. It also addresses the eastern direction but it's views are obstructed by the trees and vegetation surrounding the cottage. There is no intervisibility between Lullings and Lullings Cottage, due to the density of planting between (see page 8).



03. PLANNING

A planning statement has been prepared by RCA Regeneration, enclosed as part of this application. The planning statement should be read in conjunction with this design and access statement and referred to for full details regarding policy.

Influential Policies

The development of a proposal at Lullings Cottage has been informed by design and planning guidance at local, regional and national levels. Selected influential policies have been included below for reference;

The National Planning Policy Framework:

- *Paragraph 11:* Planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way, working proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area.
- *Paragraph 119:* Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- *Paragraph 126:* The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- *Paragraph 174:* Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Mid Sussex District Plan:

DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

DP15: New Homes in the Countryside

- *Provided that they would not be in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, new homes in the countryside will be permitted where special justification exists. Special justification is defined as: In the case of new isolated homes in the countryside, where the design of the dwelling is of exceptional quality and it enhances its immediate setting and is sensitive to the character of the area.*
- **Replacement dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where:**
 - *The residential use has not been abandoned;*
 - *Highway, access and parking requirements can be met; and*
 - **The replacement dwelling maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the natural and/or built landscape particularly in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, especially if a significant change in scale from the existing dwelling is proposed**

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- *Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities;*
- *and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination.*

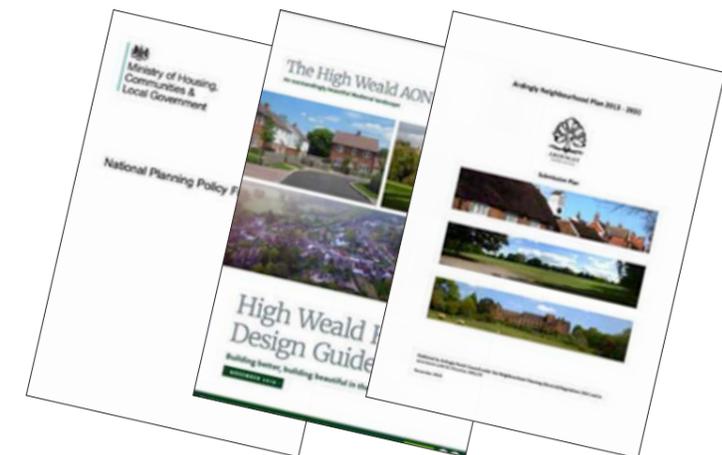
DP26: Character and Design:

- *All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:*
 - *is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
 - *creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
 - *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*

Ardingly Neighbourhood Plan 2013 - 2031:

The High Weald AONB – High Weald Housing Design Guide:

- **DG1 - Responding to Site & Landscape Context**
For development to reflect and enhance the character of the High Weald it must be designed to integrate into its setting
Rather than being a constraint, context offers opportunities to retain and embed the character of the High Weald into a genuinely landscape-led design.
Context will also include the heritage assets of a site.
- **DG7 - Building Appearance, Local Details and Sustainable Design**
The landscape of the High Weald can be seen clearly in how the built environment of the area is constructed and detailed.
The roofscape of settlements in the High Weald is one of the key defining built characteristics.



Pre Application

A pre application submission was made in February 2024; Ref: DM/24/02277, Description: Replacement of existing cottage for a single storey replacement dwelling with associated landscaping.

Feedback provided by the Conservation Officer is included below in grey italics. The design response is included in blue. The heritage response, provided by Orion Heritage (appointed as Heritage consultant at the time), is included in red. These responses were submitted during the pre application period.

1. The loss of Lullings Cottage and the associated outbuilding.

Although somewhat altered, Lullings Cottage is considered to be of a degree of historical and architectural interest as a curtilage listed building, and in particular is considered to contribute positively to the setting and special interest of Lullings. It has group value with the listed former farmhouse, and the other former farm buildings around it, and contributes to the narrative of the development of the historic farmstead.

Whilst the cottage is within the curtilage of Lullings, we would note that, whilst typical farmstead layouts in Sussex are of many varied types, as set out in Historic England's publication 'Southeast Farmsteads Character Statement' 2014, Lullings Cottage opened a new chapter in the evolution of Lullings Farm. It does not extend the farmstead related to Lullings, but sets up a separate grouping, unrelated to the main farmyard. This is supported by the fact that it is very rare to include a main farmhouse and a lesser farmhouse within the same grouping. Farm workers cottages were traditionally constructed away from the primary dwelling with very few examples where they are included within the courtyard. At this time, direct control of farming activities appear to have ceased from Lullings itself, which became a residential building. The cottage was almost certainly constructed for the new custodians of the associated land. It generated a new, albeit smaller, farmstead, unconnected to Lullings. It effectively turns its back on Lullings, utilising a separate entrance. Thus, it might be suggested that the cottage and associated buildings are a later, separate lesser farmstead, which there is an active attempt to visually obscure from the main house by extensive planting. Thus, whilst the cottage and barn are an element within the history of Lullings, they do not provide a significant contribution to the Lullings grouping.

A replacement building on the site would not have that same historical or architectural interest, and would not have the same historical relationship or group value with the farmhouse and other former farm buildings. The proposed demolition of the Cottage would result in a total loss of its own significance, and would also cause a degree of less than substantial harm, through impact on setting, to the special interests of the listed farmhouse and the remaining curtilage listed buildings within the historic farmstead. In my opinion, therefore, the principle of the demolition is contentious, and would require a very convincing justification which is not provided as part of the current pre-application submission.

Similar issues would be raised by the demolition of the associated outbuilding, which is also of a degree of interest and also contributes positively to the settings of the other listed and curtilage listed buildings within the farmstead. Again, its loss is not justified by the information currently in front of us.

The cottage does not reflect vernacular types related to the area, as set out in Historic England's publication, either in terms of materiality, scale or detail. Typical materials included 'stone and brick, roofed with tile or slate, increasingly replaced earlier forms built from earth, timber and thatch'. These natural materials allowed buildings to settle gently into the landscape, as does Lullings and its associated buildings. The scale, in particular the height, of the cottage, and crisp detailing of the materials, do not allow it to relate comfortably to the rural context. The images provided with this application of both existing and proposed cottages viewed from a distance [see overleaf], clearly illustrate that the proposed cottage is comfortable within the landscape, unlike the existing cottage and associated barn, which appears somewhat out-of-place and whose height, crisp detail and volume, visually dominates Lullings. The proposed building, in contrast, presents itself in both the subtlety of its materials and its lower scale, as being subservient to Lullings.

The loss of both buildings will also, in my opinion, have a small but noticeable negative impact on the character of the longer distance views across the valley to the east which are discussed above. This will detract from the manner in which the historic farmstead is appreciated as a grouping in these views, and will also detract from the positive contribution which these views make to the setting of the Ardingly Conservation Area.

As previously noted, the visual representations of the long-distance views indicate that the proposed building provides a more appropriate contribution to the setting of the main heritage asset of Lullings, and a less disruptive element within the landscape. Based upon these visual representations, it might be considered that the proposed building has a more positive impact than the existing cottage.



