

PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

GROVELANDS FARM, Highbrook Lane, West Hoathly, RH19
4PL



APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION
ON BEHALF OF MR & MRS DAVIES

OCTOBER 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared to accompany an application for planning and listed building consent at Grovelands Farm, West Hoathly. The proposal is for a single storey extension to the existing dwelling, a single storey extension to the 'Bothy', a residential annex, and minor amendments to fenestration details.
- 1.2 Grovelands Farmhouse is grade II Listed, list entry number 1181974. The site includes the original farmhouse at the south of the site, and a converted barn towards the north of the site which forms part of the main dwelling. Outbuildings are located adjacent to Highbrook Lane. The development proposals relate to the converted barn, and one of the outbuildings known as the Bothy.
- 1.3 This statement sets out a description of the site and the proposed development, a summary of the relevant policies of the Wealden District Council development plan, and then demonstrates how the proposed development is acceptable with regard to the relevant material planning considerations.
- 1.4 The application is supported by this statement and the following documents:
- Application forms and certificate
 - CIL Form 1
 - Location Plan & Block Plan - PL-001
 - Existing Plans and Elevations (Barn) – PL-002
 - Proposed Plans and Elevations (Barn) – PL003
 - Existing Plans and Elevations (Bothy) – PL-004
 - Proposed Plans and Elevations (Bothy) – PL-005

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site comprises a two-storey residential property, which includes the original farmhouse and a converted barn, and residential outbuildings, on the western side of Highbrook Lane. The property is just over 1km south of West Hoathly.



Above – Application site marked by the yellow arrow

- 2.2 Grovelands Farmhouse is grade II Listed, list entry reference 1181974. It is also within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are no other statutory designations covering the site.



Above – proposed block plan with proposed extensions shown in red

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- 2.3 The converted barn includes ground floor living accommodation, and bedrooms and a study at first floor level.
- 2.4 The Bothy currently comprises of an open plan bedroom and kitchen/living area, and bathroom.

Planning History

- 2.5 There is no planning history relevant to the proposal available on the planning register.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The application seeks planning permission for a single storey extension to the converted barn to create a food preparation room, and a single storey extension to the existing Bothy to create a separate living area.

3.2 The following refurbishment works are also proposed:

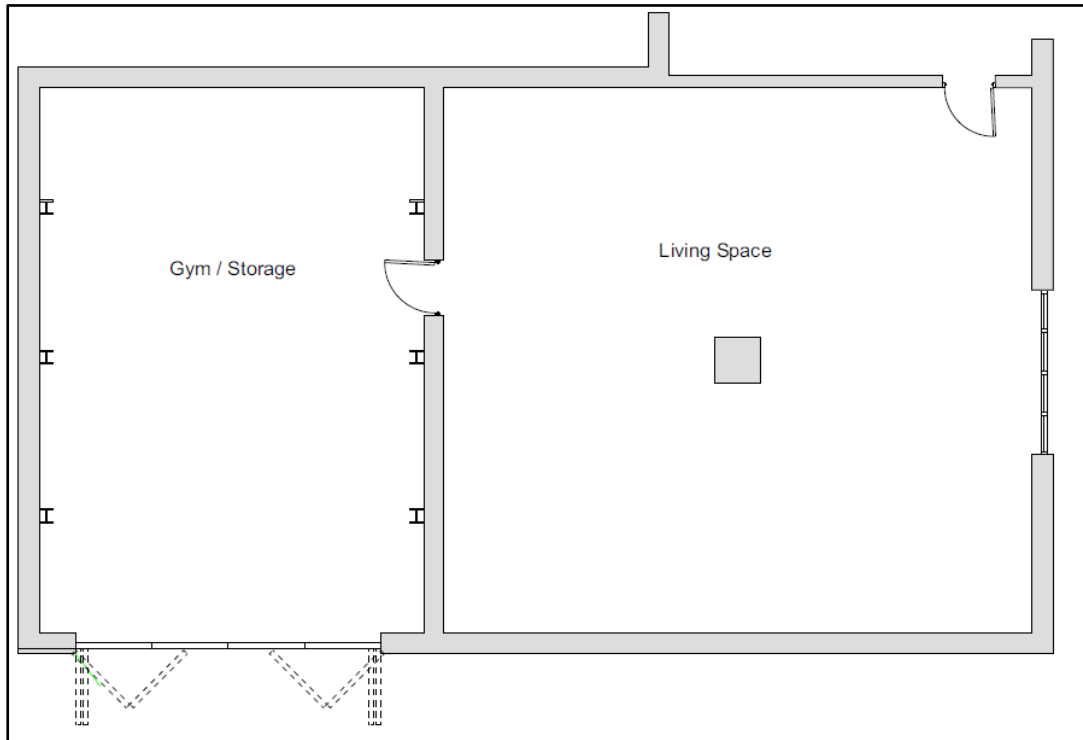
- Installation of two new windows at ground floor level and three new windows at first floor level at the barn
- Like for like replacement of double-glazed aluminium windows
- Like for like replacement of balustrades
- Removal of timber shutters
- New gutters and down pipes
- New WC / shower room in barn
- Internal glazed screen to barn doors

