

DESIGN ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT

Site: Summer Lodge, Copyhold Lane, Cuckfield, Haywards Heath, RH17 5EB

Proposal: Erection of a self-build replacement, detached dwelling following demolition of the existing dwelling

1. Introduction

This statement supports a full planning application for the replacement of the existing dwelling known as 'Summer Lodge' with a bespoke, self-build detached dwelling. The proposal involves the demolition of the current two-storey property and its replacement with a highly energy-efficient, architect-designed HUF Haus. This new building will reflect the highest sustainability standards and contemporary design quality, with no adverse impacts on neighbouring properties or the surrounding landscape.



2. Site Description

The 0.36 ha application site is a substantial residential plot located on the south side of Copyhold Lane in Cuckfield. The existing dwelling is a two-storey brick with cedar shingle cladding and tiled roof. The property is neither listed nor located within a conservation area and offers limited architectural merit. The site is well screened by mature vegetation and includes several retained trees, with one low-quality tree proposed for removal and compensatory planting offered.

The site is situated within the countryside outside the built-up area, as defined in the Development Plan and the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Planning History

The existing dwelling has established lawful use as a single dwellinghouse. No relevant recent planning applications affect the lawful use or the potential for redevelopment.

4. The Proposal

The proposal seeks to:

- Demolish the existing dwelling (GIA: approx. 202.85 m²)
- Replace it with a HUF Haus-designed home (GIA: approx. 286.3 m²)
- Provide basement accommodation with exposed rear elevation, and sustainable building techniques
- Retain the existing access, driveway, and the garage and store building (both at the front)
- Provide three off-street parking spaces, cycle storage, and an EV charging point
- Achieve net-zero carbon operational emissions through roof-mounted solar PV, air source heat pump, and advanced fabric efficiency

5. Planning Policy Context

The relevant policy framework includes the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018): This is the current adopted plan and relevant policies include:

- DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
- DP15 - New Homes in the Countryside
Replacement dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where:
 - The residential use has not been abandoned;
 - Highway, access and parking requirements can be met; and
 - The replacement dwelling maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the natural and/or built landscape particularly in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (now renamed as the National Landscape), especially if a significant change in scale from the existing dwelling is proposed.
- DP26 - Character and Design
Replacement dwellings will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:
 - is of high-quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace.
 - creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape.
 - protects open spaces, trees, and gardens that contribute to the area's character.
 - does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29).
 - incorporates well-integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high-density housing is proposed.
 - positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design.
- DP27 - Dwelling Space Standards
- DP28 - Accessibility
- DP37 - Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
- DP38 - Biodiversity
- DP39 - Sustainable Design and Construction

All development proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development and should, where appropriate and feasible, according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures:

- Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme, including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation.
- Use renewable sources of energy.
- Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation.
- Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day in accordance with Policy DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment.
- Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer-term resilience.

The draft Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039, at its Regulation 19 stage, is due to be adopted by the end of 2025 (tbc) and provides emerging policy guidance. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, weight can be given to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation. The relevant policies in the emerging plan to replace the current development plan will include:

- DPS1: Climate Change
- DPS2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- DPS5: Water Neutrality
- DPN1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
- DPN2: Biodiversity Net Gain
- DPN3: Green and Blue Infrastructure
- DPN4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- DPC1: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
- DPC3: New Homes in the Countryside
- DPB1: Character and Design
- DPT4: Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure
- DPH1: Housing
- DPH2: Sustainable Development - Outside the Built-up Area
- DPH11: Dwelling Space Standards
- DPH12: Accessibility

Other Material Considerations

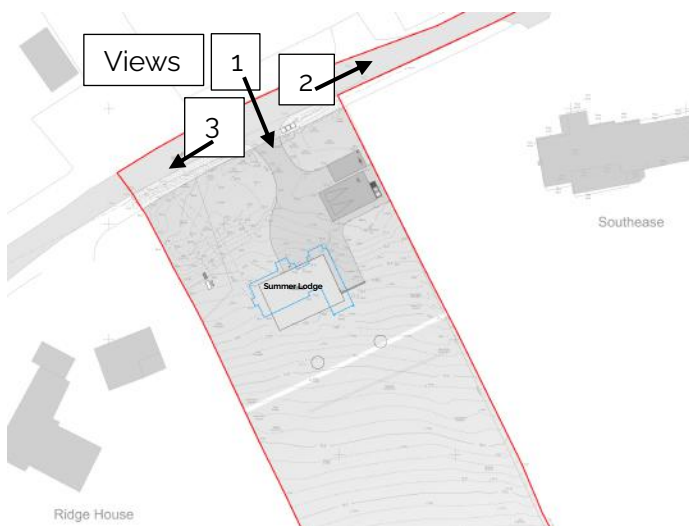
- Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan
 - Policy CNP 1 Design of New Development,
 - Policy CNP 5 - Protect and Enhance the Countryside
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)
- Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (Nov 2020)

6. Considerations

- The principle of development;
- Design and impact on the character of the area;
- Impact on neighbouring amenity;
- Impact to surrounding trees/ecology;
- Sustainability;
- Highways/Parking.

