



Planning, Design and Access Statement

Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a dwelling
(as an alternative to Prior Approval Ref. DC/25/0124)

at

Land to the west of Little Millfields
Rowhook Road
Rowhook
West Sussex
RH12 3PZ

On Behalf of
Mr Paul Rodger

Prepared by
Clare Bartlett MRTPI PISEP
c.bartlett@batchellermonkhouse.com
01798 877555

August 2026

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION 3

2 APPLICATION SITE..... 5

3 PLANNING BACKGROUND 7

4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT15

5 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATMENT.....18

6 APPRAISAL20

7 SUMMARY.....26

Appendix A – Pre-Application Advice

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This statement is prepared in support of a planning application for the demolition of buildings and the erection of a dwelling with associated parking. The application is submitted as an alternative to the dwelling granted consent under Prior Approval reference DC/25/0124 (Class Q scheme).
- 1.2 This statement sets out the relevant background to assist the planning authority in its determination of the planning application. The statement includes a description of the site and its surroundings, relevant planning history, details of the proposed development, a summary of the planning policy context, and an appraisal of the scheme against all relevant planning considerations.

- 1.3 The application is supported by the following documents:

PLANS:

Drg No. 000 – Location Plan

Drg No. 001 – Topographical Plan

Drg No. 002 – Existing Site Plan

Drg No. 003 and 004 – Existing Building Plans

Drg No. 005 – Proposed Elevation and Floor Plans

Drg No. 006 – Proposed Roof Plan

Drg No. 007 – Proposed Bike Store Plan

Drg No. 008 – Proposed Site Plan

Drg No. 009 – Proposed Street Scene

DOCUMENTS:

Planning, Design and Access Statement

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

Heritage Statement

Phase 1 and 2 Contamination Survey Reports

Tree Survey and Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Arboricultural Method Statement

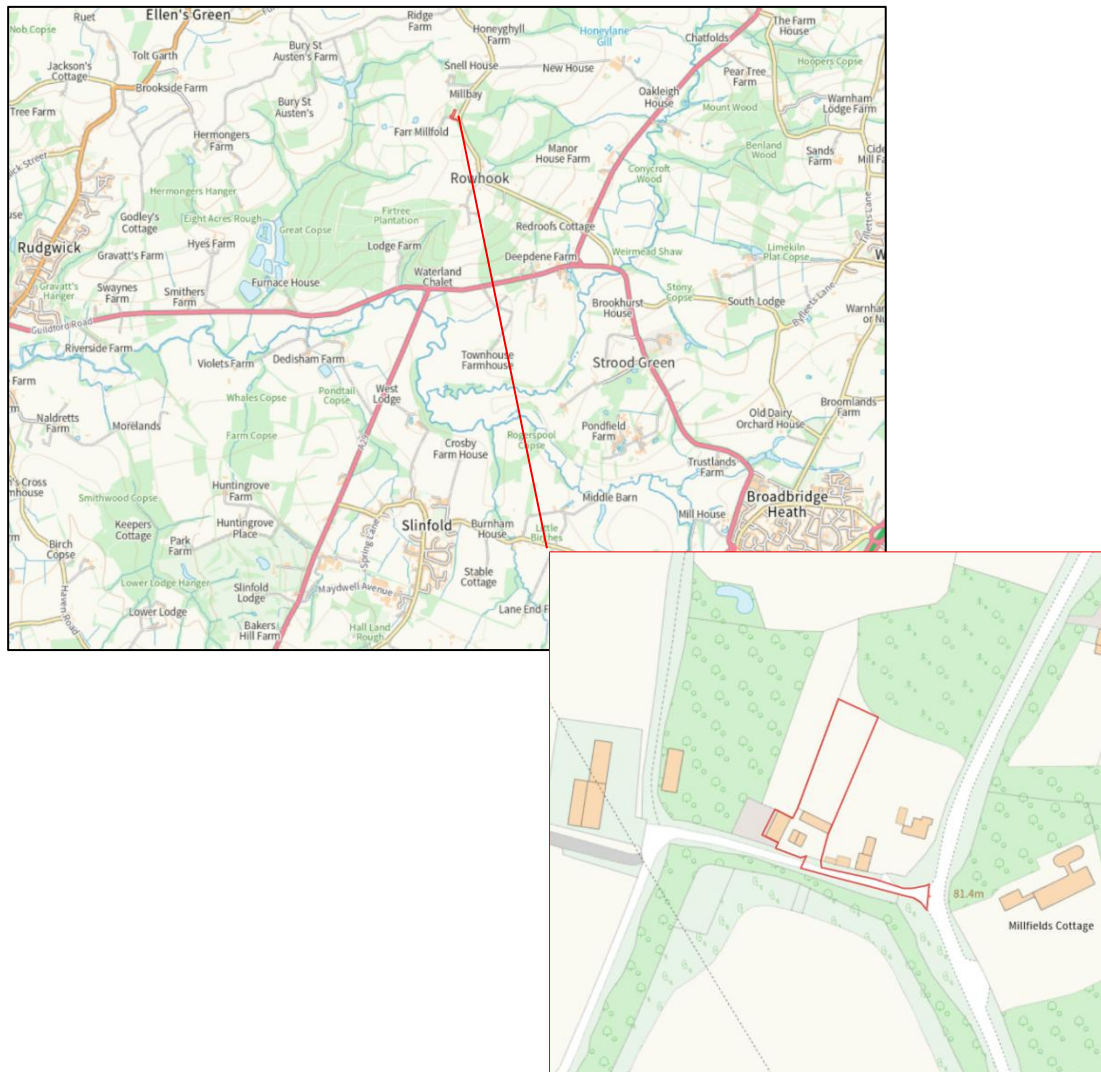
Application and Ownership Forms

CIL Forms

2 APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 The application site extends to 0.11 hectares and is located to the west of a residential property known as Little Millfields. The site is located off Rowhook Road approximately 500m north of the centre of Rowhook and 3.7km north-west of Broadbridge Heath.