3.3 The existing and proposed plans are below.

Proposed block plan



Existing ground floor plan (barn)



Proposed ground floor plan (barn) – proposed extension circled red

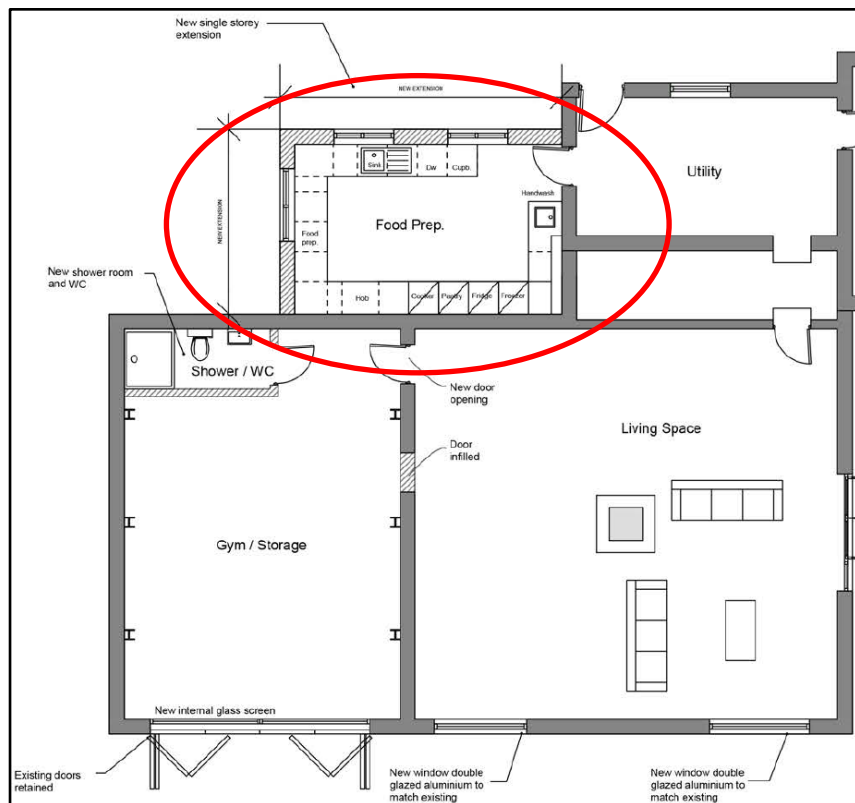


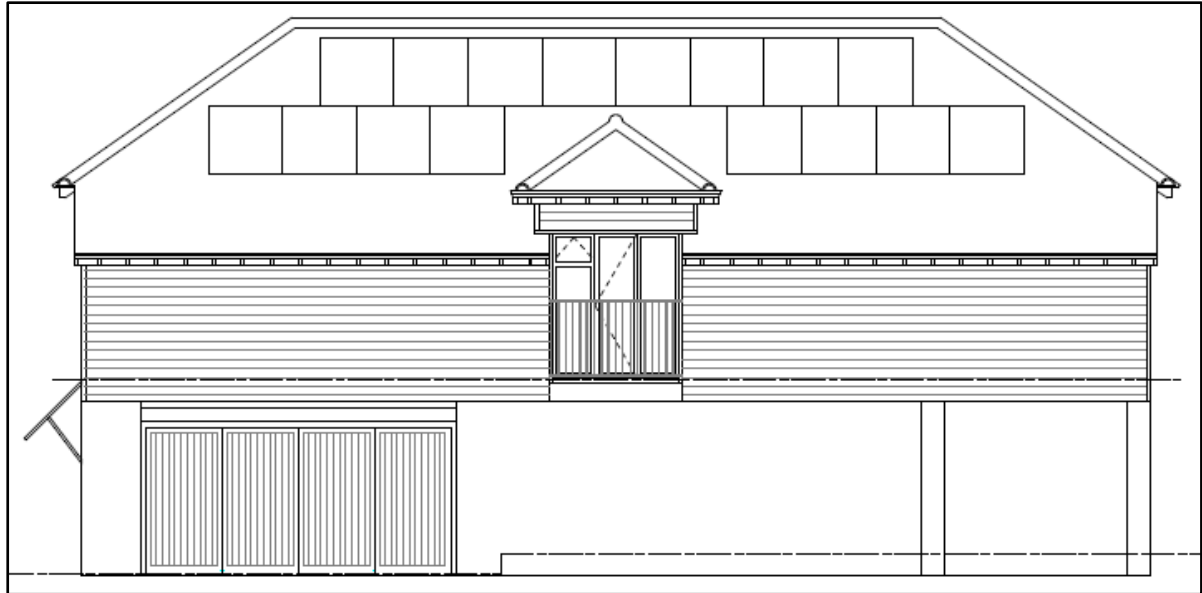
Photo of location of proposed extension to the barn



