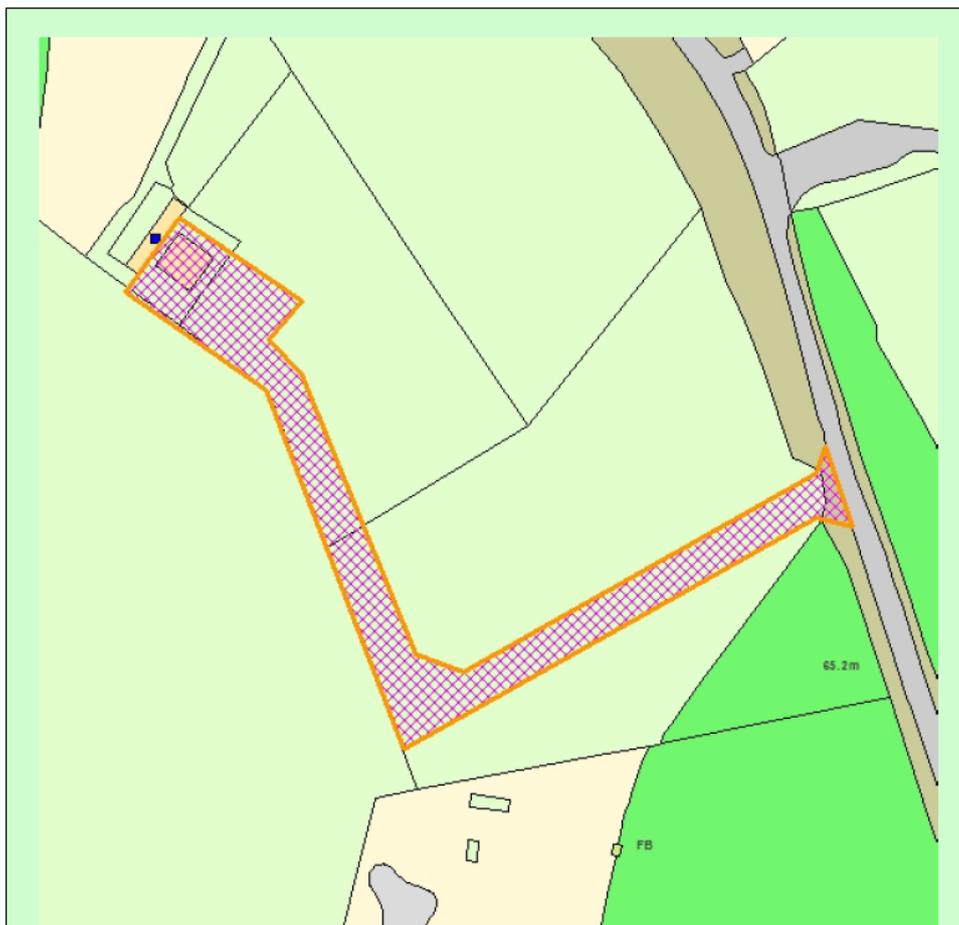


Report to: Planning Applications Committee
Date: 5th October 2022
Application No: SDNP/22/01125/FUL
Location: Land west of Lewes Road, Westmeston, East Sussex
Proposal: Redevelopment of the existing stable block with a holiday accommodation unit.
Applicant: Ms C. Mills
Ward: Ditchling and Westmeston
Recommendation: Grant Permission subject to conditions.
Contact Officer: **Name:** Chris Wright
E-mail: chris.wright@lewes-eastnourne.gov.uk

IMPORTANT NOTE: This scheme is CIL Liable.

Site Location Plan



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1.	Executive Summary
1.1	The comments from both the Parish Council and local residents are acknowledged and have been taken into consideration. However, no material considerations are believed to override the key policy considerations and the development proposals are acceptable in principle and would not have a significant harmful impact on landscape character, neighbour amenity or the highway network.

2.	Relevant Planning Policies
2.1	<u>National Planning Policy Framework</u> 2. Achieving sustainable development 4. Decision making 12. Achieving well-designed places 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding, and coastal change 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
2.2	<u>South Downs Local Plan 2019</u> Policy SD1 Sustainable Development Core Policy SD2: Ecosystem Services Strategic Policy SD4: Landscape Character Strategic Policy SD5: Design Strategic Policy SD7: Relative Tranquillity Strategic Policy SD8: Dark Night Skies Strategic Policy SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity Strategic Policy SD19: Transport and Accessibility Development Management Policy SD21 Highway Design Development Management Policy SD22: Parking Provision Strategic Policy SD23: Sustainable Tourism Strategic Policy SD25: Development Strategy Strategic Policy SD48: Climate Change and Sustainable Use of Resources
2.3	<u>Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan:</u> DS1: Development strategy