Figure 2.1 – Site Location



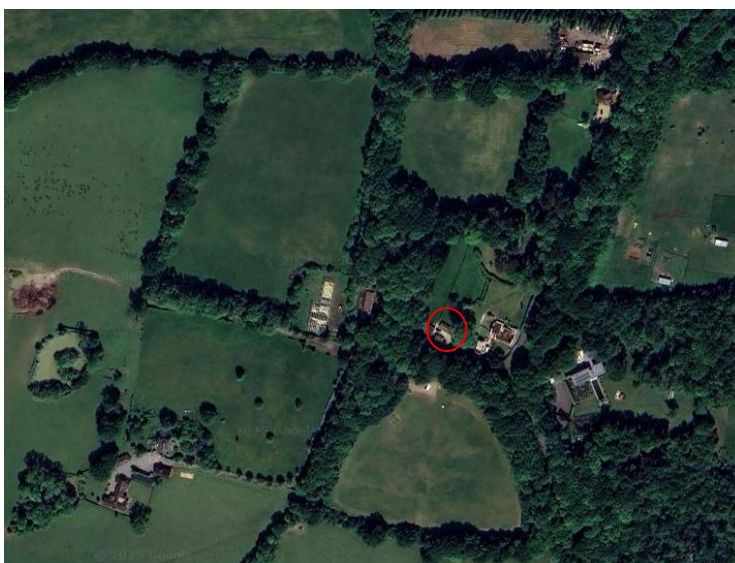
- 2.2 The site comprises three stable buildings and further outbuildings totalling 150sqm. There are also chicken coop structures sited on an area of hardstanding with a maintained grassed area to the rear.

Figure 2.2 – Site photographs



- 2.3 The site has an existing access onto an unnamed road which leads onto Rowhook Road.
- 2.4 The surrounding area has a rural character with the Grade II listed Little Millfields property to the east, a barn being converted into a storage building to the west, and fields with unknown use to the south and north.

Figure 2.3 – Contextual aerial image



3 PLANNING BACKGROUND

3.1 Planning History

- 3.1.1 The site has been the subject of an application for prior approval (ref. DC/25/0124) for the residential conversion of a stable building to form one dwelling. Figure 3.1 shows the approved plans.

Figure 3.1 – Approved Dwelling Plans



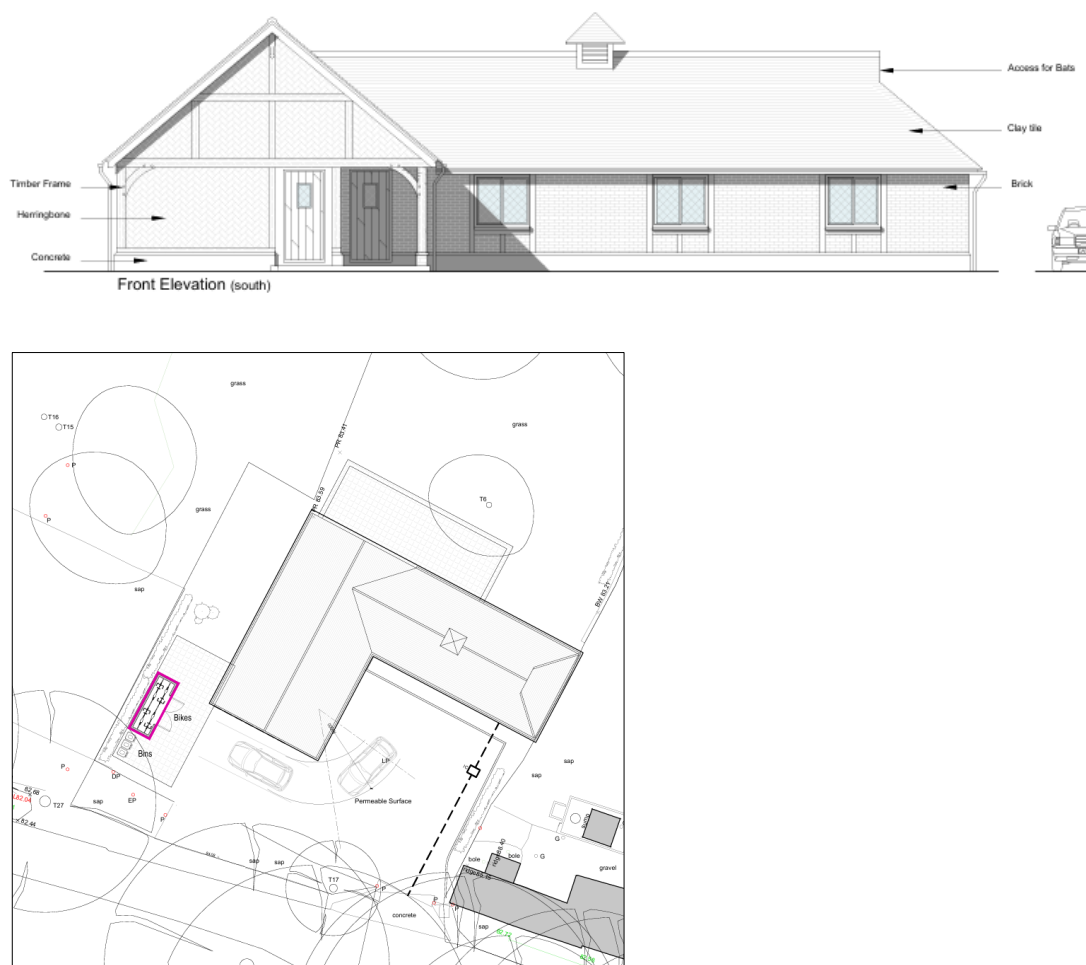
- 3.1.2 The approval was subject to a pre-commencement condition relating to contamination which is the subject of a current Discharge of Condition application. An application under Regulation 77 of the Habitats Regulations has also been submitted (ref. HRA/25/0015).
- 3.1.3 More recently, planning application reference DC/25/1360 sought consent for an alternative scheme to the above involving the demolition of all buildings and the erection of a single detached dwelling. Figure 3.2 below shows the submitted plans.

