



APPLICATIONS & APPEALS SERVICES

**ALDERS, HORSHAM ROAD, STEYNING, BN44
3AA**

**SUPPORTING PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT**

NOVEMBER 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Retrospective planning permission is sought for the conversion of 2no. outbuildings to be used as self-contained holiday lets at Alders, Horsham Road, Steyning, BN44 3AA.

1.2 The details of the proposal will be described and appraised having regard to the following aspects:

- **Physical Context** – explains the physical context of the site and its surroundings;
- **Planning Context** – the planning history of the site and broad policy requirements;
- **Use** – the purpose of the proposals;
- **Amount** – the extent of development on the site;
- **Scale** – the physical size of the development;
- **Layout** – the relationship of the proposals to neighbouring properties;
- **Appearance** – details of materials, style and impact upon the visual amenities of the area;
- **Landscape** – impact of the proposal on the existing landscape;

- **Access** – access to the development and parking provision.

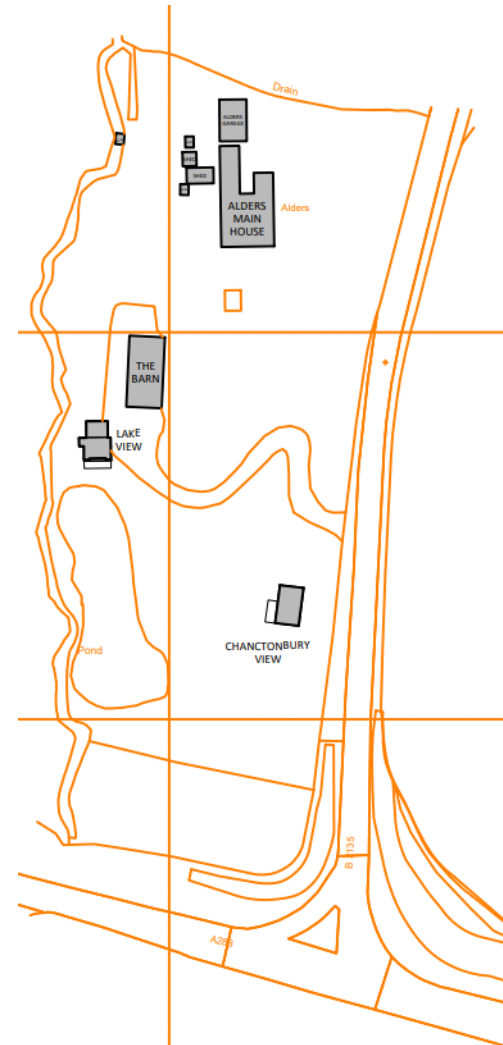
1.3 The Council is requested to consider this Statement alongside the submitted plans and this demonstration that the proposed development accords with the relevant planning policies and is acceptable in all respects. It is hoped that the Council will support the proposal and grant retrospective planning permission.

2. PHYSICAL CONTEXT & PLANNING HISTORY

Physical Context

- 2.1 The application site comprises the holiday lets known as Lake View and Chactonbury View, the accommodation units are located to the south of the main residential dwelling of Alders. There is also an existing barn on the site which is not subject to this planning application, the barn is now used as a commercial dance studio as approved under application DC/20/2131.
- 2.2 Access to the site is provided off Horsham Road to the east, once within the site the driveway has two arms, one provides access to the holiday lets and one to Alders main house.

Figure 2.1: Site Location Plan



Source: Jaye Ford Architects (2025)

- 2.3 The site is located on the west side of Horsham Road, approximately 1.5km to the northeast of the town of Steyning. Steyning contains a range of amenities to meet the everyday needs of residents including supermarkets, education and childcare facilities, employment facilities and eating and drinking establishments.
- 2.4 The application site is outside of the built-up area boundary and is therefore considered to be within the countryside for policy assessment.
- 2.5 The site is not subject to any environmental designations for its landscape or ecological value. There are some existing trees on the site, none of which would be impacted as part of the proposal. It is wholly located in Flood Zone 1.

Planning History

- 2.6 From a review of the Horsham Council planning register the following applications are of relevance to the site.
- **DC/20/2131** - Change of use of a redundant agricultural building to a dance studio (Class Sui Generis). Application permitted on 18.02.2021

