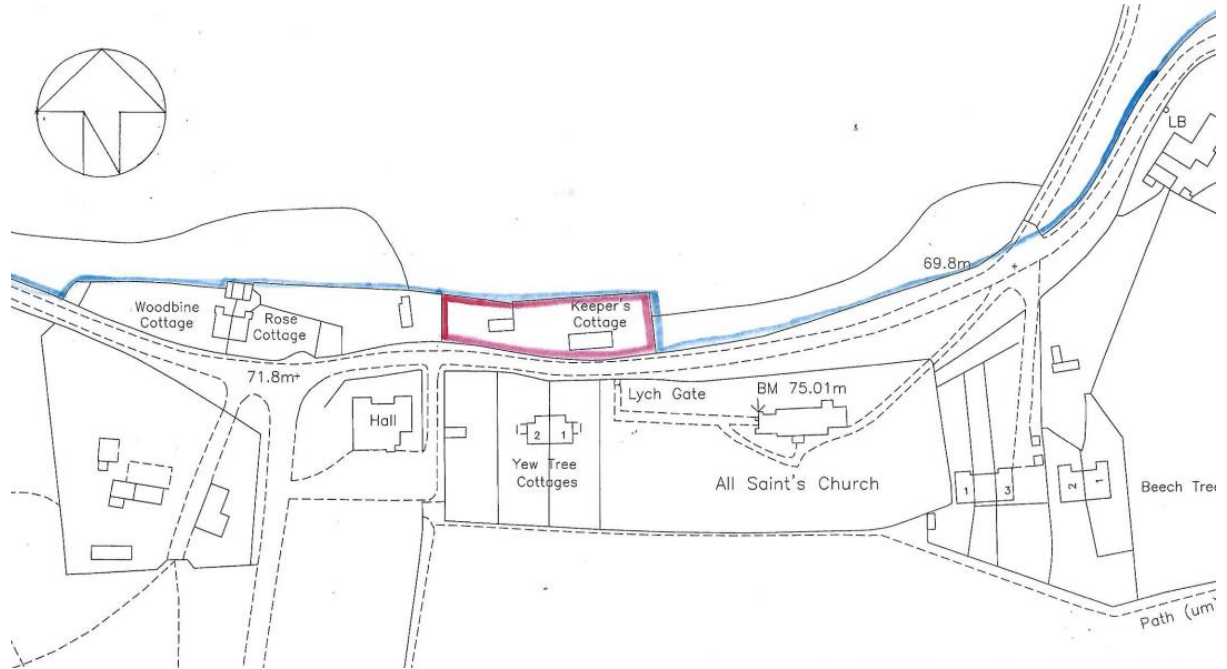


SITE PLAN

RR/2022/112/L

MOUNTFIELD

Keepers Cottage  
Mountfield Lane



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Not to Scale

## Rother District Council

Report to - Planning Committee  
Date - 26 May 2022  
Report of the - Director - Place and Climate Change  
Subject - Application RR/2022/112/L  
Address - Keepers Cottage, Church Lane, TN32 5JT  
Proposal - Two storey extension to rear. Demolition of existing porch. Internal alterations.

[View application/correspondence](#)

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**RECOMMENDATION:** It be **RESOLVED** to **REFUSE (LISTED BUILDING CONSENT)**

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**Director: Ben Hook**

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**Applicant:** Mountfield Court Estate  
**Agent:** Roger Howells Architects  
**Case Officer:** Mr Sam Koper  
(Email: [sam.koper@rother.gov.uk](mailto:sam.koper@rother.gov.uk))

**Parish:** MOUNTFIELD  
**Ward Members:** Councillors J. Barnes and Mrs E.M. Kirby-Green

**Reason for Committee consideration:** Application called in by Councillor Mrs Kirby-Green and Director – Place and Climate Change referral: “Local community including the Parish Council strongly supports the plan to modernise the cottage. The view is that the plans are sympathetic and in keeping with the position and locality.”

**Statutory 8-week date: 11 March 2022**  
**Extension of time agreed to: 3 June 2022**

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This application is included in the Committee site inspection list.

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### 1.0 SUMMARY

The proposal seeks listed building consent for the erection of a two-storey rear extension and internal alterations. The only issue for consideration for this listed building application is the impact on the importance of the listed building and its setting. The application is recommended for refusal due to harm caused to the listed building.

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## **2.0 SITE**

- 2.1 Keepers Cottage is a Grade II listed detached two-storey dwelling on the north side of Church Lane. The property is stated to be 17<sup>th</sup> Century or earlier. The building on the application site was listed on 13 May 1987. The site also sits opposite The Parish Church of All Saints, a Grade II\* listed building.
- 2.2 The site is within the remote countryside and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It also sits within an Archaeological Notification Area. It is not situated within any designated development boundary.
- 2.3 The listing description of Keepers Cottage describes it as:  
*“C17 or earlier. Two storeys. Two windows. Ground floor red brick, above tile-hung. Tiled roof. Casement windows. Gabled brick porch.”*
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## **3.0 PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 This application seeks listed building consent for the demolition of the existing porch on the western elevation, the erection of a two-storey rear extension and associated internal alterations.
- 3.2 The proposed rear extension would be part single storey and part two storey, with the existing roof pitch extended along the western side elevation. The upper roof form on the northern elevation would be fully hipped and match the pitch of the existing roof.
- 3.3 The proposed extension would measure 4.1m in depth and 6.65m in width. The height of the eaves along the western elevation would match the existing roof and would continue along to join the new roof above the first-floor level. The eaves height of the new hipped roof above would match the existing dwelling and the ridge height would not exceed the highest part of the house.
- 3.4 The proposed exterior materials to be used for the walls are reclaimed bricks and handmade plain clay tiles to match the existing building, for the roof it is proposed to use reclaimed plain clay peg tiles to match the existing roof tiles. The new windows and external doors are proposed to be painted timber to match the existing house.
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## **4.0 HISTORY**