	<p>BIZ 2: Support appropriate rural enterprise diversification</p> <p>CONS 2 Set standards for design of new development</p> <p>CONS 6: Conserve landscape and important views</p> <p>CONS 7: Protect important gaps between settlements</p> <p>CONS 8: Preserve dark night skies</p>
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3.	Site Description
3.1	The application relates to a building and land to the west of Lewes Road in Westmeston, and a short distance to the east of Ditchling village. The land is outside of the defined Planning Boundary and is therefore in a countryside location for planning purposes.
3.2	The site is within the South Downs National Park. It is not in a Conservation Area and the existing building is not listed.
3.3	The site has an existing vehicular access off the main road, which is gated, and marked by three reflective black and white bollards located on the highway verge.

4.	Proposed Development
4.1	The application seeks planning permission for demolition of the existing stables building and for construction of a holiday-let comprising three double bedrooms with en-suite and open plan living and kitchen area. The building would be approx. 14.8m x 7.9m.
4.2	Materials are proposed to be dark stained timber cladding, zinc roof in a non-reflective anthracite colour.
4.3	The ridge height is proposed to be 5.9m with eaves at 2.2m.

5.	Relevant Planning History:
5.1	Note the planning history for this site also includes the stables to the rear of the building, which are with the grounds of the neighbouring property, Hooks Acre.

	<p>LW/10/0160/CD - Discharge of condition 3 relating to planning approval LW/08/0393. Not Proceeded With.</p> <p>LW/08/0393 - Provision of track between existing access gateway at Lewes Road to serve barn and shed. Approved 29 May 2008.</p> <p>E/73/0539 - Planning and Building Regulations Applications for addition to existing house. Building Regulations Approved. No Effect Notice. Approved 4 June 1973.</p> <p>E/72/1843 - Planning and Building Regulations Applications for additions to existing dwelling to form self-contained unit. Building Regulations Refused. Refused 13 December 1972.</p> <p>E/72/1583 - Extension to existing dwelling and erection of double garage. Refused 25 September 1972.</p> <p>E/64/1250 - Planning and Building Regulations Applications for conversion of garage to bedroom and erection of new double garage. Building Regulations Approved. Completed. Approved 21 December 1964.</p> <p>E/55/0371 - Outline Application for residential development. Refused 23 May 1955</p>
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6.	Consultations:
6.1	<p><u>Westmeston Parish Council - Objection</u></p> <p><u>Principle</u></p> <p>The development proposes the demolition of an isolated stable block and construction of a holiday accommodation unit in the countryside outside the settlement boundary, providing accommodation for a total of 6 people.</p> <p>The new development, by virtue of the construction of a larger building on the site comprising an additional 30% increase in the footprint of the building over the existing stables building, its roof height, the new hard surfaced driveway and vehicle hard standing, would result in the urbanisation of farmland and the over-development of the site.</p> <p>For these reasons, the proposals are contrary to the development strategy in Policy SD25 of the SDLP and DS1 of the NDP and do not comply with the exceptions in both policies for development outside the settlement boundary. The proposals are neither small-scale, nor low key, are an inappropriate re-use of a previously developed site, and would not conserve, nor enhance, the special qualities of the National Park.</p> <p><u>Visitor accommodation</u></p> <p>The proposed visitor accommodation would be contrary to Policy SD23 of the SDLP. It would adversely affect the character, appearance and amenity of the area and, as a development outside the settlement boundary, would not positively contribute to the natural beauty of the National Park.</p>

Access

The proposed use as holiday accommodation will increase the number of vehicles entering and exiting the site from Lewes Road, particularly ones driven by drivers who are unfamiliar with local traffic dangers. The site access is located on a dangerous section of the road (that has been for some time badly maintained), with many vehicles travelling at high speed. The transport survey undertaken by the applicant was undertaken at a time, when because of the COVID pandemic, traffic was less. This part of Lewes Road is subject to the national 60mph speed limit. Improvements to the site lines at the access from Lewes Road are proposed. However, these include works on land that are outside the applicant's control and may not be able to be implemented. The proposals will increase traffic levels and increase highway safety concerns in Lewes Road.

Dark skies

The planning authority is requested to ensure there will be no adverse impacts on the quality of dark night skies from the proposals, as required by Policy CONS8 of the NDP.

Concerns for future use

The parish council has serious concerns that if the development is constructed, additional accommodation could be provided within the building envelope at first floor level, thereby increasing the number of occupants of the building by a further four persons in two additional bedrooms. This would overly intensify the use of the property and increase vehicle movements and highway safety concerns. In addition, the parish council also has serious concerns that the present proposal for holiday accommodation could become long-term rents or sold as residential property in the future.