Proposed east elevation (extension circled red)



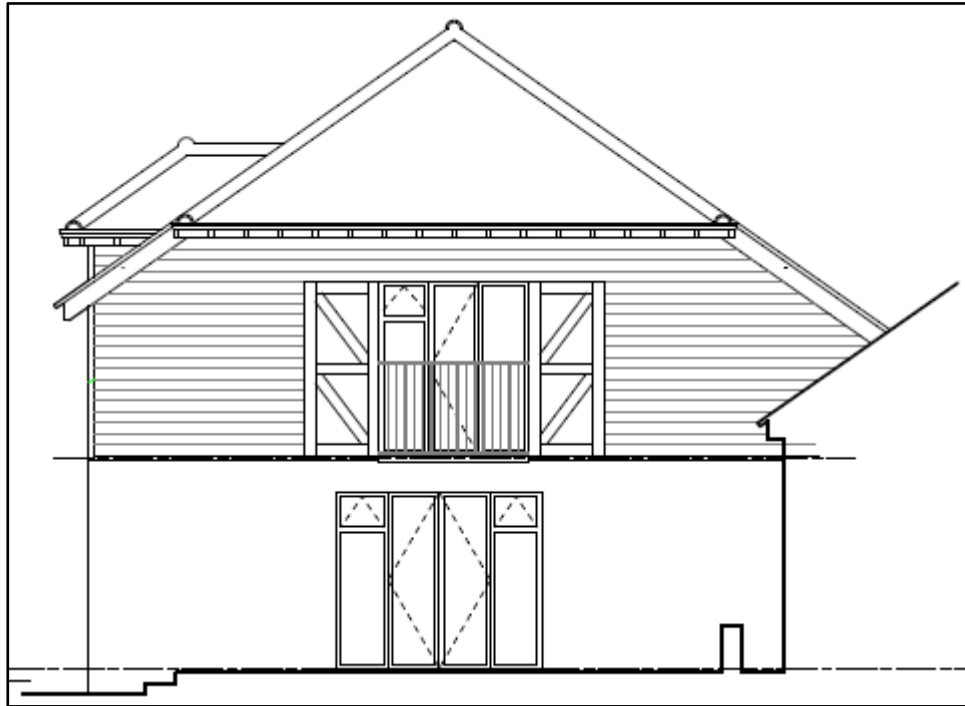
Existing west elevation



Proposed west elevation



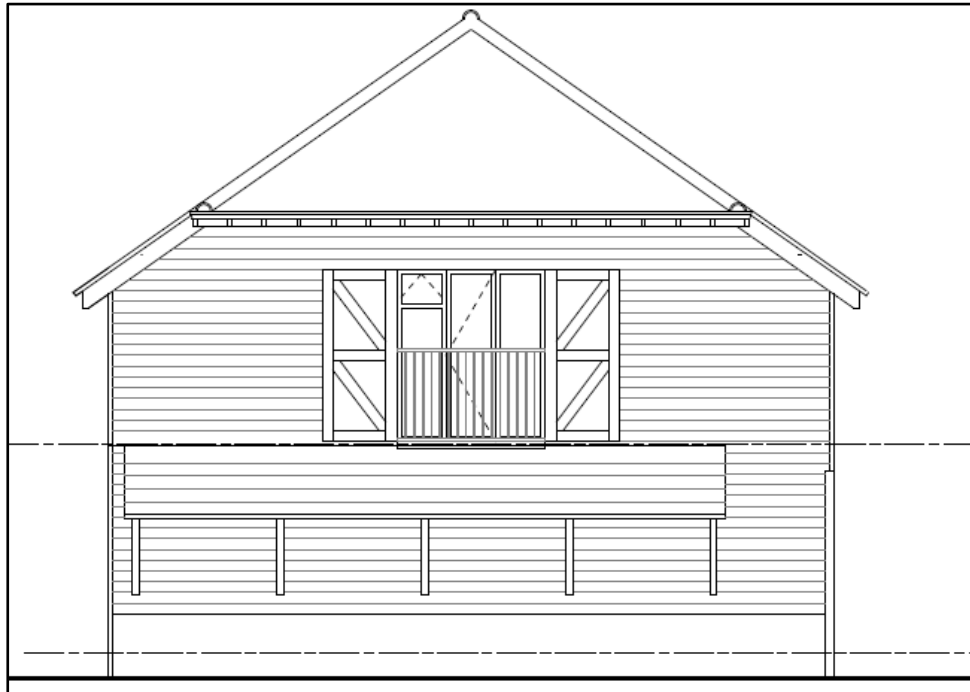
