

# Planning Statement

Change of use of artist studio/workshop for use as 2 no. units of holiday accommodation instead of large single unit approved under permission 21/2522/FUL and associated operational development at Quantock, Stockland, Honiton, EX14 9DX

Prepared on behalf of Isobel Robinson  
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## Contents

1.0	Introduction .....	3
2.0	Site and surroundings area .....	3
3.0	Planning history .....	3
4.0	Proposal .....	4
4.1	Background .....	4
4.2	External changes .....	5
4.3	Internal changes .....	5
4.4	Unit 1 .....	6
4.5	Unit 2 .....	6
5.0	Policy context .....	6
5.1	Development Plan .....	6
5.2	Relevant Local Plan Strategies .....	7
5.3	Relevant Local Plan Policies .....	7
5.4	Relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies .....	9
5.5	Relevant national planning policy .....	10
6.0	Planning considerations .....	12
6.1	Overview .....	12
6.2	Use of building as two units of holiday accommodation .....	12
6.3	Access and parking arrangements .....	15
6.4	Trees and vegetation .....	16
6.5	Character and appearance .....	16
6.6	Dark skies .....	16
7.0	Conclusion .....	17

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Dalton Aram Planning Ltd, on behalf of the applicant, Isobel Robinson, in support of a planning application seeking planning permission for the change of use of the artist studio/workshop for use as 2 no. units of holiday accommodation instead of large single unit approved under permission 21/2522/FUL and associated operational development at Quantock, Stockland, Honiton, EX14 9DX.

## 2.0 Site and surroundings area

- 2.1 Stockland is a village in the northwest of East Devon situated just over 2 miles from the boarder with Somerset. It is located within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 2.2 Stockland is located two and a half miles south of Yarcombe and six miles northeast of the town of Honiton.
- 2.3 The area is characterised by a mix of residential properties, and surrounding farms and agricultural land. The settlement is compact with a mix of building styles from across the periods, ranging from the 13th Century Church of St Michael to modern housing development.
- 2.4 Quantock, is located just over one and a quarter miles, as the crow flies, to the north west of the centre of the village.
- 2.5 Vehicular and pedestrian access is via a long private track through woodland from the country lane to the northeast of the site.
- 2.6 The application site is to the southeast of the main house, Quantock.
- 2.7 The whole site was formerly used as a kennels and cattery and prior to this as a farm. As such the site has been known by a number of names over its lifetime, Quantock, Quantock Farm, Quantock House, Rising Sun Boarding Kennels And Cattery Quantock and finally reverting back to Quantock.
- 2.8 The site is surrounded to the north, south and west by woodland and to the east by a field with woodland beyond.
- 2.9 The nearest neighbours are the main house, 17m to the west, Quantock Barn (holiday let in the applicants ownership), 30m to the east, Higher Quantock, 120m to the northwest, and Oakleigh, 140m to the south / southeast.

## 3.0 Planning history

- 3.1 There are a number of applications, associated with the application site, available on the East Devon District Council website.
- 3.2 As stated above the application site has changed names a number of times over its history.

- BOARDING KENNELS

Ref. No: 75/C0157

Status: Approved

- ONE RESIDENTIAL CARAVAN AND ONE NON RESIDENTIAL  
Ref. No: 79/C2105                      Status: Approved
- BLOCK OF 15 KENNELS FOR BOARDING DOGS  
Ref. No: 80/C1379                      Status: Approved
- Additional Living Accom.  
Ref. No: 81/P1057                      Status: Approved
- Alterations To Main Kennel Block, New Kennel Block To Replace Exg. And Use Of Barn As Kennels  
Ref. No: 98/P0310                      Status: Approved
- Replace Kennel Block & Complete One Block & Runs  
Ref. No: 02/P0159                      Status: Approved
- Demolition of existing two storey extension and erection of single and two storey extension  
Ref. No: 08/0764/FUL                      Status: Approved
- First floor extension and raising of ridge height of dwelling  
Ref. No: 12/0337/FUL                      Status: Approved
- Change of use of boarding kennels and associated land to domestic use ancillary and incidental to the residential use  
Ref. No: 17/1686/FUL                      Status: Approved
- Conversion of building to holiday accommodation  
Ref. No: 18/2398/FUL                      Status: Approved
- Demolition of dog boarding kennels building and construction of artist studio and workshop including raised decking (retrospective application).  
Ref. No: 20/2439/FUL                      Status: Approved
- Change of use of artist studio/workshop, approved under permission 20/2439/FUL, for use as a dwelling (for holiday accommodation purposes) and associated works.  
Ref. No: 21/2522/FUL                      Status: Approved