The parish council considers, and requests, that if permission were to be granted that robust planning conditions be attached restricting the future use to holiday lets, and preventing further extension of the unit, both in size and additional internal floorspace.

6.2 Ditchling Parish Council - Objection

The development is contrary to Policy SD23: Sustainable Tourism 1. (g), (i), (ii) and (iii) noted below:

g) Where proposals are located outside settlement policy boundaries as defined

on the Policies Map, they:

i) Positively contribute to the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the National Park; and

ii) Are closely associated with other attractions/established tourism uses, including the public rights of way network; or

iii) Are part of farm diversification schemes or endorsed Whole Estate Plans.

New developments in the countryside outside the settlement boundary as this application is contrary to Policy DS1 Development strategy of the

	<p>Ditchling Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan, and it does not meet any of the exceptions.</p> <p>The location is unsustainable with lack of public transport links and is not close to any shops or facilities.</p> <p>Increase in traffic along an already busy lane which has issues with speed, and the site is located on the corner along the Jubilee path with a high level of horse and foot traffic. Change of use to holiday accommodation from grazing will greatly increase traffic movement.</p> <p>The development is contrary to Policy SD4 Landscape Character as the development will cause landscape and visual impacts.</p> <p>It is felt that there is not a requirement for further holiday accommodation in this area.</p> <p>The Council would request that this application is determined by the SNDP due to the nature of the application.</p>
6.3	<p><u>ESCC - Highways - No objection subject to conditions.</u></p> <p><u>Trip Generation</u></p> <p>The applicant has submitted a Transport Statement (TS). The TS includes TRICS data that shows that the proposed development would generate approximately one vehicular trip in the AM peak and one vehicular trip in the PM peak. This level of traffic which will be generated by the development will be relatively low and will not have a material impact on the highway. Considering the above, the proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable.</p> <p><u>Access</u></p> <p>The site has an existing vehicular access from Lewes Road, which leads to an access track, and this is to be improved as part of the proposed development. It is noted that the access track narrows in width away from the highway. Whilst this is not ideal and may not allow vehicles to pass each other simultaneously, this is significantly far from the highway to not result in a severe impact on the highway. It is also noted that the proposed development is not expected to result in a significant increase in trips, and as such, I would not wish to object to this application on this basis.</p> <p>The applicant should note that the access improvement works would require a S184 agreement and should be undertaken by an approved contractor under and appropriate licence.</p> <p><u>Car Parking</u></p> <p>The proposed development will consist of 1 three-bed guesthouse. In accordance with the County Council's parking guidance, 3 car parking spaces are required. There are to be 3 car parking spaces, therefore the number of car parking spaces is considered acceptable.</p> <p><u>Cycle Parking</u></p> <p>In terms of cycle parking provision, there would need to be storage for 1 bicycle for the guesthouse, to be in accordance with the County Council's guidance. The County Council requires cycle parking to be in a safe,</p>

secure, and covered location. The submitted plans indicate there is a cycle store to be provided, therefore this is considered acceptable.

Refuse collection

The submitted plans indicate refuse is to be stored on collections days near the access. This is considered acceptable.

Conclusion

With the above in mind, I would not wish to object to this application, subject to the imposition of conditions.

1. No development shall commence until the vehicular access serving the development has been constructed in accordance with plans and details that shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway

2. The development shall not be occupied until a parking area has been provided in accordance with the details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and the areas shall thereafter be retained for that use and shall not be used other than for the parking of motor vehicles

3. Reason: To ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway

4. The proposed parking spaces shall measure at least 2.5m by 5m (add an extra 50cm where spaces abut walls).

Reason: To provide adequate space for the parking of vehicles and to ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway

5. The development shall not be occupied until a cycle parking area has been provided in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and the area shall thereafter be retained for that use and shall not be used other than for the parking of cycles

Reason: In order that the development site is accessible by non-car modes and to meet the objectives of sustainable development

Informatives

Section 184 Agreement of Highways Act, 1980 - New Access

The applicant will be required to enter into a Section 184 Licence with East Sussex Highways, for the provision of a new vehicular access. The applicant is requested to contact East Sussex Highways (0345 60 80 193) to commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the licence being in place.

