

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO:

'Planning Application for erection of 1 No. detached self-build dwelling and single detached garage, with provision of a new access from Wealden Way'

Land off Wealden Way (adjacent to Great Haywards, Amberley Close), Haywards Heath

September 2025

PLANNING STATEMENT CONTENTS

Section	Page No.
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. SITE CONTEXT	4
3. THE PROPOSAL	6
4. POLICY CONTEXT	8
5. PLANNING HISTORY	29
6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT	32
7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY	47
8. CONCLUSIONS	49

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought on behalf of the Applicant for the erection of 1 No. new self-build, detached dwelling to the south-east side of an existing detached property, Great Haywards.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the above Planning Application. The statement describes the site, its surroundings and the proposal itself. The Planning Policy background is considered along with an assessment of the proposal considering the relevant policy and all other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 The site lies within the built-up area of Haywards Heath, and the principle of development should be accepted. This Planning Application accords with an up-to-date development plan and should therefore be approved without delay.
- 1.6 This Planning Application should be read in conjunction with the detailed drawing package that has been prepared by the scheme's architects and the following supporting statements:-
 - Design and Access Statement incorporating Heritage Statement, prepared by Manorwood;
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, prepared by Ecology Partnership;
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement, prepared by Arbortrack Systems Ltd; and
 - Self-Build and Custom Build Statement.

2. SITE CONTEXT

2.1 The application site comprises vacant land that lies to the south-east side of Great Haywards Farm. To the north is garden land to Great Haywards Farm, whilst further to the west is a pair of dwellings, known as 'The Byre' and 'The Shippen' situated around a new courtyard.

2.2 Great Haywards Farm is a Grade II Listed dwelling, which was once a farmhouse and dates back to the late 15th Century/ early 16th Century. The Listing reads as follows:

GREAT HAYWARDS FARM

Location: Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 4AU

District: Mid Sussex (District Authority)

Date Listed: 11th December 1970

List Entry No: 1354931

Grade II Description: House, formerly farmhouse. Late C15 or early C16 with C17 storeyed porch, refronted in C19. West elevation has red brick ground floor and 1st floor partly brick and partly timber framed with rendered infilling. North elevation is tile hung and east elevation has complete frame visible on brick plinth, square framing with some tension braces. Steeply pitched tiled roof hipped to south with off central wide stack and external stack to north with sandstone base. 2 storeys 4 windows, casements. C17 2 storeyed gabled porch having wooden bargeboards with pendants. This is timber framed on the 1st floor and the ground floor is brick with the original door of 3 planks behind. Interior contains large open fireplace and exposed beams. Roof not seen at time of survey.

2.3 A weather-boarded barn to the west of the main dwelling is also Grade II Listed, and this has been converted to a separate residential use following the issue of planning permission in 1998.

2.4 The site is mainly an undeveloped piece of grassland. The site slopes upwards in an east-west and south-north direction. Boundary treatments comprise post and rail fencing, hedging and evergreen trees.



Fig 1. Aerial map showing the site and its surroundings
(courtesy of Google Maps)

2.5 The site lies amidst a residential development, comprising primarily a range of modern mainly two storey houses. A footpath runs along the southern boundary of the site, beyond which is Dunction Close, a terraced development of 2-storey houses facing the site. Further to the south is the more recent residential development at Bolnore village. The site is located within the main town of Haywards Heath, which benefits from a wide range of local amenities. The town has a mainline railway station that provides excellent public transport links to central London, Gatwick airport, Brighton and surrounding areas in Sussex and beyond.

3. THE PROPOSAL

3.1 This application proposal is for the provision of 1 no. detached house and detached single bay garage building, to be erected on land to the south-east side of Great Haywards, a Grade II Listed Building. The site is located adjacent to Wealden Way to the east side.



Fig 2. Proposed Block Plan

3.2 The proposed house would comprise a two-story detached dwelling, with gable roof. The property would have a footprint of 137.81m² and Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA) measuring 201.19m².



Fig 3. Proposed East (Front) and North (Side) Elevations

- 3.3 The proposal would comprise an open plan kitchen/ diner/ family room with utility, study, and living room at ground floor level, with 4 No. bedrooms. (1 no. with en-suite) and a family bathroom above.
- 3.4 The proposed site is located to the west side of Wealden Way, and a new dropped kerb and vehicular access is proposed to be added onto this adjacent public highway. A single detached garage is proposed at the front of the site.
- 3.5 The proposed development also comprises associated landscape works, as detailed on the submitted plans.

4. POLICY CONTEXT

a. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (THE NPPF)

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was originally published in 2012 and has been subject to a number of revisions subsequently, with the most recent version being published on 12th December 2024.

4.2 The NPPF confirms that planning law, as set out at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.3 The focus of the revised NPPF continues to be achieving sustainable development. The NPPF clarifies that *“at a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* (taken from Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations). However, at paragraph 8 the Framework sets out that in planning terms, and to achieve sustainable development there are *“three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)”*. These objectives are economic, social and environmental, which *“should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”* (paragraph 9).

4.4 Paragraph 11 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) 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”.*

4.5 Paragraph 12 confirms that *“the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed”*.

4.6 Paragraph 14 is relevant in this case. It states *“In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:*

a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and

b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement (see paragraphs 69-70);

4.7 Section 4 of the Plan refers to Decision Making. At paragraph 39 of the Framework, it sets out that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”*.

4.8 The Framework also sets out that there are only limited circumstances where decision-makers should give weight to policies in emerging plans, and generally *“refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination; or – in the case of a neighbourhood plan – before the end of the local planning authority publicity period on the draft plan”* (paragraph 51).

4.9 Section 5 relates to delivering a sufficient supply of homes. It reiterates at paragraph 61 that the Government’s objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes. Paragraph 65 confirms that the provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.

4.10 Paragraph 72 states that “*strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:*

- a) specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption; and*
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period”.*

4.11 Paragraph 73 continues “*Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise housebuilders to deliver new homes, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:*

- a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;*
- b) seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom-build housing;*
- c) use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;*
- d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and*
- e) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes”.*

4.12 Paragraph 74-75 note that “neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 73a) suitable for housing in their area....Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area”.