## 4.0 Proposal

### 4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 The former owner of the site was an artist whose business was extremely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. His artistic commissions have not recovered to pre pandemic levels and wanted to convert the studio to holiday accommodation to generate a further revenue stream. However, he could not afford the conversion works so had to sell the site to generate funds.

- 4.1.2 The applicant purchased the site at the start of the summer with Sykes Holiday Cottages still operating the rental for the adjacent holiday let, Quantock Barn<sup>1</sup>. Sykes Holiday Cottages told the previous owner that there is a greater need in the market for large holiday lets with five or six bedrooms. However, the new owner has carried out further research with other holiday rental companies who have indicated that larger units of accommodation, although sought after, are left empty for longer periods of time.
- 4.1.3 The new owner is also keen to provide holiday accommodation which can accommodate wheelchair users and the previous design and layout did not readily accommodate such users.
- 4.1.4 It is now proposed to convert the existing building into two units of holiday accommodation. Unit 1 being two bedrooms with Unit 2 being two bedrooms and wheelchair accessible.

#### 4.2 External changes

- 4.2.1 The form of the building would stay the same with no extensions proposed.
- 4.2.2 The large shutter doors on the west elevation are proposed to be used as the main entrances to both units but with the remaining opening blocked up with cladding to match the original.
- 4.2.3 The apertures on the east elevation are proposed to remain as existing with the large shutter door, on the northern end of the building, being converted to glazing. To reduce sun glare, and overheating of the space, all the non-openable windows and doors are proposed to have moveable brise soleil / louvers in timber to match the colour of the cladding.
- 4.2.4 The brise soleil / louvers will also have the benefit of reducing the sun and moon reflection from the windows so that the building is less visible in the wider landscape. Blinds and/or curtains would also be installed, as the artist studio has none, so that no light would pollute the dark skies.
- 4.2.5 No changes are proposed to the north or south elevations.
- 4.2.6 It is proposed to install a dividing panel on the raised decking area on the east elevation to subdivide the space into two, so that each of the units have private amenity areas.

#### 4.3 Internal changes

- 4.3.1 The existing studio is split from east to west at close to the middle of the building. It is proposed to use this central dividing wall to separate the two units with Unit 1 forming the northern end and Unit 2 the southern.

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<sup>1</sup> approved under permission 18/2398/FUL

#### 4.4 Unit 1

- 4.4.1 Unit 1 is proposed to have two double bedrooms both with en-suite.
- 4.4.2 Access is via a new entrance door on the west elevation where the current roller door is, into a hallway.
- 4.4.3 As the unit is to be used for a holiday let, and thus commercial in the eye of the fire authority, each bedroom has protected egress and do not open into the living area.
- 4.4.4 A large open plan living, dining and kitchen area is proposed at the centre of the building.