Roadworks Permit

The applicant will be required to obtain a permit for any highway works in accordance with the requirements of the Traffic Management Act, 2004. The applicant should contact East Sussex Highways (0345 60 80 193) to

	commence this process. The applicant is advised that it is an offence to undertake any works within the highway prior to the permit being in place.
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7.	Other Representations:
7.1	<p><u>The Ditchling Society - Objection</u></p> <p>The subject land is within the South Downs National Park and outside the settlement boundary of Ditchling.</p> <p>The Policies of the National Park seek to restrict new development to existing settlements. (Policy SD25 of SDNPALP and Policy DS1 of the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan).</p> <p>Development outside existing settlements is to only be permitted exceptionally. Despite it being contrary to Policy the applicant seeks to support the application on the basis that it is using previously developed land.</p> <p>It has been rightly decided by the SDNP authority in numerous other applications that the redevelopment of stabling for residential purposes would not form an appropriate re-use of land. In this case, no exceptional circumstances have been substantiated. The relevant policies of the SDNP and Neighbourhood Plan have been supported on appeal. (See SDNP 18/06553/FUL and related appeal W/4000237).</p> <p>Demand for visitor accommodation within the SDNP can be satisfactorily met by accommodation within existing settlements.</p>
7.2	<p><u>Neighbour Representations:</u></p> <p>Representations have been received from 37 Shirleys, in support of the application, for the reasons summarised below: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No reason not to approve holiday accommodation• Traffic arriving and departing will be negligible• Holiday property use will be seasonal• Spatham Lane will cease to be a 'rat run' once traffic calming is put in place, and traffic on the B2116 will decrease substantially• No problems with access to the land <p>Representations have been received from Westmeston Place and Garden House - Westmeston Place; Greenhayes - Underhill Lane; no address given; Foxwell, Charters, Downsview House and Hook Acre - Lewes Road; and 10 The Dymocks, objecting to the application for the reasons summarised as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contrary to policy SD23 of the Local Plan as only accessible by private car

- The issue of stables as previously developed land is not sufficient reason to permit further development (see Beacon Nurseries appeal decision of 25 March 2020)
- It does not make use of existing buildings
- Outside of settlement boundary
- No benefit to the community
- Does not contribute to natural beauty, wildlife, or cultural heritage
- Not closely associated with other attractions
- Will not enhance landscape and amenity
- Adverse visual impact from scarp slope of the Downs
- Bigger access with wider sight lines
- Speed survey taken during pandemic when roads were quieter
- Upgrading of track
- Creation of an apron for parking and bike store
- Busy, fast road
- Highway safety
- Inadequate visibility at access crossover
- Dangerous access
- Access alongside verge/Jubilee path, which is used by horse and pedestrian traffic
- Contrary to Neighbourhood Plan policy
- There is no existing rural business here
- A building with three double bedrooms each with en-suite is not small scale or low-key
- No shortage of visitor accommodation in the area
- Growth of Air BnB properties
- Ribbon development
- Agricultural land
- Undeveloped as far as the north scarp
- A dwelling would not be permitted on this pasture
- Haven for wildlife
- Peaceful location
- Noise, nuisance, and disturbance
- Could compromise watercourse which is part of the network of ditches and streams which crisscross the area meeting up with the Bevan Stream and which help

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to prevent flooding in these fields which are still impassable for at least 5 or 6 months of the year • Adverse impact on drainage • Nearest bus stop is approx. 1 mile away • No, regular public transport • A septic tank will be required for foul water removal as there is no mains sewer • Westmeston is a rural parish with no visitor facilities • There are no shops or restaurants • Visitors will need to travel to Hassocks or Burgess Hill for supplies • The nearest tourist attraction is Lewes to the east which • can only be reached by car • Brighton is to the south, again accessible only by car • The hedge along the Jubilee Pathway is protected by legislation as it is more than 20m in length with gaps of less than 20m along it • Holiday homes do not promote a sense of community and can harm social wellbeing, for examples noise and parties • Light pollution • Detrimental to dark night skies
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8.	Appraisal:
8.1	<p><u>Key Considerations:</u></p> <p>Sec 38 (6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>The NPPF also advises that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.</p> <p>The site is located within the South Downs National Park and therefore determine by the SDNPA who further to the presumption in favour of sustainable development and sec 38 (4) of the statutory purposes and duty of the National Park are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose 1: To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the area. • Purpose 2: To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duty: To seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes.
8.2	<p><u>Principle of Development</u></p> <p>Proposals for visitor accommodation should provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, enjoyment, and understanding of the National Park. They should also foster guardianship of the special qualities, for example, by promoting and incorporating the National Park's natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage, and the ecosystem services the National Park provides.</p> <p>In this instance, policy SD23 "Sustainable Tourism" is relevant, and each criterion is considered below (policies in italics and officer commentary in normal text).</p> <p>1. <i>Development proposals for visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will be permitted where it is demonstrated that:</i></p> <p>a) <i>The proposals will provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities.</i></p> <p>Whilst not within a settlement boundary, the site is well located in terms of offering visitors a greater awareness and enjoyment of the National Park. It is in a rural location and the village of Ditchling is nearby, as is Ditchling Beacon - the highest point in East Sussex at 248m above sea level, offering panoramic views, archaeological interest (the remains of an Iron-Age hillfort), access to chalk downland, wildflowers, and access to the South Downs Way.</p> <p>b) <i>The design and location of the development minimises the need for travel by private car and encourages access and/or subsequent travel by sustainable means, including public transport, walking, cycling or horse riding.</i></p> <p>Compass Bus Routes 167 and 168 serve Westmeston and Ditchling, providing connections between Lewes and Burgess Hill, both of which have mainline railway stations. The timetables need to be carefully studied to be understood, but connections are there. Although a less than frequent service, holidaymakers, and visitors to the park, arriving or</p>

leaving visitor accommodation, can plan accordingly and their needs differ for example, from employees carrying on a daily commute.