Associated outbuilding referred to in Pre App comments

2. The design of the proposed replacement dwelling.

In my opinion the design of the proposed replacement dwelling is not appropriately contextual, in particular in light of its position within the historic farmstead, and does not compensate for the loss of the existing historic buildings on the site.

Notwithstanding the design developments noted, if we assess the existing cottage's contextual merits; its orientation, appearance, massing and materials do not respond to the listed house or its setting.

Neither the footprint of attached pavilions with a curving link, nor the form of the building with its monopitch roofs, appears to have been drawn from, or relate to, that of the existing buildings within the farmstead.

The footprint of the proposal is amended to be 'regular' in plan to mimic the arrangement of courtyard buildings located elsewhere on the wider Lullings Site. Monopitched roofs are replaced for dual pitched roofs.

Furthermore, although timber cladding is commonly found to vernacular Sussex buildings, rammed earth, although perhaps broadly rural in nature, is in my experience not a material found locally.

The use of rammed earth has been removed. Instead, red brick to match the nearby courtyard buildings and the listed building are proposed.

Timber cladding is retained, while the orientation is changed to be arranged horizontally and in wider boards than those previously proposed to provide a closer match to the existing timber cladding present across the Lullings site.

Corrugated metal roofing is proposed in place of solely green roofs.

The use of large areas of glazing is also not typical of traditional rural Sussex buildings- although it can be found in some specific circumstances, for example to barn door openings in barn conversions, typically the balance of solid to void is in favour of the former, with smaller openings being prevalent.

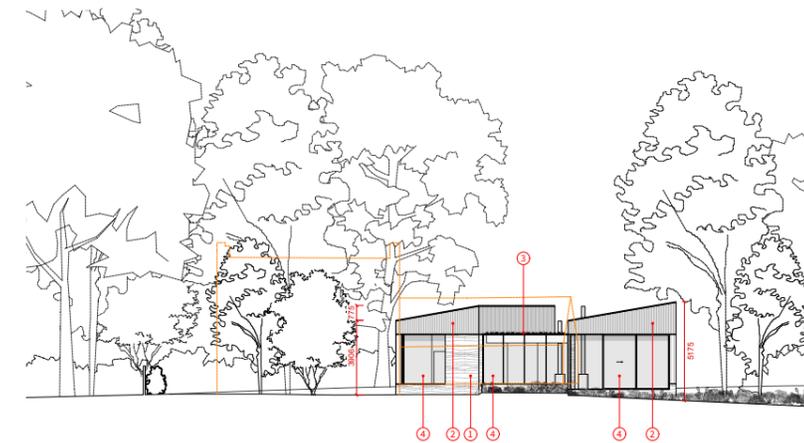
In this particular context I would also be concerned that the expanse of glazing to the eastern elevation in particular may lead to the eye being drawn to the structure within the landscape through reflectivity or through light spill at night, particularly given the relative openness of the site to long distance views across the valley to the east. On my site visit to assess the impact on these views, I noted light reflecting from the farmhouse's windows, and would assume that when conditions allowed the larger windows to the new building would also be similarly reflective, but would be likely to be more eye catching due to their greater scale. This may have a disruptive impact on the largely undeveloped, rural character of these views and the positive contribution they make to the manner in which the former farmstead is appreciated, and to the setting of the Ardingly Conservation Area.

The proportion of glazing is reduced. Openings are reduced in scale to appear similar to traditional barn openings in barn conversions. They are also set deeper within the window reveals. See overleaf for imagery depicting long range views discussed.

Please refer to the design section of this Design and Access Statement for detailed justification and contextual drivers behind the scheme.



Horizontal timber cladding, corrugated roofing and brickwork elevations - material examples located on nearby courtyard buildings of the Lullings Property



Extracts from proposals submitted at Pre Application (South East Elevation, and Ground Floor Plan)



View 1



View 1



View 2



View 2



View 3



View 3

In summary, therefore it is my opinion that both the principle of the loss of the existing buildings on the site and the design of the proposed replacement development are unfortunately contentious in heritage terms, and would result in the following harms in terms of the NPPF:

- A total loss of significance of the Cottage and its outbuilding, through their demolition.
- A level of less than substantial harm through loss of group value and impact on setting to the listed former farmhouse and the remaining curtilage listed former farm buildings. This is likely to around the low-mid level of that scale.
- A low level of less than substantial harm, through impact on setting, to the Ardingly Conservation Area.

The proposal would also be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35.

I would suggest that a proposal to retain, refurbish, and potentially sympathetically extend the Cottage and outbuilding may be more favourably viewed.

Details are enclosed in Section 4.0 Design, where the feasibility of alternative proposals are assessed.



The aforementioned changes were made to the design and responses given as per comments included above. Further feedback was received from the conservation officer in response to these, included below in grey italics.

The scheme has been revised in terms of the footprint and form of the proposed replacement dwelling, which is now shown as two parallel rectilinear buildings, with a glazed link between them. The principal buildings have pitched roofs; the link is flat roofed. The fenestration has also been revised, including some reduction in the amount of glazing to the east facing elevation, although both gables to this side of the building do retain sizeable windows and the link element between them is fully glazed. The facing and roofing materials have also been revised to show timber cladding and facing brick to the elevations, with corrugated metal and sedum roofs.

As well as the revised drawings, there is also contained in Mr Lane's email a further commentary from the applicant's Heritage Consultant.

I note the further, more detailed information on the development of the farmstead at Westhill Farm/Lullings, including in particular its evolution at the beginning of the 20th century from a working farm to a country residence. It is now assumed that Lullings Cottage was built at this time to accommodate an employee of the household, rather than being at any point a farmworker's cottage.

I do not however come to the same conclusion as the applicant's consultant regarding the resulting level of interest that Lullings Cottage holds- as has been previously discussed, the special interest of Lullings lies partly in its narrative as a farmhouse which has been adapted and extended during the early 20th century to form to a substantial country residence. The development of the ancillary buildings associated with the main house will be part of this narrative, and in my opinion the construction of Lullings Cottage to provide accommodation for an employee and his family, which is now suggested to have been broadly concurrent with the reworking of the main house, contributes to an understanding of the manner in which the farmstead evolved to suit its new purpose - it also perhaps speaks of the economic position and social aspirations of the new owners that they required purpose built staff accommodation.

Whilst I would accept that the Cottage is not of the same architectural quality as Lullings itself, I do not think it is surprising or unusual that an ancillary building constructed at this time to provide staff accommodation would be relatively modest in these terms.

The style of the building is also typical of a building of its period and type. The lack of a strong, deliberate visual connection between the house and cottage could also perhaps be considered reflective of its purpose and of this period, which was a time when staff were expected to be a discreet presence.

For these reasons I remain of the opinion that Lullings Cottage is of some interest in its own right, as a curtilage listed building, and that it contributes positively to the setting of Lullings, its special interest and the manner in which this is appreciated.

As we do not appear to have received any further, compelling justification for its loss, I also remain of the opinion that this loss is unacceptable in heritage terms. I would reiterate that the retention and restoration of the existing building, with as necessary appropriately designed extensions, would be an alternative which could potentially provide the scale of dwelling required by the applicant on the site, but with the avoidance of this harm. It remains regrettable that this is not an option which the applicant has as yet chosen to explore.