#### 4.5 Unit 2

- 4.5.1 Unit 2 is slightly larger than Unit 1 but is still proposed to have two double bedrooms both with en-suite.
- 4.5.2 As Unit 2 is to accommodate wheelchair users more space provision has to be provided and as such has decreased the number of bedrooms that could be accommodated.
- 4.5.3 Unit 2 has been designed to comply with Part M: Access to and use of buildings specifically Section 3: Category 3 – Wheelchair user dwellings.
- 4.5.4 Both of the bedrooms allow for a minimum of 1000mm wide clear access zone to both sides and the foot of the king sized bed.
- 4.5.5 There is a minimum of 1200mm clear space in front of, and between, all the kitchen units and appliances.
- 4.5.6 Each of the ensuites and the WC have above the minimum standard for clear access zones.
- 4.5.7 As the unit is to be used for a holiday let, and thus commercial in the eye of the fire authority, each bedroom has protected egress and do not open into the living area.
- 4.5.8 A large open plan living, dining and kitchen area with ample manoeuvring space for a wheelchair is proposed at the centre of the building.

## 5.0 Policy context

### 5.1 Development Plan

- 5.1.1 Planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless there are material considerations to indicate otherwise<sup>2</sup>. The development plan in this instance comprises the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 (the “Local Plan”) and the Stockland Neighbourhood Plan (the “Neighbourhood Plan”).

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<sup>2</sup> Section 70(2) of the Town and Country planning Act 1990 and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

- 5.1.2 East Devon District Council has also started work to prepare its new Local Plan (the “emerging Local Plan”) that will ultimately replace the adopted plan. As part of this process the Council has undertaken a Call for Sites (as part of the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment) and has consulted the public on an Issues and Options Report, as well as a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report to support the plan. However, the results of these consultations and the Call for Sites had not at the time of writing been published. Therefore, it is considered that the emerging Local Plan is at an early stage of production and carries little to no weight at this point.
- 5.1.3 It is noted that the site is in a rural location beyond any built-up area boundaries designated by the Local Plan and is consequently within an area classified as countryside.

## 5.2 Relevant Local Plan Strategies

- 5.2.1 Strategy 7 (Development in the Countryside) highlights that development in the countryside outside the Built-up Area Boundaries and outside of site-specific allocations will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located, including:
1. Land form and patterns of settlement.
  2. Important natural and manmade features which contribute to the local landscape character, including topography, traditional field boundaries, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings.
  3. The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusions.
- 5.2.2 Strategy 33 (Promotion of Tourism in East Devon) highlights that the Council will support and facilitate high quality tourism in East Devon to promote a year-round industry responsive to changing visitor demands. It explains that tourism growth should be sustainable and should not detrimental to the District’s natural assets but aim to attract new tourism related businesses that can complement the high-quality environment of East Devon.
- 5.2.3 Strategy 46 (Landscape Conservation and Enhancement and AONBs) highlights that development will need to be undertaken in a manner that is sympathetic to, and helps conserve and enhance, the quality and local distinctiveness of, the natural and historic landscape character of East Devon.

## 5.3 Relevant Local Plan Policies

- 5.3.1 Policy D1 (Design and Local Distinctiveness) states that to ensure new development, including the refurbishment of existing buildings to include renewable energy, is of a high-quality design and locally distinctive. Proposals will only be permitted where they:
1. Respect the key characteristics and special qualities of the area in which the development is proposed.

2. Ensure that the scale, massing, density, height, fenestration and materials of buildings relate well to their context.

5.3.2 Policy D8 (Re-use of Rural Buildings Outside of Settlements) permits proposals to re-use or convert buildings in the countryside subject to several considerations including where:

1. The new use is sympathetic to, and will enhance the rural setting and character of the building and surrounding area and is in a location which will not substantively add to the need to travel by car or lead to a dispersal of activity or uses on such a scale as to prejudice village vitality.
2. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction and any alterations protect or enhance the character of the building and its setting;
3. The form, bulk and general design of the building and its proposed conversion are in keeping with its surroundings, local building styles and materials;
4. The proposed use would not harm the countryside by way of traffic, parking, storage, pollution or the erection of associated structures;
5. The proposal will not undermine the viability of an existing agricultural enterprise or require replacement buildings to fulfil a similar function.