Figure 3.2 – Plans submitted under DC/25/1360

- 3.1.4 The application received no objections from WSCC Highways, Place Services (Ecology), and the Arboricultural Officer (once amendments to the scheme had been made). The Council's Conservation Officer did however object to the scheme on the basis of the dwelling design, making the following comments:

The significance of Little Millfields is correctly described in the supporting statement including the contribution its setting provides. This is rural in nature and includes small clusters of agricultural buildings. The proposed dwelling is reminiscent of mid-twentieth century suburban dwellings that followed the international style of architecture. It will appear incongruous in this context and will neither respect nor reinforce the rural character of this location. This will lead to less than substantial harm to the setting of Little Millfields. I do not disagree that the removal of the existing buildings will have a positive impact to the setting of the listed building but any replacement building should reflect and reimagine a rural vernacular.

- 3.1.5 Rudgwick Parish Council objected due to arboricultural and design concerns.
- 3.1.6 The application was subsequently withdrawn to enable the scheme to be revised.
- 3.1.7 A revised scheme was submitted to the Planning Authority as part of a pre-application enquiry (ref PE/26/0091). Figure 3.3 below shows the pre-application plans submitted for consideration.

Figure 3.3 – Pre-Application Plans

3.1.8 The revised scheme again proposed a single-storey three-bedroom dwelling but of a substantially different, and more traditional design.

3.1.9 A copy of the pre-application advice received is attached at Appendix A. In summary this stated:

- The site is located within the rural countryside, where new residential development would generally conflict with Policies 1, 2, 3 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework. However, the Council noted that an extant prior approval (ref. DC/25/0124) permits conversion of the existing stable building to a dwelling and considers that this fallback position outweighs the policy conflict. The principle of replacing the existing buildings with a new dwelling was therefore considered acceptable.
- The existing buildings are considered to have no particular merit and their removal is not objected to, although the proposed dwelling would have a substantially larger footprint and greater prominence. The redesigned dwelling is considered to better reflect a traditional rural building, subject to further design amendments, including a steeper roof

pitch of at least 42 degrees and traditional roof detailing. The Council also recommended that the dwelling be moved away from the shared eastern boundary to provide greater separation from the listed building.

- The extent of the proposed enlarged residential curtilage should be clarified, as it appears to the Council to include land currently associated with Little Millfields. Any planning application should also be supported by sections and elevations demonstrating the height, ridge and massing of the dwelling in relation to surrounding buildings, together with an updated landscaping scheme, compensatory tree planting where necessary, and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

3.1.10 Overall, the principle of demolishing the existing buildings and erecting a replacement dwelling was considered acceptable, subject to further design work.

3.2 Planning Policy

3.2.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2.2 The statutory Development Plan relevant to the site comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (adopted 2015) and Rudgwick Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2021)

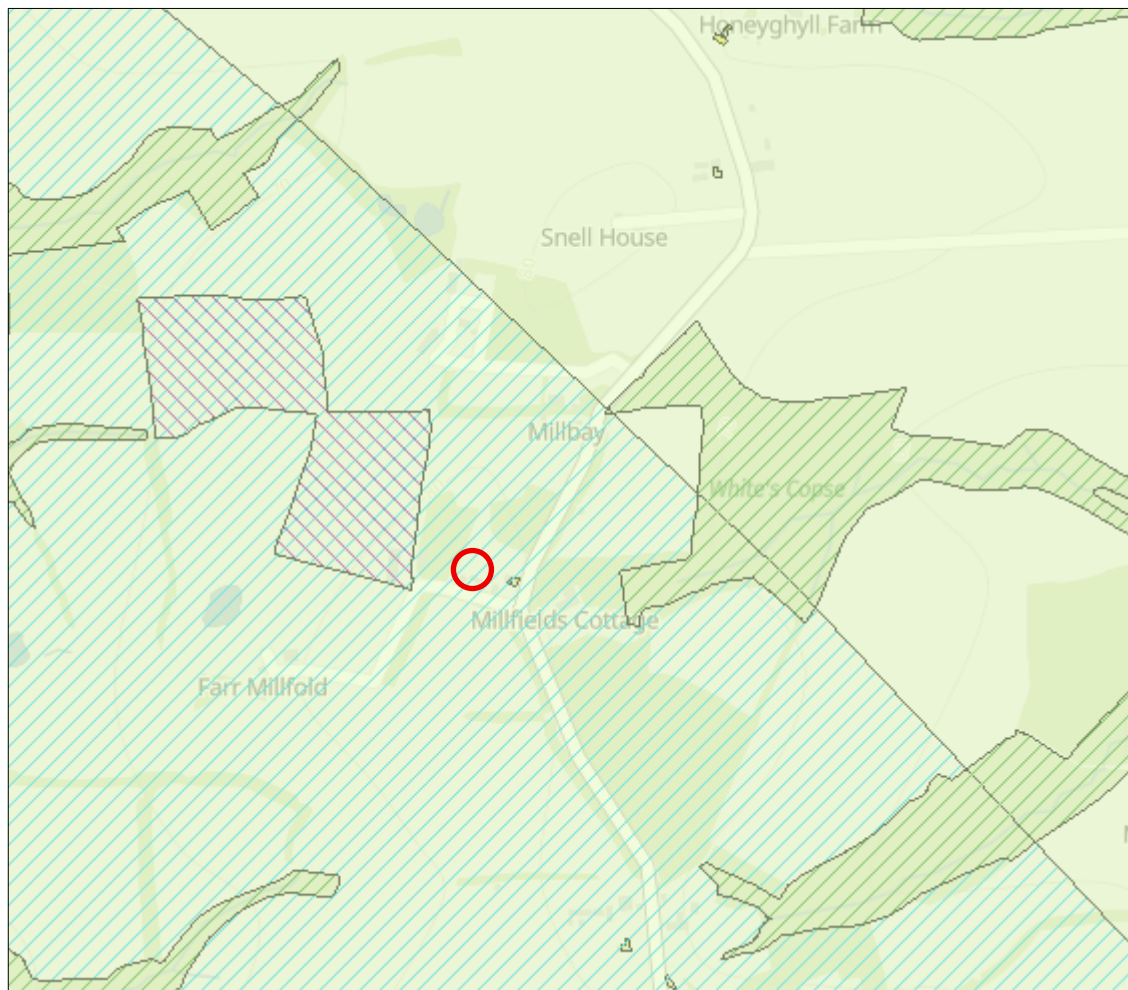
3.2.3 Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