The applicant's Heritage Consultant also makes mention of the visually intrusive nature of the existing Cottage - whilst I do not agree that the Cottage is an intrusion, the existing white paint to the elevations does render it more visually prominent than it might otherwise be. This however is an issue which could be easily resolved by either removing the paint from the brickwork, or repainting in a more sympathetic colour, and is not something which would justify the loss of the building in its entirety.

In terms of the revised design of the replacement dwelling, viewed in isolation of the issue of the loss of the existing building on the site, this is in my opinion an improvement over the previous scheme, both in terms of its footprint and form, and its materiality. In these respects the revised proposal responds more sympathetically to the context. I would however retain some concern regarding the amount of glazing to the eastern elevation.

In summary therefore, the proposal continues to be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 and DP35, and continues to represent a total loss of significance with respect to Lullings Cottage and its outbuilding, and a level of less than substantial harm, through impact on setting, to Lullings and to the Ardingly Conservation Area. This level of less than substantial harm will be somewhat reduced by the more sympathetic nature of the proposed replacement building, but remains broadly within the parameters previously set out due to the harm caused by the loss of the existing building, for which the replacement dwelling would not compensate.

04. DESIGN.

Design Rationale

The following design rationale has driven a rigorous design process. The following principals have remained of upmost importance throughout the development of the design proposals;

1. Draw inspiration from and respond to the site's rural setting within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty,
2. Ensure that the proposal's scale, form and massing are appropriate for the site and respectful of both the immediate and wider context,
3. Develop a proposal that enhances the setting of the listed building and remains respectful of it's proximity to it,
4. Utilise materials that complement the setting and that help maintain an understated and subtle appearance,
5. Provide efficient, functional and well-considered internal spaces that respond to the unique characteristics of the site,
6. Provide a dwelling with a level of performance suitable for modern day occupation,
7. Provide an architectural and landscaping strategy that enhances the quality of the natural and built landscape,
8. Create a self-sufficient, environmentally friendly home fit for 21st century living.

Alternative Proposals

As part of a thorough development process, following pre-application feedback (included in the pre-application section of this document), analysis has been undertaken to assess the feasibility of alternative proposals that involve retaining the existing cottage; Option A, Option B. These alternative proposals have been reviewed following receipt of heritage, engineering and architectural assessments. The anticipated works associated with these options are scheduled overleaf.

The works demonstrate the extent required to deliver a home to the standard sufficient for modern day family living.

Option A - Refurbishment, Reconfiguration	
Building Element	Works Anticipated
Temporary Works and Demolition	Sequential removal of ground floor concrete slab. Temporary propping to all existing openings and internal load bearing masonry while internal reconfiguration works is complete. Fully envelope in scaffold to access all areas, including temporary roof for duration of build. Review and piecemeal replacement of existing roof structure and associated timber work where compromised by water ingress. Removal of roofing battens and tiles to allow installation of breathable membranes. Removal of first floor floor structure on account of water ingress and levelling. Removal of 2x existing shed/outbuildings due to natural deterioration.
Structures, proposed and existing	New ground bearing concrete floor slab. Underpinning works to all structural walls. Piecemeal replacement of roof structure. Structural survey of existing load bearing brickwork walls to assess condition relative to first floor loads and extent of damage from non-breathable exterior paints. New structures at ground floor to allow opening up of cellular ground floor spaces to accommodate modern day living spaces.
Floors, proposed and existing	New damp proof membrane, insulation and screed to ground floor to introduce thermal performance and damp protection. Replacement of first floor suspended timber structure, trimming new opening and support for staircase.
Walls, proposed and existing	<u>External Walls:</u> Sand blast to remove existing layers of non-breathable external wall paint Rake out and repoint all elevations. Repoint in lime mortar to avoid further retention of water in brickwork. Remove and replace all areas of defective brick. <u>Internal Walls:</u> Reinstalled where existing to meet fire protection standards and provide protected means of escape from first floor. Extension and reconfiguration of hallway and stair to connect to the point of external means of escape. Staircase reconfigured to allow access from entrance ways into protected corridor serving upper floor. Reconfiguration required to allow opening up of cellular ground floor spaces to accommodate modern day living spaces.
Ceilings and Roofs, proposed and existing	Replacement of all ceilings, including linings and insulation. Replacement of roof coverings including tiles, battens, insulation and associated membranes. Provision of new breathable membrane. Replacement of all drainage goods.
Glazing, windows and doors	Replacement of all fenestration. Glazing to all new glazed areas required to meet modern day 'improved' u-values. Internal doors replaced throughout and upgraded to fire doors.
Finishes, Fixtures and Fittings	Overhaul of cosmetic finishes. Use of lime plaster and clay or lime based paints to ensure solid walls remain breathable and naturally ventilated. Overhaul of floor finishes including substrates, no levelling required at ground floor on account of new slab installation. New kitchen, utility and bathrooms.
Services: Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing	New 3 phase electrical supply and inclusion of heat pump and/or solar PV panels. Replacement of below ground foul sewage, separated from and taken to new independent septic tank, OR new connection made to mains sewer (if present). New data and aerial connections brought from Paddockhurst Road through private driveway. New kitchen, utility and bathrooms and provision of associated services required. Overhaul of lighting and heating provisions.
Landscaping	Landscape overhaul including soft and hard landscaping measures across entire site area including external paved areas, biodiversity gain areas such as wild life planting, pond and tree planting. Parking areas installed and treatment to existing driveway. New boundary treatments to be installed across north and east boundary's. Replacement boundary treatments to west and south boundary's.

Option B - Refurbishment, Reconfiguration and Extension	
Building Element	Works Anticipated
See Option A	All scope included in Option A adjacent, is also required in Option B. Inclusions below are in addition to.
Structures, proposed and existing	New steel and/or concrete primary structure to form additional floor space for living accommodation. Steelwork required to form new openings in masonry walls to link existing cottage with the new addition. Strip foundations required across new areas and sufficient tie to existing structure.
Floors, proposed and existing	New ground bearing concrete floor slab and floor build up across all new floor areas.
Walls, proposed and existing	New internal and external walls associated with extended area.
Ceilings and Roofs, proposed and existing	New roofs and ceilings associated with extended area.
Glazing, windows and doors	Glazing and fenestration sufficient to offer modern open plan living space in addition to cellular spaces within the existing building.
Finishes, Fixtures and Fittings	New finishes, fixtures and fittings associated with extended area.
Services: Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing	New mechanical, electrical and plumbing associated with extended area.
Landscaping	New landscaping associated with extended area.

Work to deliver Option A or Option B as an alternative to replacement would result in fundamental changes to the character and appearance of the existing property, to an extent that would challenge the conservation officer's position set out during the pre-application process.

The scope of alterations required for the existing building is extensive and disproportionate to the envisioned outcome. Even with such substantial changes, the proposal would fall short of modern living requirements and in particular, fail to make an appropriate contribution to the importance and special interest of the location.

For these reasons a sensitively designed, modest and high performing replacement dwelling is seen as the most appropriate solution for the site. Further detail on the proposal, including the design rationale for the development is described in the following sections of this Design and Access Statement.