However, even if visitors to the proposed accommodation do arrive by private car, there are various options for subsequent sustainable travel once they have arrived.

Ditchling village is approx. 1200m by foot, or a 3-minute bike ride; and there are various paths and bridleways nearby (for example Ditchling Beacon approx. a 45-minute walk from the application site) including:

Public Bridleway 20a with access to the east to Streat and connecting with Bridleway 11k heading southwards towards the north scarp slopes and the South Downs Way (27e).

Other public footpaths nearby cut across the landscape in the north-easterly and north-westerly directions, linking up with the Public Bridleway network and local villages such as Ditchling and Westmeston.

Some of the best ways for visitors to enjoy and soak up the special qualities of the National Park are by spending time walking, cycling or horse riding and the application site can facilitate this in this location.

The Jubilee path runs along the western side of the main road along the verge and provides an easy link to Ditchling on foot. This path is crossed by several existing driveways to neighbouring properties and farms.

Every opportunity for sustainable travel should be utilised including access to the site and/or subsequent travel, for example bicycle hire provision, as part of visitor accommodation. This is to ensure that the proposals are in accordance with National Park purposes and do not harm the special qualities.

In this regard it is suggested that the applicant and/or manager of the proposed visitor accommodation, provides bikes for the use of tourists and visitors, which should be kept on site and in good working order. A condition to this effect is recommended.

c) Development proposals will not detract from the experience of visitors or adversely affect the character, historical significance, appearance, or amenity of the area.

d) Development proposals make use of existing buildings, and, if no suitable existing buildings are available, the design of any new buildings are sensitive to the character and setting.

The existing building comprises three stables and a storage area, having a floor area of approx. 80 square metres. The building has a pitched roof design with ridge at approx. 4.4m and eaves at 2.7m.

The proposed holiday let would have a floor area of approx. 115 square metres, which is an increase of 43%. Eaves height would be 2.3m and the overall ridge height approx. 5.9m.

The plans submitted at pre-application stage had a floor area of approx. 107 square metres and the ridge height was proposed to be approx. 5.8m with eaves at 2.2m.

The applicant has stated that the existing building is not deemed suitable for conversion and following a request for additional information on this point, the applicant has submitted further details.

The existing building is steel framed and clad in corrugated metal sheet with a corrugated roof. There is a small amount of block wall and timber cladding. Significant works would be required in order to facilitate the proposed conversion to habitable standards, including replacing the walls, roof, and floor slab. The steel frame would also need to be strengthened in order to accommodate insulation, windows, and doors. Very little of the existing structure would remain, meaning we can conclude that it is not suitable for conversion.

The proposed new building would also be positioned further away from the boundary of the site with Hooks Acre and move it away from the neighbouring stable building.

The proposed new building is also positioned to maximise the benefits of adding solar PV panels to the south-west facing roof slope.

e) Ancillary facilities are not disproportionately large in relation to the rest of the visitor facilities.

f) Any proposal does not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town or village centres or assets of community value; and

g) Where proposals are located outside settlement policy boundaries as defined on the Policies Map, they:

i. Positively contribute to the natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage of the National Park; and

ii. Are closely associated with other attractions/established tourism uses, including the public rights of way network; or

iii. Are part of farm diversification schemes or endorsed Whole Estate Plans.

The proposed development site is set back from the public highway and views from outside the site are well screened by vegetation, shrubs and trees, which together with a post and rail fence form the boundary to the field in the corner of which the development would be situated. The new building would be seen briefly, but against the backdrop of a neighbouring stable building, and an adjacent driveway which is part of the neighbouring land belonging to Hooks Acre.

The scale, appearance and siting of the proposed accommodation is not considered to be visually intrusive or significantly harmful to wider landscape character.

2. Development proposals that would result in the loss of visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will not be permitted unless:

a) Evidence is provided that the current use is financially unviable and a robust marketing campaign of at least 12 months has been carried out that

clearly demonstrates there is no market demand for the existing use or an equivalent tourism use; or

b) The current use or related development harms the special qualities.