4.13 With regard to housing supply, paragraph 78 states that “Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old.³⁹ The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
- b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery⁴⁰ of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply; or
- c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework⁴¹, and whose annual average housing requirement⁴² is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance”.

4.14 Section 9 discusses promoting sustainable transport, including the need to support opportunities, and give priority to walking, cycling and public transport, in addition to creating places that are safe, accessible, address the needs of people with disabilities, and are designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

4.15 At paragraph 110 the Framework confirms that *“Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”*.

4.16 Paragraph 113 sets out that *“Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport”*.

4.17 Paragraph 115 confirms that the main considerations in transport terms when determining specific planning applications is that proposals should provide:

(a) *sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;*

(b) *safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;*

(c) *the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code⁴⁸; and*

(d) *any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach”.*

4.18 At paragraph 116, the framework also confirms 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*”.

4.19 Section 11 is entitled ‘Making effective use of land’. Paragraph 119 confirms that “*planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*”.

4.20 Paragraph 125 sets out that decision makers are required to give regard to benefits of development, including environmental gains, and should “*(c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes ...[and] (d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively...*”.

4.21 Paragraph 127 states that “*decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land.... applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area*”.

4.22 Paragraph 129 discusses the need to achieve appropriate densities. Account needs to be given to the identified need for different types of housing and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it, local market conditions, sustainability, existing character and setting, and “*the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.*”

4.23 Section 12 refers to achieving well-designed and beautiful places. Paragraph 131 states “*the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places*

is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development...”.

4.24 Paragraph 135 sets out that “*decisions should ensure that 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 (such as increased densities);*
- (d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- (e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; 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 users⁵¹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.*

4.25 Paragraph 136 notes that “*trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in*

the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users".

- 4.26 Paragraph 139 confirms that "*development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents which use visual tools such as design guides and codes".*
- 4.27 Section 16 relates to Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Paragraph 207 states 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. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance".*
- 4.28 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). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance".*
- 4.29 Paragraph 215 states 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".*

b. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 4.30 On 28th March 2018 Mid Sussex District Council adopted the Mid Susse District Plan (MSDP). This plan replaces the saved policies contained within the Mid Sussex Local

Plan, 2004. The District Plan sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031 to deliver the social, economic and environmental needs for the District.

- 4.31 The Council's Proposals Map (refer to **Fig 4** below) shows the Application site is located within the built-up area boundary for Haywards Heath.
- 4.32 **Policy DP4** is the Council's general housing policy. It states that "*the District's OAN is 14,892 dwellings over the Plan period. Provision is also made of 1,498 dwellings to ensure unmet need is addressed in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. There is a minimum District housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031...The Plan will deliver an average of 876 dwellings per annum (dpa) until 2023/24. Thereafter an average of 1,090 dpa will be delivered between 2024/25 and 2030/31, subject to there being no further harm to the integrity of European Habitat Sites in Ashdown Forest...The Council commits to commencing preparation of a Site Allocations DPD in 2017 to be adopted in 2020. The DPD will identify further sites which have capacity of 5 or more residential units. The Council will review the District Plan, starting in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023*".

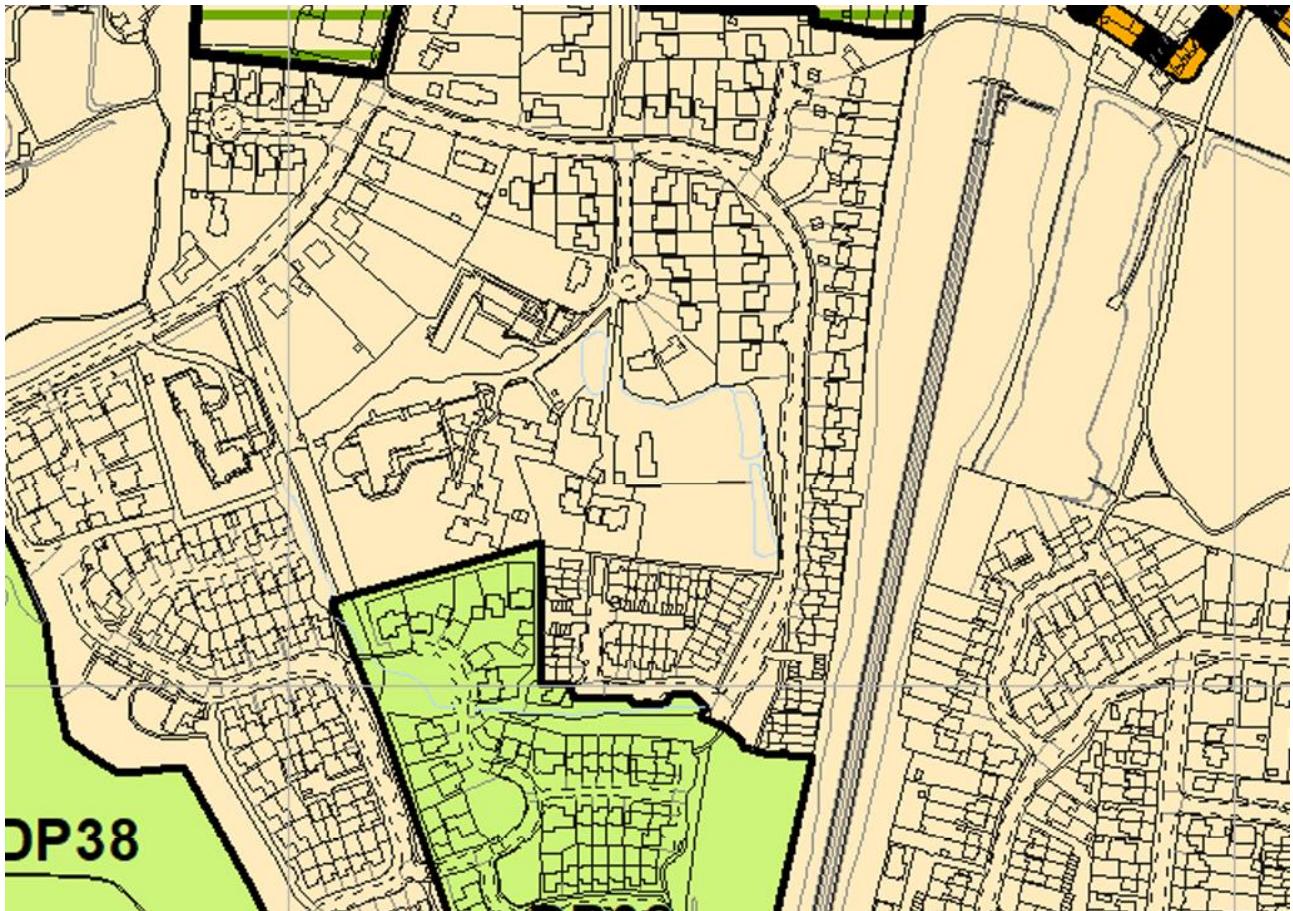


Fig 4. Extract from Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) Inset Map 13: Haywards Heath