Site Layout

The provision of a replacement dwelling allows for a more effective response to the key characteristics of the site, namely; its relationship with the listed building, the dense alcove of vegetation to the west and the generous views of the natural landscape to the north and east.

The proposed footprint is located to the north of the site, further north than the existing Cottage, to improve the natural separation between the new dwelling and the listed building. The south and eastern aspects of the site are opened up due to the relocation of the built form which improves the site's connection with the surrounding area allowing for a more considered landscaping strategy to be introduced. This links the building with it's surroundings and allows more use of natural light from the southern aspect.

The existing access to the north is retained. This provides entry to a modest parking and turning area behind the replacement dwelling. The buildings location at the north end of the site, along with the existing alcove of trees, screens the parking area from the garden and landscape beyond.

The existing site and it's arrangement of existing trees and foliage includes a 'closed' side (to the west) and an 'open' side (to the east). The proposal is orientated to address the 'open' side and encourage views in this direction. The layout of the site and the building within it lends itself to protecting and enhancing these natural characteristics.

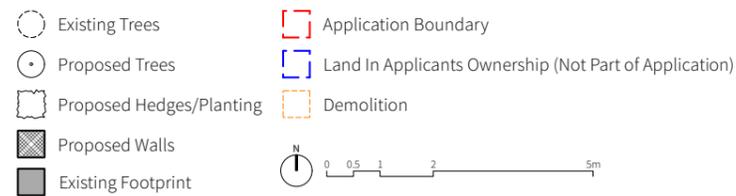
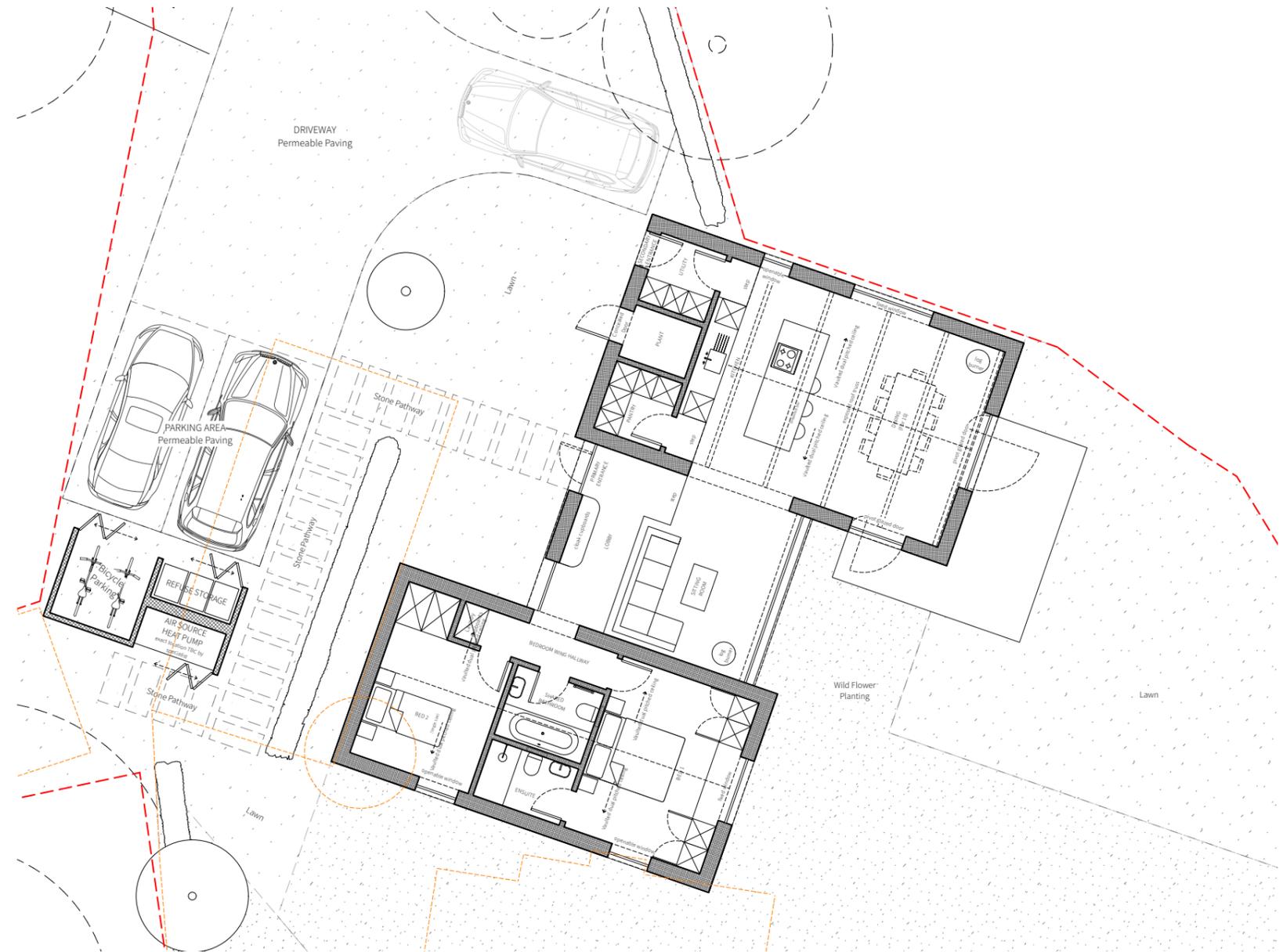


Internal Arrangement

The proposal is divided into 3 volumes, allowing it to be manipulated more freely to respond to characteristics of the site. The primary point of pedestrian access to the dwelling is via the central volume that forms a link between the other two masses either side. The entrances orientation, along with careful consideration of internal aspects, encourages views out eastwards, towards the generous views of the natural landscape in this direction.

The internal spaces are arranged to sit sensitively next to the residential boundary to the west and capitalise on views to the more open side of the site in the east. The more private spaces, including bedrooms and bathrooms, are organised in the south western wing of the proposal where it is closest to the residential boundary with Lullings. As existing, this boundary is densely planted with mature trees and mid-to-high level vegetation which form a natural privacy screen between the properties. This boundary planting is strengthened by the proposed landscaping strategy.

The living spaces are arranged across the central and north eastern volumes. The central volume is sunken within the topography to emphasise a connection to the external space to the east which is also at a lower level. Lowering this space also allows the overall roof height to be lower externally. The north eastern most volume of the proposal includes the kitchen and dining spaces. These spaces benefit from large glazed openings orientated towards unobscured views eastwards and are located furthest away from the listed building.



