



**Murray Planning
Associates**

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

(including eco services & outdoor lighting assessments)

Conversion of home office to annexe
Hill Hampton, Oxenbourne Lane,
East Meon, Petersfield
GU32 1QN

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1.0 Introduction

Murray Planning Associates has been instructed by Mr and Mrs Brooks to prepare and submit a planning application for the conversion of an existing outbuilding within the grounds of the property known as Hill Hampton in Petersfield currently used as a home office to be used as a domestic annexe associated with the main residence. The owners of the property are reaching an age where onsite care may be required for them to continue to live in their family home. As such, the proposed conversion would allow for a person providing care to stay overnight on site.

The application has not been subject to any form of pre-application discussions with South Downs National Park Authority due to the modest nature of the proposals.

This statement sets out 1) an assessment of the site context; 2) a summary of the relevant policy framework; 3) an assessment of the proposed development; followed by 4) conclusions based on the preceding sections.

This statement should be read in alongside the following documents and drawings:

- Site Location Plan
- Site Plan
- Outbuilding Existing Elevations & Floor Plans
- Outbuilding Proposed Elevations & Floor Plans
- CIL Form
- Application Forms & Ownership Certificates

2.0 Site Context

The site comprises a detached dwelling positioned on the northern side of Oxenbourne Lane, East Meon. The site lies outside of any defined settlement boundary and lies within a rural setting, although other low density residential development is apparent within the wider area.

Hill Hampton originally formed part of Hill Hampton Farm but the farm has long since been subdivided. The site is accessed from the south via a shared driveway which extends north and ultimately leads to a courtyard area to the south of the dwelling. The property has several outbuildings set within the wider site area and many of these buildings have undertaken a level of farm diversification over the years (one building in formal office use and another as a permitted car workshop) with agricultural activities continue to take place in the wider site areas.

The focus of the application is an outbuilding that lies directly south of the main dwelling and is positioned within the residential curtilage of the property. The building is of simple brick and tile construction and is in use as a home office associated with the main residence.

While the site lies in a rural location, there is extensive residential development within the wider surroundings, as well as general agricultural uses. The site therefore lies in a rural context with residential, agricultural and woodland the predominant land uses within the surroundings.

Relevant Planning History

There are several planning applications associated with the property detailed on Council's planning application register, although none since 2006.

There are two planning applications of relevance on the planning register, the first being application F.23745/014/FUL which permitted a single storey side extension. Permission was granted in October 2000.

The second application applied for the retrospective change of use of an agricultural outbuilding to an office (F.23745/014/FUL/NP). The application sought retrospective consent for an outbuilding located within the complex of farm buildings south of the main dwelling to continue to be used as a business office use. The application was approved in September 2002.

Finally, in 2006 F.23745/017/FUL/SM allowed further agricultural outbuildings within the farmyard complex to be used as workshop and storage uses. Permission was granted in September 2006.

3.0 Planning Policy Assessment

Policy Context

The site is in a rural setting outside of any defined settlement boundary, and within the administrative area of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA).

The development plan for the purposes of assessing proposals for this site are the adopted South Downs Local Plan (July 2019) and national planning policy in the form of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework. Also of relevance are the purposes of the South Downs National Park.

Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

Paragraph 2 of the NPPF notes that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Paragraph 11 advises that decisions (on planning applications) should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. As such, development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

Paragraph 130 lists a number of criteria that planning decisions should comply with. These include ensuring:

- The development will function well and add to the overall quality of the area
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping
- Are sympathetic to local character and history, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change

Paragraph 176 states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in the national parks. It also states that the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations and should also be given great weight in National Parks.

National Park Purposes

The two statutory purposes of the South Down National Park designation are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of their areas;

- To promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of their areas.

Local Planning Policy – South Downs Local Plan (2019)

In the context of the South Downs Local Plan, the site is outside of any urban area and as such falls within open countryside. The policies relevant to the site and the proposed development are SD1, SD4, SD5, SD6, SD7, SD8 and SD31 (and accompanying Technical Advice Note). These policies are looked at in more detail below.

Policy SD1 - This policy relates to sustainable development and confirms the National Park will apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development provided the development proposal accords with relevant policies in the Local Plan and with National Park purposes.

Policy SD4 – This policy advises that development proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character by demonstrating that they are informed by landscape character, reflecting the context and type of landscape in which the development is located, and that the design, layout and scale of proposals conserve and enhance existing landscape character features which contribute to the distinctive character, pattern and evolution of the landscape.

The development seeks to reuse an existing outbuilding. There is no proposed changes or alteration to the external appearance of the outbuilding, which as a single storey structure is already small in scale relative to the dwelling and larger agricultural outbuildings on site.

The proposal would cause no visible alteration to the public realm and have no visual impact to any short or long distance views or the character of the area.

Overall, the design and scale of development is considered to comply with the landscape character in compliance with Policy SD4.

Policy SD5 – This is a general policy relating to design which confirms that development should respect the local character through sensitive and high quality design that makes a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area. Of particular relevance to this proposal are criteria a and f which seek to ensure development integrates with the landscape character and that the architectural design is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of height, massing, density, roof form and materials.