3.2.4 Although Horsham District Council has prepared a replacement Local Plan, the Council has confirmed that currently limited weight can be attached to it.

3.3 Development Plan

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

3.3.1 The accompanying Policies Map identifies the site as lying outside of the built-up area boundary (shaded green on the map extract below) and within a Bat Sustenance Zone (hatched area on the map extract below).

Figure 3.1 – Horsham District Planning Framework Policies Map

3.3.2 The policies of relevance include:

Policy title	Summary of Policy
Policy 1 – Sustainable Development	Requires the Council to take a positive approach to development proposals, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
Policy 2 – Strategic Development	Seeks to manage development around existing settlements to prevent settlement coalescence and protect rural character and landscape. Rural housing is supported where it contributes towards meeting an identified need for affordable housing.
Policy 15 – Development in Rural Areas	Supports expansion where it is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement. Development should address identified housing needs and/or assist in the retention and enhancement of community facilities and services.
Policy 24 – Environmental Protection	Seeks to protect the high-quality environment of the district. Development should minimise emissions, including noise, odour, air and light pollution, and be appropriate to its location having regard to ground conditions and land stability.
Policy 25 – The Natural Environment and Landscape Character	Supports development that protects, conserves and enhances landscape and townscape character.

Policy 26 – Countryside Protection	Requires development in the countryside to be appropriate in scale and character and not result in a significant increase in activity. Development should protect, conserve and/or enhance the key features and characteristics of the relevant landscape character area.
Policy 31 – Green Infrastructure	Supports development that maintains or enhances the existing green infrastructure network. Loss of green infrastructure will be resisted unless appropriate replacement opportunities are provided to mitigate or compensate for the loss and retain ecosystem services.
Policy 33 – Development Principles	Presumes in favour of retaining important landscape and natural features such as trees, hedgerows, banks and watercourses. Development should respond sympathetically to the local landscape, justify and mitigate any losses, and achieve a high standard of design and layout that responds appropriately to surrounding buildings, landscape, open spaces, routes, skylines and important views.
Policy 35 – Climate Change	Supports development that makes a clear contribution to mitigating and adapting to climate change and assists in meeting the district's carbon reduction targets.
Policy 37 – Sustainable Design and Construction	Requires development to encourage natural lighting and ventilation, incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity, and provide satisfactory and integral arrangements for refuse and recycling storage.

Rudgwick Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2031 (Made 2021)

Policy title	Summary of policy
Policy RNP1 – Spatial Strategy	Sets out the spatial strategy for the parish and supports sustainable development. Outside defined built-up areas, new housing is generally limited to allocated sites or residential exception sites. Development should maintain the settlement pattern, avoid settlement coalescence and protect the individual identity and established built pattern of settlements.
Policy RNP2 – Housing Mix and Local Housing Needs	Requires new housing development to address identified local housing needs, with particular support for 1, 2 and 3-bedroom homes that accord with the spatial strategy. Proposals should also respond positively to the established character and density of the immediate locality.
Policy RNP4 – Homes for Older People	Supports proposals for bungalows and homes that achieve Building Regulations accessibility standard Part M4.2, provided they are otherwise in accordance with relevant planning policies.
Policy RNP5 – Density	Requires residential development proposals to demonstrate that the density of development reflects the surrounding built density of the immediate locality.
Policy RNP6 – Building Materials	Requires development to use materials that reflect common building styles within the parish. Brick should generally be the principal building material, with tile hanging or barn-style cladding on upper floors where appropriate, and tiled roofs.
Policy RNP7 – Local Architectural Character	Requires new development to respond to the surrounding architecture, with particular regard to locally distinctive architectural features, the local vernacular and characteristic details.
Policy RNP8 – Scale, Massing and Height	Requires new development to reflect local traditions, generally be two storeys in height, and have a scale and massing that respects the character and appearance of the surrounding built and natural environment.

3.4 Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF)

- 3.4.1 The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking (paragraph 11).
- 3.4.2 There are three dimensions to sustainable development: social, economic and environmental (paragraph 8). Residential developments play an important role in the provision of sustainable development with the delivery of high-quality homes in the right location contributing towards the social, economic and environmental health of the district.
- 3.4.3 The NPPF states that development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Paragraph 11d states that where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless:
- The application of policies in the framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
- 3.4.4 In situations where the presumption set out above applies, paragraph 14 explains that the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits provided that it became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which a decision is made, and the plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement. In this instance, although the neighbourhood plan is less than 5 years old, it does not contain policies or allocations to meet its identified housing requirement. Therefore paragraph 14 does not apply.

