

MME PLANNING SERVICES

Demolition of existing building and erection of 1no detached dwelling and associated works. (Application made in the alternative to Prior Approval ref: DC/25/0788).

at

The Dutch Barn, Brookside Farm, Dagbrook Lane,
Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SH

Planning Statement

Ref: P-038h

July 2026

Version 1



Figure 1: Site Location / Red Line Area

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are instructed to prepare and submit this full planning application for the demolition of the existing Dutch Barn building on site and the erection of 1no detached dwelling at Brookside Farm, Dagbrook Lane, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SH
- 1.2 The application is made in the alternative to application reference DC/25/0788 which granted Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) 2015 (as amended), for the change of use of the Dutch Barn building to form 1no dwelling.
- 1.3 This statement sets out the proposed scheme with regard to the following aspects: the planning history of the site, the development proposals, the relevant planning policy, the planning merits of the scheme and how the proposals comply with the Council's policies.

2. Site, Surroundings and Background

- 2.1 The application site forms part of Brookside Farm, which is an agricultural holding located along Dagbrook Lane, Henfield. The site is located within the countryside in policy terms, but no other statutory designations cover the site. The site is within a rural area characterised by farms, commercial uses and individually designed dwellings.
- 2.2 This application relates to a 'Dutch' barn style agricultural building located towards the westernmost extent of Dagbrook Lane. The building consists of a steel frame supporting two rounded corrugated metal roofs with a 'lean-to' element on the western side of the building. The barn is predominantly open-sided to the east and north, however it is noted that the 'lean-to' element is enclosed.
- 2.3 It is noted that planning permission was granted under planning reference DC/20/0799 to fully enclose the barn and these works have been commenced. The barn is acknowledged to have been used solely for agricultural purposes and was last in agricultural use. The site area measures approximately 775sqm.

3. Planning History

- Proposed works to fully enclose existing barn

Ref. No: DC/20/0799 | Status: Application Permitted, June 2020

- Prior notification for change of use of agricultural buildings to dwellinghouses (Class C3).

Ref. No: DC/20/1881 | Status: Permit Prior Approval, November 2020

- **Prior Notification for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to 1no. dwellinghouse.**

Ref. No: DC/25/0788 | Status: Permit Prior Approval, July 2025

- **Approval of details reserved by condition 1 to approved application DC/25/0788.**

Ref. No: DISC/25/0272 | Status: Application Permitted, October 2025

- **Application under Regulation 77 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 relating to Prior Approval consent DC/25/0788**

Ref. No: HRA/25/0018 | Status: Application Permitted, November 2025

- 3.1 As detailed above, prior approval has been granted under Schedule 2, Part 3, Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) 2015 (as amended) for the change of use of the existing building on site to form 1no dwelling, under reference DC/25/0788 in July 2025.
- 3.2 A subsequent HRA application in relation to water neutrality has been approved and the pre-commencement condition(s) attached to this prior approval permission have been discharged, allowing for commencement of the development, as set out above. As such, 1no dwelling can be created / provided in this location outside of the settlement boundary and this represents a viable and realistic fall-back position which has substantial weight in the planning balance.

4. Proposals

- 4.1 As detailed above, planning permission is sought for the erection of a 4-bed detached dwelling. The existing Dutch Barn building within the red line area would be removed to facilitate the proposed development.
- 4.2 The application is made in the alternative to application reference DC/25/0788 which granted Prior Approval for the change of use of the Dutch Barn to form 1no residential dwelling.
- 4.3 The proposed dwelling would have an overall width of approximately 15.2m, an overall depth of approximately 11m, and an overall height to the ridge measuring approximately 7.6m.



Figure 2: Proposed Site Plan

- 4.4 The proposed dwelling is designed to resemble a traditional barn-conversion style property, with a Sussex half-hipped roof design, which would be commensurate with the existing setting and the countryside location. The proposed dwelling would be positioned in the same location as the existing barn to be removed, albeit the proposal would have a smaller footprint. The proposals also include the creation of a curtilage to serve the dwelling within the existing yard area, thereby retaining the existing character and boundaries surrounding the site.
- 4.5 The proposals would consist of untreated oak weatherboarding and brick to the walls, a clay tiled roof and grey aluminium-framed windows, creating a rural appearance to the building with the use of natural materials. The proposed dwelling would have a mixture of features, including a rear gabled addition, a front projection and variations to the eaves heights. The proposed dwelling would have a GIA of approximately 245sqm, which is similar to that of the previous prior approval.