This part of policy SD23 is not relevant because the proposals are to create new visitor accommodation.

3. The Authority will support a year-round visitor economy, while ensuring the facility remains for visitor use only.

The proposals are in accordance with this aim of policy SD23 and conditions may be imposed to ensure that the building remains for use only as visitor accommodation.

4. Development proposals, on their own or cumulatively with other development uses, must not prejudice or disadvantage people's enjoyment of other existing and appropriate tourism and recreation activities.

Development proposals that generate significant additional pressure upon the surrounding rights of way network will be required to mitigate these impacts.

In this particular location it is not considered that the proposals would compromise the wider enjoyment of the National Park or put a significant amount of additional pressure on the rights of way network.

In addition, the application is considered to meet the requirements of policy DS1 of the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan, which permits development outside of settlement boundaries in exceptional circumstances such as facilities for low-key countryside recreation and tourism, particularly those promoting the use of the National Park, and where it is an appropriate re-use of a previously development site (excepting residential gardens).

8.3

Design and Landscape Character

Policy CONS6 of the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan requires development proposals to conserve landscape and important views:

1. The distinctive landscape, views and scenic beauty of the Neighbourhood Development Plan area should be conserved and enhanced. The landscape of the South Downs National Park and its setting shall be protected in accordance with legislation, national planning policy, and planning practice guidance:

a. respond appropriately to relevant published landscape character assessments, including the statement of local landscape character for the neighbourhood development plan area.

b. do not intrude adversely into key views from publicly accessible locations and particularly those shown on Figure 3.7/1; and

c. preserve the landscape setting of the settlements of Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston.

Strategic Policy SD4: Landscape Character of the South Downs Local Plan states that:

1. *Development proposals will only be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character by demonstrating that:*

a) *They are informed by landscape character, reflecting the context and type of landscape in which the development is located.*

b) *The design, layout and scale of proposals conserve and enhance existing landscape and seascape character features which contribute to the distinctive character, pattern, and evolution of the landscape.*

c) *They will safeguard the experiential and amenity qualities of the landscape; and*

d) *Where planting is considered appropriate, it is consistent with local character, enhances biodiversity, contributes to the delivery of GI, and uses native species, unless there are appropriate and justified reasons to select non-native species.*

Strategic Policy SD5: Design states that:

1. *Development proposals will only be permitted where they adopt a landscape-led approach and respect the local character, through sensitive and high-quality design that makes a positive contribution to the overall character and appearance of the area. The following design principles should be adopted as appropriate:*

a) *Integrate with, respect, and sympathetically complement the landscape character by ensuring development proposals.*

Strategic Policy SD6: Safeguarding Views states that:

1. *Development proposals will only be permitted where they preserve the visual integrity, identity, and scenic quality of the National Park, in particular by conserving and enhancing key views and views of key landmarks within the National Park.*

2. *Development proposals will be permitted that conserve and enhance the following view types and patterns identified in the Viewshed Characterisation & Analysis Study:*

a) *Landmark views to and from viewpoints and tourism and recreational destinations.*

b) *Views from publically accessible areas which are within, to and from settlements which contribute to the viewers' enjoyment of the National Park.*

c) *Views from public rights of way, open access land and other publically accessible areas; and*

d) *Views which include or otherwise relate to specific features relevant to the National Park and its special qualities, such as key landmarks including those identified in Appendix 2 of the Viewshed Characterisation*

& Analysis Study, heritage assets (either in view or the view from) and biodiversity features.

The application site lies within the north scarp foot slopes of the Downs as characterised in the Local Plan, and is visible from the South Downs Way, footpaths leading up to the Downs on the face of the scarp, near to Ditchling Beacon - the highest point in East Sussex at 248m above sea level, offering 360 degree views from its summit.

The application site will be visible in distance views but would be seen in the wider context of Ditchling village, in particular a residential street known as Shirley's, which is a short distance to the west but closer to the ridgeline of the Downs. The proposed development would also replace an existing building, and so would not be adding any additional buildings to existing views.

The development would have a simple and traditional design with external elevations clad with dark stained timber, set under a standing-seam zinc roof, in a non-reflective 'anthracite' colour. A porch canopy is proposed over the front door in the north east elevation. Overall, the ridge of the roof would measure 5.9 metres, with the eaves set low at 2.2 metres.

The more significant impact on distance views is likely to be the access route across the field to the proposed visitor accommodation.

Access tracks across fields are permissible, and indeed similar have been approved closer to the ridgeline of the Downs in recent months for example to the Everflyht Vineyard on the western side of Beacon Road. The important factors are that the access follows existing field boundaries, is screened, and softened with planting, and is constructed of natural materials that blend into the landscape.

