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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING THE DEMOLITION OF EXISTING AGRICULTURAL BUILDING WITH CLASS Q APPROVAL

AT

LAND ADJ. THE BARN
HOLLY COTTAGE
OLD FEN DIKE
SUTTON ST JAMES
PE12 0HE

FOR

MR & MRS GROVES

Job No. SE-2470 **February 2026**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement is in support of the full planning application for a replacement dwelling involving the demolition of an existing agricultural building with Class Q approval, and fallback approval, and construction of a new agricultural styled dwelling with associated external works. The application site is located within land adjacent Holly Cottage, Old Fen Dike, Sutton St James.

2.0 CONTEXT & PROPOSAL

2.1 SITE CONTEXT

The application site is located within land adjacent to Holly Cottage, Old Fen Dike, Sutton St James. The surrounding area to the proposal is made up of a mixture of residential dwellings and agricultural land.

The site is positioned within Flood Zone 3 of the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning and as such, a flood risk report will be submitted to support the application.



Figure 1: Aerial Photograph with existing barn circled in red – Google Maps

2.2 HISTORY

- H20-0517-25: Proposed demolition of existing barn benefiting from Class Q approval under H20-0124-24 and construction of dwelling, associated garage block and external works – Approved.
- H20-0124-24: Conversion of barn into single residential unit – Approved.
- H20-0686-08: Proposed detached double garage – Approved.
- H20-0897-00: Proposed first floor extension and alterations – Approved.
- H20-0744-00: Erection of stable block (part retrospective) and a hay store – Approved.

Prior approval under Class Q, Part 3, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 was granted under the above reference number. The proposal was to change the use of the existing building on site from agricultural to a single dwelling house through conversion. Following this, a fallback position was acquired through planning approval H20-0517-25 which has established the principle to a new two-storey dwelling within the site.

2.3 PROPOSAL

This application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a development following the new purchase of land. The development is of the same nature and use as that previously approved on the site, but with a revised design that reduces the overall footprint of the building to suit the new applicant's needs. The proposal has been carefully considered to retain the previously approved scheme's fundamental principles while responding to feedback, applicant needs and undergoing extensive design refinement to suit the applicant's needs.

The revised scheme maintains the established use and general arrangement of the approved development, ensuring continuity in terms of function, access and relationship within the surrounding site context. However, the building has been re-designed to occupy a smaller footprint within the plot. This reduction has been achieved through an efficient internal layout and rationalised form to suit the new applicant's needs, without compromising the quality, usability or appearance of the proposed development.

As a result, the proposal provides increased areas of external space around the building. This allows for improved outdoor circulation, landscaping opportunities, and a more generous greenspace that can be used as garden space.

The architectural approach remains consistent with the previous application. Materials, proportions and overall character reflecting the established design intent have been upheld. The proposal is balanced in appearance and ensures the development sits comfortably within its surroundings. The finishes are to be brickwork and metal sheet cladding, typical of agricultural buildings found within the local area. A large barn style roller door can be found on the front elevation with full height glazing found behind, replicating the forms that are typical of a barn conversion. It was of the upmost importance to the applicant that throughout the design process, homage was paid to the agricultural history of the site and that this history was retained with any new development.

Access arrangements remain unchanged from the previously approved scheme, with the site continuing to be served by the same upgraded existing site access point. The proposal maintains safe and convenient access for all users.

2.4 PRINCIPLE

The Court of Appeal in Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council [2017] EWCA Civ 1314 confirmed that development under Class Q of the GDPO is a fallback position ie that it is a material consideration for planning applications that permitted development rights under Class Q can be exercised. It confirmed that the fallback position can be given material weight in determining subsequent planning applications.

In order for a fallback position to be realised, the development must be 'real prospect' and it was confirmed that Class Q permitted development rights constitute a real prospect. With this in mind, the development approved under H20-0124-24 is a material planning consideration and should be considered as a fallback position in the consideration of any subsequent applications. On the basis of the above, the single dwelling can be developed under H23-594-20 and that the barn in question is not within a Conservation Area or a Listed Building (which is a requirement of Class Q) the principle of the erection of a new dwelling involving the demolition of existing building is acceptable.

Further to this, the latest approval under H20-0517-25 established that this fallback is not only acceptable in principle but is approved for development.

With the proposal being for a smaller development, the scheme is deemed acceptable and should be supported by the Local Planning Authority.

2.5 FLOOD RISK

The site in question resides within flood zone 3 of the Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning and as such, a Flood Risk Assessment accompanies the application.