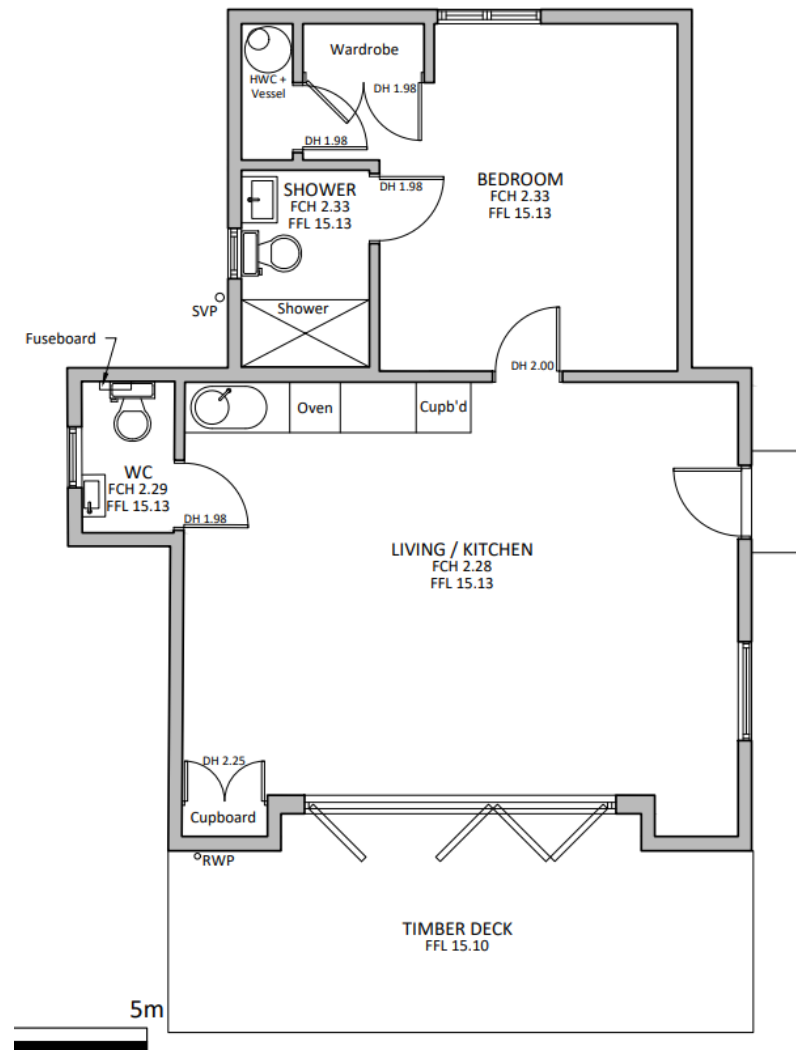
- **DC/16/2774** - Proposed erection of detached triple garage. Application permitted on 02.03.2017
- **DC/13/0201** - Ground and first floor extension to existing single storey house. Application Permitted on 22.03.2013
- **DC/12/2193** - Ground and 1st floor extension to existing single storey house. Application Permitted on 31.01.2013
- **DC/11/1482** - Occupation of Alders in non-compliance with Condition 2 of planning permission ST/37/94 (agricultural occupancy condition) (Certificate of Lawful Development - Existing) Application Permitted on 05.08.2011
- **DC/11/0044** - Proposed new vehicular access. Application Refused on 02.03.2011
- **DC/10/2261** - Proposed new vehicular access. Withdrawn Application on 16.12.2010

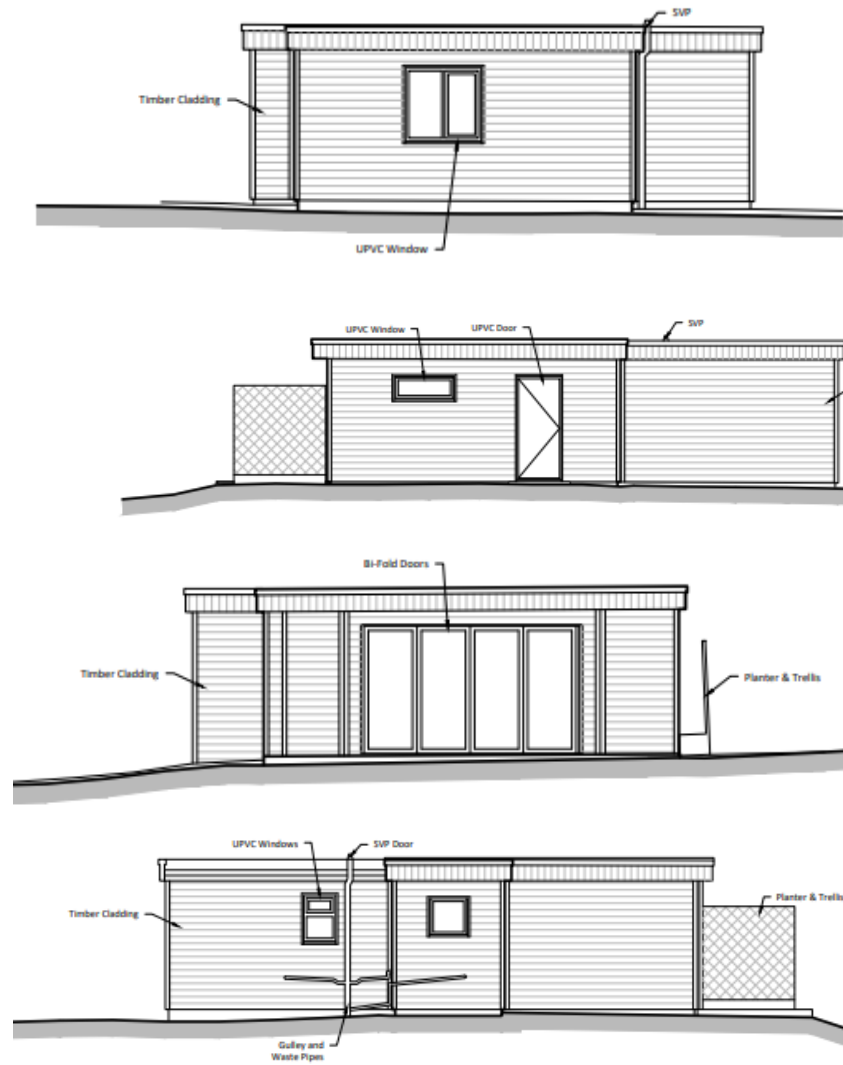
3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is for retrospective planning permission to convert the existing outbuildings into 2no. x 1no. bedroom self-contained holiday lets. The holiday lets also benefit from a kitchen/ living/ dining room and a bathroom along with an outside decking area. The Site Block Plans and elevations are provided in Figure 3.1 below and photographs of the existing buildings as converted are provided at Figure 3.2.