As detailed above all works to convert the building will be strictly internal and thus there will be no visual change to the appearance of the building or the wider site area. Overall, the proposal is considered to comply with the aims and objectives of Policy SD5.

Policy SD6 - This policy relates to safeguarding views and advises development proposals must conserve and enhance key views and views of key landmarks within the National Park.

There are not considered to be any key views in the vicinity of the site and even if there were the lack of any external alteration to the building would result in zero change. The local plan does not identify any views or other constraints within the locality. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy SD6.

Policy SD7 – This policy applies to all development proposals within the National Park and seeks to ensure that relative tranquillity is preserved and enhanced.

The proposal does not seek any addition to the overall built form on site. Therefore, it is not anticipated there will be an increase in the level of noise associated with the site over and above the noise already associated with the residential use of the building and site.

Policy SD8 – This policy relates to dark night skies and seeks to ensure that development proposals conserve and enhance the intrinsic quality of dark night skies.

The site lies within an E0 area (defined as an area of intrinsic rural darkness). E0 areas have some of the darkest skies in the National Park.

The outbuilding is already ancillary to the main domestic use of the site, and increases in overall use is not anticipated compared to the current baseline. As such, it is not anticipated that the proposal will result in any detrimental impact to the dark night sky.

Policy SD31 - states that the provision of annexes will be permitted where the annexe demonstrates a functional and physical dependency on the host dwelling and do not increase the floorspace of the existing dwelling by more than 30%.

The proposal seeks to convert an existing structure which is already incidental to property and therefore there is no increase in floorspace. The structure is within close proximity to the main house and is proposed to share the same entrance and parking arrangements. This is considered to demonstrate the physical dependency upon the host dwelling. The annexe is not to be separated from the main house and will be of ancillary use. If permission were to be granted, this can be secured by condition.

The principle of development is considered acceptable, subject to design as discussed below.

4.0 The Proposed Development

Amount

The proposed development comprises simple conversion of an existing outbuilding from home office to annexe. The proposals would not require any external alterations and as such will retain a sensible balance between built and unbuilt space both from the public realm and across the site as a whole. The site would retain a sizable garden area which provides a high level of amenity for the residents of the site. The purpose of the conversion is to provide a space for both visiting family members or a care worker to stay in order to look after the elderly occupants. The owners of the property do not want to move from their family home and this conversion would provide facilities to safeguard this position in the longer term.

Layout

The existing home office comprises two rooms. The proposed conversion to annexe will require minimal internal alterations with the formation of a small bathroom the only notable change. The annexe will provide a bedroom, bathroom and small living space but no kitchen area. This will result in future occupants of the annexe still relying on the kitchen facilities in the main Hill Hampton dwelling, ensuring the annexe remains fully associated with the main house.

Scale

The scale of the proposed development would remain as existing.

Appearance

The site is within the rural area, although with a few other dwellings in the vicinity. There are not considered to be any prevailing characteristics to the built form in the wider area. However, the design and appearance of the outbuilding is considered traditional for a rural area and will remain unaltered.

Accessibility and Parking

The proposal does not affect the level of parking necessary to serve the site, while sufficient space is left within the site for ample parking and turning space.

Noise

As noted above (under Policy SD7), the proposed outbuilding would remain ancillary in nature to the main residential use of the site. As a result, there will be no detrimental impact on the surroundings, so far as adverse noise is concerned.

Lighting

The proposal does not seek to provide any external lighting. Therefore, the proposal will not have an adverse impact so far as light pollution is concerned, nor harm the dark night skies in this semi-rural area.

Eco Services/Ecology

Local plan policy SD2 sets out guidance on ecosystem services. The policy seeks to ensure that development proposals have an overall positive impact on the ability of the natural environment to contribute goods and services. This will be achieved with a range of opportunities, including sustainably managing land and water environments, and to protect and provide more, better and joined up natural habitats.

The proposal does not result in the loss of any features of interest so far as ecology is concerned. The proposal, being small scale in nature is not able to offer any significant enhancements so far as ecology is concerned. The extended outbuilding may be suitable to provide a bird and/or bat box. This can be controlled by condition if deemed necessary.

5.0 Conclusions

The site is located in a rural setting, outside of a defined settlement boundary. The proposed development comprises a simple conversion to an existing outbuilding from home office to annexe associated with the property Hill Hampton. The development is acceptable in principle in accordance with Policy SD31 of the adopted South Downs Local Plan (2019).

The proposed scheme also accords with the relevant development control policies in the Local Plan, and aligns with the policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposals have adopted a contextual approach by carefully assessing the site in terms of its immediate setting and its relationship with the wider area. Having undertaken this assessment, the proposals do not propose any external alterations to the existing outbuilding which ensures the character and appearance of the site is maintained.

The overall design and appearance of the outbuilding continues to be appropriate to the rural setting of the site and will not detract from the setting of the main dwelling the surrounding landscape.

In summary, it is considered that the proposals are appropriate, are supported by planning policy and will not impact upon any interests of acknowledged importance. As such, we believe the proposed development should be supported by the National Park Authority.