5.3.3 For residential proposals it must be established that:

- a) The building is no longer required for agricultural use or diversification purposes; and
- b) That its conversion will enhance its setting - e.g. through removal of modern extensions and materials, outside storage, landscaping etc.
- c) Development is located close to a range of accessible services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents

5.3.4 Policy E5 (Small Scale Economic Development in Rural Areas) highlights that in villages and rural areas small scale economic development (not including retail use classes/other uses in Classes A1 – A4) and expansion of existing businesses designed to provide jobs for local people will be permitted where, among other things, it involves the conversion of existing buildings.

5.3.5 Policy E16 (Proposals for Holiday or Overnight Accommodation and Associated Facilities Proposals) states that the conversion or use of existing buildings in the open countryside, within close proximity to the main farmhouse or country house, for small-scale holiday accommodation uses will be permitted where:

1. The scale, level and intensity of development is compatible with the character of the surrounding area, including adjoining and nearby settlements.
2. The proposal does not harm the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
3. On-site servicing and parking facilities are provided commensurate with the level and intensity of the proposed use.
4. The proposal is accessible on foot, by bicycle and public transport and will not impair road safety or the free flow of traffic.



5.3.6 Policy TC7 (Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access) states that planning permission for new development will not be granted if the proposed access, or the traffic generated by the development, would be detrimental to the safe and satisfactory operation of the local, or wider, highway network.

#### 5.4 Relevant Neighbourhood Plan policies

5.4.1 The following policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered relevant to the submitted proposal.

5.4.2 Policy NE1 (Retaining and Enhancing the Natural Beauty of our Parish) of the Neighbourhood Plan highlights that:

- (i) development proposals that demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts on the natural environment (landscape and biodiversity) (or satisfactorily mitigate these impacts), and enhance the natural environment where there is the opportunity to do so, will be supported.
- (ii) Where mitigating measures are unavoidably required for development to be acceptable within its landscape setting, appropriate landscaping should be employed to mitigate the impact of the development, and such measures should include the use of native species of trees and hedges where planting is required.
- (iii) Where change to existing traditional Devon banks is unavoidable, proposals for development which affect traditional Devon hedges will only be supported where they have demonstrated that options have been assessed and, as a result, have proposed the least damaging option (to the hedgerow / bank, setting in the landscape, biodiversity and habitats).

5.4.3 Policy NE3 (Preserving Tranquillity and Our Dark Skies) of the Neighbourhood Plan highlights that development should maintain the tranquillity and dark skies of the parish.

5.4.4 Policy BHE3 (Maintaining the Built Character of Our Parish through High Quality Design) of the neighbourhood plan is to ensure that new development is of high quality design and is sympathetic to the traditional built character of the parish, proposals for development will be supported where they take into account the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Design Guide for Houses and:

- (i) ensure that the size, scale and location of the development is appropriate to the form, scale and setting of the surrounding built environment; and,
- (ii) ensure that materials and design of the development are in-keeping with the character of the surrounding built environment; and,
- (iii) ensure that it is designed in such a way as to minimise its impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape, on views of the proposed development and on the natural environment; and,
- (iv) include the use of appropriate sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) and other measures to reduce surface water run-off

## 5.5 Relevant national planning policy

5.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in planning decisions.

5.5.2 The 'golden thread' running through the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development the meaning of which is set out by the Government in Section 2, paragraphs 7 to 14 of the Framework. The NPPF explains that the planning system has three overarching objectives, economic, social and environmental, to achieve sustainable development.

5.5.3 A core principle of the NPPF is to promote good design and the creation of high quality buildings.

5.5.4 The following policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are considered to be material considerations in the assessment of the submitted proposal.

5.5.5 Section 4 'Decision-making', paragraph 38 highlights 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...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.