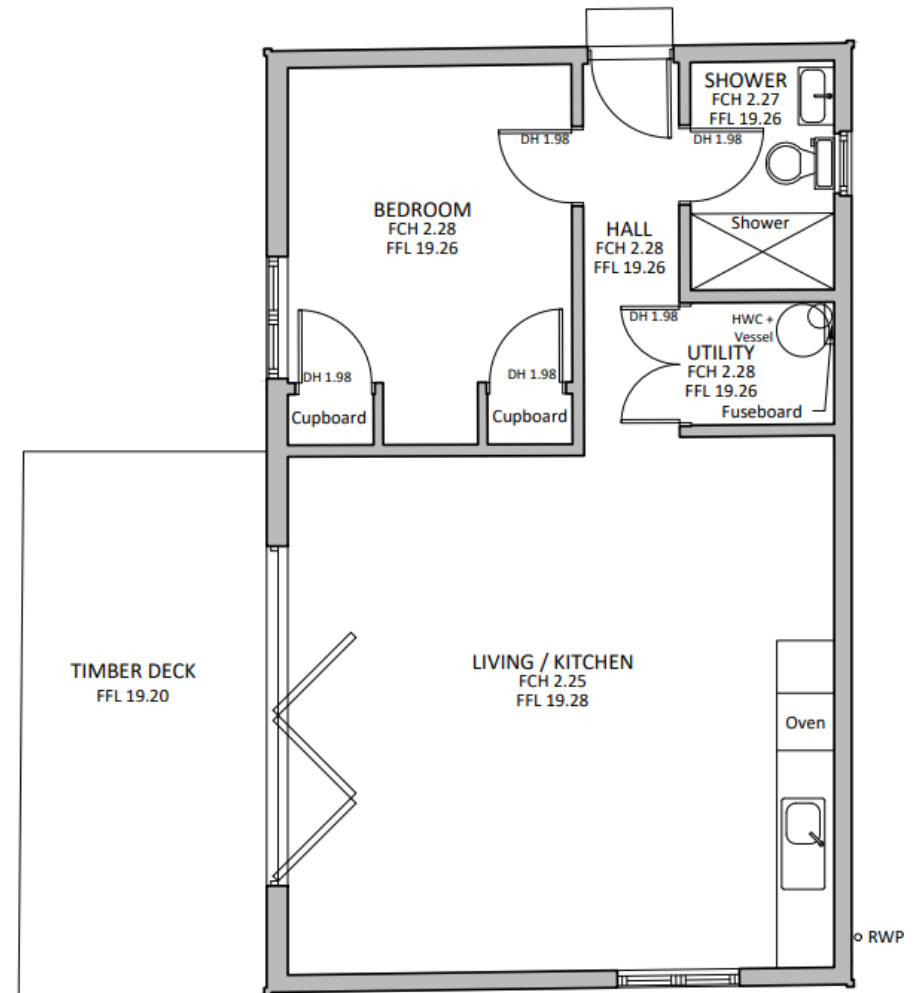
Figure 3.1: Site Block Plans

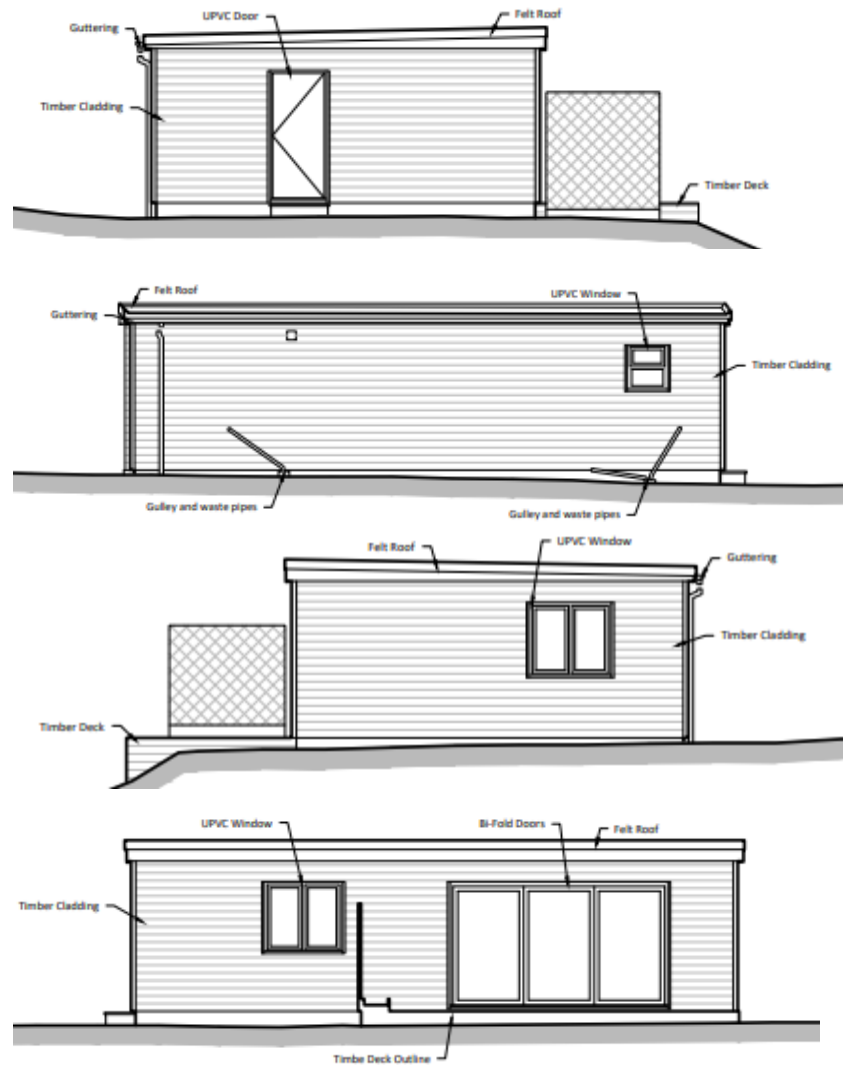
Lake View





Chanctonbury View





Source: Jaye Ford Architects (2025)

- 3.2 The accommodation has been converted to a high standard using black and grey weatherboarding with feature windows and bi-fold doors, these materials ensure the buildings reflect the local vernacular.
- 3.3 The existing access would be retained, off the driveway which leads to the main Alders House. A parking area for 2no. cars has been provided adjacent to each building.

Figure 3.2: Existing Site Photographs



Lake View



Chanctonbury View



Lake View in Foreground and Chanctonbury View in Background



Interior of Chanctonbury View

Source: NJA Town Planning Ltd (2025)

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

Sustainable Development

- 4.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and Wales and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans for housing and other development. The NPPF should be read as a whole.
- 4.2 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF sets out that ***'Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements'***.

- 4.3 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has the following three overarching objectives which are independent but need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- a) ***'an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;***
- b) ***a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect*** current and future needs and

support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

- c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy'.*

4.4 Paragraph 10 states ***'So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11).*** For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

4.5 Paragraph 12 of the Framework states that ***'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a***

planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed'.

Plan and Decision Making

4.6 Paragraph 34 requires local plans and spatial development strategies to be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. In particular, 'Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the future'.

4.7 In terms of decision-making, the Framework states at paragraph 39 that ***'Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a***

positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.

Rural Businesses

- 4.8 Paragraph 85 requires planning policies and decisions to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. In respect of rural areas, paragraph 88 supports ***'the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings'***. It also supports ***'sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside'***.

- 4.9 Paragraph 89 recognises that ***'sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycle or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist'***.

Highways and Car Parking

- 4.10 Paragraph 109 requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This is to ensure that (inter alia) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.