Figure 3: Proposed Elevations

- 4.6 The proposed design is considered to be in keeping with the setting and the overall scale would be comparable to the existing building to be removed and existing development within the immediate vicinity, and would be appropriate in terms of the size of the plot. The garden space to be provided would be commensurate with the size and scale of the proposal and neighbouring residential properties, with extensive planting proposed.

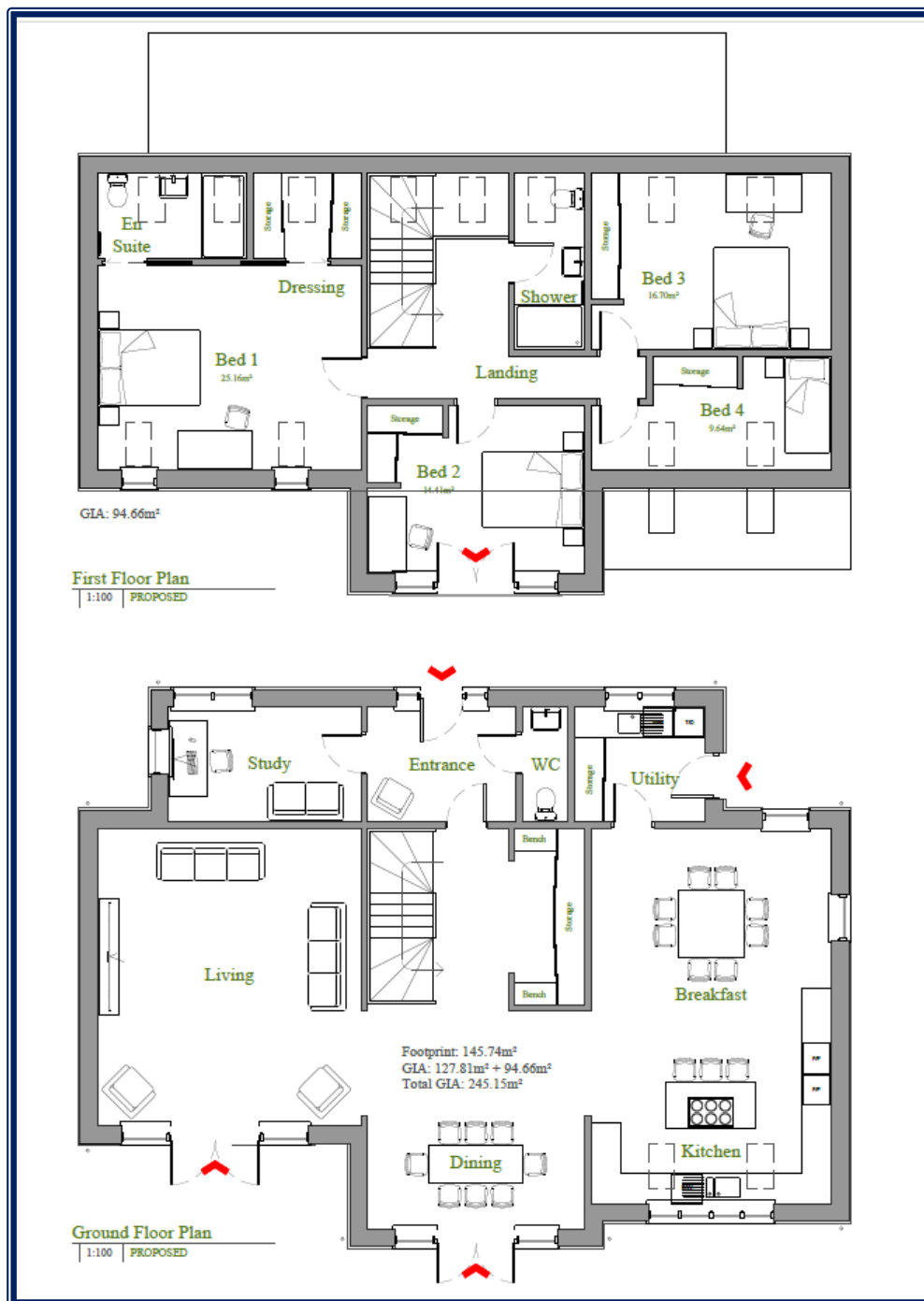


Figure 4: Proposed Floor Plan

- 4.7 The proposed development is considered to be appropriately separated from neighbouring properties to avoid any impact on amenity and would provide a good level of accommodation for future occupiers. Sufficient parking would also be provided, with the development served by an existing access from the public highway.

5. Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and National Guidance

- 5.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England 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.
- 5.2 Running throughout the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Sustainable development is achieved through three main objectives which are – economic, social and environmental.
- 5.3 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states that for decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. 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 policies of the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or, any adverse impact of doing so would 'significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits' when assessed against the policies of the NPPF when taken as a whole (NPPF paragraph 11 d).

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (2015)

- 5.4 Paragraph 34 of the NPPF requires that all development plans complete their reviews no later than 5 years from their adoption. Horsham District Council has submitted its new local plan for examination, however at this stage, the emerging policies carry limited weight in decision-making.

- 5.5 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) was published in February 2025 by the Council. The LDS sets out the production timetable for the New Local Plan anticipated to be adopted in April 2026. Notwithstanding the above, as the HDPF is now over 5 years old, the most important policies for determining this application are now considered to be 'out-of-date'. This position is further highlighted given that the Horsham District Local Plan examination hearing meetings scheduled for January 2025 were cancelled by the appointed Inspector, and in April 2025 advised that the Plan is withdrawn due to concerns about its legal compliance. Proceedings for the new Local Plan have now re-opened, however the new local plan carries limited weight in decision-making at this stage.
- 5.6 The Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites. The presumption in favour of development within Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF therefore applies in the consideration of all applications for housing development within the District, with Policies 2, 4, 15 and 26 now carrying limited weight in decision-making.
- 5.7 While considered to be out of date, the main HDPF policies relevant to this application are as follows:
- Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development
 - Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development
 - Policy 3 - Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy
 - Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion
 - Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision
 - Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs
 - Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
 - Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
 - Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
 - Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
 - Policy 33 - Development Principles
 - Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change
 - Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use
 - Policy 37 - Sustainable Construction
 - Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding
 - Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
 - Policy 41 – Parking

Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) (2021)

5.8 Neighbourhood Plan policies relevant to this application are as follows:

- Policy 1: A spatial plan for the parish
- Policy 4: Transport, Access & Car Parking
- Policy 10: Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity
- Policy 12: Design Standards for Development

Planning Advice Note(s) (PAN)

5.9 Relevant PAN's to this application are as follows:

- Shaping Development in Horsham District
- Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

6. Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

- 6.1 The HDPF spatial development strategy as contained within policies 2, 3 & 4 directs development to sites within built-up area boundaries, encourage the effective use of brownfield land, and aim to manage development around the edges of existing settlements in order to protect the rural character and landscape.
- 6.2 Residential development in this location would conflict with the requirements of Policies 2 and 4 (Settlement Expansion) of the HDPF, as well as Policy 1: A spatial plan for the parish of the HNP. The site is also not in an isolated location therefore the opportunities afforded by Paragraph 84 of the NPPF do not apply in this instance.
- 6.3 In addition to the above, Policy 1: A spatial plan for the parish of the HNP steers new housing development to within the defined settlements of the Parish.
- 6.4 Notwithstanding the above, the Council is currently unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, with the latest Authority Monitoring Report (December 2025) detailing a supply of only 1.7 years. Therefore, the tilted balance contained in Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged.

- 6.5 While the Council has submitted the New Horsham District Local Plan for examination, as detailed above, the situation with this remains uncertain. As such, the weight given to the above policies and the New Local Plan is therefore limited to none at this stage.
- 6.6 In addition to the above, and as set out at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2, the existing building on site benefits from Class Q Prior Approval permission under planning reference DC/25/0788, which established that 1no dwelling can be created in this location. This is a significant material consideration in the determination of this current planning application.
- 6.7 The Prior Approval permission has been shown to be water neutral and the pre-commencement condition(s) attached to application reference DC/25/0788 have been discharged, which allows the prior approval consent to be implemented. The presence of the Prior Approval to create 1no dwelling on the site, which could still be implemented, represents a viable and realistic fall-back position, were the current application to be refused. A refusal of the current application would not therefore prevent the introduction of a dwelling outside of the defined built-up area boundary.
- 6.8 The proposed development seeks to improve the quality of the development for future occupiers through an enhanced design and appearance when compared to the prior approval consent.
- 6.9 In addition, the proposal also seeks to improve the quality of the dwelling through the use of higher quality materials and design, which would consequently improve the internal living spaces and appearance of the resulting building. These elements would result in social benefits that would improve the environment and quality of accommodation for future occupiers, and this benefit is considered to be of weight in the assessment of the current application. It is also noted that the applicant has confirmed that they would implement the fall-back application should this application not be approved.
- 6.10 It is therefore considered that refusal of the application on the basis of the conflict with Policies 4 and 26 of the HDPF would not be warranted and would not prevent a dwelling(s) from being created on the site, given the fall-back position as set out above. On this basis, the principle of development is considered acceptable.