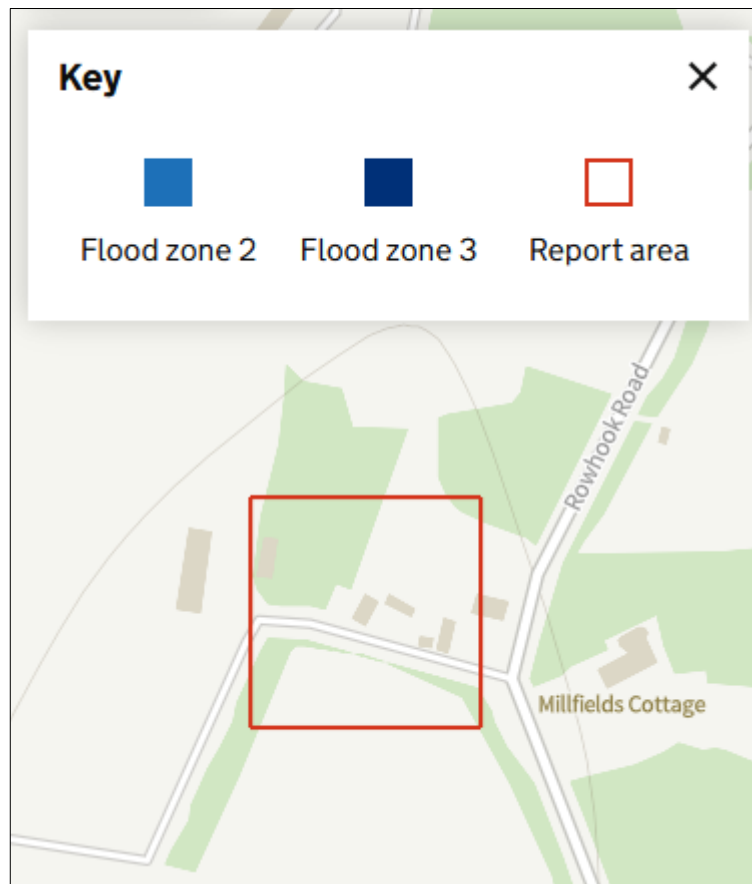
Housing Needs Assessment (July 2017)

- 3.4.5 The assessment was prepared to provide an assessment of housing needs to underpin Neighbourhood Plan policies. It identified a need for a range of dwellings, including a significant proportion of smaller properties, of which a proportion should be bungalows; and homes for the recently retired and/or over 55s to downsize into locally which should generally be smaller although it acknowledged demand for 3 bedroom properties, in addition to affordable housing provision as part of larger developments.

3.5 Environmental Constraints

- 3.5.1 The site is located within Flood Zone 1 with a low probability of flooding.

Figure 3.2 – Flood Map for Planning



4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The proposed scheme seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing buildings and structures on the site and the erection of a new single-storey dwelling. This application is submitted as an alternative to the previously approved Prior Approval scheme (ref. DC/25/0124), which allowed for the conversion of one of the stable buildings into a one-bedroom dwelling.
- 4.2 The revised proposal will result in the complete removal of all buildings and structures on the site. In their place, a single-storey three-bedroom dwelling is proposed. The dwelling will be centred on the footprint of the larger stable building with maintained land to the rear creating a private garden space for the proposed dwelling. The existing chicken coop structures would be replaced with the area used for a cycle store and area for bin storage.

Figure 4.1 – Proposed Layout



- 4.3 The proposed dwelling will provide three bedrooms (suitable for up to six persons), an open plan lounge/kitchen/diner, utility room and family bathroom.
- 4.4 All rooms will be located at ground floor level, ensuring full accessibility and suitability for occupants with reduced mobility to address the need identified within the Neighbourhood Plan. The gross internal floor area will be 120 sqm. Although this is an increase compared to the Prior Approval scheme, due to the demolition of all other buildings the overall built form on the site will be reduced by approximately 20%.

Figure 4.2 – Proposed dwelling



- 4.5 To address comments made at the pre-application stage, the dwelling has been sited away from the shared eastern boundary but still outside of tree root protection areas. The roof also now features bonnet hip tiles, valley tiles and exposed rafter feet and a steepened slope with a 42 degree pitch.
- 4.6 The existing access into the site will be retained. Parking for residents and visitors will be provided on the existing area of hardstanding at the front of the property and within a car port. A secure cycle store and bin store is sited behind the car port with space by the access gates for bins on collection day.
- 4.7 The existing hardstanding will be retained to ensure the rooting area of an existing oak tree remains undisturbed.
- 4.8 The orientation of the proposed dwelling and the integration of energy-efficient design features will optimise solar gain and natural ventilation, with bedrooms being mainly north-facing and the main living space being east, west and north facing. Sustainable construction methods and materials will be employed, contributing to improved energy performance over the approved conversion scheme.
- 4.9 Energy will be supplied to the dwelling via either a ground or air source heat pump.
- 4.10 The proposal requires the removal of two trees, namely the tree identified on the submitted

tree survey as T6 which is a fruit tree showing significant signs of decay. Also, T13 which is a Common Ash and lies outside of the application site, but was surveyed as part of the application's tree survey. It was assessed as having a structure at risk of failure and has now been removed due to safety concerns. The fruit tree will be replaced within the garden area for the new dwelling. The applicant would also be agreeable to planting two trees within the garden area of Little Millfields, which lies outside of the application boundary, alongside its boundary with Rowhook Road to compensate for the loss of the Ash tree.

