

PLANNING STATEMENT

PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF PART OF Paddock TO DOMESTIC GARDEN

WAGTAILS, WALSHAM ROAD, WATTISFIELD, DISS IP22 1NZ

1.0 INTRODUCTION

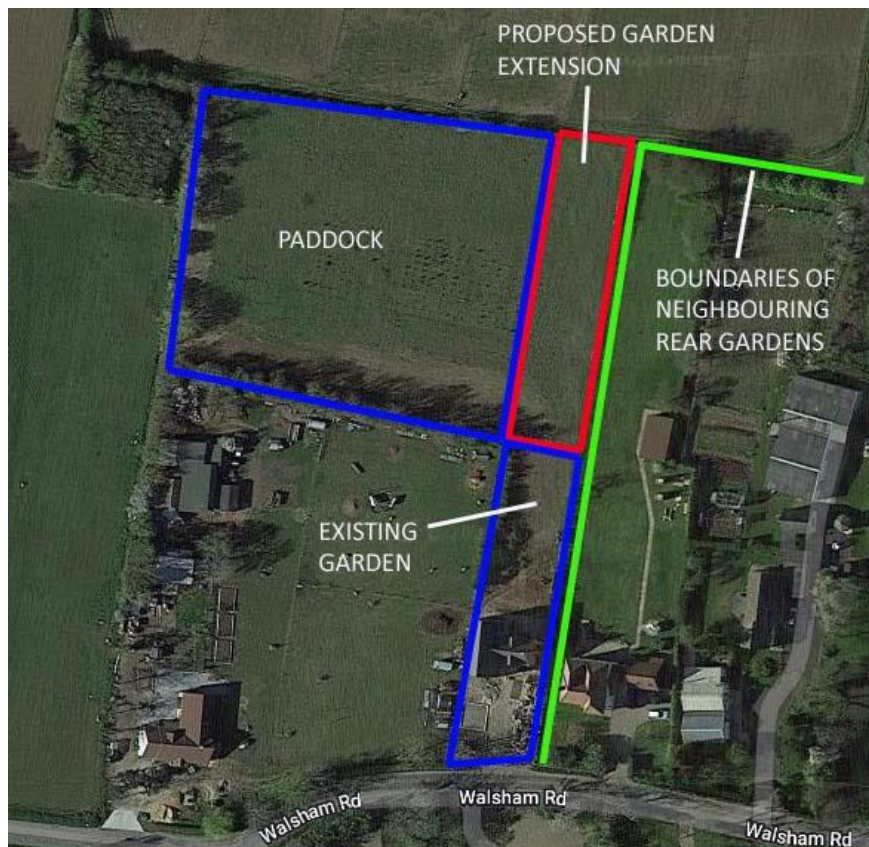
1.1 It is proposed to extend the existing residential garden into part of the paddock to the rear of the property. The extended garden would match the neighbouring gardens and would not encroach into open countryside.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION & PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The site is located on the northern side of Walsham Road, to the south of the village of Wattisfield. The property is a new dwelling, built under planning permission granted in 2018 (DC/18/00562).

2.2 It is a 4-bed detached house set back from the road, and the rear garden has a depth of approximately 40m. The 2 neighbouring properties to the east, also detached dwellings, set back from the road, have rear gardens of depth around 118m.

2.3 The existing paddock projects beyond the existing rear garden boundary of the application site, in line with both neighbours to the east, and wraps around the back of the neighbour to the west. The proposed garden extension only includes the part of the paddock immediately behind the existing garden. The remainder of the paddock would remain outside the domestic garden.