Section 14 of the NPPF requires a Sequential approach, directing new development to areas at lowest risk of flooding before land at higher risk is considered. The application site is on land at highest risk of flooding but as the scheme is to effectively replace an existing unit of residential accommodation, there is no alternative land available. Accordingly, the Sequential Test is passed.

Upon passing the Sequential Test, the Exception Test must be addressed. This requires that a) the development is safe for its lifetime without increasing the risk of flooding elsewhere and b) it presents a wider sustainability benefit to the community which outweighs flood risk.

With regards to point a) the proposal is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment which demonstrates that the scheme is technically safe from flooding. With regards to point b) the demolition and rebuild of the property presents an opportunity to provide flood resilience measures which may not have previously been achievable if the scheme was for a conversion only. In view of the above, the Exception Test is passed, and the proposal therefore complies with Section 14 of the NPPF.



Figure 2: Extract from Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning

3.0 DESIGN

3.1 USE & AMOUNT

The proposal is for the erection of a single dwelling involving the demolition of the existing agricultural building. Given the fallback position of H20-0124-24 and the subsequent approval under H20-0517-25, the proposed use and scale of development is acceptable. The proposal is deemed a betterment to the existing approval and will enhance the local area.

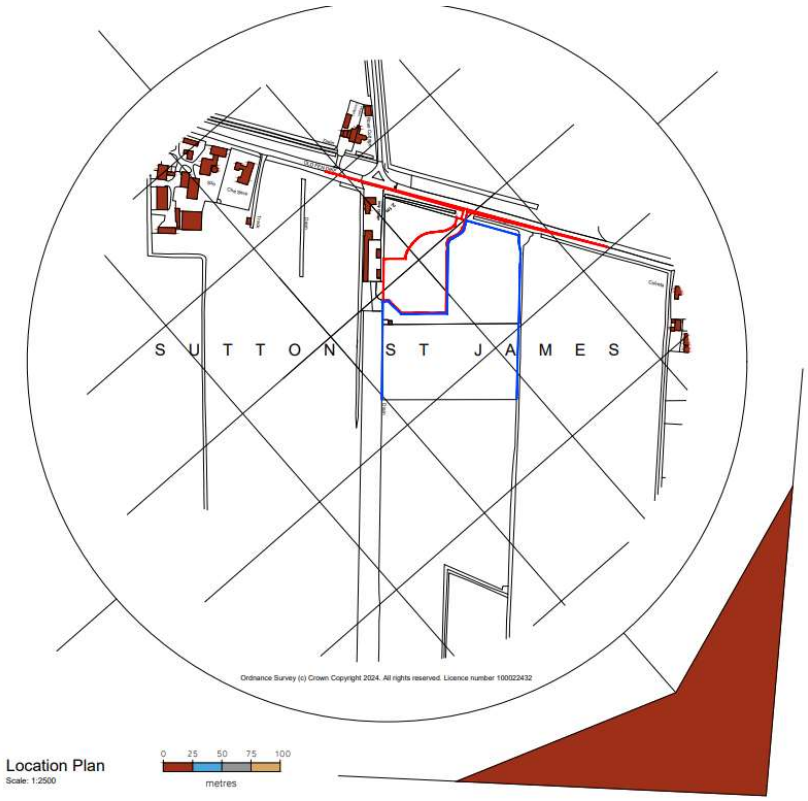


Figure 3: Location Plan

3.2 LAYOUT, SCALE AND APPEARANCE

The dwelling will be generally positioned in a similar position to the existing barn which retains the overall character of the street scene with regards to massing.

The plot utilises the existing site access from the highway and will be upgraded as required to meet highway requirements within the area.

The repositioning of the dwelling will be visually less dense which is considered to be more appropriate to this countryside setting and will have less of an impact on neighbouring residential dwellings. This repositioning also allows for a betterment to the plans which provides a better size home in keeping with the area and orientation that maximises views for the occupant whilst maintain the formations established on the existing site. The building designed to reflect the local area.

Ample off-road parking has been provided along with adequate garden land to suit a development of this nature.

3.3 LANDSCAPING

The proposal includes landscaping as indicated on the attached plans which will enhance the biodiversity of the site, provide a net gain and enhance the future occupier's well-being on site, all whilst looking visually more attractive to the street scene.

3.4 SITE SPECIFIC

Access to the dwelling will be via the existing access point from the highway and is proposed to be upgraded to county council standards. The approved Class Q application and subsequent full application was for a single dwellinghouse and as this application is for the same number of dwellings, it is considered acceptable as the additional vehicular movements have already been established as coming from the highway. The access is existing, and as such, is deemed acceptable at present.

Two sheltered parking spaces have been provided with ample room on the proposed driveway to host emergency vehicles, delivery vehicles and visitors.