- 4.11 Ecological enhancements are also proposed and include the planting of new native hedgerows using species such as blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) to support local invertebrate communities and provide increased foraging and commuting opportunities for birds and bats. These hedgerows will also improve habitat connectivity, reinforce green corridors, and contribute to the structural diversity of the site.
- 4.12 Rubble and debris will be repurposed on site to create habitat piles and refugia for reptiles and small mammals. Bird and bat boxes will be installed on the new building and existing trees to enhance breeding and roosting opportunities.
- 4.13 The edges of the garden will be enhanced with a native wildflower mix.

5 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

5.1 Use

- 5.1.1 The proposed development seeks full planning permission for a new dwelling as a replacement to the existing buildings on the site. The use of the site will change from mainly agricultural to residential. The principle of residential use has already been established via Prior Approval ref. DC/25/0124 under Class Q of the GPDO.

5.2 Amount

- 5.2.1 The new dwelling will be single-storey with a gross internal area of 120 sqm, including three bedrooms, a kitchen/dining area/ living room, utility, and bathroom. Although the internal floorspace is larger than that in the approved Class Q scheme, the overall built footprint on site will reduce by approximately 20% through the demolition of all existing buildings.

5.3 Layout

- 5.3.1 The proposed dwelling is to be sited largely on the footprint of the two largest demolished buildings, utilising existing hardstanding areas. Private garden space will be located to the rear of the dwelling utilising a maintained area of grassland. Parking is provided at the front on retained hardstanding, and secure cycle storage and refuse areas are appropriately located to the side.
- 5.3.2 The layout has been designed to maximise privacy, usability, and accessibility.

5.4 Scale

- 5.4.1 The dwelling is single-storey, modest in scale, and in keeping with the rural character of the area. Its proportions and height are designed to minimise visual impact and to avoid rivalling the neighbouring listed building and associated structures.

5.5 Appearance

- 5.5.1 The design draws from the rural vernacular and uses traditional materials such as brick and clay roof tiles.

5.6 Landscaping

- 5.6.1 The development retains all existing healthy trees and introduces additional native planting to deliver ecological enhancements.

5.7 Site Access

- 5.7.1 The site is accessed from Rowhook Road via an established access road. The access has functioned without incident for at least 25 years with no reported incidents on the crashmap website.

5.8 Parking

- 5.8.1 The development will provide on-site parking in line with the West Sussex Residential Parking Demand Calculator. Sufficient space for at least 4 residents and visitors is available on the existing hardstanding at the front of the dwelling.

5.9 Inclusive Access

- 5.9.1 The dwelling has been designed with full ground-floor accommodation and level access throughout, ensuring accessibility for occupants with reduced mobility. Door widths, circulation spaces, and room layout support inclusive design principles.

5.10 Public Transport and Services

- 5.10.1 While in a rural location, the site is approximately 3.5 miles from the edge of Rudgwick and Broadbridge Heath where services and schools are available. The nearest train stations are at Warnham and Horsham approximately 5 miles away.

6 APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues in the consideration of the proposals are considered to be as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Heritage Impact and Listed Building Setting
- Design and Scale
- Layout and Residential Amenity
- Ecology and Biodiversity Enhancement
- Trees
- Sustainability

6.2 These are discussed below.

Principle of Development

6.3 The principle of one dwelling on the site has been established through the Prior Approval (ref. DC/24/0304). The fallback position is therefore a material consideration of significant weight, confirming the site's suitability for residential use.

6.4 Whilst the site is located outside of any defined built-up area boundary in an area that the spatial strategy seeks to restrict development, it is the case that the strategy is now out of date given the Council's five year housing land supply position. It is understood this now stands at 1.7 years which equates to a significant shortfall. The local plan is also more than 5 years old. As a result, policies relevant to the determination of the proposals are out of date because they are based upon assessments of housing need that are now not compliant with the NPPF. The proposals therefore fall to be considered against the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

6.5 The site is not situated within a protected area such as a National Landscape, the Green Belt, SSSI or National Park. Subject to satisfactorily addressing water neutrality, there is no conflict with paragraph 11d of the NPPF.

6.6 The proposal would deliver a single storey family-sized home, which are not typically built as part of new housing developments. Policy 16 of the HDPF does require that new developments offer a variety of housing sizes, types, and tenures to meet the district's needs, as identified in

the most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The proposal will contribute to the District's housing offering providing greater choice and diversity in the types of homes available.

- 6.7 The NPPF advises that planning authorities should support opportunities for sustainable development in rural areas and that proposals should be approved unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The site is not isolated in the context of paragraph 84 of the NPPF given its proximity to existing dwellings and road infrastructure.
- 6.8 The scheme would also accord with the three strands of sustainable development. It would be socially sustainable, providing a modest sized house in a district which has an unfulfilled need and a significant housing land supply shortfall of less than one year.
- 6.9 It would also be environmentally sustainable, avoiding land of the highest amenity and landscape value. It would also deliver significant biodiversity enhancement.
- 6.10 It would also be economically sustainable, providing construction and operational jobs. It will also help to support existing businesses to a small degree through increased spending.
- 6.11 In relation to the site's location, the NPPF acknowledges that rural locations will not have the same level of accessibility to services as urban locations. However, it does not preclude new housing in rural areas. The site does also benefit from consent for one dwelling.
- 6.12 The proposed dwelling allows for an improved scheme and quality of accommodation, whilst still providing a single storey dwelling suitable for occupation by all. A new-build dwelling would also allow for better energy-efficiency with energy saving measures integrated into the design and construction materials.
- 6.13 Given the rural location and policy support for sustainable rural housing (HDPF Policies 1, 2, 15, and 26), the proposal is considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with other policy criteria, including design, environmental protection, and sustainability.

