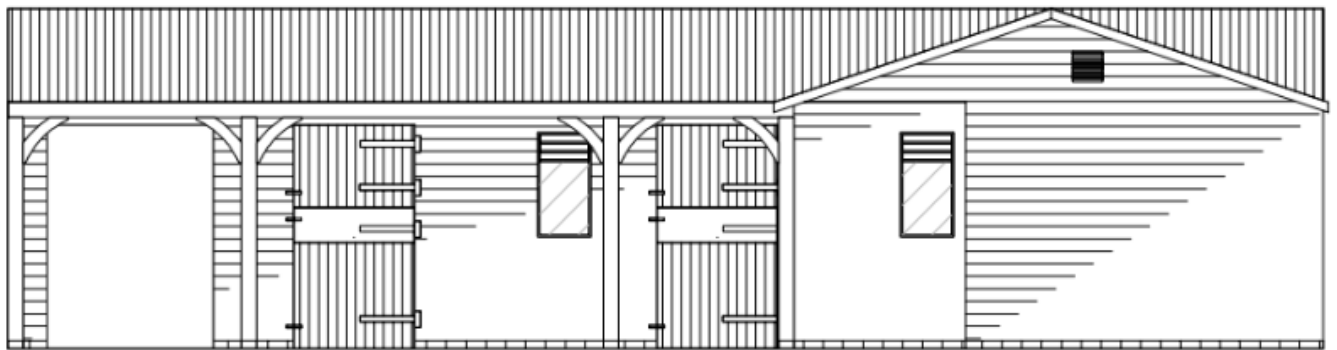




SUPPORTING PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, Meopham DA13 9AA

August 2025

SUPPORTING PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

In support of an application for the
Change of use of land to equestrian, with the erection of a stable block

at

**Tudor Cottage
Nash Street
Meopham
DA13 9AA**

On behalf of

Mr and Mrs J Booth

	INITIALS	DATE
DRAFTED BY	OS	30/07/2025
REVIEWED BY	DD	27/08/2025

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Bloomfields Chartered Town Planners have been commissioned by Mr and Mrs Booth to prepare a full planning application for the change of use of land to equestrian and the erection of a stable block at Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, Meopham, DA13 9AA.
- 1.2. The proposed development will allow the clients' own horses to be moved from the unsuitable outbuilding where they are currently housed, to a new purpose-built stable block on a parcel of land which is part of the wider land holding of Tudor Cottage. The equine use will be for the private and domestic use of the applicants only.
- 1.3. This application should be read in conjunction with a full application which has been submitted concurrently with this 'change-of-use' application, and will allow for the vacated outbuilding to be repurposed to independent annexe-style living accommodation for a relative.
- 1.4. This statement has been drafted to demonstrate that the proposed scheme is consistent with the objectives of the Adopted Development Plan for Gravesham, and that there would be no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024).
- 1.5. The application submission is accompanied by the following submitted plans and supporting documents:
 - Floor and Roof Plan Dwg No. 12662ZY Page 1 of 2
 - Elevations Plan Dwg No. 12662ZY Page 2 of 2
 - Existing Block Plan ProMap dated 21.06.2025 Rev v1
 - Proposed Block Plan undated
 - Site Location Plan 21.6.2025 Rev v1
 - Preliminary Baseline Assessment Native Ecology July 2025
 - BNG Baseline Feasibility Report Native Ecology July 2025
 - BNG Condition Assessment Sheets Native Ecology July 2025
 - BNG Metric Native Ecology Native Ecology July 2025

2. The site

- 2.1. Tudor Cottage is a residential property, located in a rural setting, between the settlements of Istead Rise and Meopham. The residential curtilage comprises a detached residential property, rear garden and ancillary outbuilding. Tudor Cottage is designated as a Grade II listed building, entry no. 1054085.
- 2.2. The property is characterised by red brick elevations and timber framing with curved braces between the timber framing above the front door. The dwelling has a simple pitched roof with hip ends and is covered in clay peg tiles. Under Planning Permission ref. 20191062, a number of 'modern windows' were replaced to match the original windows, which are timber-framed and single glazed with diamond leaded details.
- 2.3. The application site, herein referred to as 'the site', and shown in Figure 1, comprises 325 sq.m hectares of short sward, intensively managed modified grassland and an intensively horse-grazed field, situated along the western boundary of the ownership boundary of Tudor Cottage. The site benefits from its own dedicated access from Nash Street, which provides access to the field on the western side of Tudor Cottage.
- 2.4. To the east and south of the site are several residential buildings, including the Grade II listed building Nash Street Farmhouse. Further afield, the site is surrounded by parcels of agricultural land.



