

Design, Access and Planning Statement for the Change of Use of  
an existing workshop to holiday let - 127 Third Avenue, Batchmere

**October 2023**

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# 1.0 Introduction

This Design, Access and Planning Statement sets out matters in support of a full planning application for the change of use of an existing workshop/garage building to that of a holiday let.

The building, of brick construction, has been standing for in excess of 28 years [see Appendix 1] within the residential curtilage of 127 Third Avenue and remains in excellent condition, which requires minimal, internal adaptations in order to deliver high-quality tourist accommodation.

Served by its own gated entrance, with ample off-road parking and screened by an evergreen hedgerow, the building already has dedicated power and water supply and mains sewage connection.

## 2.0 Planning Policy Context

Almodington does not have a defined Settlement Policy Area; it falls within a Rural Area, and the Chichester and Pagham Harbour SPA Buffer areas.

Relevant planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and the recently adopted Chichester Local Plan (2014-2029).

**Section 6 of the NPPF – Building a Strong, Competitive Economy** – has a subsection titled ‘Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy’ and states in paragraph 84:

*Planning policies and decisions should enable:*

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

**Paragraph 85 develops this further and makes clear that:**

*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.*

**The current proposals comply as follows:**

- **Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs**, and this proposal aims to provide much-needed short-term holiday accommodation by utilising an existing building.
- This holiday let will contribute to a strong rural economy by its introduction of new visitors to the area, who will be encouraged to buy produce from local villages and farm shop and visit and use local amenities. Bicycles will be provided to guests, with existing space for bicycle storage on site.
- Sustainable rural tourism will be provided by way of the use of an already existing redundant building by the provision of a well-designed conversion that respects the character of the countryside.
- There is a pressing and current need for additional holiday accommodation in the Chichester District.

**The Chichester Local Plan (2014-2029)** defines sustainable development as: *development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

**Policy 1, Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, states:** *“When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan ... will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”*

**Policy 45, Development in the Countryside, states:** *“Within the countryside, outside settlement boundaries, development will be granted where it requires a countryside location and meets the essential, small scale and local need which cannot be met within or immediately adjacent to existing settlements.”*

This proposal is sustainable and caters for tourists seeking a rural holiday break throughout the year. The building is small in scale (compared to a holiday complex) and has sat comfortably on its site for in excess of twenty-eight years. The building is close to existing buildings - it is located within the residential curtilage of 127 Third Avenue and therefore does not prejudice any agricultural uses or operations. It is well-screened by evergreen hedgerow that is higher than the building itself. There is an acknowledged need for tourist accommodation in the area, especially with regard to extending the holiday season.

**Policy 30, Built Tourist and Leisure Development states:**

*Proposals for tourism and leisure development, including tourist accommodation, will be granted where it can be demonstrated all the following criteria have been considered:*

- 1. It is sensitively designed to maintain the tranquillity and character of the area;*
- 2. Is located so as to minimise impact on the natural and historic environment, including that of visitors or users of the facility*
- 3. It provides a high-quality...accommodation; and*
- 4. Encourages an extended tourist season.*

*Additionally, new tourism buildings(including bed and breakfast, self-catering and hotel facilities) in the countryside should be of a scale appropriate to the location and demonstrate they require a rural location, and support the objectives of rural regeneration/diversification.*

This application provides a sensitively designed conversion of an existing building into high-quality accommodation and minimal impact on the environment. As the site offers a countryside environment and is not reliant on beach attractions, the season would be longer than at coastal destinations. The area attracts artists, walkers, cyclists, photographers and bird watchers. The scale of the building remains unchanged.

