

Officer Report

Application No.	25/0855/FH
Site Address	MARTINFIELD MANOR, LYDD ROAD, NEW ROMNEY, TN28 8HB
Officer Name	Ross McCardle
Proposal	Change of use from a mixed use of guest house and private residential dwelling house to a single dwelling (Use Class C3).

Recommendation

Report Number	RD-437509
Recommended Decision	Recommended to be Approve with Conditions
Recommendation Date	10 June 2025

Report

SITE

Martinfield Manor is a large, detached property at the southwestern edge of New Romney, at the junction of Lydd Road and Church Road. It is currently in mixed use as a guest house and residential dwelling, and comprises private accommodation and a guest dining room at ground floor, 6 guest bedrooms at first floor, private accommodation at second floor. There is an attached 2-bed residential annexe on the northeast corner. There is a generous enclosed garden to the rear and eastern side, and a large parking area in the northwest corner with access from Church Road.

The following constraints are relevant:

- Within defined settlement boundary.
- Land to the west, across the road, is a Special Landscape Area.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Reference	Description	Decision
98/0665/SH	Conversion of existing garage to annexe and installation of widows.	Approved
98/0131/SH	Change of use of part of ground floor and whole of first floor from residential to guest house.	Approved

PROPOSAL

This application seeks planning permission for change of use from mixed use as a guest house and private dwelling to use as a single dwelling.

No physical alterations are proposed.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

New Romney Town Council: no objection.

REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

PUBLICITY

The application was publicised in accordance with the regulations.

RELEVANT POLICIES

The Development Plan comprises the Places and Policies Local Plan 2020 and the Core Strategy 2022.

Core Strategy 2022:

SS1 (spatial strategy)
SS2 (Housing and economy growth)
SS3 (Place-shaping and sustainable settlements)
CSD8 (New Romney strategy)

Places and Policies Local Plan 2020:

HB1 (quality places)
HB3 (Internal and external space standards)
HB8 (alterations and extensions)
HB12 (Development of new or extended residential institutions)
E3 (Tourism)
E4 (Hotels and guest houses)
T2 (Parking standards)
T5 (Cycle parking)
HW2 (Improving health and wellbeing)
HW3 (Development that supports healthy, fulfilling and active lifestyles)

HB12 states that *“planning permission will be granted for the development of new residential institutions, or the conversion of existing properties to this use”* subject to certain criteria.

E4 states that *“applications for the change of use or redevelopment of hotels, guest houses or self-catering units which would result in a loss of visitor accommodation will only be permitted where:*

- 1. The standard and type of accommodation that is, or could be provided at reasonable cost, is unsuited to meet visitor demands; or*
- 2. In the case of hotels and guest houses, the premises or site are poorly located in relation to the areas of main tourist activity or tourist routes, and uses in the immediate vicinity are predominantly unrelated to tourism or incompatible with the continued tourist use of the premises; and*
- 3. In addition to the above, it has been demonstrated that the business has been marketed at a reasonable rate and for a period of 12 months.”*

NPPF and NPPG:

National guidance supports community uses subject to amenity considerations.

APPRAISAL

Principle

Policy E4 seeks to protect the district's existing supply of tourist accommodation unless it is expressly demonstrated that the building is unsuited or inappropriately located to meet demand, and subject to a 12-month marketing exercise. In that regard the principle of change of use is unacceptable unless sufficient evidence has been presented to meet the requirements of the policy.

The submitted Planning Statement acknowledges the requirements of the policy, setting out that the property is somewhat remote from the main tourist attractions of New Romney and providing details of 27 other accommodations located more centrally within the town. Appendices 2 and 3 of the statement provide evidence that the property has been marketed since December 2023, at a fair market rate, and without any reasonable offers (other than for residential use or redevelopment of the site).

I therefore consider that points 2 and 3 of E4 have been met and, consequently, that the principle of change of use is acceptable in this instance.

Residential amenity

Change of use would give more living space to the occupants, enhancing their residential amenity.

There would be no impacts on neighbouring properties beyond those already associated with mixed use of the property. There may be some reduction in vehicle movements or general noise and disturbance from removing regular visitors to the site; this would be a positive gain in terms of local residential amenity.

Visual amenity

No physical works are proposed so there would be no impacts upon the character or appearance of the street scene or the adjacent Special Landscape Area.

Highways and parking

The property has a large parking and turning area that would not be affected. I have no concerns in this regard.

Other

The change of use is not liable for CIL or BNG.

HUMAN RIGHTS

I have also considered the human rights issues relevant to this application. In my view, the Appraisal section above and the Recommendation represents an appropriate balance between the interests and rights of the applicant (to enjoy his land subject only to reasonable and proportionate controls

by a public authority) [and the interests and rights of those potentially affected by the proposal (to respect for private life and the home and peaceful enjoyment of their properties)] and the wider public interest.

PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In determining this application, regard has been had to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set down in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, in particular with regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. It is considered that the application proposals would not undermine objectives of the Duty.

It is considered that the application proposals would not conflict with objectives of the Duty.

DUTY TO COOPERATE

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019 the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and creative way by offering a pre-application advice service and, where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome and as appropriate, updating applicants / agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance the application was acceptable as submitted.

RECOMMENDATION

Taking the above into account it is recommended that planning permission should be granted.

Recommended Conditions (2)

1

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2

No development shall be carried out other than in accordance with the following approved documents:

Application form

Planning statement and appendices

Ordnance Survey site location plan / existing block plan / proposed block plan

Drawing PA_24_063_001 – Existing floor plans

Drawing PA_24_063_002 – Proposed floor plans

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.