Massing, Scale and Height

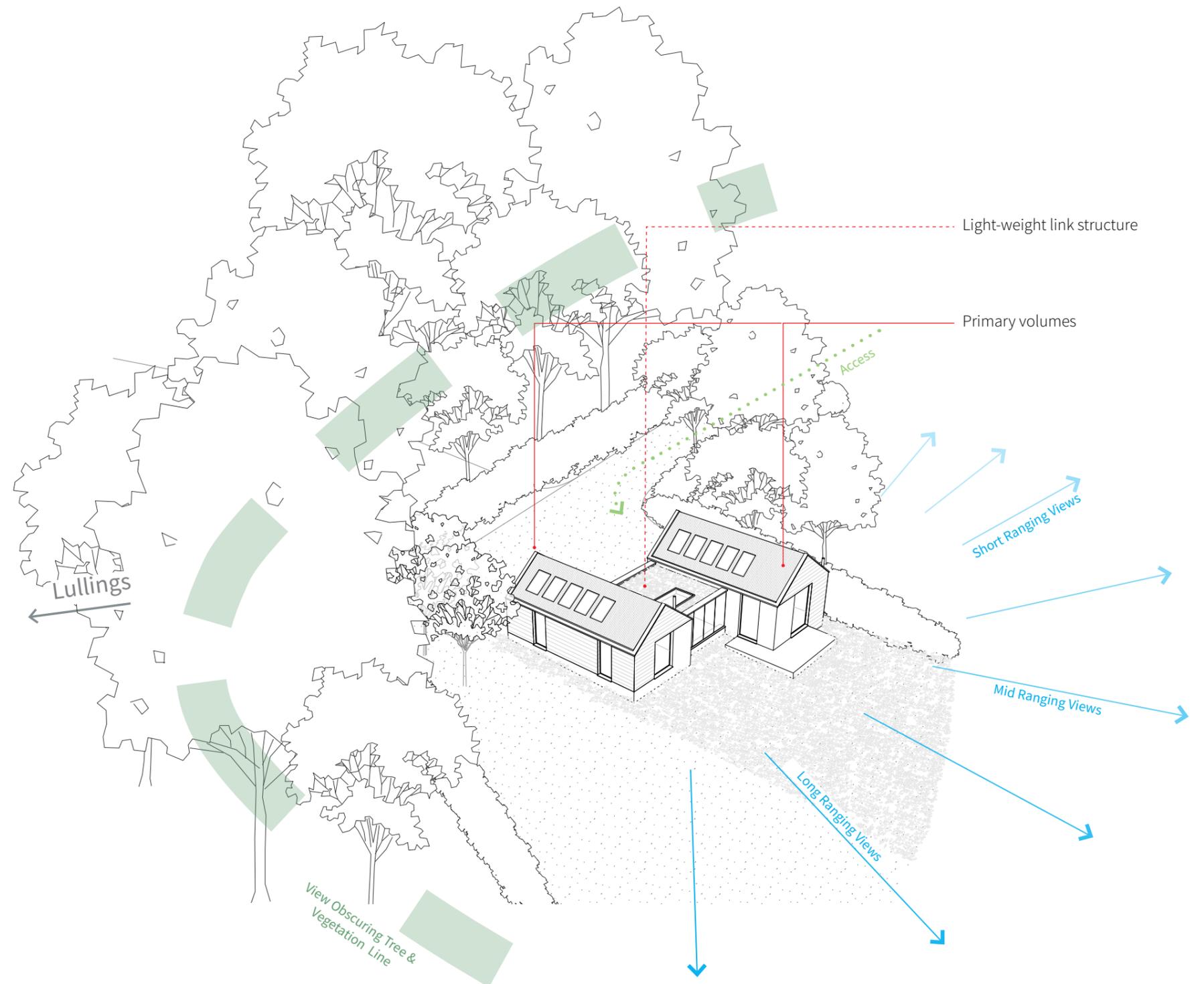
The proposal is modest in scale to minimise its visual impact. Its massing follows a similar rationale to the layout; it is split into three volumes, including two wings and a light-weight link structure between them. The link acts as a visual separation between the two wings and allows the proposal to sit sensitively within the landscape. The breaking down of the overall form in this manner allows the building to appear as a cluster of smaller out-buildings, typical of rural development, whilst reducing its perceived sense of scale from longer range views (please refer to elevational studies for reference).

The proposal is single storey to ensure it remains low rise and nestled in the natural landscape. This allows all of the internal spaces to link seamlessly with the site. The low rise nature of the proposal allows the trees and foliage to remain visible around each of its sides reinforcing the impression it is surrounded by foliage and trees to ensure that the character of the site is retained.

The single storey structure pushed back into the north western boundary allows the proposal to remain unobtrusive in long range views into the site and allows the site to remain natural in its appearance, improving the setting of the listed building.

The primary forms include dual pitched roofs to mimic a traditional barn or agricultural outbuilding aesthetic. South facing roofslopes, concealed from long range views by the larger tree planting, include solar panels linked to both an EV charger and solar battery.

The link has a flat roof to ensure that it remains low rise in relation to the two wings that flank it on either side. It helps create a visual separation between the two larger volumes to reduce the entire proposal's sense of scale.



The slope of the existing topography will be retained as this forms an important part of its character. To reduce the building's overall height it will be sunken into the slope at its highest point, revealing more of itself as the land falls away to the east. The floor level internally is lowered to help achieve this.

The perceived scale of the proposal in elevation is greatly reduced from the existing condition. The ridge of the proposal is 2.5m lower in height than the existing cottage.

At the south west corner, closest to the listed building and the Lullings property boundary, the proposal is approximately 3.9m tall, while the existing cottage is approximately 7.0m tall on this boundary.

At the north west corner, closest to the point of vehicular and pedestrian access, the proposal is approximately 3.4m tall.

At the north east corner, where the proposal addresses the longer ranging views, it is approximately 4.9m tall.

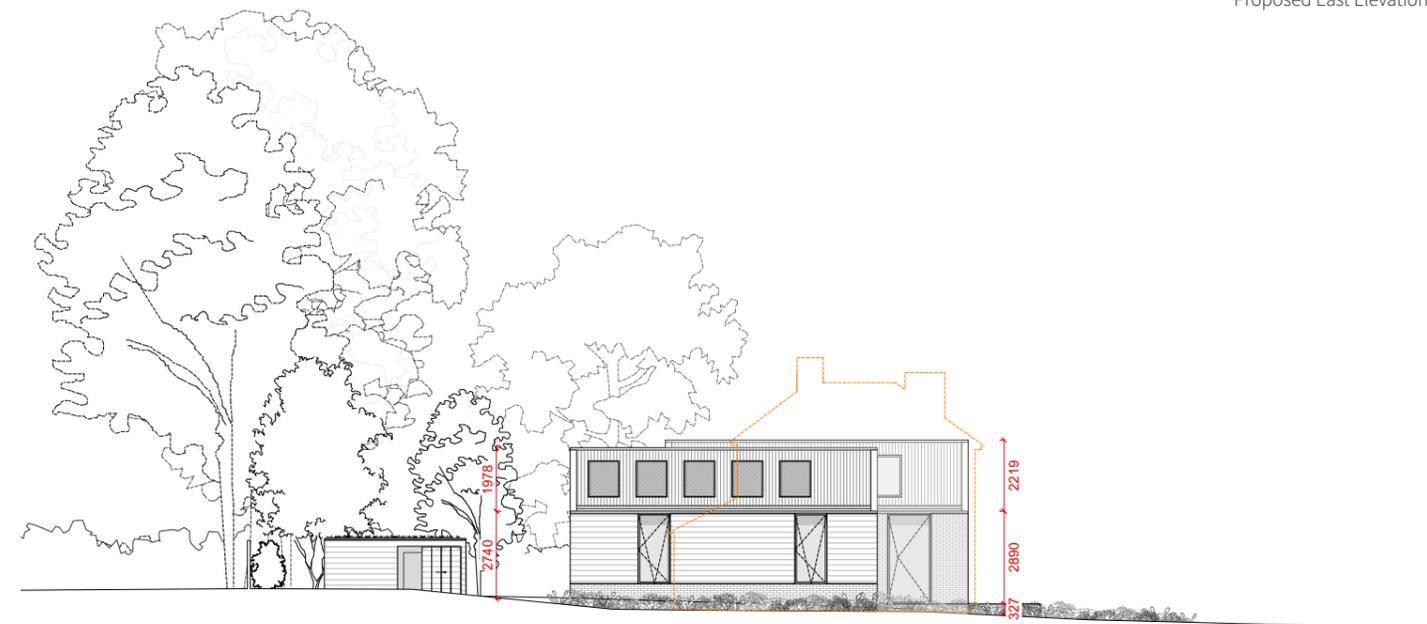
At the south east corner it is approximately 4.0m tall. Internally, the floor to ceiling height is modest to ensure that the proposal is as low rise as possible.