Section 16, The Economy, states in para 16.23:

*Visitors support a range of facilities and services which are important to the local economy and enhance its attractiveness as a location for businesses and residents. However, due to a lack of suitable accommodation, an insufficient number of tourists are able to stay overnight. To support the visitor economy, new tourist accommodations and attractions will be encouraged in areas that can accommodate additional visitor numbers without detriment to the environment. This will enable development and provide facilities that could extend the tourist season and also benefit the local community.*

*Although within smaller villages and the countryside, proposals should fully assess the potential to re-use existing buildings and extend current businesses, new sensitively designed tourism buildings and serviced accommodation may be permitted in these locations. Proposals to convert rural buildings in the countryside for economic or community uses will be encouraged before residential uses are considered.*

Paragraph 19.33 states: *Where buildings are of a poor design or scale or do not respect the landscape character or its surroundings, the building may be suitable for redesign or re-modelling or alternatively replacement.*

The recent redetermined appeal decision letter concerning Living Elements, 1 Keynor Lane, Sidlesham [APP/L3815/C/13/2202639 et al dated 9 July 2015] is of direct relevance as one

element of the scheme was the provision of a tourist accommodation unit. The issue of sustainable development is discussed in paragraphs 22 to 25:

*22. The site is not located within a defined settlement policy area, but the surrounding area includes dwellings, a school, Public House and a farm shop. Contrary to the Council's arguments, I find that the site is not totally remote or isolated given the existence of commercial and residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the site.*

*23. The Council is concerned that future occupiers of the residential flat are likely to be reliant on private mode of transportation to meet their daily needs. This is because the site is located 5 miles south of Chichester and 4 miles north of Selsey where there is a wide range of amenities. However, I consider that the degree of reliance on the private car is not that uncommon in a mainly rural area such as this and the distances involved are not excessive by rural standards. Additionally, public transportation is a realistic option as the bus stop is situated close to the site's access. The Council states there is lack of public footpath on the rural road, but the bus stop is located in proximity of the site, and Sidlesham is on a bus route which links the settlement to larger conurbations.*

*24. The site is close to local attractions and amenities and is well placed for tourism by bicycle or walking. Although customers are likely to arrive by car, this would be true of most rural holiday accommodation. Once on site there would be no necessity for all journeys to be made by car.*

*25. Pulling all of the above points together, I find the site is suitable and sustainably located for the type and scale of the development. The mixed use of the site is likely to support economic growth, enhance and maintain the vitality of the rural community.*

A redetermined appeal decision letter carries substantial weight. Accordingly, it must be held that the conversion of the subject building into a small tourist unit is a sustainable form of development. A decision to the contrary would be perverse.

The application site's location is a positive attraction to tourists, offering car-free excursions, e.g. walking on Medmerry Nature Reserve, or cycling between the holiday let and West Wittering Beach or Chichester Harbour.

Moreover, the building already has;

- A dedicated gated entrance, with off-road parking for several cars
- A dedicated power supply with it's own meter and consumer unit
- An existing connection to the mains water and sewage system

The many permitted planning applications for holiday lets in the close vicinity of the site recently permitted is a clear acceptance that holiday lets are an acceptable and needed form of development in this area, especially in the case of the reuse of an otherwise unused building.

One example of this is at **95 First Avenue, Batchmere** - which is in the immediate vicinity of this site, the council permitted [21/00114/FUL] on 12 March 2021 “Change of use of garage to 1 no. two-bed holiday let.” There has been no material change in either national or local planning policy since that date.

Another example of this is at **107 First Avenue, Batchmere** - which is in the immediate vicinity of this site, the council permitted [23/01480/FUL] on 19 September 2023 “Continued use of land for the stationing of a historic railway carriage for use as a holiday let”. There has been no material change in either national or local planning policy since that date.



## 3.0 Conclusions

In terms of scale, the conversion will deliver a building with rural visual cues.

There is an acknowledged need for additional tourist accommodation within the Chichester District; the site is brownfield land close to existing residential and commercial properties.

The holiday let would provide economic benefits to the rural area and nearby settlements.

The redetermined appeal at 'Living Elements' makes clear that tourism use in Sidlesham Parish – and a similar distance from a bus service - would constitute sustainable development.

The recent permission for holiday lets in the immediate vicinity of this application site confirms the establishment of a precedent and there has been no material change in policy since that grant of permission

This building has existed for in excess of 28 years in the same place and remains in excellent condition

The building is already served by its own gated driveway, electricity and water supply and sewage connection.