5.5.6 One of the NPPF's core objectives (Section 6) is to support a prosperous rural economy as part of building a strong competitive economy. Paragraph 84 of the NPPF highlights that:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

5.5.7 Section 11 'Making effective use of land' highlights that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.

5.5.8 Section 12 'Achieving well designed places' indicates that all development to be of a high quality in design, and the relationship and visual impact of it to be compatible with the surroundings. In particular, paragraph 130 highlights that planning policies and decisions should ensure that development:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

5.5.9 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF states:

*“Planning policies and decisions should recognise 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 cycling 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”.*

5.5.10 Another of the NPPF’s core objectives (Section 9) is to promote sustainable transport Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states:

*“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making and development proposals, so that:*

- a) *the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- b) *opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- c) *opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- d) *the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*
- e) *patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places”.*

5.5.11 Paragraph 105 of the NPPF states:

*“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”.*

5.5.12 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states:

*“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”*

## 6.0 Planning considerations

### 6.1 Overview

6.1.1 The existing artist studio was approved under permission 20/2439/FUL and consequently the principle of the construction of the building, and use as an artist studio, had previously been accepted.

6.1.2 In addition, the change of use of the artist studio to a single unit of holiday accommodation was approved under permission 21/2522/FUL and consequently the principle of development for holiday purposes has already been accepted.

6.1.3 It is the proposed conversion of the building for use as two units of holiday accommodation, instead of a single unit, that is for consideration under this application.

### 6.2 Use of building as two units of holiday accommodation

6.2.1 The application site is located beyond any built-up area boundaries designated by the Local Plan and is consequently within an area classified as countryside.

6.2.2 Strategy 7 (Development in the Countryside) of the Local Plan highlights that development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is in accordance with a specific Local or Neighbourhood Plan policy that explicitly permits such development and where it would not harm the distinctive landscape, amenity and environmental qualities within which it is located.

6.2.3 Policy D8 of the Local Plan permits the conversion of buildings in the countryside subject to a number of considerations including where they are sympathetic to and will enhance the rural setting and character of the buildings and the surrounding areas, the buildings are structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstructions and that the buildings are no longer required for agricultural use.

- 6.2.4 For residential proposals, policy D8 requires the development to be located close to a range of accessible services and facilities to meet the everyday needs of residents, to enhance its setting and that the building is no longer required for agricultural use or diversification. While a holiday let would fall under a C3 (Dwellinghouses) use class it would be restricted in occupation for holiday purposes and would not be able to be used as a person's home. Therefore, the requirement to be located close to a range of accessible services and facilities would not apply to this proposal.
- 6.2.5 As the building is a recent, modern construction a structural survey in support of the application is not considered necessary. The building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for substantial extension, alteration or reconstruction.
- 6.2.6 Further, the site does not form part of an agricultural enterprise and, therefore, the proposal would not undermine the viability of an existing agricultural enterprise or require replacement buildings to fulfil a similar function.
- 6.2.7 In addition, as the existing building is relatively modern it is unlikely that it would make a suitable habitat for protected species for bats or birds. Therefore, it is considered that a Biodiversity Survey is not necessary for this proposal and no such report is submitted with the application.
- 6.2.8 Policy E16 permits, subject to the specified criteria, the conversion or use of existing buildings in the open countryside for small-scale holiday accommodation uses where they are within close proximity to the main country house.
- 6.2.9 The first criterion of policy E16 requires the scale, level and intensity of development to be compatible with the character of the surrounding area. In this case the proposal would provide a single unit of accommodation situated in close proximity to the main house and other domestic outbuildings. The proposal would, therefore, be compatible with the character of the locality in terms of its scale and intensity.
- 6.2.10 Secondly, while there are neighbouring residential properties to the northwest and south/southeast of the building they are a significant distance from the proposed holiday accommodation to ensure that its use would not give rise to adverse residential amenity impacts such as noise or disturbance, overlooking and loss of privacy.
- 6.2.11 In addition, the use of the building for two units of holiday accommodation would not have any greater harm on the residential amenity of the host dwelling, or that of the neighbouring holiday let (Quantock Barn), which is also in the applicant's ownership, than the approved single unit of holiday accommodation. Further, it would not introduce an adverse conflict in this regard for future occupiers of the holiday accommodation.
- 6.2.12 The fourth criterion highlights that proposals should be accessible on foot, by bicycle and public transport. In this instance, it is noted there are no public transport options available within the village of Stockland.

