



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)

re

A proposed extension

at

**Walstead Place Farmhouse
Scaynes Hill Road
Lindfield
West Sussex RH16 2QG**

**On Behalf of:
Mrs Gill Jackson**

PLANNING STATEMENT

Prepared by:
Batcheller Monkhouse
No.1 London Road
Tunbridge Wells
Kent
TN1 1DH

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 1982, Mid Sussex District Council granted planning permission under reference LR/7/82 for an agriculturally tied farmhouse at Walstead Place Farm to service the functional needs of the farm at that time. Since then, most of the farmland has been lost to development and all that remains is the farmhouse standing in approximately 2 hectares of pasture with a barn and an area of hardstanding.
- 1.2 The agricultural occupancy condition was removed under reference DM/24/2503. The effect of this is that the farmhouse is now an unencumbered dwelling which is not restricted in size and design to any agricultural functional need. The house is, in planning terms, a family home where external improvements are subject to standard householder planning policies.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal seeks to add an attached two storey extension to the eastern elevation to initially provide additional residential accommodation. The extension has been designed so that if or when additional bedrooms are not required, it may revert to several uses, such for example as a home office, gym, studio or workshop.
- 2.2 The project architects have detailed their design approach in their Design and Access Statement. This Statement places the proposal in a planning policy context.
- 2.3 The immediate need for this extension is to enable the house to be occupied by three generations of the same family. The modern term for this arrangement is “Multi-Generational Living” which, as noted by Stephen Burke who is a Director of the think-tank United for all Ages is *“an interesting part of the changing dynamics in our social and family life”*.
- 2.4 In general terms, this change in dynamics is not surprising. The arrangement has many advantages ranging from caring for elderly relatives and seriously ill/disabled children at home, child-minding when parents are in full time employment, to providing living accommodation to members of the younger generation who cannot afford to rent or

buy a first home. Multi-Generational living releases local pressure on market and affordable homes at times of acute housing shortage.

- 2.5 Specifically in this instance, Mrs Jackson is the widow of Mr Ian Jackson. She is beyond retirement age and living alone. It makes absolute sense to not only provide for her future needs in inevitable advancing years but also to configure her house in such a way that also accommodates her son, daughter-in law and young children. This development enables independent living without the creation of an ancillary “Granny Annex”. It also offers for her, and future generations, the benefits noted at 2.4 (above) within an extension that can also provide a number of facilities appropriate to a family home.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY ANALYSIS

- 3.1 Planning law requires applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, which in this instance comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014, the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan 2014. Other relevant material considerations are the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD. The emerging Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039, the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 and local precedent are also material planning considerations.
- 3.2 The Council is updating the District Plan. However, emerging policies within the emerging District Plan 2021 to 2039 currently carry little weight.
- 3.3 **The current District Plan** has no specific policies relating to residential extensions. The most relevant policies would appear to be:

Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside which aims to protect the countryside and its intrinsic character with a presumption in favour of proposals that maintain or where possible enhance the quality of the District’s rural and landscape character, and which are supported by other policies in the Plan or the relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy DP26: Character and Design which aims to ensure that all new development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings (my emphasis) are well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside.

- 3.4 Similarly, the **Mid Sussex Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2022)** contains no policies that apply to this proposal. However, it does oblige the Council to identify sufficient housing sites to provide a five year housing land supply. In the absence of sufficient housing land, Multi-Generational Living developments such as this make a valuable contribution to the supply of housing within the District.
- 3.5 **The Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan** has no policy on household extensions although it does support development that “meets the future housing demand and need” and relies heavily on policies within the District Plan and the NPPF.
- 3.5 The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended in February 2025) is a significant material planning consideration in that it sets out the framework under which local authorities should determine planning applications. The following paragraphs are particularly important when considering the merits of this proposal.

Paragraph 7 says (inter alia) summarises sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It adds that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes.

Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives in achieving sustainable namely economic, social and environmental.

Paragraph 9 states that planning decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, taking local circumstances into account.

Paragraph 10 states that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 11 amplifies the resumption in favour of sustainable development by obliging Councils to approve 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, to grant permission unless there are policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance which provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed or any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of this Framework taken as a whole. It is important to recognise that Paragraph 11 requires decision makers to have particular regard to key policies in the Framework that direct development to sustainable locations, make effective use of land and secure well-designed places and affordable homes.

Paragraph 39 requires local planning authorities to approach decisions on proposed developments in a positive and creative way and to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in **meeting the need for homes and other uses**, (my emphasis) while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

Paragraph 131 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

4.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

4.1 An examination of this proposed householder development confirms that:

- a) The principle of this proposal to extend a dwelling to provide additional residential accommodation in a way that enables the improvements to easily revert to appropriate alternative domestic uses is not contrary to planning policy.

- b) The use of the extension to provide Multi-Generational Living accords with the increasing trend towards this form of family accommodation.
- c) The development has no adverse impact on traffic generation or neighbouring residential amenity.
- d) The scheme has been well designed by local architects to be in keeping with the existing dwelling, landscape character and local distinctiveness having taken full account of the MSDC Design Guide.
- e) For the above reasons, the LPA is requested to look favourably on this planning application.

David Campion

DAVID CAMPION MRICS FBIAC

For and on behalf of Batcheller Momkhouse

September 2025