I consider that this application to continue the use of the building as a family holiday let is fully policy compliant and, as such, I request that this application receive the support of Officers.

4.0 Images





Dedicated garden space

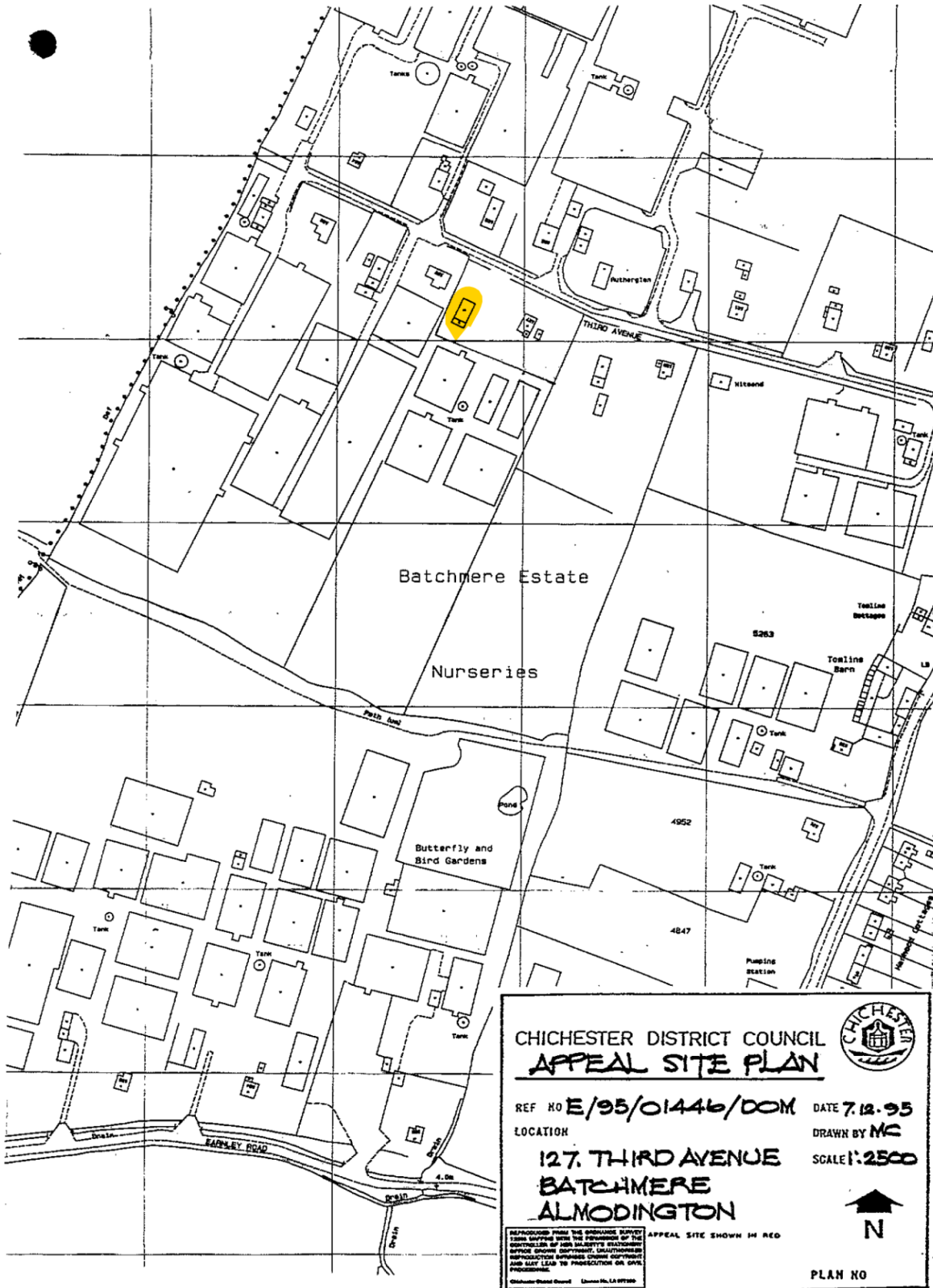


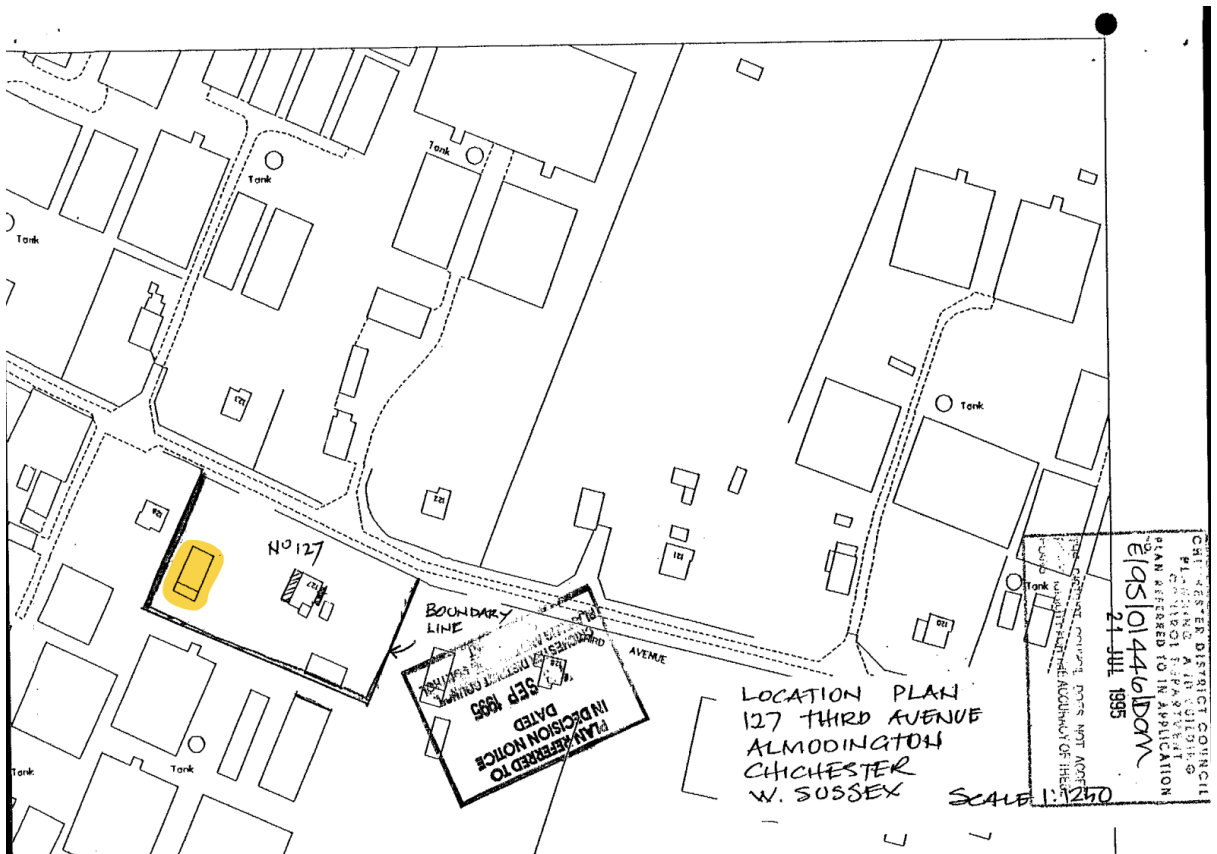
Dedicated gated entrance and parking provision (view from site)



Dedicated gated entrance (view from road)

# 5.0 Appendix





LOCATION PLAN  
 127 THIRD AVENUE  
 ALMODINGTON  
 CHICHESTER  
 W. SUSSEX

SCALE 1:250

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL  
 PLANNING AND BUILDING  
 PLAN REFERRED TO IN APPLICATION  
 21 JUL 1995  
 E/95/0144/0/DOM