6.2.13 However, paragraph 85 of the NPPF highlights that planning decisions should recognise 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. Paragraph 85 adds:

*“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 cycling or by public transport)”.*

6.2.14 The site’s location was also considered as part of the adjacent holiday let, approved under ref: 18/2398/FUL that:

*“Although located in a remote location, isolated from services and facilities the location of the development is along one of the many routes towards the settlement of Stockland. The vitality of the nearest settlement, Stockland, would not be prejudiced as a result of the development and indeed would have the potential to facilitate tourism expenditure into the local economy.”*

6.2.15 It was concluded for the adjacent holiday let, approved under ref: 18/2398/FUL that:

*“Proposal acceptable. The holiday use of the building would aid the rural economy and can be achieved without harm to the countryside.”*

6.2.16 In approving the proposal for the change of use of artist studio/workshop for use for holiday accommodation purposes at (ref. 21/2522/FUL) the Council found in favour of this proposal highlighting in the delegated report of the application:

*“The site is however poorly located in sustainability terms and users of the holiday let are likely to be reliant on private transport for the vast majority of journeys, this weights against the proposal. Such impacts though need to be considered in light of the traffic generation associated with the former use of the site as a boarding kennel and the benefits to the tourism economy likely to arise from the proposal”.*

6.2.17 Therefore, the Council set aside sustainability concerns arising from the proposal’s isolated countryside location in favour of the benefits to the tourism economy and a reduction in traffic generation from the site’s previous use.

6.2.18 It is considered that the use of the building as two smaller units of holiday accommodation rather than a large single unit would not be significantly different in terms of the intensity of use and the number of people that could be accommodated within the holiday units at anyone time.

6.2.19 In this instance it is considered that the use of the existing building for two units of holiday accommodation would be sensitive to their surroundings and the relatively minor nature and scale of the use is unlikely to have an unacceptable impact on local roads.

6.2.20 It is, therefore, considered that the proposal gains, in principle, support from policies D8, E5 and E16 of the Local Plan.

### 6.3 Access and parking arrangements

- 6.3.1 Policy E5 of the Local Plan requires proposals to provide a safe highway access and ensure that the local highway network can accommodate a forecast increase in traffic.
- 6.3.2 In this instance, the site benefits from an existing access onto the rural lane to the north-east of the site which would provide a convenient and safe access to the surrounding highway network.
- 6.3.3 There is also a large area of hardstanding to the north of the constructed building where parking space for several vehicles is provided. It is, therefore, considered that there is sufficient space within the proposed development site for the parking of vehicles to accommodate additional vehicles visiting the site, with adequate turning and manoeuvring space for vehicles using the site.
- 6.3.4 While the site is located in a relatively isolated rural position, paragraph 103 of the NPPF notes that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural area which should be taken into account in the planning balance.
- 6.3.5 In addition, it is noted that the Council has previously accepted that the closure of the kennel business could have brought about wider environmental benefits in the form of lower frequency of highway movements and reduced noise disturbance, preserving the tranquillity of the surrounding AONB. The use of the building either as an artist studio and workshop or for holiday accommodation purposes is likely to result in similar benefits to the surrounding area.
- 6.3.6 It is noted that the Local Highway Authority raised no objection to the 2018 and 2021 proposals for holiday use at the site.
- 6.3.7 The Council considered that the adjacent holiday let, approved under ref: 18/2398/FUL, was acceptable for the following reason:
- “The access to the main road is relatively close and this route can accommodate the traffic flow associated with a holiday use of the barn.”*
- 6.3.8 In addition, the Council considered that the conversion of the application site building to a single holiday let, approved under application ref. 21/2522/FUL, was suitable from a highway safety perspective on the following grounds:
- “There is adequate space available within the site to provide parking provision to serve the proposed holiday let unit to accord with policy TC9 of the Local Plan. In relation to site access this would be via private access road which is lightly trafficked and where turning provision is afforded so that vehicles joining the public highway could do so in forward gear. Visibility at the junction of the access track with the public highway is reasonable and the proposal is unlikely to result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety, particularly taking into account historic use of the site, as such the requirements of policy TC7 of the Local Plan would be met”.*
- 6.3.9 In summary, it is considered that the proposal would provide a safe means of access and would not give rise to significant levels of traffic that would harm the safe operation of the surrounding highway network in accordance with policies TC7 and TC9 of the Local Plan.