Figure 1. Google Maps aerial image of the site (red boundary).

- 2.5. In terms of constraints, the site is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt, as well as the North Downs National Character Area and is within close proximity to two Grade II Listed Buildings.

3. Proposal

- 3.1. This application is for change of use of land and the erection of a purpose-built stable block for the sole use of the occupants of Tudor Cottage.
- 3.2. There is a need for new stables because the clients' horses are currently living in an unsuitable outbuilding to the frontage of Tudor Cottage. Prior to its stable use this outbuilding was a garage and store connected with the occupation of Tudor Cottage. On this basis, it is not appropriate for the current equestrian use due to its poor ventilation, lack of natural light and its construction, including incorrect flooring and poor access.

4. Planning History

- 4.1. There are no planning applications related to this site, however there are Listed Building consents relating to Tudor Cottage.
- 4.2. These Listed Building consents, and associated condition discharge applications, relate to the internal and external alterations to Tudor Cottage, and although they have been considered in detail in the concurrent application related to the provision of an annexe, they are not considered relevant to this application.

5. Design and Access

Use

- 5.1. The site currently has an agricultural use. However, it has been utilised for equestrian use for a time period in excess of 10 year.

Amount and scale

- 5.2. The stable block will be located along the western boundary of land in the applicant's ownership.
- 5.3. The building will be approximately 13.26 metres in length, and 9.80 metres wide reducing to 5.49 metres wide to form an 'L' shape, with an eaves height of 2.46 metres and a ridge height of 3.40 metres.
- 5.4. The development will include two areas of hard standing, one to the front of the stable block and one to the south.
- 5.5. The hard standing to the front will be of concrete slab construction and form a collecting yard for the horses, as well as a safe working area for farriers and vets, to include a 1.8 metre roof overhang. This area measures to 38.24 sq.metres.
- 5.6. The hard standing to the south of the stable block will be formed of permeable compacted aggregate, measuring to 52.81 sq.metres to include the muck store, which itself measures to 12.23 sq.metres.

Layout

- 5.7. The stable block will consist of an 'L' shaped building including 3 stables, a hay store, tack room and washdown bay.
- 5.8. The size of the individual stables has been designed in accordance with space recommendations from the British Horse Society.

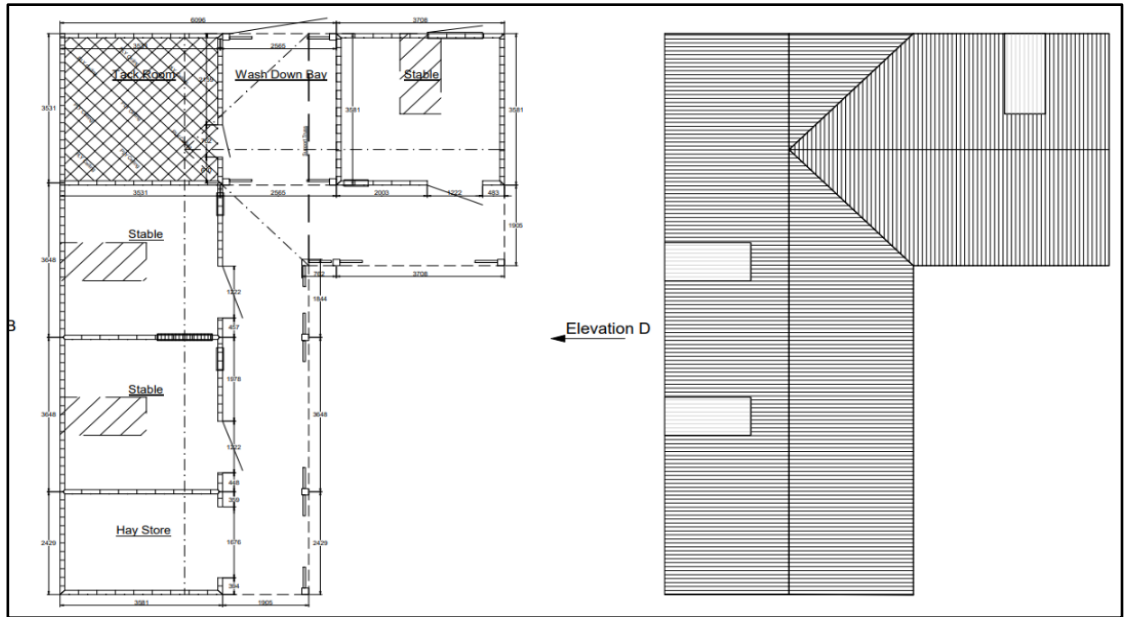


Figure 3. Proposed floor plan

Appearance

- 5.9. The walls of the stable block will be constructed with Canadian lumber standard timber and clad in pressure-treated weatherboard cladding with a sawn finish, with a pitched roof made with black Onduline roofing sheets.
- 5.10. The stable doors will be two-part stables doors, and the hay barn will have a wide, open entrance to allow for easy entry and loading of materials.
- 5.11. On its northern elevation, the washroom will have an open entrance, secured by a gate, allowing horses to enter the washroom and stables from the rear of the block.