6.1 Principle of Development (DP12, DP15)

The proposal constitutes a one-for-one replacement dwelling, which is acceptable under Policy DP15, provided the replacement maintains or enhances landscape quality. The residential use is not abandoned, and all highways and parking standards can be met. The site lies to the west of and is outside the designated National Landscape (formerly the AONB). Copyhold Lane is a private, mature, tree-lined lane off the A272 / Tylers Green. Similar to other properties along the lane, the existing house is set back from the road frontage, well-screened, and only visible from directly in front of the driveway entrance, as indicated in the images below.



6.2 Character and Design (DP26)

The proposed HUF Haus exhibits a contemporary, high-quality design with triple glazing, overhanging eaves, and white rendered finishes, reflecting the varied architectural character of surrounding properties. The building, well-screened and set back from the road frontage, will sit comfortably within the large plot without appearing dominant or out of scale.

Policy DP26 – requires replacement dwellings to be well-designed and reflect the distinctive character of the area while being sensitive to the countryside.

Among a longer list of requirements, but relevant to the replacement house here, all development is required to demonstrate:

- a high-quality design and layout and should include appropriate landscaping and greenspace.
- should not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29).
- should incorporate well-integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment.
- should positively address sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design.

The proposed HUF Haus has a distinctive, contemporary gable-fronted design with a dark grey stained timber frame, white rendered walls, triple glazing and roof-mounted PV panels. The house will be 2 storeys and 7.9m high when viewed from the front. With part subterranean basement accommodation, it will appear as 3 storeys and 10.9m high at the back as the land slopes down and away towards the rear. Given the variety of architectural styles in the vicinity and the secluded nature of the plot itself, the new design will not appear out of place or unduly prominent in the context of the lane's character. The size and scale of the 2-storey house with half-submerged basement accommodation will sit comfortably within this spacious plot. Set in the same position as the existing centrally positioned property, it will not encroach on its side boundary nor on the amenities of either side's adjacent neighbour. Overall, the proposal would have an acceptable impact on the character and appearance of the site itself and the locality in general and would accord with policy DP26 and the wider intentions and the guidance that the Design Guide SPD provides:

"to inspire designers to rise to the challenge to deliver high-quality, well-designed buildings that respond to the challenge to deliver sustainable development."

It also describes that:

"Designers are encouraged to be inventive and innovative; to prepare proposals that respond to place, that meet the needs of modern lifestyles and that are adaptable in the future. Contemporary solutions of high architectural quality that deliver outstanding places are welcomed and encouraged."

The proposed dwelling retains the footprint and siting of the existing house. Given the generous plot size and high separation distances to Ridge House in excess of 40m to the west and Southease also circa 40m distant to the east, there will be no material impact on the privacy, outlook, or daylight of adjacent properties.



7. Ecology and Biodiversity

Policy DP38 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they maintain, protect, and enhance the biodiversity of a site, including features of conservation value. The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (July 2025) and a Bat Emergence Survey Report (July 2025).

The existing dwelling has several potential roosting features and surrounding connecting habitat, with moderate potential to support roosting bats. As a result, two dusk emergent surveys have been conducted on-site. It has been determined that the dwelling supports 2x common pipistrelle day roosts and 2x brown long-eared bat day roosts, which are likely to be destroyed or disturbed by the proposal. A bat licence from Natural England must be obtained prior to the commencement of works that impact the roost and will need to include the implementation of a bat mitigation strategy, which can be secured by condition. It is considered that in this case the three derogation tests would be met and therefore a licence is likely to be granted. Subject to securing appropriate conditions, there should be no objection to the proposal on ecological grounds in accordance with policy DP38.

8. Climate Change and Sustainability

The proposed replacement dwelling has been meticulously designed with sustainability, carbon neutrality, and environmental stewardship at its core. In line with the Mid Sussex District Plan (Policies DP39 Sustainable Design and Construction, and DP26 Character and Design), as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) chapters 2, 14, and 15, the development aspires not only to meet but to significantly exceed the statutory and policy requirements relating to energy efficiency, environmental performance, and climate resilience including emerging policies: DPS1: Climate Change and DPS2: Sustainable Design and Construction.

Policy Context and Objectives

The development addresses key objectives of the District Plan, which call for new buildings to:

- Minimise energy use through layout and passive design
- Incorporate renewable technologies and low-carbon systems
- Reduce water consumption
- Demonstrate adaptability to future climate conditions
- Minimise waste and promote sustainable construction

Aligned with the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development, the proposed dwelling contributes positively across environmental, social, and economic dimensions. It also supports the national ambition of achieving net-zero carbon homes, which is further reinforced by industry guidance and local climate action frameworks.