4.33 **Policy DP6** refers to Settlement Hierarchy. This policy states that *“Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design), and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement...The growth of settlements will be supported where this meets identified local housing, employment and community needs.*

4.34 Haywards Heath is classified as being a Category 1 Settlement, which is described as being a *“settlement with a comprehensive range of employment, retail, health, education leisure services and facilities. These settlements will also benefit from*

good public transport provision and will act as a main service centre for the smaller settlements”.

4.35 **Policy DP26** relates to Character and Design states that “*all development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and 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;*
- *contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*
- *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 character of the area;*
- *protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- *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);*
- *creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- *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;*

- *take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- *optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development".*

4.36 **Policy DP34** relates to Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets. This policy states that *"development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:*

- *A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;*
- *Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;*
- *Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;*
- *Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;*
- *Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;*
- *Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric".*

4.37 The following policies are also considered to be of relevance to this planning application:

- **Policy DP21:** Transport;
- **Policy DP27:** Dwelling Space Standards;
- **Policy DP28:** Accessibility;
- **Policy DP29:** Noise, Air and Light Pollution
- **Policy DP30:** Housing Mix;
- **Policy DP37:** Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows;
- **Policy DP38:** Biodiversity;
- **Policy DP39:** Sustainable Design and Construction;
- **Policy DP41:** Flood Risk and Drainage.

C. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

4.38 Mid Sussex District Council formally 'made' the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2014-2031) part of the Local Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area of Haywards Heath as of 15th December 2016. The policies contained therein carry full weight as part of the Development Plan for planning decisions within the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (HHNP) area.

4.39 The most relevant HHNP policies are as follows:

Policy E7 requires new development proposals to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Policy E9 relates to matters of character and design, stating that "*developers must demonstrate how their proposal will protect and reinforce the local character within the locality of the site*". A number of criteria are set out that identify how this can be achieved, and includes having regard to the scale and design of new development, open spaces, improving connectivity, car parking, and making efficient use of land.

Policy E13 states that proposals for new residential development should provide good quality private outdoor space which is appropriate to the development proposed.

Policies T1 and T2 relates to providing good pedestrian and cycle connections and the need for S106 obligations to be provided in relation to new cycle routes. Policy 3 relates to car parking provision.

In the housing section of the NP it sets out that *Haywards Heath Town Council (HHTC) has investigated the feasibility of meeting their objectively assessed housing need of 2204 units within the NP area. The HHNP includes the following proposed housing provision:*

Source of Supply	Units
Completions (1/4/14 to 31/3/16)	432
Committed / Pending sites (including Rookery Farm allocation and land north of Birchen Lane)	837
Greenfield Sites	540
Brownfield Sites	97
Allowance for Windfall Sites	128
Total	2034

This leaves a shortfall of 170 units against the assessed housing requirements for the NP area. The application site is not identified within the NP, but the NP does state: "*HHTC supports the principle of making the best use of Brownfield sites and expects sites to continue to come forward during the period of the Plan.*"

Finally, **Policy H8** relates to windfall housing development within the built-up area boundary, and states that "*Housing development within the Haywards Heath built-up area boundary, as defined, will be permitted including infill development and change of use or redevelopment to housing where it meets the following criteria:*

- The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing buildings and the character of the street scene.*
- Gaps which provide views out of the Town to surrounding countryside are maintained.*

- *Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
- *The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible reinforced.*
- *The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded".*

4.40 It is important to note that **Core Aim 'F'** of the HHNP states that "*the Plan prioritises making best use of Brownfield Sites. This includes supporting making best use of Brownfield sites within the built up boundary line of the town and safeguarding the rural setting of the town by retaining key local gaps with nearby communities.*"

4.41 Neighbourhood Plan '**objective 6F**' (as referenced in the supporting text to Policy E10) states: "*Development should reinforce the character and quality of the locality of the scheme*". It is then followed by a range of design focussed requirements, which have been taken into account in the preparation of this planning application.

D. OTHER RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE

4.42 The District Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) relating to infrastructure provision, including affordable housing.

4.43 In addition, Mid Sussex District Council formally adopted a Design Guide on 4th November 2023 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning application and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the district.

E. STRATEGIC HOUSING & ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT

4.44 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to produce a Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). Mid Sussex have a regularly updated SHELAA, the latest version of which

is dated 2023. This sets out the long list of sites which were nominated to the Council, but these sites do not have any planning status.

4.45 The Application Site forms part of a larger site (reference 842), which is considered in the District Council's SHELAA, as set out below:

SHELAA Ref	842	Parish	Haywards Heath		
Site Location	Land adjacent to Great Haywards, Amberly Close, Haywards Heath				
					
Site uses	Vacant				
Gross Site Area (ha)	0.31				
Potential Yield	9				
Site History	Planning Application - Refused				
Absolute Constraint	Flood Zone 2 or 3	x			
	Site of Special Scientific Interest	x			
	Ancient Woodland	x			
	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	x			
	Local Nature Reserve	x			
	Conservation Area	Development would not have a negative impact on Conservation area and/or Area of Townscape Character			
	Scheduled Monument	x			
	Listed Buildings	Development may potentially affect listed building/s - mitigation may be necessary			
	Access	Safe access is not available but potential exists to easily gain access			
Suitable	Relatively unconstrained - assessed as Suitable at Stage 1, progress to Stage 2 assessment				
Availability	Site submitted by site proponent to the SHELAA for assessment - considered available				
Achievability	There is a reasonable prospect that site could be developed within the Plan period				
Timescale	short term				

4.46 The SHELAA is understood to be Stage 1 of the Council's site selection process, which is used to inform future site allocations in the Development Plan. The Council have undertaken further testing of this (and many other) sites during the preparation of the new District Plan (which is currently at examination stage – see below), and this is set out in the Site Selection Paper, which was published in 2024. This document forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Plan. The assessment of Site 842 is set out below for ease of reference.