In this case, the applicant proposes the access track to follow the edge of the field and indigenous hedge planting along the open side of the track. This minimises the visual impact on the wider landscape. A permeable gravel surface is proposed for the track, although chalk would also be an option.

The access track would use the existing vehicular access onto the main road, and it is noted that, subject to conditions, the highway authority raises no objection to these proposals.

8.4

Ecosystem Services

In order to meet the requirements of policies SD2 and SD9 of the Local Plan the applicant has submitted an Ecosystem Services Statement setting out the following measures:

- 1) Bat boxes or bricks.
- 2) Bird boxes.
- 3) Installation of bug boxes.
- 4) Replacement tree planting.
- 5) Native hedgerow planting.
- 6) Water butts for rainwater collection.

	<p>7) 19% improvement in carbon emissions against Part L of the Building Regulations.</p> <p>8) Water consumption to be no more than 110 litres per person per day.</p> <p>9) Solar photo-voltaic (PV) panels to the south-east roof slope.</p> <p>The local planning authority would wish to see an electric vehicle charging point and details of water/heating that does not involve gas - for example an air source heat pump.</p> <p>In addition, full details of new hedge and tree planting will be required. It is noted that two trees are to be removed and new tree planting should be of an appropriate species and height, in a similar position to those being removed.</p> <p>These details can be secured by imposing appropriate conditions.</p>
8.5	<p><u>Planning Obligations:</u> There are no S106 Planning obligations associated with this proposal.</p>
8.6	<p><u>Human Rights Implications:</u> The impacts of the proposal have been assessed as part of the application process. Consultation with the community has been undertaken and the impact on local people is set out above. The human rights considerations have been considered fully in balancing the planning issues; and furthermore, the proposals will not result in any breach of the Equalities Act 2010.</p>
8.7	<p><u>Conclusions:</u></p> <p>The comments from both the Parish Council and local residents are acknowledged and have been taken into consideration. However, no material considerations are believed to override the key policy considerations and the development proposals are acceptable in principle and would not have a significant harmful impact on landscape character, neighbour amenity or the highway network.</p>

9.	Recommendations
9.1	In view of the above the proposed development is considered to be acceptable and approval is recommended subject to conditions.

10.	Conditions:
10.1	<p>Time Limit</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).</p>

10.2	<p>Approved Plans</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the plans listed below under the heading "Plans Referred to in Consideration of this Application".</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.</p>
10.3	<p>Restriction on Use</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be used for holiday lettings only and for no other purpose (including any other purpose in Class C3 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes)(Amendment)(England) Order 2005, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order).</p> <p>Reason: Occupation of the building for purposes other than holiday lettings for visitors and tourists of the National Park would be contrary to policies SD1 and SD25 of the South Downs Local Plan and policy DS1 of the Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
10.4	<p>Register of Occupiers</p> <p>The owners or operators of the holiday let shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all occupiers of the accommodation, and their main home addresses, and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the premises are not used as a residential dwelling having regard to Policy SD23 of the SDNP Local Plan.</p>
10.5	<p>Time Limit on Occupation</p> <p>The holiday let accommodation hereby approved shall not be occupied continuously by the same person(s) for any single period of time exceeding 28 days.</p> <p>Reason: In order to ensure that the accommodation is used as a holiday let benefiting tourism and the visitor economy and because the introduction of a permanent dwelling in this location would be contrary to planning policy, in accordance with policy SD23 of the South Downs Local Plan and having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>
10.6	<p>CEMP</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan that shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority and maintained in accordance with the approved details thereafter. The Construction Environmental Management Plan shall be submitted within 3 calendar months of the date of this decision, and shall include the following details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The anticipated number, frequency, and types (including size) of vehicles using the access.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed plan of the first stretch of access (approx. 20m) from the edge of Lewes Road. • Full details of the track surface materials. • Full details of the position of any gate across the vehicular access. <p>Reason: In the interests of highway safety, landscape character and the amenities of the area in accordance with policies SD4 and SD5 of the South Downs Local Plan.</p>
10.7	<p>Native Hedgerow</p> <p>The access track shall not be brought into use for its intended purpose as access to the barn until the native species hedgerow has been planted along the open (northerly and easterly) edges of the proposed track. The hedgerow shall be maintained as such thereafter.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of visual amenity, the wider landscape character, and the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and ecological capital.</p>
10.8	<p>Width of Access</p> <p>The access track shall be single lane except for where it opens out into the junction and transition zone with the public highway, and the parking and turning area for the holiday let.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to reduce the impact on wider landscape character.</p>
10.9	<p>Hours of Construction</p> <p>Construction work and deliveries in association with the development hereby permitted shall be restricted to between the hours of 0800 and 1800 Mondays to Fridays and from 0830 until 1300 on Saturdays. No works in association with the development hereby permitted shall be carried out at any time on Sundays or on Bank/Statutory Holidays.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of the residential amenities of the neighbours having regard to policies SD5 and SD7 of the South Downs Local Plan and to comply with National Policy Guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>
10.10	<p>No External Lighting</p> <p>No external lighting shall be installed within the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control the development in detail in the interests of night-time amenity, tranquillity and protect and conserve the International Dark night Skies.</p>
10.11	<p>EV Charging</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use for purposes hereby approved until a minimum of one electric vehicle</p>