The low rise nature of the proposal allows it to have minimal impact on its surroundings and allows the natural characteristics of the site to remain prominent.

Please refer to the plan drawings for the scale of the development with regards to the length and width of each form.



Proposed East Elevation



 Demolition

Proposed South Elevation

Appearance and Materiality

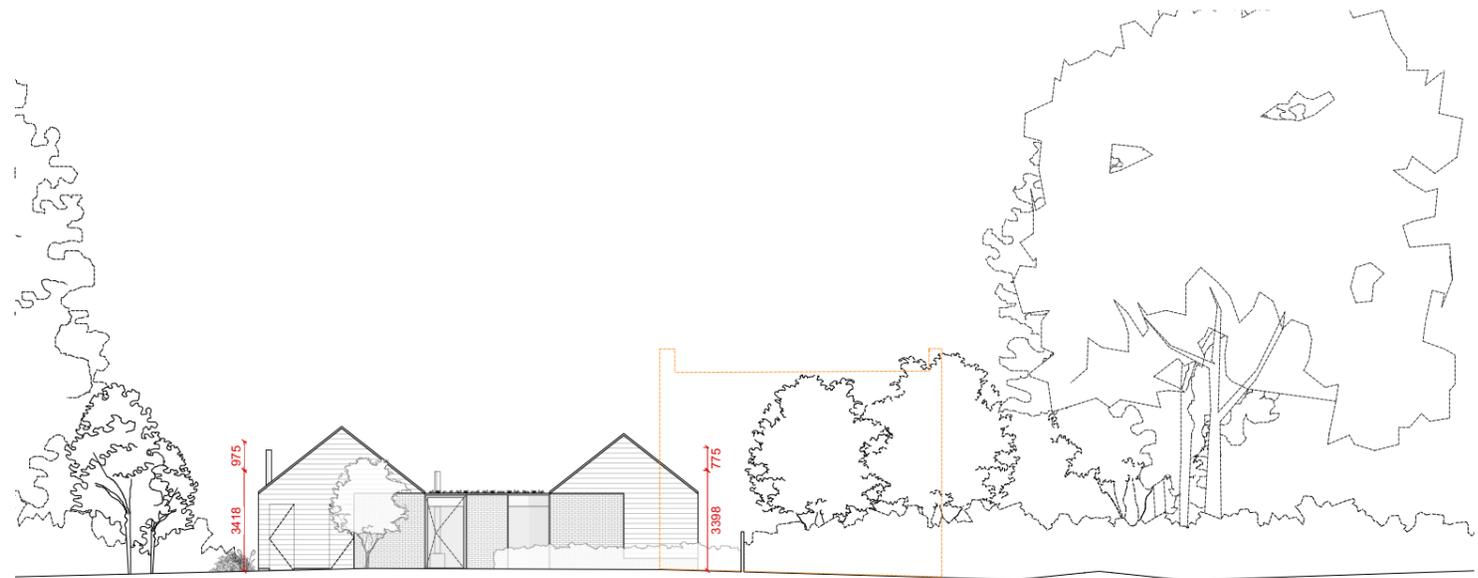
The appearance of the proposal reflects a modestly contemporary interpretation of a rural farmstead. This is achieved through the use of widely recognised materials that will weather of time, in combination with design decisions made with regards to the buildings form, height and scale.

The eastern elevation of the proposal (on the 'open' side of the site) includes two primary window openings that mimic those used in traditional barn structures to capitalise on generous views over the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty while appearing to long distance views as a converted agricultural building.

Across the south, west and north elevations the building includes few window openings and where these are included these are proportioned to mimic single doorway or barn door sized openings to avoid the building appearing overly domesticated.

The linking structure, situated between the two wings, is glazed on its southern aspect to retain a light-weight appearance and to accentuate the separation between both of the wings. The use of minimal framed aluminium glazing in these areas provides a contrast to the solid walls adjacent and helps to create the impression there are two barn-like structures adjacent to one another, typical of a rural development. The larger volume of glazing benefits from being set back within more solid walls and lower than the forms adjacent which helps to limit reflection.

The proposed material palette is kept deliberately natural to soften the proposals overall appearance and allow it to sit comfortably within it's immediate rural setting. Please see overleaf for further details.



Proposed West Elevation



Proposed North Elevation

 Demolition

The material choices reflect and enhance the rural setting. Particular inspiration has been taken from the ancillary outbuildings to the south of the listed Lullings property, once forming part of the farmstead (image adjacent).

Timber cladding, which will weather naturally to form a silvered grey tone, is used across the proposed external walls that face the site's north, west and south boundary's. The timber cladding is to be in larch and arranged horizontally to match the outbuildings on the listed property adjacent.

Red brickwork walls are used at low level and across two walls that line the sides of the linking form to help further separate the two pitched roof structures. The colour, texture and mortar style is inspired by the original style of brickwork on the listed building and outbuildings nearby to remain contextually sensitive.

A green roof is proposed over the linking structure to increase biodiversity across and further soften the appearance of the clustered buildings. The green separation of the dual pitched roof forms helps to distinguish them as separate buildings.

Corrugated roofing is proposed across each of the dual pitched roofs to match the materials used on the ancillary buildings adjacent. The dark colour and undulating appearance helps to avoid reflections or glare.



