

**APPLICATION FOR A DETACHED GREENHOUSE AT BARNFOLD  
COTTAGE, SAINTS HILL, PENSHURST, TONBRIDGE, KENT.**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

Graham Fifield  
GRF Planning  
30 Collington Avenue  
Bexhill on Sea  
East Sussex  
TN39 3NE

Tel: 07956 271511

Email: [graham@grfplanning.com](mailto:graham@grfplanning.com)

## **The Application Site and Surroundings**

Barnfold Cottage is a detached two storey property situated on the south side of a private drive that leads in an easterly direction from New Road (the B2188) approximately 0.8 Kms south of Penshurst. The house is of traditional construction comprising red brick and tile hanging under a plain tiled roof. It is within a small enclave of existing properties on the south side of the drive. A public bridleway runs along the drive in front of the property before turning in a north easterly direction. A hedge along the front boundary helps screen the garden from the bridleway. The property is very well screened from views to the south by existing mature vegetation. This vegetation, together with the distance from adjoining properties means that the proposed greenhouse, which is situated some 12 metres to the west of the property, will not be obtrusive. The greenhouse is of traditional appearance being constructed out of aluminum alloy and resting on a brick plinth. The property is within the High Weald AONB and Green Belt.

## **Planning Policies**

### Core Strategy 2011

Policy SP1 deals with the issue of the design of new development. It requires that all development should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the distinctive local character of the area in which is situated. It indicates that account should be taken of other adopted guidance.

### Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) 2015

Policy EN1 indicates that proposals which would create a high quality design will be permitted. The policy contains a number of design principles which include the form of the proposed development responding to the scale, height, materials and site coverage of the area. Policy EN2 relates to the protection of amenity and seeks to safeguard the amenities of existing and future occupiers of nearby properties. Policy EN5 relates to the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and gives them high status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. Proposals will be permitted where the form, scale, materials and design would conserve the character of the landscape. Policy GB3 relates to residential outbuildings

in the Green Belt. It states that such buildings within 5 metres of the existing building will be treated as an extension to the dwelling. The greenhouse is substantially more than that distance from the dwelling, therefore the second part of the policy is engaged. This states that outbuildings will be permitted where the building, including the cumulative impact of other buildings within the curtilage would be ancillary to the main dwelling in terms of function, and design and would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive bulk or visual intrusion.

#### Residential Extensions SPD 2009

Section 3 gives advice in respect of outbuildings in AONB's and the Green Belt. It refers to them not impacting detrimentally to the space surrounding buildings and be limited in scale and be clearly ancillary to the property. In addition, their scale should not exceed what might be reasonably expected for the function of the building. Paragraph 3.24 refers to a cumulative addition of the original dwelling by no more than 50%. However, that limitation has been superseded by policy GB8 of the ADMP. The remainder of the policy deals with issues such as design and character, the intent of which are also found in later documents.

#### Development in the Green Belt SPD 2015

With regard to outbuildings, policy GB3 of the ADMP is referred to and states that such buildings more than 5 metres from the dwelling will be permitted in addition to the allowance under policies GB1 and 4 if the design and cumulative impact would not materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive bulk or visual intrusion.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

Section 13 sets out the Government's policies regarding the protection of Green Belt land. Paragraph 138 sets out the five purposes of such a designation. These are:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 147 indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149 states that the construction of new buildings are inappropriate with a number of exceptions. One of the exceptions being that the proposal is for the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. With regard to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, paragraph 176 indicates that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty with the scale and extent of development limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

### **The Case for the Development**

From the above, it is considered that there are two issues that are relevant to the determination of the application. The first is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the landscape, which is designated as an AONB, the second is whether the proposal accords with the policies of protection of the openness of the Green Belt. Whilst some of the issues are common to both issues, they also involve different considerations.

The proposed greenhouse is a very lightweight structure in appearance. It is of a traditional design and modest scale with a footprint of some 9.5 m<sup>2</sup>. It is set within the generous sized garden that mainly lies to the west of Barnfold Cottage. The siting has been chosen to provide the most light to the greenhouse, as if it was situated any further to the south it would be in shadow from the vegetation on the southern boundary of the garden. It is a structure that would be typically found in a domestic garden and will not have an adverse effect on the landscape or AONB.

With regard to the effect on the Green Belt, the greenhouse is more than 5m from the house and so policy GB3 does not require it to be considered as an extension to the house. The relevant issues under that policy are the cumulative impact of it and other outbuildings and whether the greenhouse is subservient to the main house. For the same reasons that applied to the issue of the effect on the landscape it is strongly contended that the proposed greenhouse would be subservient to the main house. This arises both from its size in relation to the

dwelling and its external appearance. With regard to the cumulative effect of other outbuildings, there is an existing very modest summerhouse in the garden and close to the western boundary, well screened from the main house a garage approved under reference 22/01701 which is sited on an area of existing hard standing. In proportion to the overall size of the garden, these outbuildings together with the greenhouse would not have a significant effect on the openness on the Green Belt.

## **Conclusion**

For the reasons described it is considered that the very modest greenhouse proposed will not have a harmful effect on the character of the area or the AONB and, in the context of the Green Belt will be a very subservient building in relation to the main house. The development will comply with the policies that have been quoted and it is hoped the application can be supported.

September 2023