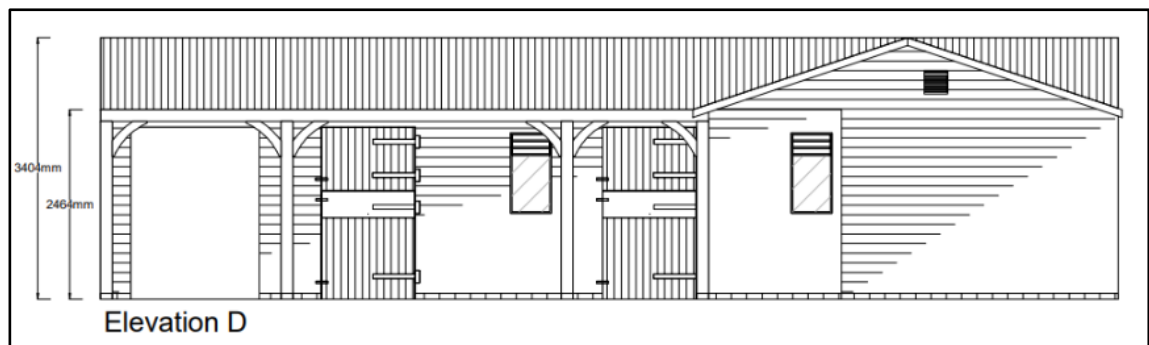


Figure 4. Proposed southern elevation

Landscaping

- 5.12. To adhere to BNG requirements, a full biodiversity plan and landscaping scheme has been submitted alongside the application. This will include the provision of four small trees along the track line, leading to the stable block, and the retention of existing habitats on site where suitable. The existing habitats include a mature native hedgerow that runs along the western boundary of the applicant's property, providing an established visual shield to the proposed development.
- 5.13. In total, the development proposals will result in a 10.03% gain in the biodiversity value of the area habitats within the site.

Access

- 5.14. The site will be accessed directly via an existing gateway leading off Nash Street.
- 5.15. A 7.3 square metre area of hard standing will be located at the entrance to Nash Street, providing a safe entry and exit point onto the highway. The access track will utilise a cellular porous plastic paving grid system for grass reinforcement, which will maintain the appearance of the grass field whilst allowing for vehicular access to the stables for vets, farriers and feed deliveries.

6. Heritage

- 6.1. The application site is in close proximity and within the setting of two Grade II listed buildings:
- Tudor Cottage, entry list no. 1054085
"18th century or earlier. Two-storey timber-framed house with curved braces. Red brick infilling. Hipped tiled roof. Four casements. Diamond paned windows. Flat hood on shaped wooden brackets over door. Substantial central brick chimney stack."
 - Nash Street Farmhouse, entry list no. 1350212

“Early C19. Red brick walls, slated roof. Two storey; 2 casement windows with pointed Gothic panes 3 similar windows on first floor. Flat hood over front door. Modillion eaves cornice. Gable ended roof with parapets. (Similar rear elevation gain with windows intact).”



Figure 5. Landstack image of the site in relation to the listed buildings.

- 6.2. A heritage statement is therefore necessary to assess potential impacts related to the proposed new stables on the historical significance of these nearby heritage assets.
- 6.3. The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out that ‘In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 6.4. *“The property is believed to date back to the 18th century or earlier and comprises 2 storey brick and timber framed house with feature exposed timbers to the upper part of the front and rear elevation, including 2 attractive curved braces with red brick infilling. This is all under a pitched, timber roof construction with a tiled covering. The roof is hipped at either end and a catslide to the rear. There are 4 casements on the front elevation with diamond paned windows and a central brick chimney stack. This all accords with the list description.*

- 6.5. *The external walls are of solid brickwork construction and timber construction with brick infill panelling. On the front and rear elevations, some of the timbers are exposed. On the eastern elevation there is a rendered finish to the ground and first floor. This is a hard cement based render which has been added at a later date.*
- 6.6. *There is clear evidence of works that have been carried out in the last century which are not appropriate for a listed building. This includes the hard cement render, the conservatory to the front (that has since been removed), the replacement windows and the creation of more modern window and door openings, particularly on the north west corner. The annexe was believed to have previously been used as a garage and on the north elevation there is evidence of this where a former door opening existed". Heritage Statement (September, 2019) Bloomfields 2019, produced to support Listed Building application 20191062.*
- 6.7. This should be read in conjunction with the Heritage Statement submitted as a background document to the concurrent application for the annexe conversion. '*Heritage Impact Statement for the proposed barn conversion at Tudor Cottage, Nash Street, August 2025- Clague Architects*'.