- 4.1 RR/2021/1825/P Two storey rear extension. Demolition of existing porch. Internal alterations. – Withdrawn
- 4.2 RR/2021/1826/L Two storey rear extension. Demolition of existing porch. Internal alterations. – Withdrawn
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## **5.0 POLICIES**

- 5.1 The following policies of the adopted Rother Local Plan Core Strategy are relevant to the proposal:

- RA1: Villages
  - EN2: Stewardship of the Historic Built Environment
- 5.2 The following policies of the adopted Development and Site Allocations (DaSA) Local Plan are relevant to the proposal:
- DHG9: Extensions, Alterations and Outbuildings
- 5.3 The following objectives of the adopted High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 are relevant to the proposal:
- Objective S2: To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement
- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance are also material considerations particularly section 16 on the conservation of historic assets.
- 5.5 Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 confers a statutory duty to local planning authorities when considering whether to grant listed building consent, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
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## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 Planning Notice – No representations received
- 6.2 Mountfield Parish Council – **NO OBJECTION**
- 6.2.1 Mountfield Parish Council strongly supports this application.
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## **7.0 APPRAISAL**

- 7.1 The only issue for consideration for this listed building application is the impact on the importance of the listed building and its setting.
- 7.2 Policy EN2 relates to development affecting the historic built environment, including that both statutorily protected and the non-statutorily protected, and it will be required to (iii) Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials, including forms specific to historic building typologies.
- 7.3 Policy RA1 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy states that the needs of rural villages will be addressed by: Protection of the locally distinctive character of villages, historic buildings and settings, with the design of any new development being expected to include appropriate high-quality response to local context and landscape.
- 7.4 Policy DHG9 (v) of the DaSA Local Plan states that extensions to existing buildings will be permitted where they fully respect and are consistent with the character and qualities of historic buildings and areas, where appropriate

- 7.5 Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 7.6 Paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.
- 7.7 Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 7.8 Paragraph 200 and 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification and that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.9 Although not unique, it is considered that a lobby entrance house of such a period that maintains its original plan form (with the exception of the very minor outshot to the West elevation) is considered to be relatively rare. As such it is considered that the rear extension over the two stories will alter the historic interpretation of the building and remove it from its traditional format to an unacceptable degree.
- 7.10 Although considered as harmful it is acknowledged that the harm caused would be considered to be less than substantial and therefore can be mitigated by way of clear and convincing justification or public benefits as detailed under paragraphs 200 and 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework. In this particular case there is no evidence that justifies why the property requires a further extension.
- 7.11 Currently the property benefits from a kitchen, bathroom, two reception rooms, two bedrooms and an additional toilet on the first floor. It is considered in this current existing layout the property could function as a small two-bedroom family dwelling without further extensions being added to the building and thus maintaining its historical significance and architectural interest. In terms of public benefits, it is considered that the properties re introduction to provide residential housing after a period of vacancy is a public benefit however, the larger format proposed would not provide sufficient mitigation against the harm caused.
- 7.12 In terms of the buildings general condition internally it is noted that various adaptations reconstruction and other works have taken place particularly during the 19th century. Nevertheless, the general plan form of a lobby entrance cottage remains. It is acknowledged that the staircase access has been relocated and significant alteration has occurred to the main chimney stack,

however this does not excessively detract from the properties historic character.

- 7.13 It is considered that the refurbishment of the property would be welcomed without the proposed extension. The extension would unacceptably alter the buildings plan form which is an element with great weight in terms of overall significance. The removal of what can only be described as a poor shed like addition referred to as a 'porch' to the western elevation is encouraged and does not benefit from listed building consent and is a very poor addition.
- 7.14 The proposed extension is considered to fail to satisfy the policies detailed above in terms of bulk, scale and associated impact upon the setting. The proposed footprint is approx. 27sqm, being 6.65m wide and over 4.1m deep. For sake of comparison, the cottage including the 19th century outshot is approx. 61sqm. This makes the new floor space increase by almost 50% over the area of the whole building at ground floor level. The first floor will have an additional 16sqm afforded to its existing 50sqm floorplan. The depth of the development will almost double the depth of the building at the western end giving an additional 4.1m to the 4.5m deep building.
- 7.15 The overall bulk and form adopted is compounded by its vertical scale being equal to the of the host building removing a sense of subservience which is a requirement of the above policies.

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## **8.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 The proposal would have a detrimental impact on the character and setting of the listed building; therefore, the application is recommended for refusal.

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### **RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE (LISTED BUILDING CONSENT)**

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#### **REASONS FOR REFUSAL:**

1. Having regard to Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, it is considered that the proposed works, by virtue of excessive bulk, scale, loss of a clear building form and typology would adversely affect the setting and special architectural and historic character and interest of the listed building as a designated heritage asset, and as such would be contrary to Policies EN2 and RA1 of the Rother Local Plan Core Strategy, Policy DHG9 of the Development and Site Allocation Plan, and paragraphs 200 and 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

#### **NOTES:**

1. This refusal relates to the proposal as shown on the following plans:  
Drawing No. 2106/RS1, dated March 2021  
Drawing No. 2106/RS2, dated March 2021  
Drawing No. 2106/1, dated July 2021  
Drawing No. 2106/2, dated July 2021  
Drawing No. 2106/3, dated July 2021

Drawing No. 2106/4, dated July 2021

2. It is suggested that a revised application to only consider the restoration of the cottage may be accepted and given due consideration. However, in this case the principle of extension is not supported.