#### 6.4 Trees and vegetation

6.4.1 It is noted there are trees to the north of the building. However, as the application seeks conversion, with no extension, of an existing building no harm to existing mature trees can take place.

#### 6.5 Character and appearance

6.5.1 The existing building has a very high quality, contemporary design. It has been finished with materials that reflect those used in traditional buildings, within the surrounding area, albeit it in a modern interpretation. These finishes include vertical timber cladding for the walls and a metal standing seam material on its juxtaposed roof slopes. Further, the powder coated aluminium windows and doors that have been installed also give a high-quality appearance to the contemporary building.

6.5.2 Minor changes to the building's appearance are proposed under this application, including the infilling of its roller doors and addition of brise soleil / louvers. However, it is considered that these changes would have a minimal visual impact on the surrounding area.

6.5.3 Notwithstanding that there are very limited public views of the site available from within the surrounding area, it is considered that the high quality design and appearance of the building would remain largely unchanged in the landscape.

6.5.4 Any limited views of the buildings would also be viewed in context with, and set against, the context of the site which comprises the main dwelling and the outbuilding to the north, along with the former barn which has been converted to a holiday let to the east of the application site.

6.5.5 The wider sites boundaries are adjoined by existing mature trees and areas of woodland, particularly to the north, east and west, which further aid in screening the constructed building from view.

6.5.6 It is, therefore, considered that the conversion of the building to form two units of holiday accommodation would not have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding area nor lead to visual harm to, or undermine, the landscape quality of the AONB.

#### 6.6 Dark skies

6.6.1 It is noted that the application site comprises an existing building within the AONB. However, the proposed development would be installed with brise soleil / louvers so that it would not give rise to significant adverse effects in terms of light pollution particularly when in use during the evening and night-time.

6.6.2 Therefore, the proposal would protect the tranquillity of the parish and maintain its dark skies in accordance with policy NE2 of the Neighbourhood Plan.



## 7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 In summary, it is considered that the building would remain in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
- 7.2 The proposed use of the building as two units of holiday accommodation would fulfil the objectives of local and national policy to promote sustainable tourism development.
- 7.3 The proposal would also provide economic benefits and provide a more regular, than the one large holiday let, additional income for the applicant. In addition, the building is an existing building located in close proximity to the main countryside house and would, therefore, comply with the requirements of policies D8, E5 and E16 of the Local Plan.
- 7.4 It is considered that the existing entrance to the site is adequate to provide a safe and convenient means of access and to accommodate the relatively low volumes of additional traffic generated by the proposed holiday letting use, which should be set against existing levels of traffic accessing the site in connection with its former kennels use and existing use as an artist studio use. In addition, the proposed development would not give rise to unacceptable highway safety impacts or severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network that would warrant refusal of the application on highway grounds.
- 7.5 In addition, the use of the building for holiday accommodation purposes would not result in harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties.
- 7.6 The Council is, therefore, respectfully requested to approved the proposed development.