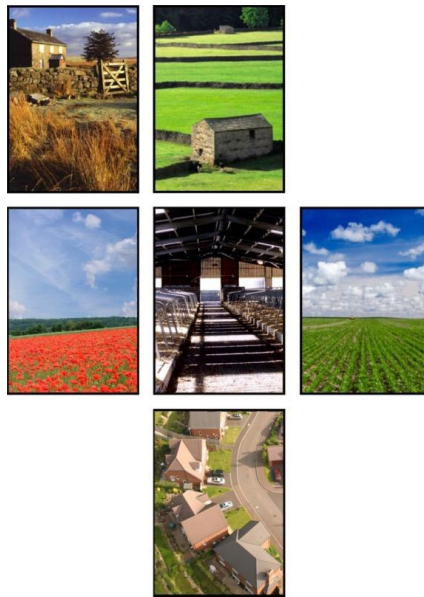


DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT  
FOR THE  
CONVERSION OF PICKWICK TO FOUR DWELLINGS

AT  
PICKWICK  
TURNPIKE ROAD  
AMBERLEY  
WEST SUSSEX BN18 9LX



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## **Introduction 1.0.0**

1.0.1 We act on behalf of James Thorns of Pickwick, Turnpike Road, Amberley, West Sussex, BN18 9LX in this application to convert the property to form four dwellings. The site did benefit from an outline planning application with all matters reserved for up to seven units of various sizes. Demolition of the existing dwelling, swimming pool building and garages. granted on 11 December 2020 (SDNP/19/05270/OUT). However due to the constraints and financial viability of the site developers and the planning department could not agree on a scheme which was either practical or viable.

1.0.2 The property is within the development boundary of the village and has been designed to utilise the existing buildings and curtilage to form a unique small development without detracting from the neighbouring properties or the visual amenity of the area.



Photograph of East Elevation

## **Location 2.0.0**

2.0.1 Amberley is reached by the B2139, four miles west of Storrington and five miles north east of Arundel. Pickwick is located off Turnpike Road as you enter the village on the right if travelling from Storrington.

## **Proposal 3.0.0**

3.0.1 The applicant proposes converting the existing dwelling to form four dwellings comprising of three four-bedroom units, one three-bedroom and one two-bedroom property. The site lends itself naturally to development. We have taken into account the existing structures, layout and curtilage of the ground. The proposal has been designed to minimise impact on the environment and neighbouring amenity.



Photograph of Southern Elevation



Photograph of West Elevation

3.0.2 Pickwick and its outbuildings are of modern brick construction the outbuildings consist of garages and an indoor swimming pool complex. The property lends itself naturally to be subdivided into separate residential units.

3.0.3 On 11 December 202 South Downs National Park granted an outline planning application with all matters reserved for a development of up to seven units of various sizes. Demolition of the existing dwelling, swimming pool building and garages.

3.0.4 However irrespective of the consent a fundamental issue was the site accommodating the seven units without making a cull de sac or courtyard development acceptable to the planning authority.

3.0.5 Based on the feedback from the LPA and various developers the best use of the site is to convert the existing building into four residential units. The existing building does not add or take away from the visual amenity and the impact on the proposed development does not affect the environment or the national park.

## **National Planning Policy Framework 2021 4.0.0**

4.0.1 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied<sup>1</sup>. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced

4.0.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

4.0.3 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.0.4 These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

4.0.5 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### **Delivering a sufficient supply of homes**

4.0.6 Rural Area in the South Downs National Park by nature of the areas designation limits the supply of housing therefore sites like the proposed at Pickwick offers the community an idea location for the proposed development as it meets the policies set out in the draft South Downs National Park Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.0.7 To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the

needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

4.0.8 To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.

4.0.9 Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;

b) use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;

c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and

d) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

4.1.0 Neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 68a) suitable for housing in their area.

4.1.1 Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

## Rural housing

4.1.2 In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

4.1.3 To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby

4.1.4 Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential dwelling; or e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
  - is truly outstanding or innovative, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
  - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

Achieving appropriate densities

4.1.5 Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) local market conditions and viability;
- c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

4.1.6 Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

- a) plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;

b) the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and

c) local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).

4.1.7 The proposed development reuses the existing building and outbuildings which is a good use of the site and environment. The development period will be reduced and from commencement to completion will be done quickly and with little disruption to the neighbouring properties.

### **Horsham Planning Policy Framework 5.0.0**

5.0.1 Although the framework highlights that the South Downs has its own policy it is important to note that the South Down national Park Plan is still in draft form and has not been adopted which means the planning policy should fall back onto the National Planning Policy Framework (Revised) 2019. However, the Horsham Planning Policy Framework 2015 has also been superseded by the NPPF in 2019.