Existing south elevation



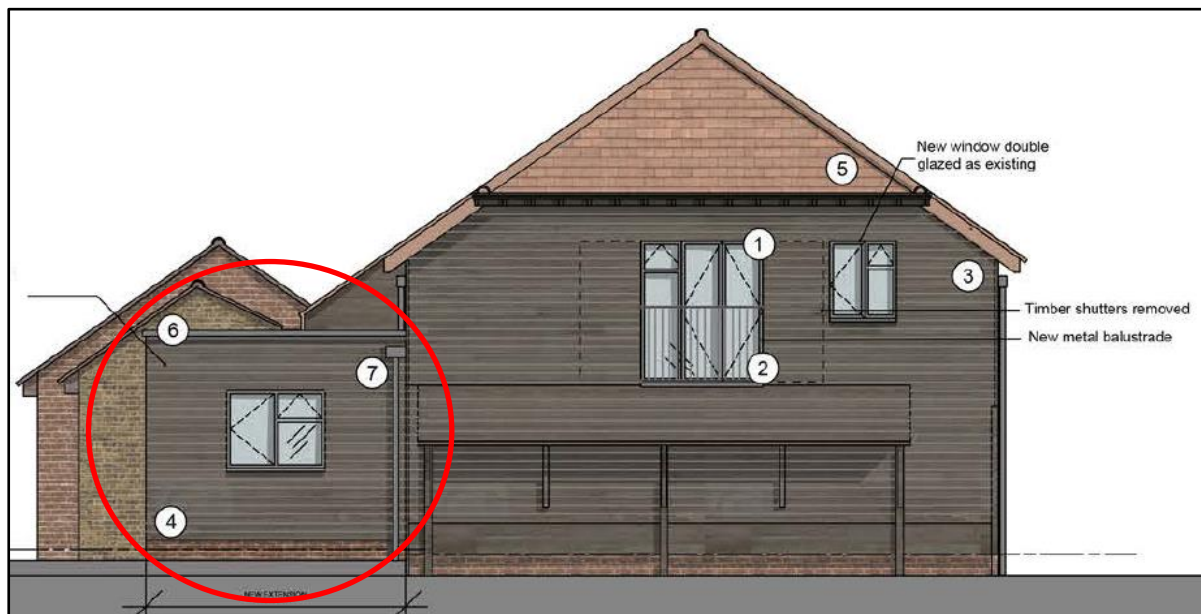
Proposed south elevation



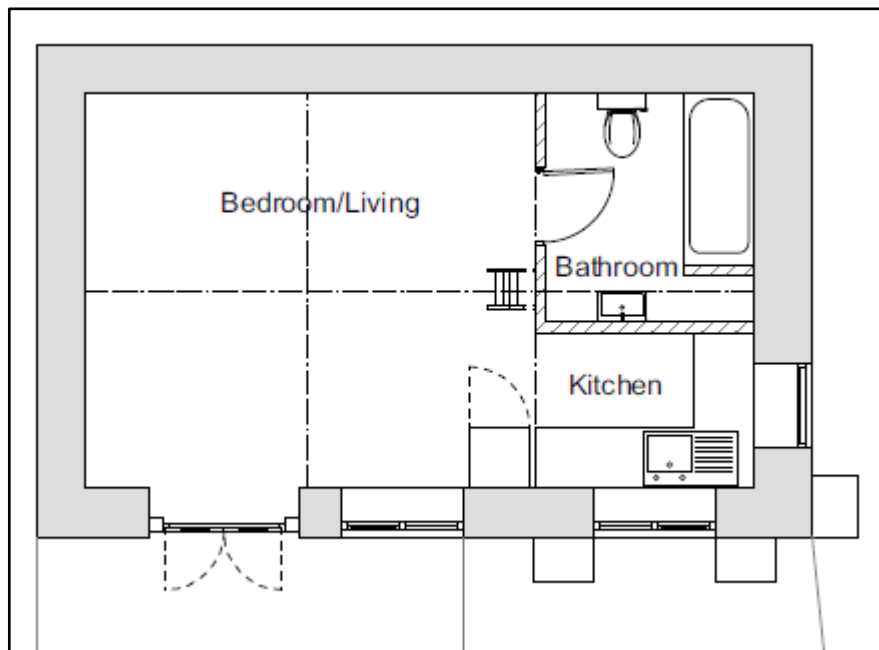
Existing north elevation



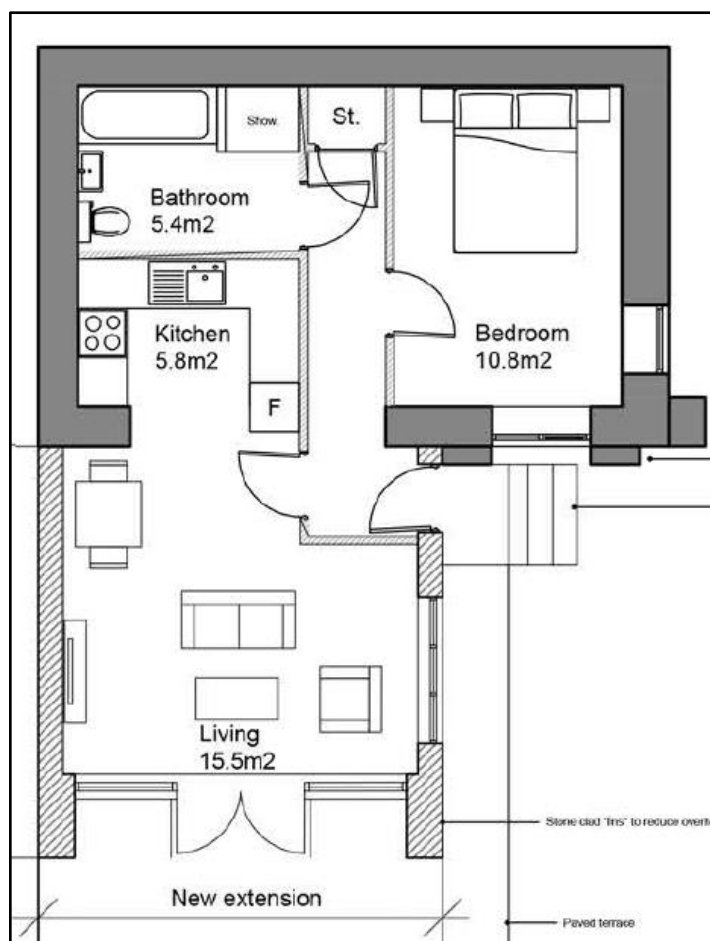