4.47 At Appendix 4 of the Site Selection Paper are the conclusions of the Council's assessment work on housing allocations. For Site 842 it confirms that this larger site area was rejected for allocation at Stage 2(c), for the following reason "*Great weight is given to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Development of the site would cause less than sustainable harm: High impact to a listed building/ setting and character of a listed building. It is not considered that the benefits of development would outweigh harm or loss to the asset. The site is therefore considered unsuitable for development and has been excluded from further assessment.*" It is important to note that Stage 2(c) is the final step before Stage 3 ('further testing'), where Officers then decide whether to proposed a site for allocation in the new Plan or not. In addition, it is also important to reiterate that the assessment for Site 842 refers to a larger site area, which included land closer to the Listed building than that now proposed. This is a significant material change. Of course, if this smaller site was proposed for allocation it would have been omitted at Stage 1, as sites of less than 5 dwellings are not considered via the SHELAA / allocation process.

ID 842 Land adjacent to Great Haywards, Amberly Close, Haywards Heath



Site Details

Units: 5 Site Area (ha): 0.31

Part 1 - Planning Constraints

1. Landscape	Very Positive	Within built-up area.
2. Flood Risk	Very Positive	The site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1, the area of lowest fluvial flood risk.
3. Trees	Positive	The site is not affected by Ancient Woodland. Presence of trees along boundary
4. Biodiversity	Neutral	This site is nearby to Catt's Wood complex and meadow's. It appears that the closest portion of the Local Wildlife Site to the SHELAAs has been destroyed by development, therefore it is vital the remaining Local Wildlife Site is retained and protected. Consideration to the following: impacts of disturbance of the Local Wildlife Site arising from people and pets, impacts on connectivity, impacts of light and noise pollution.
5. Listed Buildings	Negative	Planning permission has been refused on several occasions for housing development on this site due to the impact on the setting of the listed house and barn. Development on the site remains contentious due to the associated loss of the open and rural nature of this part of the setting of the farmstead, which makes a positive contribution to the special interest of the buildings and the manner in which this is appreciated. NPPF: Less than Substantial Harm, HIGH
6. Conservation Areas	Very Positive	There are no conservation areas within or adjacent to the site
7. Archaeology	Very Positive	No archaeological designations on/ adjacent to site.

Part 2 - Deliverability Considerations

8. Availability	Positive	Site is in control of a housebuilder.
9. Access	Positive	Safe access is not available but potential exists to easily gain access

Part 3 - Sustainability / Access to Services

10. Bus Service	Fair	Access to Public Transport and/or frequency of Public Transport in this location is fair
10. Train Service	Poor	
10. Public Transport	Neutral	
11. Main Service Centre	Positive	Within 15 minutes walk / 20 minutes public transport
12. Primary School	Neutral	Within 20 minutes walk
13. Health	Positive	Within 15 minutes walk
14. Retail	Positive	Within 15 minutes walk

F. EMERGING PLANNING POLICY

4.48 Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039 - Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. 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, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF.

4.49 The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and stage 1 hearings were concluded on the 31st October 2024.

4.50 On 4th April 2025, the Inspector wrote to the Council with her Stage 1 findings, and concluded that the Council have failed the duty to cooperate, noting that *“the presence of constraints does not obviate the necessity for MSDC to explore the possibilities of doing more to help address the unmet needs of the wider sub- region. The failure here is that the Council has not adequately considered the requests of its neighbours - namely Crawley, Horsham and Brighton and Hove, in a constructive, active and ongoing way. The Council has, consequently, not maximised the*

effectiveness of plan preparation... there are two options open to the Council, either to withdraw the Plan from examination or to ask that I write a report of my conclusions. I should say that the latter would involve further expense, and that the contents of the report would likely be very similar to this letter."

- 4.51 We are aware that there has been subsequent correspondence between the Council, the Government and the Planning Inspectorate in respect of this matter, and most recently MSDC are understood to have now launched a legal challenge against the Government in respect of the Planning Inspector's findings and recommendation to withdraw the Plan from examination. Therefore, as it stands today, the draft Plan has not been withdrawn.
- 4.52 Given the above, we consider that no weight can currently be given to the draft Plan, and this Planning Application should therefore be assessed against the polices of the adopted District Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan, the NPPF, and other relevant planning guidance.

5. PLANNING HISTORY

(i) Planning History

5.1 This proposal follows several related planning applications on the adjacent site. The most recent of these are detailed below: -

- **Planning ref: DM/15/1801/**: Erection of 1 detached house and detached double garage. Refused planning permission. Appeal Dismissed.



Fig 5. Refused block plan (ref: DM/15/1801)

- **Planning ref: 10/02236/FUL/**: Erection of 1 no. detached house on vacant land (resubmission of 10/01275/FUL). Refused planning permission. Appeal Dismissed.