7. Planning Policy

- 7.1. The proposed development has been considered in accordance with the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), Gravesham Local Plan First Review Saved Policies (2014) as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).
- 7.2. Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan in force unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

- 7.3. **Paragraphs 7 and 8** of the NPPF outline that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through three overarching objectives:

- a) An economic objective - 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 and vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of the present and future generations and by fostering well designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities health, social and cultural wellbeing, and
- c) An environmental objective - to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of and, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

7.4. **Paragraph 10** states, so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. **Paragraph 11** confirms that in respect of decision-taking, the presumption in favour should be applied as follows:

- d) “Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- e) Where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless;
 - i) The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed or
 - ii) Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”

- 7.5. **Paragraph 39** provides guidance in relation to decision-making and outlines that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, seeking to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 7.6. **Paragraph 96 (c)** sets out that decisions should aim to enable and support healthy lives, for example through the provision of sports facilities.
- 7.7. **Paragraph 103** outlines the importance of access to opportunities for sport and physical activity for the health and wellbeing of communities.
- 7.8. **Paragraph 116** outlines that “development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios”.
- 7.9. **Section 12** of the NPPF sets out a guide to creating well-designed, high-quality and sustainable development. **Paragraph 131** in particular states that “creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”.
- 7.10. **Paragraphs 135** outlines that decisions should ensure developments:
- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; and
 - f) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

- 7.11. **Section 13** outlines the importance of Green Belt land as well as measures to prevent urban sprawl. In particular, **paragraph 153** sets out that “when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness”. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 7.12. **Paragraph 154 (b)** outlines that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it is for the provision of appropriate facilities, including outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 7.13. **Section 14** states that plans should contribute to the mitigation and adaptation of climate change, taking into account the long-term implications of flood risk. In particular, **paragraph 170** outlines that “inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing areas away from areas at highest risk”.
- 7.14. **Paragraph 187** outlines that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services. Proposals should also aim to minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity.
- 7.15. **Paragraph 203** states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation of the historic environment and should take into account aim to make a “positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness”.
- 7.16. **Paragraph 207** sets out that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.
- 7.17. **Paragraph 212** 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).

- 7.18. **Paragraph 215** outlines 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.

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- 7.19. **Policy CS13: Green Space, Sport and Recreation** outlines that the Council will seek to make provision for and enhance the quantity and accessibility of sports facilities.
- 7.20. **Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development** sets out that development outside of rural settlements will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in this plan.
- 7.21. **Policy CS19: Development and Design Principles** sets out that new development should be visually attractive and should conserve and protect the character of the local and natural environment. To achieve this, developments should be sympathetic to the local setting in terms of design, scale, materials and density. Development should safeguard amenity, including privacy and daylight of neighbouring properties and should avoid adverse environmental impacts from pollution, including noise and odour pollution. Development should also protect and enhance biodiversity.
- 7.22. **Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment** states that proposals will be supported which preserve and where appropriate, enhance the setting of heritage assets.
- 7.23. **Policy CS01: Sustainable Development** states that planning decisions that accord with the policies in the development plan for Gravesham will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 7.24. **CS11: Transport** states that new development should mitigate its impact on the highway and public transport networks.
- 7.25. **CS18 Climate Change** sets out that the “Council will expect new development to take advantage of opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding from all sources where it is technically and financially feasible”.

Gravesham Local Plan First Review Saved Policies (2014)

- 7.26. **Policy C17** sets out that proposals for the erection of stables will only be permitted if they are compatible with the agricultural, landscape and transport policies of this Plan. Where proposals are acceptable in principle, the authority will expect stables to be properly designed and constructed of sound materials appropriate to the countryside and to be in an acceptable location within the site.
- 7.27. **Policy T4** states that authorities will not permit proposals for development outside of the confines of the built-up area that generates significant vehicular traffic.

8. Analysis

- 8.1. Policy CS01 of the Local Plan (2014) states that planning decisions that accord with the policies in the development plan for Gravesham will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following sections demonstrate that the proposal complies with the relevant policies. Therefore, it is considered that the application should be approved without delay.