Proposed north elevation (new extension circled red)



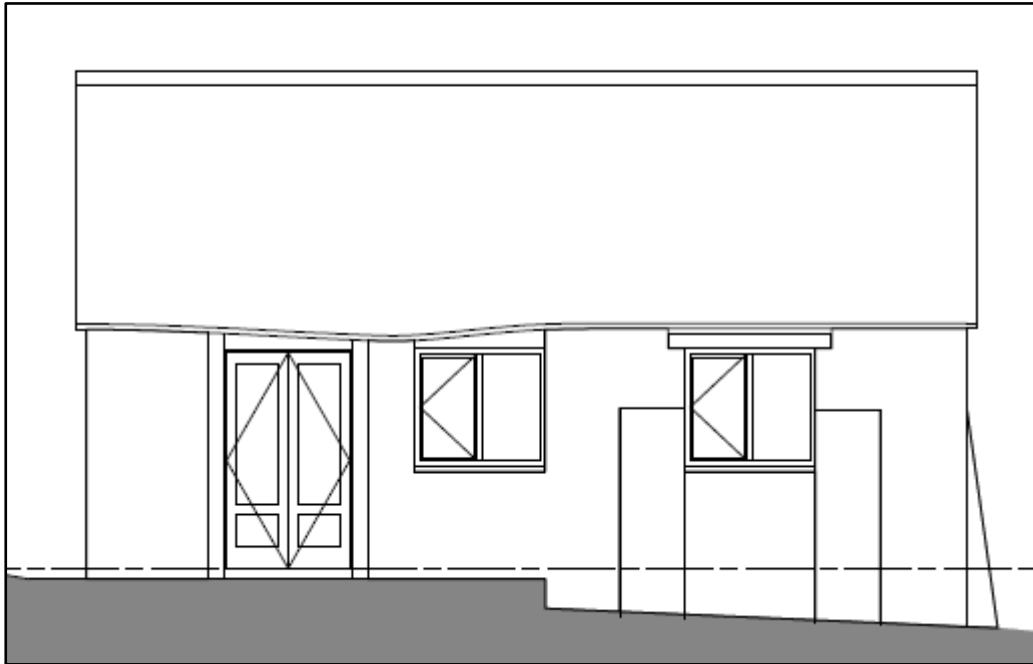
Existing ground floor plan (Bothy)



Proposed ground floor plan (Bothy)