- 6.11 Lastly, it is noted that there are a number of recent decisions which have granted residential developments outside of the defined built-up areas. Examples include reference numbers DC/22/0495 and DC/22/2250 which each sought permission for 1no dwelling and were granted at appeal in August 2023 and March 2024 respectively, and DC/23/2278 which sought permission for 8no dwellings and was granted by the Council's planning committee in April 2024.
- 6.12 The Inspector within the appeal decision in relation to application reference DC/22/0495 states "I have attached limited weight to the conflict with HDPF Policy 26 in respect of development outside of built-up area boundaries. The housing shortfall dictates that those boundaries are out of date. I consider that some weight can still be given to the strategy set out within HDPF Policy 2, in terms of the general locations of new development, but the fact that a site may lie outside of the built-up area boundary does not, in and of itself, constitute a reason to refuse planning permission".
- 6.13 A very recent appeal decision issued in October 2025 under planning reference DC/24/1486, granted permission for a new build dwelling approximately 2 miles away from the closest built-up area boundary. Within the appeal decision the Inspector states that:
- "27. *The proposed dwelling would be in a location that is not considered suitable when assessed against the relevant HDPF and NP policies. The site lacks close proximity to a wide range of essential services and facilities. Although there are some opportunities for travel by means other than private car, reliance on car journeys is likely to be significant. In these respects, the proposal would conflict with key development plan policies.*
28. *Balanced against the harm are a number of benefits. The overall housing supply remains significantly deficient, and the provision of an additional dwelling would make a meaningful contribution to addressing this shortfall. The Framework recognises that small sites can make an important contribution to housing supply and are often built out quickly. There would also be modest economic benefits during construction and through local spending, as well as a small contribution to housing diversity. While the scale of these benefits is modest given that only one dwelling is proposed, in the context of current housing pressures, even a single additional home represents a valuable and positive contribution.*

29. *Taking all matters into account, the adverse impacts of granting permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole. Consequently, the proposal benefits from the presumption in favour of sustainable development as defined in paragraph 11d of the Framework.”*

- 6.14 Other recent examples of permitted dwellings outside of a defined built-up area can be seen under planning reference DC/24/1887, which granted outline planning consent for 2no detached dwellings in December 2025; reference DC/25/1831, which granted outline planning consent for 1no dwelling in March 2026, and reference DC/25/0895, which granted full planning consent for 1no dwelling at appeal in March 2026 (Appeal Reference APP/Z3825/W/25/3375774).
- 6.15 The above examples clearly show that notwithstanding the distances to the respective settlement boundaries, these boundaries are now considered to be out of date given the lack of 5-year housing supply. Therefore, the tilted balance is engaged and the principle of residential development in this location is acceptable.
- 6.16 While it is acknowledged that every application and site context should be considered on its own merits, taking into account the current situation of the Council in terms of its 5-year housing supply and the above examples, there is an expectation that a consistent approach is applied to decision making.
- 6.17 1no additional dwelling would contribute towards the much-needed supply of houses. Small sites can often be built out relatively quickly and there would be economic benefits arising from construction and spend in the local economy. In the context of the current circumstances, the additional dwelling would be valuable. Recent decisions that have been made by the Council and the Inspectorate confirm small scale developments such as this make a valuable contribution to the Council's housing shortage.
- 6.18 In summary, given the lack of a 5-year housing supply, the realistic and viable fall-back position and relevant recent examples of housing developments permitted outside of settlement boundaries, the principle of residential development is therefore acceptable.