Principle of development

- 8.2. This proposal is for the development of a stable block within the landownership of the client's residential property, Tudor Cottage. The stables will be for private and personal use relating to the occupation of Tudor Cottage.
- 8.3. As outlined in Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the NPPF, the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 8.4. The proposed stable block is to be located adjacent to a number of buildings, within land adjoining the residential curtilage, ensuring that it remains visually contained within the established built environment. As such, it would not extend development into open, undeveloped land and would have no detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt. By positioning the stable block in close proximity to existing structures, the development respects the spatial character of the site and maintains the visual separation between built form and the surrounding countryside. This approach aligns with Green Belt policy objectives by avoiding urban sprawl and preserving the sense of openness that defines the rural landscape.

- 8.5. The provision of a stable block at the client's property will significantly reduce the need for regular travel to and from external livery yards or equestrian facilities, which will become necessary given the ongoing use of the current stable building is no longer viable, as set out in this statement. This reduction in transport requirements directly contributes to lowering greenhouse gas emissions associated with the use of vehicles. By enabling the daily care, feeding, and exercise of horses to take place entirely within the boundaries of the property, the proposed development supports more sustainable patterns of land use and reduces dependency on fossil-fuel-based transport. This aligns with national and local planning policies that promote sustainable development and encourage measures to mitigate climate change.

Green Belt

- 8.6. The proposal is located within the Green Belt and therefore should be considered carefully as part of this application.
- 8.7. This proposal is for the provision of a stable block. Under paragraph 154 (b) of the NPPF, the proposal would therefore not be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt as it would support the provision of appropriate facilities, including buildings for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation.
- 8.8. Paragraph 153 of the NPPF sets out that local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Paragraph 154 (b) specifically requires facilities for outdoor sport and recreation to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and should not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- 8.9. Local Plan Policy CS02 sets out that development outside of rural settlements will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in this plan. Equestrian uses have long been considered an acceptable use in the Green Belt.
- 8.10. Policy CS13 of the Local Plan outlines that the Council will seek to make provision for and enhance the quantity and accessibility of sports facilities.

- 8.11. The site has been used for equestrian use for a period in excess of 10 years, and therefore, a Lawful Development Certificate could be applied for to regularise the use. This is a material consideration when assessing the proposals for the site.
- 8.12. The proposed stable block will contribute to the overall provision and enhancement of equestrian infrastructure within the local area. By increasing the number of high-quality, purpose-built stables, the development supports and strengthens the borough's capacity to accommodate horse-related activity, both now and in the future.
- 8.13. It is demonstrated that the development meets policies of the NPPF and, as detailed in Policy CS02, should be supported by the local planning authority.

Design, character and appearance

- 8.14. Section 12 of the NPPF outlines that development should be of a high quality, producing visually attractive designs which are sympathetic to and add to the local areas and its character.
- 8.15. Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) sets out that new development should be visually attractive and should conserve and protect the character of the local and natural environment. To achieve this, developments should be sympathetic to the local setting in terms of design, scale, materials and density.
- 8.16. Local Plan Saved Policy C17 specifically states that the authority will expect stables to be properly designed and constructed of sound materials appropriate to the countryside and to be in an acceptable location within the site.
- 8.17. The proposed development has been carefully designed to reflect the scale, form, and materials typically found in rural and agricultural buildings, ensuring it is sympathetic to its rural context.
- 8.18. The stable block will be single-storey and modest in size, incorporating elevations clad in timber, a feature which is common within the local vernacular. The building will therefore have a rural appearance that complements its countryside setting. In particular, the new building will reflect the design of an existing timber-clad barn located on the property site, ensuring the development is consistent with the built form within the setting of Tudor Cottage.

- 8.19. The erection of a stable block in this rural location will be entirely consistent with the existing land use and the established character of the area. The site is situated within a countryside setting where equestrian activity is a common and appropriate use of land, reflecting the area's agricultural and recreational traditions. The proposed development aligns with the rural function of the area and will not introduce a new or conflicting use. As detailed in paragraph 135 of the NPPF, the proposal is therefore sympathetic to local character.

Heritage

- 8.20. This assessment of the current proposals has been completed by Danielle Dunn BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI and current student of the IHBC recognised MSc in Architectural Conservation at the University of Kent; a site visit was undertaken on 13th May 2025.
- 8.21. The proposed development of new stables will not have a direct impact on either Tudor Cottage or Nash Farm House, as it is proposed to be located some distance from these assets. However, the setting of the stables and how they impact the setting of the Listed Buildings has been considered.
- 8.22. The proposal has been carefully designed to ensure it does not impact on nearby Listed Buildings, this includes it being located a suitable distance so as not to impact on their immediate form or setting. The provision of additional tree planting as part of the landscaping scheme will further alleviate any potential impact on the setting of the heritage assets.
- 8.23. The new stables will be modest in form and constructed using sympathetic materials and designed to complement the rural character of the area. This will ensure that the building further preserves the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings in accordance with national and local heritage protection policies.
- 8.24. Policy CS20 of the Local Plan similarly states that proposals will be supported which preserve and where appropriate enhance the setting of heritage assets. The proposed scheme has been designed with sensitivity to the character of the area and will not compete with or dominate the listed building in terms of scale, massing, or appearance.