Heritage

- 6.14 Little Millfields, located immediately east of the application site, is a Grade II listed building. A Heritage Statement prepared by Gingerbread Heritage accompanies the application and assesses the significance of the asset and the contribution made by its setting. The assessment concludes that the significance of the listed building derives principally from its architectural and historic interest as a sixteenth-century timber-framed vernacular dwelling together with its rural setting.

- 6.15 The Heritage Statement confirms that the existing buildings on the application site are modern stable buildings and ancillary structures of no architectural or historic significance. Furthermore, they make little contribution to the significance or appreciation of the listed building.
- 6.16 The current proposal has been informed by both previous Conservation Officer comments and subsequent pre-application advice. The dwelling has been redesigned to reflect a traditional rural form and vernacular detailing, including the use of brickwork, clay roof tiles, bonnet hip tiles, valley tiles and exposed rafter feet. The building has also been repositioned further away from the shared eastern boundary with Little Millfields to increase separation and reduce its visual presence within the setting of the listed building.
- 6.17 The Heritage Statement concludes that the proposed dwelling has been carefully designed to remain subservient to the listed building in terms of its height, scale, bulk, massing and appearance. The development would acknowledge and respect the rural character of the area and would not compete with or detract from the significance of Little Millfields. Additional native hedgerow planting would further reinforce the visual separation between the two sites.
- 6.18 The Heritage Statement concludes that the proposal would preserve the significance of the Grade II listed building and would result in no harm to its significance or setting. The proposal therefore accords with Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Chapter 16 of the NPPF, and Policies 2, 32 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

Design and Scale

- 6.19 The design has evolved directly in response to feedback from the Conservation Officer and pre-application discussions. The dwelling adopts a traditional rural form with a steeper roof pitch, brick elevations, clay roof tiles and traditional detailing including bonnet hips, valley tiles and exposed rafter feet
- 6.20 The site layout makes efficient use of the existing developed area, avoiding sprawl or the unjustified extension of residential curtilage into the countryside.
- 6.21 Private amenity space is well-proportioned and logically arranged mainly to the rear of the property. Adequate separation is maintained from neighbouring land uses, and boundary treatments can be enhanced through new planting. Car parking and refuse storage are discreetly located, and the existing access remains unchanged, ensuring minimal disruption to the site and surroundings.
- 6.22 The layout supports inclusive design, with step-free access and single-storey accommodation

that is suitable for all ages and abilities. The proposals therefore align with the principles of HDPF Policy 33 and the objectives of the NPPF in delivering accessible and well-designed places.

Layout and Residential Amenity

- 6.23 The proposed layout has been carefully designed to make efficient use of the existing developed area of the site whilst avoiding any unnecessary encroachment into the surrounding countryside. The dwelling is positioned broadly on the footprint of the existing stable buildings and utilises existing areas of hardstanding for access and parking, thereby minimising the extent of new development within the site.

- 6.24 The layout has evolved following pre-application discussions with the Local Planning Authority and has been amended to increase the separation between the proposed dwelling and Little Millfields. This approach reduces the visual relationship between the two buildings, preserves the setting of the listed building and provides a more spacious arrangement within the site. The orientation and positioning of the dwelling ensure that it remains subordinate within its surroundings and respects the established pattern of development.

- 6.25 The proposal provides a generous area of private amenity space to the rear of the dwelling which is commensurate with the size of the property and capable of meeting the day-to-day recreational needs of future occupiers. The garden area will also incorporate additional planting and ecological enhancements, contributing positively to the character and appearance of the site.

- 6.26 Owing to the single-storey form of the dwelling, the separation distances achieved and the existing boundary treatments, the proposal would not result in any unacceptable overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impact or loss of outlook for neighbouring occupiers. Equally, future residents of the proposed dwelling would benefit from a high standard of residential amenity through appropriately sized internal accommodation, good levels of natural light and access to private outdoor space.

- 6.27 Vehicle parking, cycle storage and refuse facilities are all accommodated within the site in convenient and accessible locations. The existing access arrangements are retained and no changes are proposed that would adversely affect highway safety or the operation of the local road network.

- 6.28 In comparison to the extant Class Q approval, the proposed dwelling would provide a significantly enhanced standard of accommodation through improved internal layout, larger and more usable living spaces, greater access to natural light, improved energy efficiency and a stronger relationship with private garden areas. The proposal therefore represents a qualitative improvement over the approved fallback scheme whilst maintaining a single dwelling on the site.
- 6.29 The dwelling has also been designed to provide inclusive and adaptable accommodation, with all principal rooms located at ground floor level and step-free access throughout. The proposal therefore accords with the objectives of HDPF Policy 33 and the design aspirations of the NPPF by delivering a well-planned, accessible and attractive place to live.

Ecology and Biodiversity Enhancement

- 6.30 The application site comprises land occupied by buildings, structures and areas of hardstanding. A Preliminary Ecological Assessment accompanies the application and confirms that the site has limited ecological value, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures.
- 6.31 Unlike the previously submitted scheme, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is no longer applicable to this proposal because it falls within the statutory small sites exemption. As such, there is no requirement to demonstrate a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 6.32 Notwithstanding the exemption, the proposal incorporates a range of ecological enhancements consistent with the requirements of the NPPF and Policies 25, 31 and 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework. These measures include:
- New native hedgerow planting using species including hawthorn and blackthorn;
 - Wildflower planting around the site boundaries;
 - Habitat piles and refugia formed from retained rubble and timber;
 - Bird nesting features;
 - Bat roosting features;
 - Improved habitat connectivity and foraging opportunities for wildlife.

- 6.33 These measures will enhance habitat diversity, strengthen ecological connectivity and provide tangible biodiversity benefits over the existing condition of the site. The proposal therefore delivers meaningful ecological enhancement despite the exemption from mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

Trees

- 6.34 The proposal requires the removal of one declining fruit tree (T6) which is exhibiting significant signs of decay. A second tree (T13), located outside the application site, has already been removed on safety grounds due to structural failure concerns. Replacement tree planting is proposed, resulting in no overall adverse arboricultural impact.