4.11 Paragraph 112 states that if setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account the accessibility of the development, its type, mix and use, the availability of land and opportunities for public transport, local car ownership levels and the need to ensure that adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

4.12 Paragraph 116 makes it clear that ***'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe'***.

Effective Use of Land

4.13 Paragraph 124 requires planning policies and decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring healthy living conditions.

4.14 Paragraph 125 states that planning policies and decision should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land. Furthermore, paragraph 128 sets out that local planning

authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans where this would help to meet identified needs.

4.15 Paragraph 129 states that ***'Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.....'***

Design

4.16 In terms of design, Section 12 seeks to achieve well designed places sets out that the ***'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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'*** (Paragraph 131).

4.17 Paragraph 135 further states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and

effective landscaping. Development should also be sympathetic to local character and history and should be designed with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 4.18 Paragraph 139 states that ***‘Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:***

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes: and/or***
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so***

long as they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings’.

Climate Change

- 4.19 Paragraph 161 requires the planning system to support the transit to a low carbon future and to taking into account flood risk. New development should be planned in ways which avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change (paragraph 164).

Countryside

- 4.20 Paragraph 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment by: (inter alia) ***‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside....’.***
- 4.21 Paragraph 189 sets out that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within

their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Biodiversity

- 4.22 Paragraph 192 requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity. Paragraph 193 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should avoid significant harm to biodiversity which should be adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. Development should not result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Ground Conditions and Pollution

- 4.23 Paragraph 196 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner (paragraph 197).

- 4.24 Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment (paragraph 198).

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 4.25 Local planning policy is set out in the Local Plan, the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) adopted was in 2015. The following policies of the HDPF are most relevant to the proposal:

- Policy 1: Sustainable Development
- Policy 2: Strategic Development
- Policy 3: Development Hierarchy
- Policy 4: Settlement Expansion
- Policy 7: Strategic Policy: Economic Growth
- Policy 10: Rural Economic Development
- Policy 11: Tourism and Cultural Facilities
- Policy 24: Environmental Protection
- Policy 25: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 26: Countryside Protection

- Policy 28: Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
- Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
- Policy 32: The Quality of New Development
- Policy 33: Development Principles
- Policy 35: Climate Change
- Policy 36: Appropriate Energy Use
- Policy 37: Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy 38: Strategic Policy: Flooding
- Policy 40: Sustainable Transport
- Policy 41: Parking

Steyping Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.26 The Steyping Neighbourhood Plan area covers the site. It was made in September 2022 to influence and guide development within the Parish over the plan period up to 2031. Policy SNDP2 'Responsible Environmental Design' of this Plan is relevant to the proposal and discussed further below.

5. DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL: USE, AMOUNT & SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT

The Principle of Development

- 5.1 NPPF paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental (NPPF paragraph 8).
- 5.2 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states ***‘So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11)***. Importantly, paragraph 38 of the NPPF states ***‘Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible’***.
- 5.3 HDPF Policy 1 states that when considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development

contained within the NPPF. Therefore, planning applications that accord with the policies of the HDPF will be approved without delay (unless material considerations indicate otherwise).

- 5.4 HDPF Policy 26 states that within the countryside development must be essential to its countryside location and must meet certain criteria. In addition, proposals should be of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location. The policy also notes that development will be considered acceptable where it does not lead, either individually or cumulatively, to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside, and protects, and/or conserves, and / or enhances, the key features and characteristics of the landscape character area in which it is located.
- 5.5 The proposed use of two, self-contained holiday lets will help to enable the sustainable economic development of the rural area in accordance with policy 26. They are of a minor scale and did not lead to any increase in the level of activity in the countryside given the wider site and buildings in the surrounding area are also in use for residential purposes and a commercial dance studio.

5.6 Furthermore, the proposal related to previously developed land due to being existing outbuildings. The existing structures were simply updated to create holiday lets which are of a high-quality design and appearance. As such, it resulted in a positive impact upon the visual amenities of the countryside landscape.

5.7 The proposal complies with HDPF 26 and the NPPF and the principle of development is acceptable given it is compatible with its countryside location and the positive impact of the proposal on the character of the landscape.

Use of Buildings As Holiday Lets

5.8 The NPPF at paragraph 85 requires planning policies and decisions to help create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. In respect of rural areas, paragraph 88 supports ***‘the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings’***. It also supports ***‘sustainable rural tourism and leisure***

developments which respect the character of the countryside’.

5.9 Similarly, HDPF policy 10 supports sustainable rural economic development within the District to help generate local employment opportunities and economic, social and environmental benefits for local communities. In the countryside, policy 10 supports development which maintains the quality and character of the area whilst sustaining its varied and productive social and economic activity. Any development should be appropriate to the countryside location and should (inter alia) contribute to the wider rural economy and/or promote recreation in and the enjoyment of the countryside. Development should wherever possible be contained within existing buildings suitable for conversion although new buildings or development may also be acceptable.