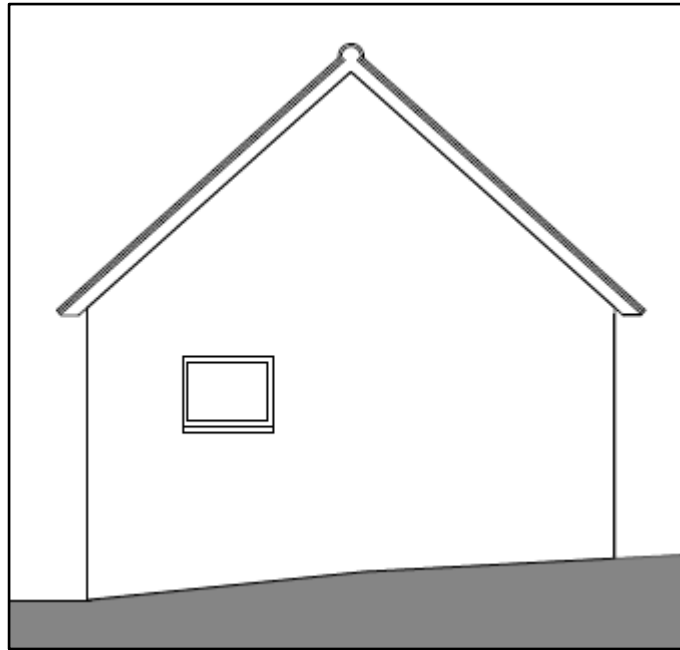
Existing west elevation (Bothy)



Proposed west elevation (Bothy)



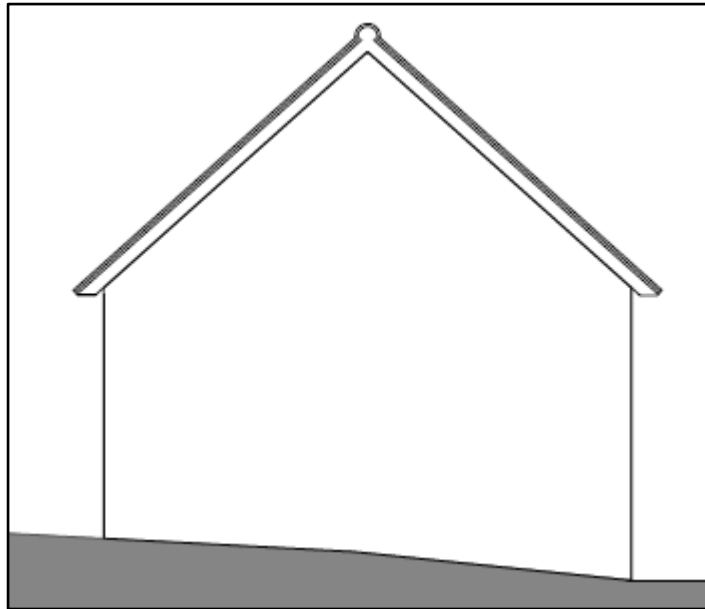
Existing south elevation (Bothy)



Proposed south elevation (Bothy)



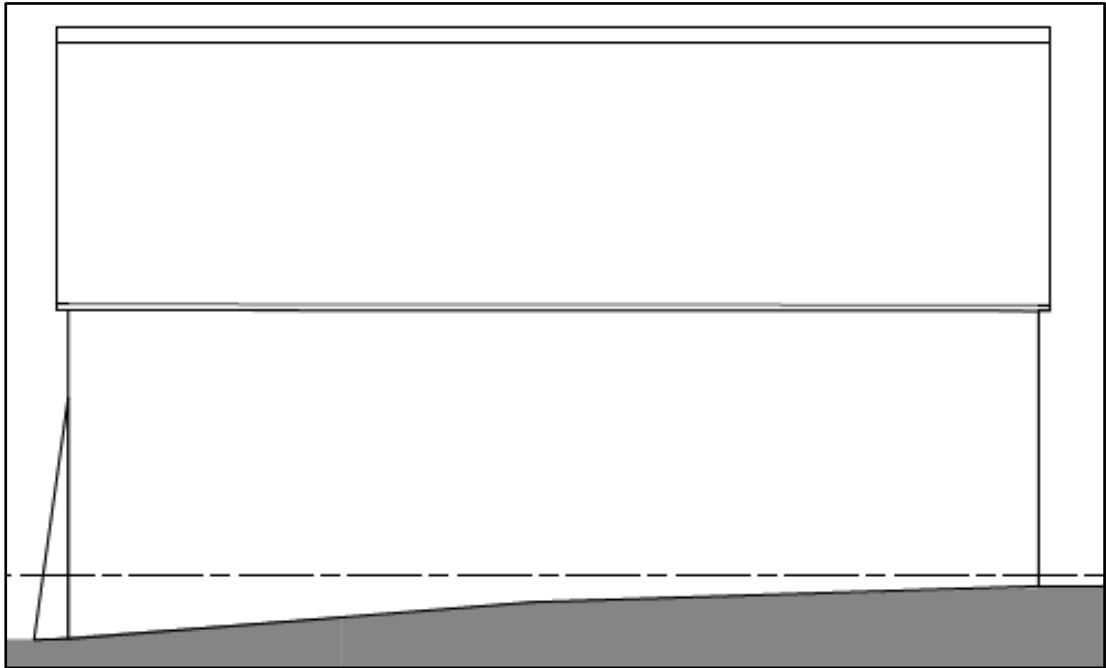
Existing north elevation (Bothy)