1 Red Brickwork



2 Horizontal Timber Cladding - Silvered Larch



3 Green Roof - Sedum/ Intensive Roof

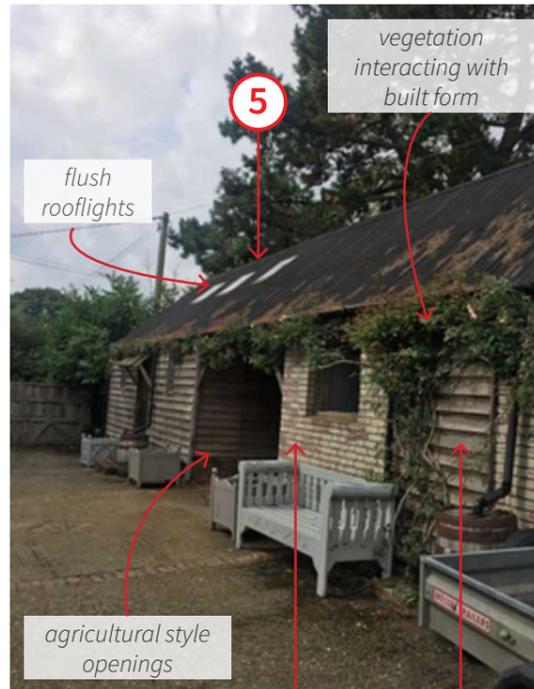


4 Contemporary Glazing - Aluminium framed

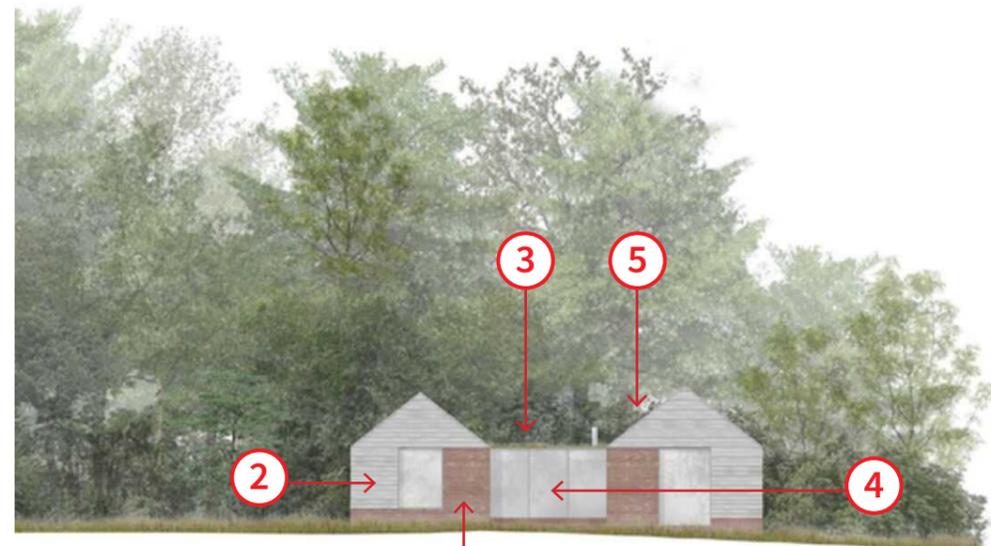


5 Corrugated metal roofing

Material Palette



1 Existing ancillary building, adjacent to Lullings and part of Lullings historic farmstead



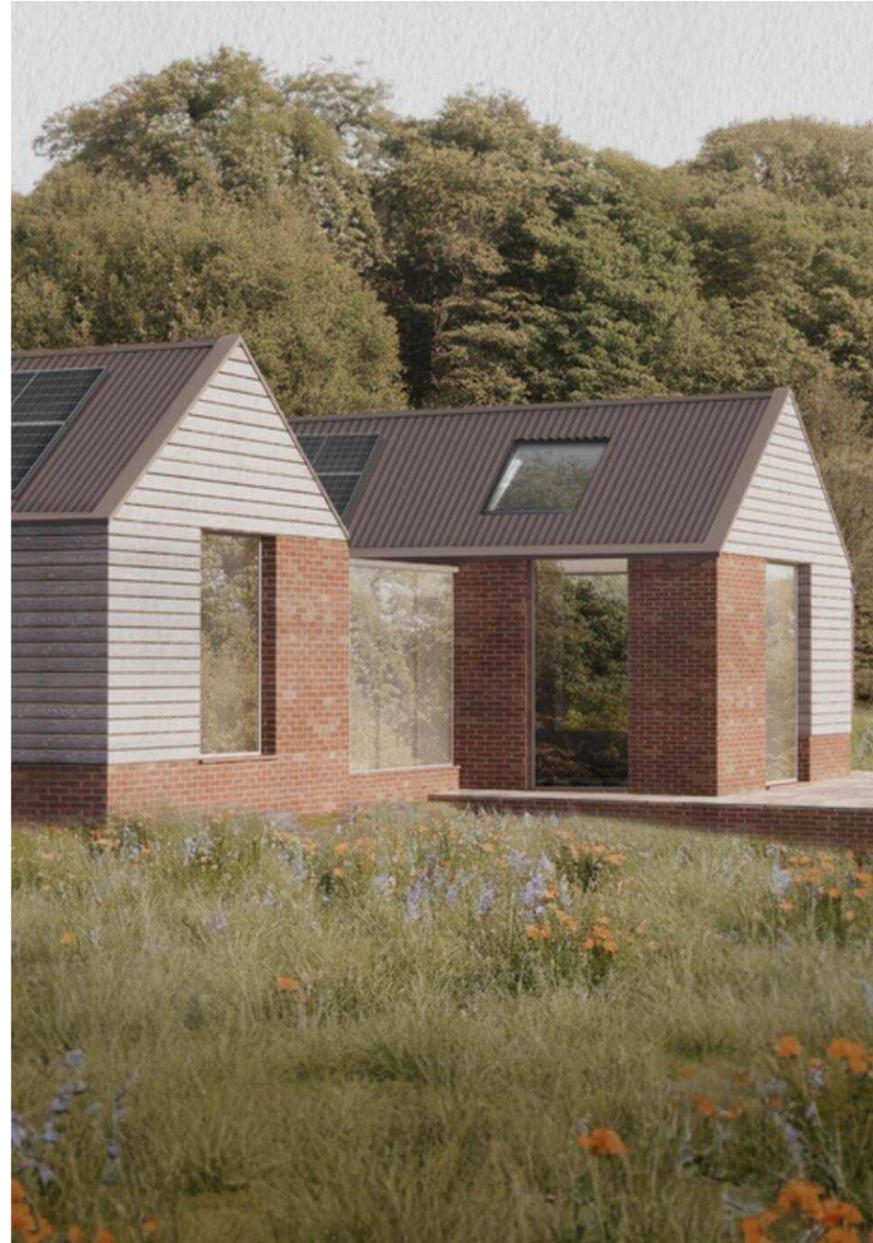
1 East elevation - rendered to illustrate arrangement of materials

Design & Access Statement.

The proposals appearance is developed to appear like two simple agricultural outbuildings.

It uses traditional materials; timber cladding, brickwork and corrugated metal, to maintain a sensitive overall appearance, particularly from longer views, and one that is in-keeping with the buildings across the Lullings site adjacent.

Contemporary detailing is used to ensure the building appears honest and of it's time rather than pastiche. Concealed rainwater gutters, slim framed aluminium glazing and simple window and door openings ensure the proposals overall appearance remains uncluttered and simple.



Artist visualisation of proposals east elevation

05. ACCESS & LANDSCAPE

Vehicular Access

The location of vehicular access onto the property will be unchanged as a result of this application.

The access driveway will be cleared and overgrown planting will be cut back to allow clear access, whilst retaining a natural and unassuming appearance.

A combination of gravel and permeable paving will be used to demarcate the vehicular and pedestrian route towards the replacement dwelling while planting and vegetation will be maintained across both to ensure the overall appearance remains natural.

Parking

The refurbished driveway will serve a modest courtyard and parking area, formed of permeable paving, to the rear of the dwelling.

Provision for 2 parking spaces has been included.