5.10 HDPF policy 11 supports tourism and the enhancement of local cultural facilities. The policy requires any development to be of a scale and type appropriate to the location and should increase the range, or improve the quality of

accommodation, attraction or experiences for tourists, day visitors, business visitors and residents in the District.

- 5.11 The existing holiday lets are incidental to the site and their location lends itself well to accommodating small-scale holiday lets which positively contributes to sustaining the local rural economy, including tourism.
- 5.12 The holiday let uses are small in scale and resulted in the same footprint of built development on the site compared to their previous use as outbuildings. The use does not result in any harmful intensification of activity within the countryside.
- 5.13 The site is well connected to the main road network, Washington Road to the south of the site connects to Steyning to the south and Storrington to the east (both of which are within close proximity to the site). Additionally, Horsham Road connects to the A272 to the north, which links directly to the A24. These major routes provide links north and south to London, the south coast, Gatwick airport and beyond. The site is also well placed in respect of the South Downs National Park (the boundary of which is located less than 150 meters away to the south of Washington Road) and a number of

surrounding towns and villages such as Worthing (5 miles), Storrington (5 miles) and Partridge Green (4 miles).

- 5.14 The site is close to the rural public right of way network locally including the Downslink Cycle Route which runs through Steyning. There are several tourist attractions nearby including the Knepp Castle Estate, vineyards (Nyetimber and Kinsbrook as examples), the South Downs Way and the many villages and towns, walking routes and visitor attractions, restaurants, pubs, cafes, shops and other businesses within the National Park and surrounding areas. The site is therefore well located and in a suitable position to accommodate self-contained tourist accommodation.
- 5.15 It should be acknowledged that NPPF paragraph 85 recognises that ***'sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport'***. Given the small-scale nature of the holiday lets, this use of the buildings will not result in harmful unsustainable vehicle movements within the countryside.

5.16 The Horsham District Visitor Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2016), which is the most up to date document whilst writing, provides an assessment of the future potential for hotel and visitor accommodation across the District. It found that the District has a strong and growing market for hotel and visitor accommodation across the District based upon a number of issues including projected population growth. Within the rural areas of the District in particular, the study found opportunities for the upgrading and expansion of existing hotels and B&Bs and the provision of new high quality holiday cottages.

5.17 Paragraph 3.6.1 states that ***‘Our survey of holiday cottage letting agencies that are represented in Horsham District showed strong demand for all sizes and standards of self-catering property in all parts of the District. Existing agency-let self-catering properties are consistently full with full week lets during school holiday periods, May, June and September and the Christmas and New Year period. At all other times of the year there is strong demand for weekend breaks, other than during January and February when weekend demand is weaker and more variable’.***

5.18 In addition, paragraph 3.6.3 states that all of the letting agencies spoken to are looking for additional properties in and around the Horsham District and in the South Downs National Park. There is clearly a high demand for the type of holiday accommodation that can be offered at Alders with the buildings providing high quality self-catering facilities in an attractive and accessible location. Visitors will contribute to and help sustain the local economy and in particular other businesses such as local restaurants, pubs and visitor attractions. Overall, the use of the buildings as holiday lets is fully supported by the NPPF and HDPF policies 7, 10 and 11.

Case Studies

5.19 The following are examples of where the Council has granted planning permission for similar self-catering holiday let accommodation within the countryside:

DC/20/1282 - West Wantley, Fryern Road, Storrington, Pulborough (Appendix NJA/1)

5.20 This planning application was approved in September 2020 for the demolition of existing dairy and stables and rebuilding as a single storey building to provide 1No. 3 bed holiday let

unit of accommodation. There was no Officers Report uploaded for this application, however, the Decision Notice confirmed the principle of development was acceptable.

DC/14/2390 - Former Outbuildings at 1 Stammerham Cottages, Capel Road, Rusper (Appendix NJA/2)

- 5.21 This application was approved in January 2015 for the demolition of an existing farm cottage/outbuilding and erection of a log cabin for holiday let, the Officer's Report states "**As the site is located outside of the planning boundary, a new dwelling would not normally be acceptable in this location. However as the application is specifically for a holiday let, which would accord with both national and local policies that support tourism and rural diversification, an exception is considered to be acceptable in this case.**"

DC/14/1066 - Fantasy House, Elm Grove Lane, Steyning (Appendix NJA/3)

- 5.22 Planning permission was approved in August 2014 for the demolition of part of the existing building, construction of 1.5 storey replacement building for office use and convert part of

building to provide holiday let accommodation and associated internal works. The Officer's Report stated "**the applicant has also made a convincing case with evidence that there is a demand for holiday let's in the area and that the proposal would support/ promote the economic vitality and viability of the locality**".