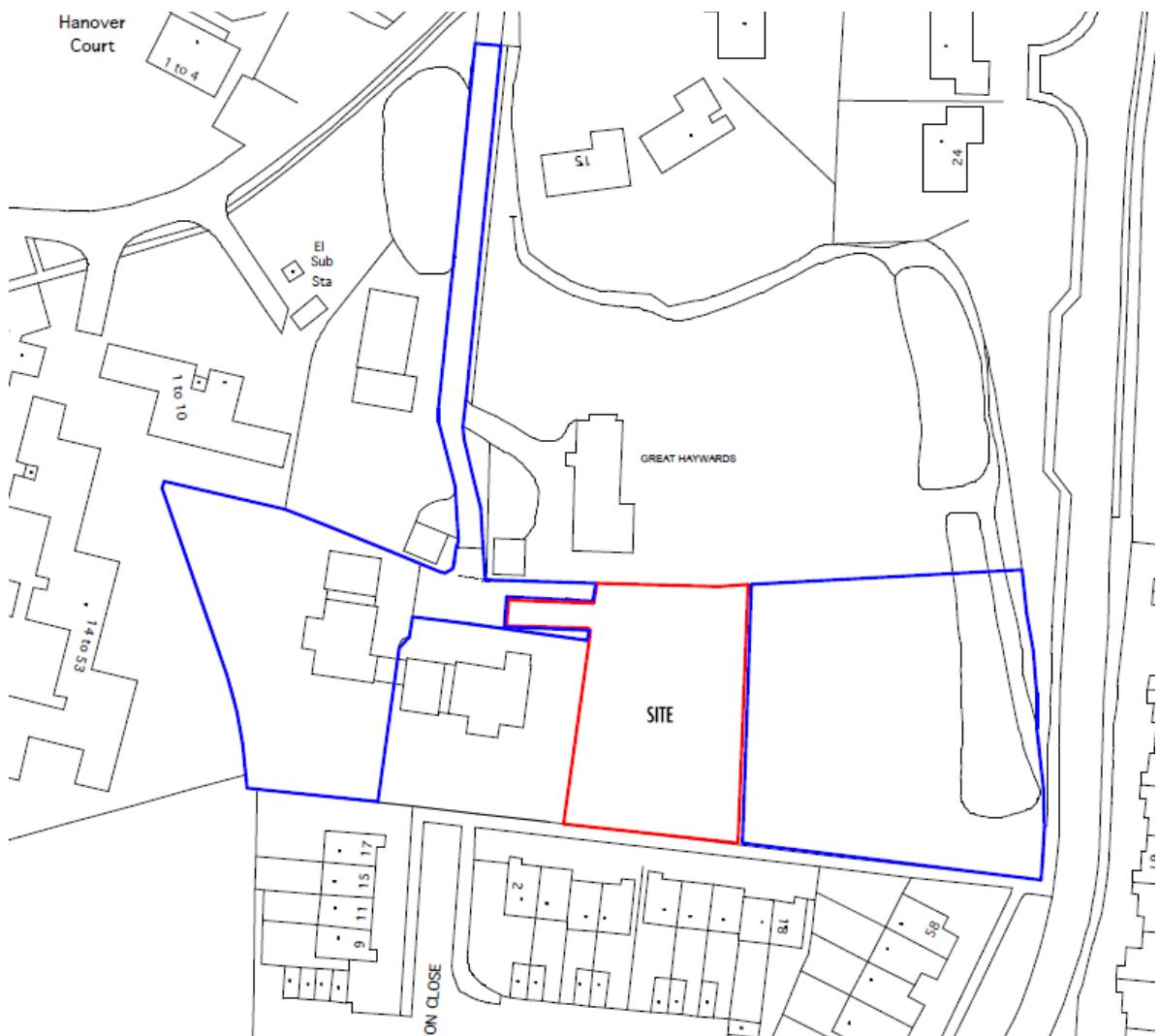


Fig 6. Refused Block Plan (ref: 10/02236/FUL/)

- **Planning ref: 08/03424/FUL/**: Reinstatement of previous dilapidated 1800mm high close-boarded fencing with new. Application refused. Appeal Dismissed.
- **Planning ref: 07/01914/FUL/**: New highway access onto Wealden Way. Application Refused.
- **Planning ref: HH/06/02585/FUL/**: 2 no. residential dwellings and demolition of redundant agricultural buildings. Application Approved.



Fig 7. Refused Block Plan (ref: 10/02585/FUL)

- **Planning ref: 00/01188/FUL/**: Erection of three detached dwellings with associated access and landscaping. Application Refused. Appeal Dismissed.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

6.1 This application proposes the erection of 1 no. detached dwelling on land adjacent to Great Haywards, a Grade II Listed Building. The site comprises a large area of vacant land, which is currently overgrown. The proposed site is located to the west side of Wealden Way, and access would be provided via this existing public highway.

6.2 As set out above, the Mid Sussex District Plan proposals map identifies that the site lies within the defined built-up area boundary, where there is a presumption in favour of new development, subject to other Development Plan Policies.

6.3 We are aware that there is extensive planning history in relation to land lying adjacent to Great Haywards, most notably with two previous refused applications (2010 and 2015) and subsequent dismissed appeals (2011 and 2015). This history is set out in full within the planning history section of this report. It will be noted that each of these applications had differing site circumstances, being located further west of the current application site and subsequently much closer to Great Haywards to the north and residential properties to the west. There have also been material changes in planning circumstances since these decisions, with revisions to the NPPF and adoption of the Mid Sussex District Plan in 2018. It is our opinion that the above material changes warrant a different view being taken in relation to this new application proposal.

6.4 Government Planning Policy supports effective and efficient use of land for sites such as this, but also advises that new housing should be well integrated with and complement neighbouring buildings and its local area in terms of scale, density, layout and access.

6.4 We are aware of a housing scheme recently determined at Appeal (Public Inquiry), for a site at Scamps Hill in Lindfield (**planning ref: DM/24/0446; appeal ref: APP/D3830/W/24/3350075**). At this time, the Inspector considered the issue of Housing Land Supply, noting that *“the Council suggest they have 3.38 years housing land supply, whereas the Appellant suggests it is 2.41 years. The variation is due to the differences in anticipated delivery of various large sites. However, as both parties agreed to describe the shortfall as significant, the issue was not contested at the Inquiry”*. It is therefore clear that currently, MSDC are unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

6.5 This point is confirmed by the Council within their recent decision on Twinham, 34 Hurst Road DM/25/0310 where in the Officer's Report they stated that *“having regard to the above, while the Council has performed excellently in respect of the Housing Delivery Test, a new standard method formula was published alongside the NPPF which gives Mid Sussex a significantly higher housing requirement than the current District Plan. As a result, and having regard for the need for an appropriate buffer, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites as per the requirements of paragraph 78 of the NPPF”*.

6.6 The presumption in favour of sustainable development is therefore engaged, and paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF applies. The policies most relevant to new housing are out of date, and permission should be granted for new housing 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”*.