Proposed north elevation (Bothy)



Existing east elevation (Bothy)



Proposed east elevation (Bothy)



4.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 Relevant planning policy includes the adopted Wealden Local Plan 1998, the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Wealden Local Plan 1998

- 4.2 The Wealden Local Plan (saved policies) was adopted in 1998 September 2007. Relevant saved policies are set out below.
- 4.3 Policy EN1 states the Council will pursue sustainable development.
- 4.4 Policy EN8 states development in the Low Weald will only be permitted if it conserves the low rolling agricultural character of the landscape. Particular regard will be had to the retention of woods, boundary trees and hedges, and attractive vernacular buildings and groups of buildings.
- 4.5 Policy DC19 states that outside development boundaries proposals for extensions and alterations to existing dwellings should:
- Comply with policy HG10
 - Not be intrusive in the landscape or detrimental to the rural setting
 - Be of an appropriate size and character relative to the original dwelling, and not be visually dominant or otherwise adversely change the character of the existing building or group of buildings
- 4.6 Policy HG10 states the extension and alteration of existing dwellings will be permitted where the scale, style, design and materials are appropriate and sympathetic in relation to the existing buildings, and there is no significant adverse effect on the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Wealden District Council Core Strategy Local Plan 2013

- 4.7 The Core Strategy was adopted in February 2013. The relevant policies and objectives are set out below.
- 4.8 SPO13 states the Council will encourage the development of high quality, safe and attractive living environments for communities in both towns and villages.
- 4.9 Policy WCS14 advises that when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.10 Spatial objective SP02 states the Council will ensure the intrinsic quality of the historic environment is protected.

5.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 The key material planning considerations relevant to this proposal are:

- The principle of development
- Design
- Impact on amenity
- Impact on the Low Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

All material planning considerations are assessed below.

Principle of Development

5.2 Policies HG10 and DC19 allow for residential extensions subject to appropriate consideration of the following factors:

- Whether they are of an appropriate size and character relative to the original dwelling
- Whether sympathetic and appropriate materials are used
- If they protect the amenity of adjacent occupiers
- On the provision they are not intrusive in the landscape or detrimental to the rural setting

5.3 The following sections demonstrate the proposal is acceptable with regard to the above considerations.

Design

5.4 The design of both extensions ensure they are sympathetic to the existing buildings, both individually and cumulatively.

Barn extension

- 5.5 The eastern extension to the barn will be approximately 5.5 metres by 3.8 metres. The roof will be lower than the eaves of the adjacent buildings, and the extension will also not result in any expansion to the building line beyond existing walls. The extension also faces towards existing outbuildings, as opposed to facing open countryside, and is in a part of the site where the footprint of the building is already irregular.
- 5.6 For these reasons the scale of the extension would sit comfortably in a subservient position to the surrounding buildings.
- 5.7 The proposed extension to the barn will have a flat GRP roof coloured grey, timber cladding stained dark brown to match the existing cladding to this part of the dwelling, and grey powder coated aluminium windows, to also match the existing windows.
- 5.8 The flat roof will ensure the surrounding pitched roofs of the dwelling continue to be prominent, to protect the existing character of the dwelling. The materials will match the existing materials used on this part of the dwelling, and this will further ensure the character of the dwelling is protected as a result of the development.

Bothy extension

- 5.9 It is proposed to extend the Bothy to create an L-shaped building. The extension will measure approximately 5 metres by 5 metres, and be located on the western elevation of the Bothy, facing into the application site. The extension will be located over an existing patio area associated with the Bothy (see photo on following page).



Above – Existing Bothy with front patio where the extension is proposed

- 5.10 As the extension is proposed on an area which is already clearly associated directly with the Bothy, the character of this part of the site will remain largely unchanged.
- 5.11 The materials used will match the existing materials. The roof will be clad in clay tiles, and the walls will be clad in local stone.



Above – Examples of local stone cladding

- 5.12 The extension to the Bothy will be fully contained within the part of the site already occupied by the Bothy, and the materials will match the existing materials to ensure the character of this part of the site is protected and maintained following development.

- 5.13 The scale of the extension is also appropriate in comparison to the surrounding buildings, and appropriate for an ancillary residential building located within a large residential plot.