- 5.23 The Council has also approved a range of applications for straight conversions of building into holiday lets in recent years, as set out below.

DC/23/1069 - Bentons Cottage, Bentons Lane, Dial Post (Appendix NJA/4)

- 5.24 Planning permission was approved in August 2023 for change of use of existing stable building into a holiday let. The Officer's Report stated "**The proposal would contribute to the wider rural economy and would improve the range and quality of facilities for visitors. While it is recognised that there would be some dependence on the car to access facilities and services, this would not be unusual for accommodation of this type, and is not considered to**

amount to a level or intensity of activity that would result in adverse harm to the countryside location”.

**DC/23/0984 - Walden Hall, Cowfold Road, West Grinstead
(Appendix NJA/5)**

- 5.25 This planning application was approved in February 2024 for the conversion of a stable building to form 4no. self-contained holiday lets. The Officers Report for this application states *“The Council aims to take a proactive stance to encourage local tourism within the District and the proposal would make a modest contribution toward the provision of visitor accommodation within the District. There is likely to be a demand for this type of accommodation in this location. The Council’s Visitor Study (2016) identified a strong demand for this type of accommodation with supply not able to meet demand during spring and summer weekends, albeit this document is now over 7 years old.”*

6. LAYOUT, DESIGN & APPEARANCE

Design

- 6.1 The NPPF sets out that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Developments should be visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character of the surrounding area and should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (paragraphs 131 and 135).
- 6.2 HDPF policy 32 requires high quality design for all development in the District. In addition, HDPF Policy 33 sets out the Council's key development control criteria and states that development should make efficient use of land, should not cause harm to neighbouring residential amenities, should be appropriate in scale, massing and appearance and be of a high standard of design. Development should also be locally distinctive in character and should use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping.
- 6.3 Local policy SNDP 2 'Responsible Environmental Design' sets out ***'As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals should be designed responsibly, and take account of their impact on the environment throughout their lifetime.'***
- 6.4 Policy 33 sets out ***"In order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment developments shall be required to:***
- 1. Make efficient use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist;***
- 6.5 The proposal makes efficient use of existing buildings that were previously used as outbuildings for Alders and are no longer required. The proposal complies with criterion 1.
- 2. Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development;***

6.6 The buildings are located away from neighbouring properties and there has been no adverse impact caused in respect of any loss of privacy, overbearing appearance or loss of light to Alders. The proposal complies with criterion 2.

3. *Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views;*

6.7 The appearance of the buildings has been significantly enhanced. The accommodation is of an appropriate scale and mass and would be viewed in context of the other built form within the curtilage of Alders. The buildings are not located within an isolated countryside position due to forming part of the wider site, as such, there is limited impact upon the rural character and appearance of the area. The proposal complies with criterion 3.

4. *Are locally distinctive in character, respect the character of the surrounding area (including its overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where available and applicable, take account of the recommendations/policies of the relevant Design Statements and Character Assessments;*

6.8 The buildings are of a design that is typical of the rural area. As set out, they are set within other built form and their use will not result in any harmful spread of development within the countryside. The proposal complies with criterion 4.

5. *Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; and includes the provision of street furniture and public art where appropriate*

6.9 A range of high-quality building materials were used to undertake the conversions. The sympathetic timber cladding respects its rural character and there is no conflict with criterion 5.

6. Presume in favour of the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development;

- 6.10 No trees, hedges, banks or watercourses are affected by the proposal. There is no conflict with criterion 6.

7. Ensure buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, unless this conflicts with the character of the surrounding townscape, landscape or topography where it is of good quality.

- 6.11 The holiday lets are sufficiently lit by natural light from appropriately positioned and sized windows and doors. The proposal complies with criterion 7.

Proposals will also need to take the following into account where relevant:

Incorporate where appropriate convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles and cycles, and the storage of bins/recycling facilities without dominating the development or its surroundings;

- 6.12 The accommodation uses the existing hardstanding to provide space for 2no. car parking spaces for each unit. There is also space for the suitable storage of bins/recycling facilities at the properties. The proposal complies with criterion 8.

9. Incorporate measures to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour on the site and in the surrounding area, and create visually attractive frontages where adjoining streets and public spaces, including appropriate windows and doors to assist in the informal surveillance of public amenity areas by occupants of the site;

6.13 The holiday lets provide an appropriate use within a safe and secure building. The close relationship of the accommodation to buildings on the wider site provides for natural surveillance within the curtilage. The proposal complies with criterion 9.

***10. Contribute to the removal of physical barriers;
and,***

***11. Make a clear distinction between the public
and private spaces within the site.***

6.14 The proposal raises no implications in respect of criteria 10 and 11. Overall it is demonstrated that the proposal complies in full with HDPF Policies 32, 33 and Neighbourhood Plan policy SNDP2.