6.7 As will be addressed in detail below, the development proposal would be erected within the setting of the Grade II Listed Building, Great Haywards. In this respect the DAS and Heritage Statement prepared by Manorwood in support of this application advises that the new proposals result in "*less than substantial harm but at the lower end of the spectrum.*" It is our opinion that the benefits of providing a well-designed new dwelling on an infill plot in a sustainable location within the defined built-up area are significant and would outweigh any potential harm to the setting of the nearby Listed Building. Further, currently Mid Sussex District Council do not have a 5YHLS and there is therefore a heightened need for housing. Therefore, the principle of new development in this location is acceptable and fully compliant with government guidance and local level policies.

6.8 The site is sustainably located, within easy reach of a host of services and facilities. The site is also well connected in terms of public transport, Haywards Heath railway Station is located approximately 0.6 miles north of the site and there are several bus stops within the immediate vicinity, which provide a host of regular services into Haywards Heath and provide connections to other towns and villages.

6.9 The MSDC Site Selection Paper (see Section 4 above) considers the larger site area against a number of relevant issues, including landscape, flood risk, trees, biodiversity, Conservation Area, archaeology, deliverability and sustainability. In all respects (other than heritage – see below), the assessment confirms that development of the site scores as either neutral, positive or very positive.

Character of the Area and Heritage Matters

6.10 The site is within the defined built-up area boundary for Haywards Heath. The surrounding area is characterised by residential development.

6.11 **Policy DP26** in the MSDP seeks for new development to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of its surroundings. In addition, the NPPF is supportive of good design and making efficient use of land.

6.12 This proposal seeks permission to erect a sensitively designed two storey detached four-bedroom dwelling. A high-quality design solution is proposed. The detached house would be located southeast of the Grade II Listed property, allowing a sizeable area of open space to be retained to the south side of Great Haywards' curtilage, as well as ample separation distance between other neighbouring properties.

6.13 As will be evident from a site visit, the surrounding area is residential, with the Wealden Way streetscene characterised by two storey detached and terraced properties. Plot sizes and shapes are varied. As detailed within the accompanying DAS, the *"design of the proposed development adopts a traditional approach incorporating local vernacular materials and forms to ensure the new development sits comfortably within the semi-rural wider setting of Great Haywards"*.

6.14 It is our opinion that provision of a new detached dwelling at this site would result in an efficient use of the available land resource without leading to an overdevelopment or over-intensive use of the site. The proposed design is of a high quality, and the new house would appear as an entirely appropriate addition the residential area. The prevailing character of the locality would not be impacted upon by the proposed development.

6.15 The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and Heritage Statement, which has been prepared by Manorwood. This statement notes that *"the proposed site is also adjacent to the north to Great Haywards, which comprises a Grade II Listed Building dating to the late 15th century/early 16th century...The immediate setting of the listed Great Haywards does not include any outbuildings or structures that can be deemed as curtilage listed. To the northwest of Great*

Haywards is the Grade II Listed Great Haywards Barn. This designated heritage asset, however, is too far [sic] away and too well screened from the proposed site to be affected by the proposed development".

6.16 With regard to character, the report notes that "*the immediate area to the southwest, west and north of Great Haywards has suburban residential character as a result of late 20th century development in the form of detached dwellings and residential institutional buildings. The areas to the southeast and east, which include the proposed site, have a well-defined semi-rural character with undeveloped areas surrounded by dense vegetation and mature trees, which separates it from Wealden Way. To the northeast of the proposed site there is also a pond, historically associated to Great Haywards".*

6.17 The Heritage Statement states that "*the construction of the proposed residential dwelling and associated garage building will also involve landscaping works, including small areas of hardstanding immediately to the west and north of the new dwelling and the creation of vehicle access from Wealden Way. The small areas of hardstanding adjacent to the new dwelling will be traditional (shingle or similar) with soft edging to preserve the semi-rural character of the site. The will also ensure that any potential domestic paraphernalia associated to the new dwelling remains within its immediate setting and curtilage... The new vehicle access from Wealden Way will provide direct access to the property and associated garage building, ensuring the existing traffic running through Amberley Close and alongside the listed Great Haywards Barn and Great Haywards is not increased... The new dwelling will result in an increase of domestic lighting and noise, as well as traffic activity in Wealden Way. Given this is a single residential dwelling which will sit within an already urbanised area of Haywards Heath, such increase will be minimal and barely noticeable... The proposed development is considered to erode part of the remaining openness around Great Haywards, albeit a large area of the existing plot (the closest to the listed building) will remain undeveloped. As such, the proposed*

development is considered to result in less than substantial harm, but at the lower end of the spectrum".

6.18 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states 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*". As detailed above, it is our opinion that the benefits of providing a well-designed new dwelling on an infill plot in a sustainable location within the defined built-up area are significant and would outweigh any potential harm to the setting of the nearby Listed Building. Further, currently Mid Sussex District Council do not have a 5YHLS and the creation of 1 No. family home within a sustainable location on a vacant site within the settlement boundary, heavily weighs in favour of the proposal.

6.19 The report goes on to explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm. It makes the following points:-

"The proposed dwelling and garage building will be located at the southeast end of the land adjacent to Great Haywards and immediately to the south and southwest of the existing pond, which is the furthest point from the listed building. This area also benefits from the presence of a group of dense mature trees which will provide natural screening.

Currently, the proposed site is not visible from any advantageous points due to the heavy vegetation around and within the ground. Whilst the overgrowth within the proposed site will be cleared, the existing dense vegetation around the plot will remain preventing views from Wealden Way and reducing the visual impact of the new development within the broader garden context of Great Haywards.

When visible (if any at all), the traditional form of the roofs and the use of traditional clay tiles will ensure the new buildings are perceived as part of the surviving historic buildings within the area.

Based on this, the proposed development will cause very limited visual impact on the setting of Great Haywards, as it will be barely noticeable from any public vantage points.

The layout and massing of the proposed dwelling and garage building have been sensitively designed to ensure that it remains clearly subservient to the neighbouring heritage asset.

The chosen materials have been carefully selected to reflect the traditional materials found in the neighbouring listed building and the local vernacular, allowing the new buildings to sit harmoniously within its setting".