### **South downs National Park Policy Proposed 6.0.0**

6.0.1 The South Downs was established as a National Park in 2010. The South Downs National Park Authority (National Park Authority) became the local planning authority for the National Park in 2011. The National Park contains over 1,600km<sup>2</sup> of England's most iconic lowland landscapes stretching from Winchester in the west to Eastbourne in the east. The South Downs Local Plan is the first Local Plan to plan for the National Park as a single entity.

6.0.2 The Local Plan establishes the strategic planning policy framework. However, at a local level, neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. When a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is 'made' (adopted), it becomes part of the development plan for the National Park, and its policies will be used to determine planning applications within the relevant parish alongside the Local Plan and mineral and waste plans. The Draft Local Plan is supportive of sites within the South Downs which reuse existing structures.

6.0.3 The NPPF sets out how the presumption in favour of sustainable development is a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making. This means that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. They should also take a positive approach when deciding planning applications. Core Policy SD1 and its supporting text reflects these principles, within the context of the National Park's statutory purposes and duty. The supporting text also provides general guidance to clarify on the development management process.



6.0.4 The site falls within the settlement policy boundary of Amberley, which was adopted through the Amberley Neighbourhood Development Plan (2017) and carried through to the South Downs Local Plan (2019). Policies HD1 and SD25 support development proposals within settlement boundaries where these accord with other development plan policies; and providing they are of a scale and nature appropriate to the character and function of the settlement in its landscape context; make best use of suitable and available previously developed land in the settlement; and make efficient and appropriate use of land.

Policy SD26 requires a total of six dwellings to be provided in Amberley village, which has been met through allocation policy HD5 for a 'minimum of six dwellings.' Policy HD6 states that the scale of development must be appropriate to the size, character and role of the settlement and that land must be used 'effectively and comprehensively.'

The following list are policies in relation to the SDNP Local Plan which are applicable and support the development:

- SD1: Sustainable Development
- SD2: Ecosystems Services
- SD4: Landscape Character
- SD5: Design
- SD6: Safeguarding Views
- SD8: Dark Night Skies
- SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- SD10: International Sites
- SD11: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- SD16: Archaeology
- SD17: Protection of the Water Environment
- SD19: Transport and Accessibility
- SD21: Public Realm, Highway Design and Public Art
- SD22: Parking Provision
- SD25: Development Strategy
- SD26: Supply of Homes
- SD27: Mix of Homes
- SD50: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- SD51: Renewable Energy.

Policies EN1, EN2, HD4 and HD6 of the Amberley NDP (2017) seek to ensure that new development does not detract from the National Park's visual qualities and essential characteristics or adversely impact on significant views; and is of a scale, design and density appropriate to its location to avoid harm to the established character and appearance of the local area.

Policy HD2 states that Proposals for new development will be assessed against the established standards laid down in the Amberley Village Design Statement (2005). Planning guideline 11 of the Amberley VDS states that further development on the boundaries of the built up area should be restricted to smaller buildings to soften the transition to open ground and retain the 'soft edge' and uneven character of the existing settlement pattern.

The new proposal fits the above criteria and will not increase or decrease the impact of the building to the visual amenity as its already in situ and has been for many years.

## **Conclusion 7.0.0**

7.0.1 The property known as Pickwick is in Amberley which is reached by the B2139, four miles west of Storrington and five miles north east of Arundel. Pickwick is located off Turnpike Road as you enter the village on the right if travelling from Storrington.

7.0.2 The applicant proposes converting the existing dwelling to form four dwellings comprising of two four-bedroom units, one three-bedroom and one two-bedroom property. The site lends itself naturally to development. We have taken into account the existing structures, layout and curtilage of the ground. The proposal has been designed to minimise impact on the environment and neighbouring amenity.

7.0.3 In summary, the previous outline planning permission allowed up to seven dwellings on the site is acceptable in principle, subject to a s106 to secure a policy-compliant amount and tenure of onsite affordable housing provision based on that scenario the seven units were approved, which would accord with policy SD28.

7.0.4 Pickwick and its outbuildings are of modern brick construction the outbuildings consist of garages and an indoor swimming pool complex. The property lends itself naturally to be subdivided into separate residential units.

Given the outline application was considered broadly in accordance with the Development Plan and there are no overriding material considerations to otherwise indicate that outline permission should not be granted. It should therefore be considered that converting the existing dwelling should be compliant with the South Downs National Park Policy.

7.0.5 The South Downs National Park Local Plan is still being reviewed however the site lies within the development boundary of the village and the reuse of buildings is supported by the National Park. The National Planning Policy Framework revised in 2021 supports the reuse of buildings to form residential units and has a presumption in favour of granting planning permission. We believe the proposed project at Pickwick should be supported by the South Downs National Park Planning authority and Horsham District Council.