Refurbishment works

- 5.14 Other minor refurbishment works are also proposed as part of the development. These are:

- Five new windows (on the barn elevations)
- Timber shutters will be removed on the north and south elevations
- New gutters and downpipes
- Like for like replacement of balustrades and windows as shown on the submitted plans
- New WC / shower room in barn

- 5.15 The new windows are appropriately located with regard to the alignment of existing windows. They will be framed using matching materials. Therefore they will compliment the existing elevation design.

- 5.16 The like for like replacement of windows, balustrades and guttering will enhance the appearance of the dwelling by facilitating the repairs required to maintain the listed building.

Amenity

- 5.17 The nearest neighbours to the application site are located opposite Grovelands Farm on the eastern side of Highbrook Lane. The proposal is for minor extensions to the existing dwelling and outbuilding, and for minor alterations to, and refurbishment of, fenestration at the main dwelling.

- 5.18 Due to the small scale nature of the proposals, and high vegetation lining Highbrook Lane, there will be no impact on the amenity of neighbours.

Landscape Impact

- 5.19 The application site is within the Low Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Development is allowed in the Low Weald AONB if it conserves the low rolling agricultural character of the landscape. Particular regard must be had to the retention of woods, boundary trees and hedges, and attractive vernacular buildings and groups of buildings.
- 5.20 The existing character of the site is residential, with a large rear garden which has views across the Low Weald AONB.



Above – View from the rear of the site looking west

- 5.21 The extensions will be contained within the existing group of buildings. Neither extension protrudes into the countryside beyond the existing group of buildings. The rear garden is extensive, and as such there will be no public views of either extension or the associated refurbishment works.
- 5.22 No works are proposed to trees or hedgerows. Therefore the proposal is acceptable with regard to landscape impact.

Sustainable Development

- 5.23 National and local planning policies provide positive support to proposals for sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework provides three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental).

Economic Role

- 5.24 Construction works will provide economic activity in the construction industry and related secondary industries. The works carried out to construct the extensions and undertake the refurbishment works would likely provide employment for skilled construction workers, plumbers, electricians, roofers and plasterers.

Social Role

- 5.25 The proposals will result in an improved standard of accommodation for current and future residents. The provision of additional floorspace will also improve the flexibility of space within the property, which can be adapted to meet future and changing needs of residents.

Environmental Role

- 5.26 The proposed alterations are well designed and result in an improved standard of accommodation, without harming the natural environment. The proposals are also acceptable with regard to the impact on the listed building, as will be demonstrated in the following section.

6.0 HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

Significance

- 6.1 Grovelands Farmhouse is grade II listed, list entry number 1181974. The list entry states:

WEST HOATHLY HAMMINGDEN LANE

1. 5405 Grovelands Farmhouse TQ 33 SE 7/500 II

2. North wing C17. Two storeys. Two windows. Ground floor red brick, above tile-hung. Tiled roof. Casement windows. C19 addition of 2 window-bays in red brick at south end.

- 6.2 The site comprises of the original Grovelands Farmhouse, the barn to the north which has been converted to form part of the main dwelling, and outbuildings. Images of the original farmhouse and its relationship with the converted barn are provided below.



Above – original farmhouse from south



Above – Farmhouse east and north elevation



Above – Farmhouse western elevation, with converted barn to the left

Impact Assessment

- 6.3 The proposed development has been designed to preserve the character of the listed building. The extensions are located away from the original farmhouse, and have been design to closely integrate with the buildings they are attached to. This is achieved by using matching materials, and positioning the extensions in locations

where they clearly relate to their immediate setting. The site and setting of the listed building as a whole will be protected by the extensions.

- 6.4 The refurbishment of the windows, doors, balustrades and guttering will improve the appearance of the listed building and ensure it continues to be kept in a good state of repair. The removal of the timber shutters on the south and north side will have no noticeable impact on the listed building. The character of the listed building will be enhanced through the refurbishment works.
- 6.5 The additional openings have all been designed to match existing openings in terms of materials, and alignment within the elevations. They will appear as usual features of a residential barn conversion. Just five new windows are proposed across all elevations. This will not have a material impact on the character of the barn, and therefore the existing character of the barn will be preserved.
- 6.6 The provision of the new WC / shower room in the barn will not interfere with any historic fabric, and will only require internal alterations. Similarly, the internal glazed screen to barn doors will not have any impact on historic fabric.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposed development seeks planning and listed building consent for a single storey extension to the existing dwelling, a single storey extension to the Bothy, and minor amendments to fenestration details. The proposed development has been assessed against the relevant policies within the Wealden Development Plan Documents, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 7.2 This report demonstrates that the proposals are acceptable in principle and would cause no harm to character the listed building, Low Weald AONB, or the amenities of neighbouring residents.
- 7.3 The proposals will also ensure the continued maintenance and enhancement of the listed building.
- 7.4 For the reasons set out above the proposed development is acceptable, and we respectfully request that Wealden District Council grant planning permission accordingly.

Lewis and Co Planning

October 2021