- 6.20 The heritage statement concludes that “*the proposed development by virtue of its good design and location is considered to have limited impact setting of the listed building...Such impact has been minimised as far as possible, resulting in less than substantial harm but at the lower end of the spectrum...The proposal is, therefore, compliant with respect to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Mid Sussex Local Plan*”.
- 6.21 The reasons previously provided by the Planning Inspectors and Council (see the Site Selection Paper conclusions set out in Section 4 above) relate to the impact on the setting of the Listed building. The Council’s Site Selection Paper says “Planning permission has been refused on several occasions for housing development on this site due to the impact on the setting of the listed house and barn. Development on the site remains contentious due to the associated loss of the open and rural nature of this part of the setting of the farmstead, which makes a positive contribution to the special interest of the buildings and the manner in which it is appreciated. NPPF: Less than Substantial Harm, HIGH”.
- 6.22 However, these comments in respect of the impact on the setting of the Listed building relate to a larger site area and a scheme of at least 5 dwellings. The current

planning application now proposes a smaller development area, which is set further east and away from Great Haywards, thereby retaining a sizeable open and undeveloped parcel of land between the proposed new house and its curtilage and the Listed building. We contend that this is a significant change, the consequence of which is that the impact on the setting of the Listed building is considerably reduced from that previously considered.

- 6.23 It is our opinion that the site is sufficient size to comfortably accommodate the level of development indicated, and the resultant low density would be entirely appropriate given the site's relationship with the adjacent Listed Building, allowing ample amenity areas to both properties, as well sufficient separate distance between the properties to be maintained.
- 6.24 The proposal presented within this application submission would provide an efficient use of the available land resource in a sympathetic form via an appropriate density layout that would not jar with the established pattern of development in the area, and nor would it introduce an obtrusive or visually harmful form of development that would affect the character of the immediate area. The dwelling has been designed and carefully located to respect the setting of the nearby Listed building, Great Haywards. The proposal is considered to accord with **policy DP26** and **DP34** of the District Plan and policies **E9** of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.25 It is considered that the proposed development would represent a high-quality development in this location, which would appear perfectly in keeping with existing housing in this locality, and it would not detract from the character of the surrounding locality. The proposed development by virtue of its good design and location is considered to have limited impact setting of the listed building. Such impact has been minimised as far as possible, resulting in less than substantial harm but at the lower end of the spectrum. It is our opinion that the benefits of providing a well-designed new dwelling on an infill plot in a sustainable location within the

defined built-up area are significant and would clearly outweigh any limited harm to the setting of the nearby Listed Building. Further, the proposal would positively contribute towards the Council's housing supply, providing important social and economic benefits. For these reasons outlined above, it is our view that the proposal is fully compliant with **Policy DP26 and DP34** of the MSDP, and the relevant sections of the Haywards Heath NP, and the policies contained in the Government's NPPF.

Residential Amenity

6.26 **Policy DP26** of the MSDP requires that proposals for new development will not cause significant harm to the amenities of nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings. Matters to consider include the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and noise, air and light pollution.

6.27 In terms of residential amenity, we can confirm that the proposed development has been appropriately laid out to ensure that the relationships with neighbouring dwellings will be acceptable. The surrounding area is residential in character, with the site adjoining Wealden Way to the east side and residential properties to the south. The side is bordered to the north and west sides by the residential garden of Great Haywards.

6.28 Window orientation and placement have been given due consideration. No first-floor windows are proposed to the south elevation, which is closest to the neighbouring properties. This will prevent any undue overlooking towards neighbouring properties and our client would be happy for this to be ensured via condition. There is ample separation distance between the proposed dwelling and neighbouring properties to all other sides. It is considered that the relationship between the proposal and all neighbouring dwellings would be wholly acceptable, given the scale and height of the dwelling, window placement, orientation and distance between the proposal and neighbouring properties.

6.29 The new house will have an appropriately sized area of private amenity space to the north side. An adequate and proportionate rear garden area would be retained for Great Haywards also. Given the nearby Listed Building and its setting, the plot would be larger than many that surrounding to provide sufficient separation distance between the properties. It is our opinion that the plot size and level of amenity space provided would be in keeping Great Haywards and the spatial pattern of development in this area generally.

6.30 Taking into consideration all the above, it is our opinion that the proposed development would not have a detrimental effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of any neighbouring dwelling by way of noise impact, overbearing effect, loss of privacy or loss of light and would be fully compliant with **policy DP26** of the MSDP.

Space Standards

6.31 The proposal has been designed to be fully compliant with the National Space Standards, with respect to the internal floorspace of the proposed new house.

6.32 The Government's Technical Housing Standards - national described space standards sets out minimum gross internal floor areas and storage. The proposed development would comprise 1 No. new four bedroom, 8 person occupancy dwelling, which at 201.19 sq. m would exceed the required standards for a property of this type (115 sq. m). The proposal would be compliant with the Government's guidance, and **Policy D27** of the MSDP.

Access & Parking Arrangements

6.33 The proposed site is located to the west side of Wealden Way, and a new access point into the site from Wealden Way is proposed, as detailed on **fig 8** below.



Fig 8. Extract from Proposed Block Plan

6.34 The proposal would have sufficient space for the on-site turning and parking for 3 No. vehicles for the new dwelling. There would also be sufficient space within the garage building for No. 1 vehicle and cycle storage.

6.35 It is considered that the proposal will not give rise to highway safety or car parking concerns, and the proposal would accord with the NPPF, **Policies DP21 and DP28** of the MSDP, the intentions set out in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan, and WSCC's document "Guidance for Parking at New Developments, August 2019" - in that satisfactory access and on-site car parking will be provided as part of the development proposals.

Ecology

6.36 The Application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which has been prepared by The Ecology Partnership.

6.37 The report draws the following conclusions: -

The site does not lie within or adjacent to any designated sites. A number of statutory sites and non-statutory sites are located within the surrounding area; however, no residual negative impacts are anticipated due to the distances between the site and all designated sites, and the lack of related habitat to be lost. The site falls outside the Ashdown Forest 7km ZOI, and so no mitigation is required in relation to recreational pressure. Retaining the onsite woodland and trees as far as possible will maintain existing levels of connectivity of protected sites within the wider landscape.