Sustainable Design and Fabric Efficiency

The dwelling's performance begins with its highly efficient building envelope, manufactured using HUF Haus's precision-engineered, factory-assembled techniques. The structural system features:

- Exceptionally airtight wall and roof construction
- High-performance insulation values (well beyond Building Regs Part L)
- Triple-glazed low-E windows with integrated shading to reduce thermal bridging
- A draught-free environment that enhances occupant comfort and reduces energy waste

These measures alone result in a fabric-first approach to energy efficiency, reducing heating demand and enabling the house to greatly surpass the 30% TER uplift required by the 2021 Building Regulations by a considerable margin.

Operational Net-Zero Carbon Achievement

The house has been designed in order to be verified as an operational net-zero carbon development using SAP and GLA-compliant metrics:

- The house design will be capable of achieving in excess of a 100% improvement over the Target Emission Rate (TER)
- The house design, with the array of roof-mounted photovoltaic panels, will be capable of its EPC being rated at 100 (A) – the maximum score achievable
- The house design will also be capable of providing in excess of a 100% reduction in CO₂ emissions compared to 2021 standards

Energy Generation and Systems Integration

To meet 100% of its operational energy demand, the dwelling will incorporate:

- A photovoltaic (PV) array in excess of 22 kWp will be mounted discreetly on both side roof slopes
- A highly efficient Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP)
- Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR)
- 100% LED lighting and energy-efficient controls
- Advanced smart energy systems

Water Efficiency and Climate Adaptation

The house is designed to limit potable water consumption to <110 litres per person per day, using:

- Aerated taps and low-flow showers
- Dual-flush WC systems
- Rainwater harvesting for garden irrigation and non-potable uses

Deep overhanging eaves prevent overheating in summer months, while southeast-facing glazing maximises solar gain in winter, providing passive heating.

These strategies promote thermal comfort, lower utility demand, and reduce climate vulnerability.

Construction Sustainability and Lifecycle Impact

The HUF Haus methodology ensures:

- Offsite manufacture, reducing waste and disruption

- A construction timeline of approximately 16 weeks
- Use of sustainably sourced materials and low embodied carbon

Demolition of the existing building will be managed to prioritise salvage and recycling.

Biodiversity and Environmental Enhancement

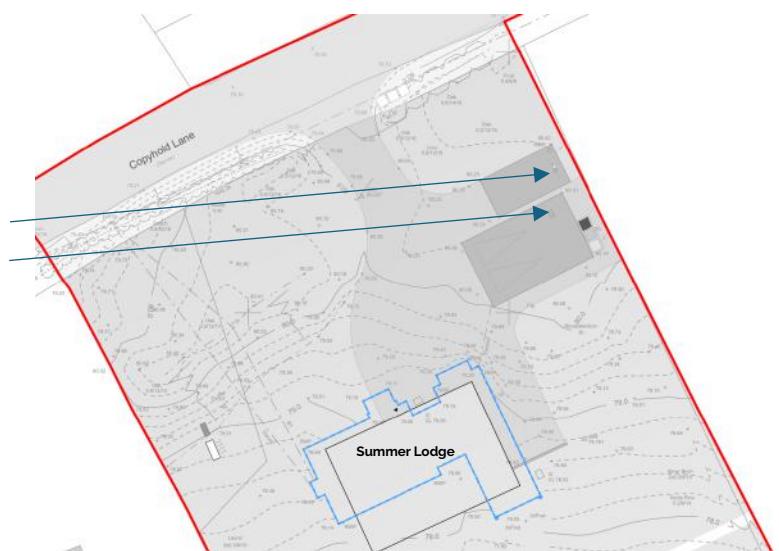
The landscaping scheme, to be controlled by way of a planning condition, will include compensatory tree planting, native landscaping, bird and bat boxes, and minimal external lighting to protect habitats.

Commitment to Long-Term Carbon Reduction

The applicant confirms that in working with HUF Haus, he and his family are committed to a low-carbon lifestyle for the future.

9. Highways and Parking

The proposed access and driveway will be retained. At least 3 off-street parking spaces will be provided, alongside secure cycle storage within the existing shed to be retained; and an EV charging point on the existing garage, also to be retained. These measures ensure compliance with local transport and parking policies and also in the more specific emerging Local Plan policy DPT4.



10. Trees and Landscaping

Policy DP37 of the District Plan relates to trees, woodland and hedgerows. This seeks the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows. The site benefits from a line of mature trees across the Lane frontage and along both side boundaries, all of which are being retained. As identified in the A Durkin AMS report, all retained trees can be fully protected during construction using a combination of robust ground protection and fencing in accordance with BS5837:2012.

The proposal is set away from the RPA's and canopies of trees. As such it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in respect of impact to trees and vegetation. In summary, the arboricultural impact associated with the development will be positive due to a combination of tree protection measures, specialist construction techniques and compensatory replacement planting. Subject then to securing appropriate conditions, the proposals should be acceptable in terms of their impact on trees in accordance with policy DP37.

11. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a high-quality, modern replacement dwelling that will:

- Contribute positively to the local character
- Deliver a net-zero carbon home
- Enhance ecological and landscape value
- Protect residential amenity and highway safety

It is fully compliant with local and national planning policy and sets a strong precedent for sustainable self-build development within Mid Sussex. Planning permission is therefore respectfully sought.