- 8.25. The relocation of the horses to a new stable block will also enable additional positive impacts on the Listed property known as Tudor Cottage, as they will no longer reside in the outbuilding directly adjoining the host property. The outbuilding, where the horses are currently housed, was not designed for housing horses; prior to the stable use it was as a garage and store connected with the occupation of Tudor Cottage.
- 8.26. Stables provide an inherent fire risk, which then places the Listed Buildings closest to it at an increased risk. For example, forage storage is located in the lean-to that adjoins the stables, a potentially combustible material which is not sufficiently separated from the stables or stored in an appropriately ventilated structure. Moving the horses away from Tudor Cottage will improve the potential fire risk of these Listed Buildings. This improvement is considered to accord with Section 16 of the NPPF which actively seeks to safeguard heritage buildings for current and future generations.
- 8.27. In summary, the assessment has identified that there is limited potential for development to affect the historic significance of the nearby heritage assets or their setting.

Landscape and visual impact

- 8.28. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.
- 8.29. Local Plan Policy CS19 sets out that new development should conserve and protect the character of the local and natural environment.
- 8.30. The site is located within the North Downs National Character Area, consisting of areas of agricultural land and woodland. The settlement patterns of this area are characterised by traditional, small villages, scattered farms and large houses with timber framing.
- 8.31. As outlined in the National Character Area Profile, the distinctive character of the North Downs should be conserved by understanding the area's traditional architecture and distinct materials, including brick, timber and tiles.

- 8.32. As detailed, the development will consist of a timber-clad stable block, reflecting materials found within the North Downs National Character Area. The building will be located next to the existing built form and modest in size and therefore will not erode the open views of the prevailing landscape.

Amenity

- 8.33. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that decisions should ensure that developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.
- 8.34. Policy CS19 of the Local Plan specifically sets out that new development should safeguard amenities, including privacy and daylight of neighbouring properties and should avoid adverse environmental impacts from pollution, including noise and odour pollution.
- 8.35. The proposed erection of a single-storey stable building has been carefully designed and positioned to ensure that it does not result in any harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties. The building is sited at a considerable distance from the main residential dwelling on the property, allowing for a clear separation between domestic and equestrian functions.
- 8.36. Given its single-storey form and modest scale, the stable block will not introduce any overbearing structures and so will not cause any overlooking or overshadowing of neighbouring properties and buildings. Importantly, there are no buildings directly adjoining the site on its north, west, or south elevations, ensuring open boundaries that further reduce any potential for impact on neighbouring outlook or amenity
- 8.37. The stable block will be used solely for the private keeping of the applicant's own horses, and as such, it will generate minimal activity and no commercial traffic or visitor levels that could lead to disturbance.
- 8.38. Furthermore, the relocation of the horses from their current housing will have inherent benefits for the occupants of Tudor Cottage. For example, given the nature of the use of the building, rats, mice and other vermin are attracted to the building, which invariably seek warmth in Tudor Cottage during the winter months. The occupiers are routinely required to instruct pest control to manage this problem

- 8.39. Disturbance to the occupants of Tudor Cottage and its neighbours will also be improved with the new stable block. The current horse stabling, creates smell and noise disturbance impacts and there is a particular issue with flies in the summer months.
- 8.40. The following images show the improved distances from neighbouring properties with the new purpose built stable block.



Figure 6 Existing stable building in relation to neighbouring properties (Image courtesy of Google Earth):



Figure 7 Proposed new stable building in relation to neighbouring properties (Image courtesy of Google Earth):

- 8.41. The private, small-scale nature of the proposed new stables, including its siting and distance from neighbouring properties, ensures it will operate without creating disturbance and remains entirely compatible with its rural setting. With the additional benefit of their being less impact than what is created by the current stables.