7 SUMMARY

- 7.1 This application seeks full planning permission for the demolition of the existing stable buildings and associated structures and the erection of a single-storey three-bedroom dwelling with associated parking, landscaping and ecological enhancements.
- 7.2 The proposal is submitted as an alternative to the extant Prior Approval permission (ref. DC/25/0124) which establishes the principle of residential development on the site. The fallback position is therefore a material consideration.
- 7.3 The scheme has evolved through engagement with Horsham District Council, including pre-application discussions, and has been specifically revised to address previous concerns relating to design, heritage impact and layout. The proposed dwelling adopts a traditional rural appearance, incorporates high quality materials and detailing, and has been positioned to respect the setting of the neighbouring Grade II listed Little Millfields.
- 7.4 The development would provide a well-designed and accessible single-storey dwelling that responds to identified housing needs, particularly for accommodation capable of meeting the needs of older occupants and those with reduced mobility. The proposal would also deliver a more energy-efficient form of development than the approved conversion scheme.
- 7.5 The proposal retains the site's established access arrangements, safeguards important landscape features, and includes replacement tree planting together with a package of ecological enhancements. Although Biodiversity Net Gain is not applicable due to the site's qualification for the small sites exemption, the development will nevertheless deliver measurable biodiversity improvements through native planting, habitat creation and the provision of bird and bat features.
- 7.6 Having regard to the development plan, the National Planning Policy Framework, the extant fallback position and all other material considerations, the proposal represents a sustainable form of development that will deliver social, economic and environmental benefits. There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh those benefits.

Appendix A Pre-Application Advice



Ms Clare Bartlett
Batcheller Monkhouse
57 Lower Street
Pulborough
West Sussex
RH20 2AZ

Our ref: PE/26/0091
Your ref:
Officer: Hannah Darley
Email: Hannah.Darley@horsham.gov.uk
Tel: 01403 215538
Date: 4th June 2026

Dear Ms Bartlett

Location: Land To The West of Little Millfields Rowhook Road Rowhook Horsham

Details: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a dwelling (as an alternative to Prior Approval Ref. DC/25/0124)

Thank you for your enquiry regarding the above and my apologies for the delay in replying. I can advise as follows: -

The site itself comprises relatively modest stables of approximately 150sqm sited in a cluster. Some of the buildings are in a poor state of repair. The current application site via a private access that connects to the east of Rowhook Road. The character of the area is rural and there is a Grade II listed property to the east known as Little Millfields. There appears to be a field to the rear that adjoins Little Millfields.

The scheme would require planning permission, and any application would be assessed against relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework ('the HDPF') and these are set out in the following sections.

The pre-application site lies within a rural countryside location where new housing would not generally be supported by Policies 1, 2, 3 or 26 of the HDPF. In this instance it is though noted that application ref: DC/25/0124 granted prior approval for conversion of the stable building to a dwellinghouse. This prior approval remains extant and capable of being implemented.

It is advised that the presence of this prior approval would outweigh the conflict with policies within the HDPF, such that an alternative scheme to provide a dwelling on the site would be acceptable in principle.

A preceding planning application for the erection of a new dwelling on the site was submitted under ref: DC/25/1360. This application was though withdrawn, primarily due to concerns in respect of design and the impact on neighbouring heritage assets. This response therefore focuses on this issue.

Policies 25, 32, and 33 of the HDPF promote development that protects, conserves and enhances the landscape and townscape character from inappropriate development. Proposals should take into account townscape characteristics, with development seeking to provide an attractive, functional and accessible environment that complements the locally distinctive character of the

district. Buildings should contribute to a sense of place, and should be of a scale, massing, and appearance that is of a high standard or design and layout which relates sympathetically to the landscape and built surroundings.

Policy 34 of the HDPF recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and as such the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets.

The existing buildings on the site are of no particular merit and there is no objection to their removal. The replacement dwelling would have a more substantial footprint and prominence than the buildings it would replace. It is though considered that subject to an appropriate design this would not be objectionable to in principle.

The redesigned replacement dwelling better reflects a traditional rural building, although it would be recommended that a steeper roof pitch be included of at least 42 degrees. While this would push the ridge higher this will not be unexpected in this context. There would be an expectation that the building would have traditional roof junction detailing including exposed rafter feet, bonnet hip tiles, valley tiles and cut verges. It would also be recommended that the building be sited away from the shared eastern (side) boundary of the site, for both practical reasons and to create further separation around the listed building.

The enlarged curtilage for the proposed dwelling (relative to the fallback prior approval) appears to be land currently associated with Little Millfields. It would be useful for this to be clarified as part of any submission to avoid any encroachment beyond existing residential curtilages as a result of the proposal.

As part of a planning application it would be beneficial to include sections / elevations showing the proposed height, ridge and massing of the proposed dwelling in relation to surrounding built form. In addition, any resubmission should also seek include an updated landscaping scheme, making provision for compensatory tree planting where necessary, and an Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Conclusion and Next Steps

It is advised that the principle of demolishing the existing building and erecting a new dwelling would be acceptable. It is though recommended that further design work take place in respect of the comments within this response. If the suggested amendments are possible it would be recommended that an application be submitted to allow for public consultation and further consideration. If any issues arose as part of the application process, it would be possible to discuss prior to any decision being finalised.

I hope this is of some assistance. The above comments are given as the opinion of the Case Officer and do not prejudice any outcome of a subsequent application. Should you submit a formal planning application, please quote reference number PE/26/0091 in your submission.

Yours sincerely

Hannah Darley
Senior Planning Officer