Countryside

6.15 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia) ***‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside’***.

6.16 HDPF Policy 24 requires the high-quality environment of the District to be protected through the planning process. Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF promote development that is of a high-quality design, which is sympathetic to the character and distinctiveness of the site and surroundings. The landscape character of the area should be protected, conserved and enhanced, with proposals contributing to a sense of place through appropriate scale, massing and appearance.

6.17 The design, scale and massing of the holiday lets along with considered materials ensures that the general character and appearance of the countryside was not significantly altered as a result of the proposal. There is no greater visual impact within the landscape. The wider site is also screened by mature trees, hence there is no further landscaping required in order to protect the countryside.

6.18 In summary, the holiday lets resulted in a very minimal impact to the character and appearance of the area and the high-quality environment is fully protected. The proposal is therefore fully compliant with NPPF paragraphs 187 and HDPF policies 24, 25, 32 and 33.

Impact on Amenity

- 6.19 HDPF policy 32 states that development will be expected to provide an attractive, functional, accessible, safe, and adaptable environment that contributes to a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves. Policy 33 continues that development shall be required to ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
- 6.20 The design of the holiday lets are functional and meet all the required space standards. They do not generate any major noise, the buildings are located away from neighbouring residential dwellings and there is no adverse impact caused in respect of any loss of privacy, overbearing appearance or loss of light to neighbours.
- 6.21 Therefore, the holiday lets meet the needs of the occupiers and does not result in an unacceptable impact on nearby residential neighbours and the requirements of policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF would be fully met as part of the proposal.

7. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 The NPPF requires that local planning authorities should preserve and enhance biodiversity and that new development should adequately mitigate against any potential harm. The site is not located within any designated landscape, however HDPF Policy 25 protects the landscape and habitats of the district and is relevant to this proposal.
- 7.2 In having regard to the natural environment, no natural features such as trees, hedgerows or woodland that have public amenity value were adversely affected by the conversions.
- 7.3 It is not considered that the conversion raises any issues in respect of the biodiversity requirements of the NPPF and HDPF policy 31. Importantly there was no net loss in biodiversity value and thus no conflict with the relevant development plan policies or advice set out in the NPPF addressing biodiversity.

Sustainability

- 7.4 HDPF Policy 35 sets out that development will be supported where it makes a clear contribution to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change and to meet the District's carbon reduction targets. Development must be designed to mitigate the effects of climate change and to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- 7.5 The accommodation has been carefully and specifically designed to ensure that it is environmentally sustainable in its construction and future occupation. This ensures compliance with the NPPF and HDPF policies 35, 36 and 37 and the Council's target to become carbon neutral by 2030 (direct emissions) and by 2050 (indirect emissions).

8. ACCESS AND HIGHWAYS

- 8.1 The NPPF sets out at paragraph 116 that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 8.2 HDPF policies 40 and 41 seek to ensure that proposals incorporate safe and adequate means of access and that there is appropriate car parking provision.
- 8.3 The existing access off Horsham Road is utilised by the occupants of the holiday lets. This access route has not been subject to a significant increase in number of vehicle movements due to the existing dance studio and residential uses on the wider site that also use this access. There has also been no adverse effect upon the surrounding road network.

- 8.4 The existing hardstanding is used to provide 2no. car parking spaces at each of the holiday lets and there is sufficient manoeuvring space.
- 8.5 Additionally, visitors will benefit from a range of walking and cycling routes within the vicinity. This includes the rural public right of way network locally and the Downslink Cycle Route.
- 8.6 Overall, the access and car parking provision are adequate and the proposal complies with policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF and the NPPF.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Retrospective planning permission is sought for the conversion of 2no. outbuildings to be used as self-contained holiday lets at Alders, Horsham Road, Steyning.
- 9.2 The conversions are compliant with the aims of the NPPF and the HDPF to support sustainable rural economic development including tourism. The Horsham District Visitor Hotel and Visitor Accommodation Study (2016) found a strong and growing market for visitor accommodation across the District based upon a number of issues including the need for new high quality holiday cottages. The accommodation makes a small but important contribution to help fulfil this need, making efficient use of previously used buildings resulting in no harm to the countryside landscape.
- 9.3 The self-contained holiday lets are small in scale, as appropriate to the rural area and did not create any harmful intensification of use in accordance with HDPF policies 10, 11 and 26. The accommodation is similar to others permitted within the District as referred to within this Statement.

- 9.4 It has been demonstrated neighbouring amenity will be fully respected and there are no ecological concerns. Sufficient car parking and access is also provided.
- 9.5 Overall, the conversions comply with the relevant policies of the NPPF and the development plan (including the Neighbourhood Plan). Therefore, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development, retrospective planning permission should be granted.