Ecology

- 8.42. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF outlines that proposals should also aim to minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity. Local Plan Policy CS19 similarly sets out that development should protect and enhance biodiversity.
- 8.43. This application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Report (Native Ecology, July 2025). The report concluded that with short, grazed grassland, there are no suitable habitats for hazel dormice, nesting birds, foraging and commuting bats and hedgehogs. Additionally, the lack of waterbodies means that the site is not suitable for great crested newts and riparian mammals, including otters, water voles and beavers.
- 8.44. The report suggests a number of mitigation strategies to reduce impacts upon ecology. To reduce impacts on potential commuting and foraging bats, the development should follow guidance issued by the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP, 2023). During construction, all excavated holes should be covered to stop animals from becoming trapped or injured. Finally, to avoid the colonisation of reptiles, the areas of grassland within the Site will continue to be maintained to a sward height of no more than 150mm.
- 8.45. This application is also supported by a BNG Baseline Assessment and BNG Feasibility Report (Native Ecology July 2025).
- 8.46. The Baseline Assessment reports that the site has a baseline value of 0.07 biodiversity units.
- 8.47. The BNG Feasibility Report shows that the development will result in a 70.11% loss in biodiversity. To achieve a 10% gain, an additional 0.07 biodiversity units are required which can be met through the planting of 4 small trees along the access track.



Figure 6. BNG Recommendation Plan from the BNG Feasibility Report

Social benefits

- 8.48. Paragraph 96 (c) of the NPPF sets out that decisions should aim to enable and support healthy lives, for example through the provision of sports facilities.
- 8.49. The development of a stable block at the client's home will enable and support healthy lives by promoting regular physical activity, outdoor engagement, and mental well-being through daily interaction with the horses. Moreover, keeping horses at home can also reduce the social stress that sometimes arises in communal yard environments, offering a more private, relaxed, and self-directed experience for horse owners.
- 8.50. Economically, keeping horses at home can result in significant cost savings over time. While there is initial setup costs associated with building a stable block, ongoing expenses, such as livery fees, transport costs, and service charges, are reduced or eliminated entirely.

- 8.51. These factors make private horse keeping not only more convenient and personally fulfilling but also a more cost-effective option compared to commercial livery arrangements.

Highways

- 8.52. Paragraph 166 sets out that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.
- 8.53. Local Plan Policy CS11 states that new developments should mitigate their impact on the highway and public transport networks.
- 8.54. Local Plan Saved Policy T4 specifically states that authorities will not permit proposals for development outside of the confines of the built-up area that generates significant vehicular traffic.
- 8.55. It is proposed that the erection of a stable block at the client's property will not result in any increase in traffic levels or pose a risk to highway safety. On the contrary, housing the horses on-site will reduce the need for regular travel to and from off-site livery facilities, thereby decreasing the number of vehicle movements associated with daily care, feeding, and exercise, thereby lessening the overall impact on the local road network. This reduction in travel not only lowers the property's overall transport impact but also contributes to safer and quieter local road conditions.
- 8.56. As no commercial equestrian use is proposed, there will be no increase in visitor traffic or deliveries beyond what is typical for a private residential setting.
- 8.57. The development therefore presents no adverse impact on the local highway network as required in national and local policy and should not be refused on highway grounds.

Flood risk

- 8.58. Paragraph 170 outlines that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing areas away from areas at the highest risk.

- 8.59. Paragraph CS18 states that the Council will expect new development to take advantage of opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding from all sources where it is technically and financially feasible.
- 8.60. The site is located in flood zone 1 and is at very low risk from surface water flooding. The proposal should therefore not be refused on flood risk grounds.