Design and Appearance

- 6.19 Policy 25 of the HDPF seeks to protect the natural environment and landscape character of the District, including the landform, development pattern, together with protected landscapes and habitats. Development will be required to protect, conserve, and enhance landscape and townscape character, taking account of areas or features identified as being of landscape importance, individual settlement characteristics and settlement separation. In addition, development will be supported where it maintains and enhances the Green Infrastructure Network.
- 6.20 Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF require development to be of a high standard of design and layout. Development proposals must be locally distinctive in character and respect the character of their surroundings. Where relevant, the scale, massing and appearance of development will be required to relate sympathetically with its built-surroundings, landscape, open spaces and to consider any impact on the skyline and important views.
- 6.21 As detailed above, the wider site of Brookside Farm, including the existing building to be demolished to facilitate the proposed development, is characterised by utilitarian agricultural style buildings. The design of the proposed dwelling would take its cues from this rural character, with the proposed dwelling appearing as a rural barn-style conversion. The proposed materials to the walls and roof would reflect the existing buildings within the vicinity and would be suitable in this rural context.
- 6.22 The proposed design is considered to be in keeping with the setting and the overall scale would be comparable to existing development within the immediate vicinity, and appropriate in terms of the size of the plot.
- 6.23 The proposed dwelling would be located in essentially the same location as the existing building to be removed, however it would have a smaller footprint and would sit more comfortably within the site, as detailed within the submitted plans. The garden space to be provided would be modest in size with planting proposed and sufficient space for vehicle parking available.
- 6.24 The resulting design of the proposed building, overall, is considered to be a marked improvement when compared to the design of the dwelling permitted under the fall-back application, reference DC/25/0788. The proposal would also result in an enhancement to the countryside location when viewed against the previous approval.

- 6.25 Additional planting is proposed, and the applicant would accept a planning condition requiring the submission and approval of a detailed landscaping scheme, which would result in a further enhancement to the site, when compared to the previous approval.
- 6.26 The proposed development would result in a higher quality development when compared to the previously approved application, and would appropriately reflect the character and visual amenities of the countryside location. Overall, the proposals would represent appropriate development within this setting and would be in accordance with Policies 25, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

Neighbouring Amenity and Level of Accommodation Provided

- 6.27 Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.
- 6.28 Given the relationship of the proposed dwelling, as indicated on the site plan provided, with neighbouring properties, it is considered that the proposals would not have a detrimental impact in terms of overlooking, loss of privacy, overbearing impacts or loss of light to neighbouring residential properties. An appropriate garden area would be provided for the proposed dwelling which would provide adequate external amenity area for future occupiers. The proposals would also comply with Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).
- 6.29 The application is therefore considered to be acceptable in this regard, in accordance with Policy 33 of the HDPF.

Parking and Highways

- 6.30 Policies 40 and 41 of the Horsham District Planning Framework relate to transport and parking, and states that more transport choice including community transport where appropriate will be encouraged, as well as a reduction in private car use and greater accessibility to more sustainable modes of transport. Adequate parking and facilities must be provided within developments to meet the needs of anticipated users.
- 6.31 The plans indicate that the proposals would be served by an existing access to the site, and as such, no highway safety concerns would be apparent. Given the existing fall-back position where 1no dwelling could be provided on the site, the provision of 1no new-build dwelling would not result in a marked increase in trips to and from the site which would be detrimental to the function of the highway network.

- 6.32 Sufficient space for parking would be provided on site, and overall, the proposals would be acceptable in this regard, in accordance with Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF.

Ecological and Biodiversity Considerations / Enhancements

- 6.33 Policy 31 of the HDPF states that –

“Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council will support new development which retains and/or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks”.

- 6.34 The application is supported by a detailed Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA). The submitted ecological information outlines that overall, the proposals would not have a detrimental impact on protected habitats or species with mitigation and enhancement measures proposed.
- 6.35 As such, the submitted details provided and to be provided, indicate that there would be no detrimental impact on habitats or protected species, in accordance with Policy 31 of the HDPF.

7. Summary and Conclusion

- 7.1 Overall, given the position of the Council with regards to its 5-year housing supply, the viable and realistic fall-back position and recent decisions relating to residential development outside of built-up areas, the proposal represents an appropriate form of development in this location.
- 7.2 The proposals would be acceptable in terms of design and impact on the setting, and would not appear prominently within this context, resulting in an enhancement in terms of design and appearance when compared to the fall-back position.
- 7.3 The proposals would also be acceptable when considered against all other material matters, as detailed within this statement and supporting information.

7.4 As such, while now considered to be out of date, the proposals would be in accordance with Policies 4, 25, 26, 31, 32 and 33 of the HDPF and therefore, the Local Planning Authority is respectfully asked to grant planning permission accordingly.