Bicycles

An integrated bike store, adjacent to the parking area allows secure parking for bicycles and encourages occupants to use alternative means of travel.

Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access via the northern driveway onto the property will be unchanged as a result of this application.

The access driveway will be refurbished and overgrown vegetation removed as such to allow safe passage of vehicles and pedestrians along a shared surface route.

A formal pedestrian access to the dwelling is included via the light-weight linking structure. A secondary pedestrian access is via the primary built form to the south. The secondary access is finished in timber cladding to match the wall finish allowing the primary access to appear more prominent.



Example permeable paving



Existing point of access in the north - to be cleared and refurbished

Refuse and Recycling

An external refuse store is located to the west of the dwelling, to include provision for 3x bins.

Trees and Planting

An arboricultural survey was undertaken by GHATrees. A tree constraints plan and impact assessment have been provided and enclosed as part of this application. Please refer to the report produced by GHATrees for further information.

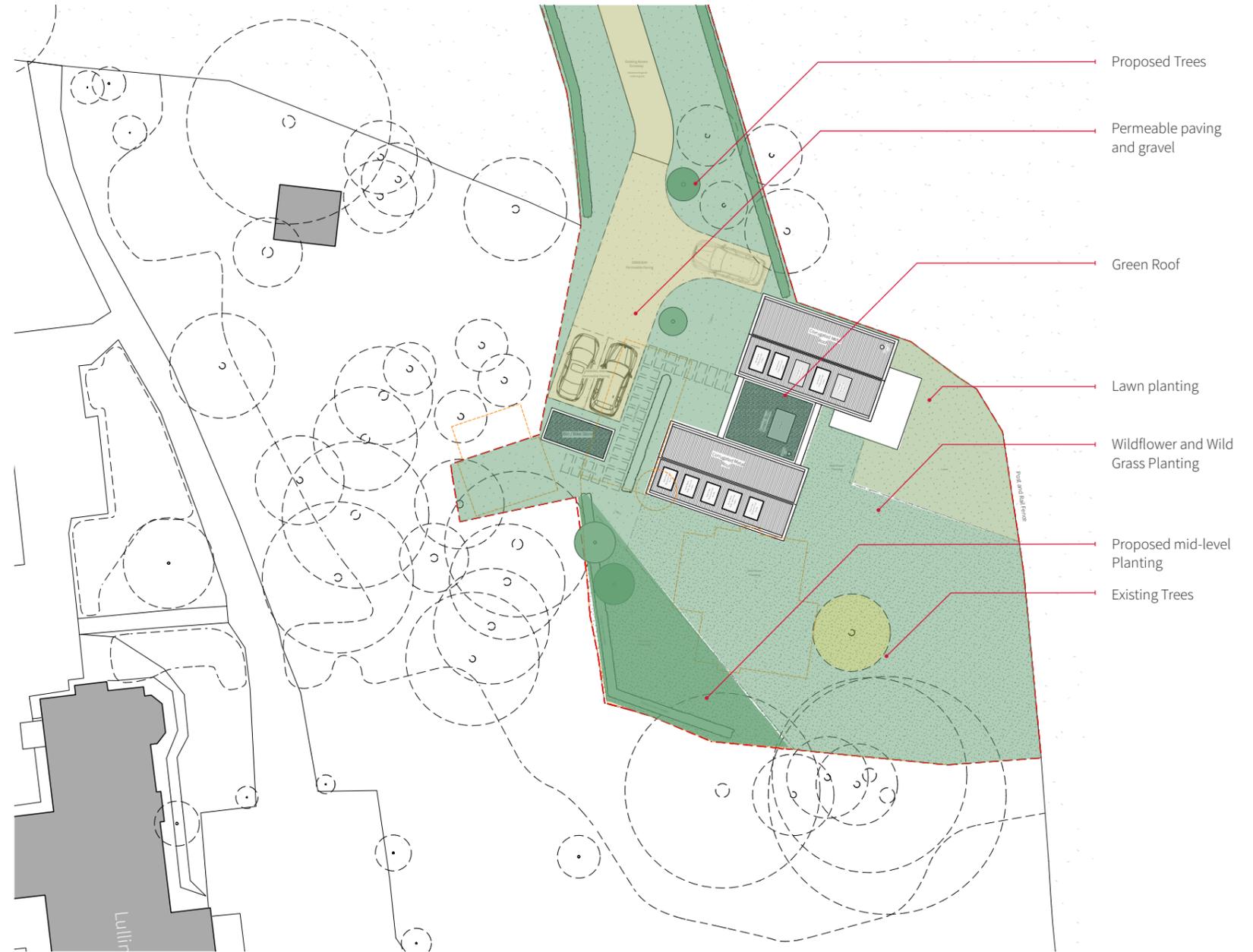
There will be 4 native trees planted as part of the proposed works along with hedgerow planting and a wildflower and wildgrass garden. These items help to strengthen the existing boundaries around the site providing privacy and shade. They also increase the biodiversity of the site area and enhance it's natural appearance.

Ecology

A suite of ecology surveys have been prepared by Phlorum and Arbtch. These include a PEA, a PRA and secondary activity surveys for newts and activity surveys for bats.

In May 2025 Artech conducted a biodiversity baseline evaluation and calculation for the proposals. The calculation and associated report is enclosed as part of this application.

The proposal includes a landscaping scheme (adjacent) that will help secure the future of the ecosystems currently present while also establishing new ones.



Drainage

The site is in an area at very low risk of surface water flooding and very low risk of flooding from rivers and the sea.

There is a net increase in exposed roof area across the site as a result of the proposals.

All new flat roofs will include green roofs which will slow the discharge of storm water.

All storm water will be discharged to a new soakaway or natural infiltration system to allow the water to naturally and slowly discharge to ground.

The driveway will include a highly permeable surface for rain water. Similarly, the new parking and courtyard area will be in gravel and permeable paving allowing rain water to permeate through to the ground.

Sustainability

The proposal includes an air source heat pump and photovoltaic panels. The combination of these technologies allows the dwelling to be serviced entirely by sustainably generated power.

The site is in a prominent solar position and will benefit from natural direct sunlight for a large proportion of daylight hours. South facing roofslopes of both dual pitched roofs will accommodate solar panels and a solar battery will be provided within the plant space.

The walls, roofs and floors will be well insulated to outperform current building regulations and provide a low energy home.



Solar Panels and Green Roof / Wild Grass Planting / Wild Flower Planting / Drainage Soakaway

07. CONCLUSION.

The proposal described in this design and access statement replaces an existing dwelling in poor condition on a site with historical significance. It replaces the existing dwelling with a new home that is respectful of this significance and particularly sensitive to the context around it.

The scale, massing and appearance of the proposed building is developed to achieve a sympathetic relationship with its surroundings, allowing it to sit comfortably within the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposal seeks to balance the provision of a new home of high quality design, fit for 21st century living, along with a respectful response to historic surroundings.

This design and access statement demonstrates how the proposal responds to relevant policy and guidance, sets out the scheme's design principles and helps articulate why we consider this proposal to be successful and appropriate.

We therefore recommend that this planning submission is considered for your support and approval.

Existing Site Image - View from the east



Artistic Impression of Proposal - View from the east





**WillGamble
/Architects.**