	<p>charging point has been provided and made available for use, in a position that is convenient to use for occupiers of the holiday let.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of reducing harmful emissions and local contributors towards climate change.</p>
10.12	<p>In Accordance with Ecosystem Services Statement</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the Ecosystem Services Statement submitted and maintained as such thereafter.</p> <p>Reason: In order to enhance the natural capital and biodiversity of the site, in accordance with Ecosystem Services objectives.</p>
10.13	<p>Vehicle Access Details</p> <p>No development shall commence until the vehicular access serving the development has been constructed in accordance with plans and details that shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway.</p>
10.14	<p>Parking Area</p> <p>The development shall not be occupied until a parking area has been provided in accordance with the details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and the areas shall thereafter be retained for that use and shall not be used other than for the parking of motor vehicles</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway.</p>
10.15	<p>Size of Parking Area</p> <p>The proposed parking spaces shall measure at least 2.5m by 5m (add an extra 50cm where spaces abut walls).</p> <p>Reason: To provide adequate space for the parking of vehicles and to ensure the safety of persons and vehicles entering and leaving the access and proceeding along the highway.</p>
10.16	<p>Cycle Parking</p> <p>The development shall not be occupied until a cycle parking area has been provided in accordance with details which have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority and the area shall thereafter be retained for that use and shall not be used other than for the parking of cycles</p> <p>Reason: In order that the development site is accessible by non-car modes and to meet the objectives of sustainable development.</p>
10.17	<p>Land Management Plan</p> <p>Following implementation of the development hereby approved, the site shall be managed in accordance with a land management plan, the details of which shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning</p>

	<p>Authority prior to the development hereby permitted being brought into use for its authorised purpose. The land management plan shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grazing and cutting regime for the paddocks. • The stock intensity and amount of time and seasons they will be on the land. • Any chemical treatments to be applied to the land. <p>No subsequent changes to this management will be made without the written approval of the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To secure biodiversity enhancements on the site in accordance with policy SD9 of the South Downs Local Plan.</p>
10.18	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>No development shall take place until detailed information in a design stage sustainable construction report in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) design stage SAP data b) design stage BRE water calculator c) product specifications d) building design details e) layout or landscape plans <p>demonstrating that the building has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reduced predicted CO2 emissions by at least 19% due to energy efficiency and. b) reduced predicted CO2 emissions by a further 10% due to on site renewable energy compared with the maximum allowed by building regulations c) EV charge point d) predicted water consumption no more than 110 litres/person/day e) separate internal bin collection for recyclables f) private garden compost bin and providing evidence demonstrating: g) sustainable drainage and adaptation to climate change h) selection of sustainable materials <p>has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be built in accordance with these agreed details.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure development demonstrates a high level of sustainable performance to address mitigation of and adaptation to predicted climate change.</p>
10.19	<p>Restriction on Temporary Structures</p> <p>Notwithstanding Part 4 and Part 5 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended by the Town and Country</p>

	<p>Planning (Use Classes)(Amendment)(England) Order 2005, or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order, no temporary uses or structures (for example campsites) shall be permitted on any part of the application site.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of amenity, highway safety and preserving and enhancing landscape character.</p>
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11.	Plans:
11.1	This decision relates solely to the following plans:

	<u>Plan Type</u>	<u>Date Received</u>	<u>Reference:</u>
	EXISTING SITE PLAN AND FLOOR PLAN	03.03.2022	SK01
	SITE PLAN	03.03.2022	SK03A
	FLOOR PLANS AND LOCATION PLAN	03.03.2022	SK04B
	PROPOSED FRONT AND PRINCIPAL SIDE ELEVATIONS	03.03.2022	SK05C
	BLOCK PLAN	03.03.2022	SK06B
	Application Documents -	03.03.2022	LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL
	Application Documents -	03.03.2022	ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT
	Application Documents -	03.03.2022	ECOSYSTEMS SERVICES STATEMENT
	Application Documents -	03.03.2022	HIGHWAY ACCESS REPORT
	Application Documents -	03.03.2022	NOISE ASSESSMENT
	Application Documents -	03.03.2022	PLANNING. DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

12.	Appendices
12.1	None.

13.	Background Papers
13.1	None.