2.4 The paddock is heavily grazed with hedging to the east and north boundaries.

- 2.5 The proposed change of use would involve retention of existing hedging and additional native hedge planting along the western boundary, separating the new garden extension from the rest of the paddock

3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development¹ and seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment².
- 3.2 Local planning policies are provided in the Local Plan (1998) and Core Strategy (2008) & Focused Review (2012). Wattisfield is defined as a 'secondary village' with limited services and facilities. The site is outside the settlement boundary and for planning purposes is in the countryside. CS2 sets out development that may be accepted in the countryside, including extensions to dwellings. CS5 seeks to maintain and enhance the environment.
- 3.3 Local Plan policy GP1 deals with design and layout of development and requires that the character or appearance of the surroundings are maintained or enhanced, and that natural landscape features be incorporated. Insofar as housing policies are relevant, the proposal affecting the extent of residential garden, H13 on design and layout of housing development requires that proposals should respect the character of the site and surroundings, not adversely affect amenities of neighbours, protect important landscape features and, where possible, enhance ecology. H15 states that development must be consistent with the pattern and form of development in the area and character of its setting. H16 seeks to protect residential amenity and H18, dealing with extensions to dwellings, requires that development should not materially affect amenities of neighbours or the character or appearance of the area. CL11 requires that high quality agricultural land is retained.
- 3.4 In accordance with paragraph 48 of the NPPF, emerging policies may be given due weight depending on the level of progress and extent of unresolved matters. The Joint Local Plan (JLP) is to be progressed in two parts, with the current plan, having unresolved matters such as settlement hierarchy and housing numbers removed, as Part 1, and Part 2 to follow.
- 3.5 It is likely that JLP draft policy LP23 on change of use of agricultural land to garden land will be within Part 1, and may be given due weight. Although dealing with change from agricultural land and in this case, the land in question is not agricultural, it is relevant to note that the draft policy requires that landscape characteristics and biodiversity be taken into account, that the best and most versatile agricultural land should not be lost, that the development should not intrude into open countryside or result in loss of important trees or hedges, and that new boundary treatments must achieve a rural character.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Planning permission DC/18/00562 was granted 10 April 2018 for the erection of a dwelling and associated garage, and a subsequent application (DC/19/04618) to vary conditions relating to approved plans, landscaping and materials was approved in 2019.

¹ NPPF paragraph 11

² Ibid section 15

4.2 Earlier applications, including a much larger site, relate to proposed agricultural development and provision of a caravan site, respectively, all of which were refused.

5.0 PLANNING ANALYSIS

5.1 The proposal involves the change of use of part of the paddock to domestic garden. It is not agricultural land and the proposal would therefore not result in the loss of any agricultural land, complying with CL11.

5.2 The extended garden would project northwards as far as existing neighbouring boundaries, and no further. Its width would match that of the existing garden and would not encroach further west into the remainder of the paddock. The proposal would not intrude into open countryside and follows the pattern and form of existing development, respecting its character. It would be in keeping with the wider landscape setting.

5.3 The existing grass is closely grazed and does not provide opportunities for biodiversity. Existing hedges would be retained and additional native hedging provided, to the enhancement of biodiversity and the rural character and appearance of the area.

5.4 The character and appearance of the area would be maintained by the proposal, in reflecting the existing layout of development, and enhanced, by additional planting, in compliance with GP1.

5.5 The proposed garden extension would run alongside the existing garden of the nearest neighbour to the east. Use of the land as domestic garden in this situation would not adversely affect residential amenities of neighbours.

5.6 The proposal respects the character of the site and surroundings, does not adversely affect amenities of neighbours, retains existing landscape features and enhances wildlife habitat, in compliance with H13. It is consistent with the pattern and form of development in the area and character of its setting, in compliance with H15. It does not materially affect amenities of neighbours or the character or appearance of the area, in compliance with H16 and H18.

5.7 Although of lesser importance than adopted policies, it is noted that the proposal also meets the requirements of draft policy.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The proposed extension to the garden would follow the existing character, pattern and layout of development in the area. It would not encroach into open countryside and does not involve the loss of high quality agricultural land. Appropriate native planting would enhance wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Amenities of neighbours would not be adversely affected.

6.2 The proposal thereby complies with national and local planning policies and it is requested that planning permission be granted.

Mrs G Davidson BA(Hons) MRTPI

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