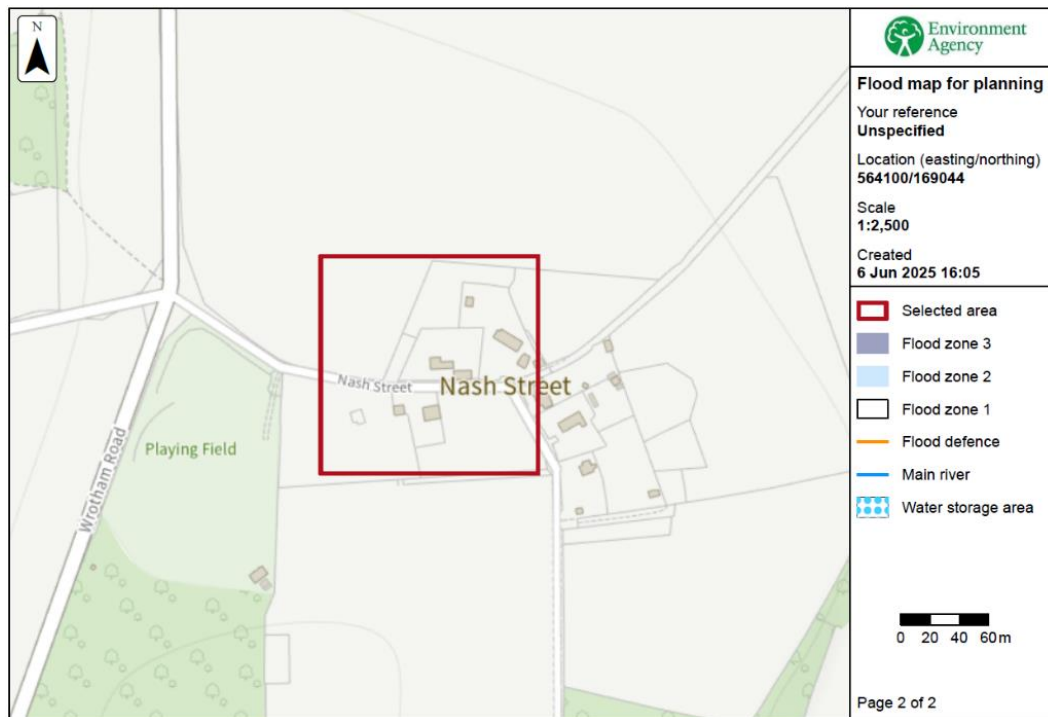


Figure 8. Flood Map showing the site in relation to flood zones.

Horse Welfare

- 8.61. As detailed by the British Horse Society, as a minimum, stables must be big enough to allow for horses to turn around and lie down comfortably. In accordance with space recommendations for large ponies, the stables will have an individual size of 3 metres by 3.6 metres. The stables can therefore provide sufficient space for the housing of horses.
- 8.62. The British Horse Society (BHS) provide guidance on stable safety. An extract from their guidance note is copied below –

- 8.63. *“Horses spend varying amounts of time in their stables, depending on their management, routine, health and the time of year. It is important to make sure the comfort and welfare of your horse is not compromised when they are in their stable, as poorly designed structures can increase the chance of injury, health problems and pose a fire risk.”*
- 8.64. DEFRA has produced a Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their hybrids(“the Code”). With regard to stabling, the Code states –
- 8.65. *“Welfare should be considered when constructing or altering buildings to provide housing for horses. The main considerations are the safety and comfort of the horses, ease of access and adequate drainage and ventilation. If poorly designed or managed, stabling can contribute to the rapid spread of disease, cause injury and pose significant fire risks. Good vehicular access is essential in case emergency vehicles need to access the site”.*
- 8.66. For the following reasons the outbuilding where the horses are currently kept is not appropriate for the current equestrian use due to the following reasons:
- 8.67. Ventilation – the building is poorly ventilated with the building benefitting from only small makeshift vented windows on the south elevation. The stable boxes are formed of modern timbers built around the original frame of the building. This makes the building difficult to clean, leading to more dust which compounds the problem of poor ventilation and the extent of the timber work within the building reduces air flow. This has become particularly problematic for the applicants older horses, one of which suffers from ROA, a breathing disorder. The BHS state “effective ventilation in your stable is essential all year round, to encourage fresh air to circulate, for temperature control and to help decrease the risk of respiratory problems such as equine asthma (previously known as recurrent airway obstruction (RAO)).”
- 8.68. Construction – original ironmongery and original timbers with nails protruding pose a risk of injury to horses. The Code states *“the building should be constructed soundly, with no exposed surfaces or projections likely to cause injury”.*
- 8.69. Flooring – the building has been constructed with poor drainage, meaning stable waste is not effectively drained from the stables affecting the comfort of the horses. BHS state *“stable flooring should be as even as possible, non-slip and designed to drain urine away from the horse, such as slopping towards the back or having drainage channels.”*

- 8.70. Natural light – the small vented windows and small north facing door results in limited natural light, a particular problem when horses are housed during the day, which is commonly the case during the hot summer months
- 8.71. Access – the stable boxes built into the fabric of the building each open to a central area, making it difficult to manoeuvre horses in and out of the stables. It is also the case that the stable doors are smaller than the recommended size set out by BHS and repeated in the Code. This central area also provides for a limited covered area to care for the horses during wet weather.

Yard access – to the north of the building is a small yard area which encroaches on the residential curtilage of Tudor Cottage. This yard area overs restricted access for vehicle movements, both planned and in the event of an emergency. This causes the applicant particular issues when feed is delivered and the farrier or vet attend site. The yard is also not of sufficient size for access by a horse box, meaning horses are presently loaded on Nash Street.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. This application seeks full permission for the erection of a private stable block at Tudor Cottage.
- 9.2. This statement has demonstrated that the proposal accords with relevant national and local policies. In particular, the development would not constitute inappropriate development within the Green Belt and would not impact upon its openness. With a modest size and incorporation of locally used materials, the building would not impact upon the setting of any listed buildings or the North Downs National Character Area.
- 9.3. It is therefore requested that this application is considered favourably.