There are no priority habitats on site, but woody vegetation should be retained as far as possible to maintain existing levels of landscape connectivity of nearby priority habitats. It is recommended that if any trees require removal they should be replaced with new native/species rich alternatives.

The scrub habitat dominating the site were considered to be of site value only. The mature trees and woodland were of greatest ecological value on site and should be retained and enhanced during development as much as is reasonably possible. Enhancements can be made to these features such as species-rich native wildflower planting at ground level and woody infill planting with native trees and shrubs.

It is considered that the mature trees within the woodland may have potential to support roosting bats. It is recommended that any trees to be removed are subject to an updated GLTA before felling.

It is suspected that the wooded trainline embankments that run 30m east of the site are likely to be used by foraging and commuting bats. As such, the onsite trees, scrub and woodland have potential to act as a 'hop-over' feature for bats passing through the town centre opportunistically whilst using these more suitable offsite corridors. Trees and woodland onsite are recommended to be retained and enhanced

and a bat sensitive lighting strategy should be followed in their proximity to prevent potential impacts to opportunistic commuting/foraging bats and suitable offsite woodland. A re-assessment of potential impact may be required if these features are not retained once the proposals have been finalised.

Any clearance of suitable nesting bird habitat, including trees, hedgerow, and woodland, should be undertaken outside nesting bird season or after a nesting bird check by a qualified ecologist.

A single pond was present on site, with a further two within 250m of the site. The onsite pond was subject to eDNA analysis, which returned a negative result. Due to the presence of two further ponds within 250m, lack of dispersal barriers and location of the site within an amber/red impact risk zone, it is recommended that the development enrolls in NatureSpace's district licensing scheme.

The majority of the site was dominated by urban habitats considered unsuitable for reptiles, dormice, hedgehogs, or other protected species. Onsite habitats such as the mature trees, hedgerow, and woodland were dominated by non-native species, of limited ecological value, and lacked meaningful connectivity to the wider landscape within the urban context in the centre of a town, bound on all sides by a main road. Any future development is not considered to be constrained by these species.

Recommendations for enhancements have been made within this report, aimed at improving the ecological value of the site post-development”

- 6.38 Several recommendations for ecological enhancement are made within the report. These include the removal of invasive and non-native species, as well as supplementary infill planting of native woody species and species-rich wildflower at ground level; the hanging of bird boxes; the integration of Swift bricks into the structure of the development; the introduction of bat boxes and the introduction of Bee bricks into the development.
- 6.39 Our client is committed to complying with the suggested recommendations and would be happy for these to be ensured via a suitably worded condition. The

proposals would be compliant with guidance contained within the NPPF and **Policy DP38** of Mid Sussex District Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

6.40 No BNG is required in this case as the proposed development is a self-build dwelling, and it is therefore exempt. The application is accompanied by a Self-build and Custom Build Statement.

Drainage

6.41 The Application Site lies within Flood Zone 1, which means that it has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

6.42 A drainage statement accompanies this Planning Application. This advises that regarding foul drainage, our client proposes to connect the mains drainage to the existing foul water drain in Wealden Way. The alternative is to install a Sewage Treatment plant on site constructed in accordance with the Governments 'General Binding Rules'.

6.43 The report confirms that Surface water will be drained into the Balancing Pond on the site.

6.44 We suggest that detailed drainage design can be dealt with by way of a suitably worded Planning Condition.

Arboriculture

6.45 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared by Arbortrack Systems Ltd in support of this Planning Application. The report advises that "*low-quality trees 5, 6 & 7 will be removed to allow or facilitate development. The loss of these trees is a low and acceptable impact and is likely to have a minimal amenity impact on the surrounding area.* 1.4.3 *The majority of surveyed ash trees on site are suffering*

*from ash dieback disease (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*). They should be monitored routinely, and some have been recommended for removal within three years".*

6.46 It goes on to conclude that "*the great majority of site works will take place beyond the RPAs of retained trees and canopies. Retained trees will be protected throughout the course of development by ground protection and fencing to the specification recommended by BS5837:2012*".

6.47 The development proposal is acceptable from an arboricultural perspective and would be compliant with **Policy DP37**.

Sustainable Construction & Energy Efficiency

6.48 A Sustainability Report is submitted with this Planning Application, and this confirms compliance with **Policy DP39**.

7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

7.1 As outlined above, the focus of the revised NPPF continues to be for development to be sustainable. It sets out there are three principle 'objectives' to achieving sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In this part of the Planning Statement the main factors that inform the judgement as to whether the proposal would be a sustainable form of development are summarised. In reaching that view all matters referred to in the above report have been considered.

The Economic Objective

7.2 The proposed development would result in the creation of construction jobs during the build period. The additional population could help generate more local spending in the local community, provision of infrastructure and services, and generate New Homes Bonus funding as well as additional Council Tax receipts. These are all material considerations that weigh in favour of the development. It is considered that the proposal would satisfy the economic role of sustainable development.

Social Objective

7.3 The provision of 1 No. new family dwelling will make a small, albeit notable contribution to the district's housing supply. The NPPF seeks to promote "*strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations*". Due to the location of the site within the built-up area of Haywards Heath where there are many services, it is considered that the location of the site is sustainable. Overall, it is considered that the proposal would be satisfactory from a social perspective.

Environmental Objective

7.4 There is an overriding need to ensure that development should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. The proposed development in terms of layout, scale and appearance is in keeping with the

character of the surrounding area and hence would not result in an adverse impact to the character of the surrounding built environment. We have demonstrated that the proposed development by virtue of its good design and location is considered to have limited impact setting of the listed building. Such impact has been minimised as far as possible, resulting in less than substantial harm but at the lower end of the spectrum. There are no flood risk, biodiversity or landscape constraints that relate to this site. The proposal would not result in any highway safety problems. As such, the environmental role of sustainable development would be satisfied by this proposal.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 In conclusion, the proposed development is considered acceptable for the following reasons:

- The provision of 1 No four-bedroom family home would reinforce the character and quality of the residential area by providing a high-quality designed property that positively responds to the site and the local character of the area. The proposed development would not appear as an overdevelopment or visually cramped, and it is evident that the proposal will sit comfortably within the streetscene.
- The site is located within the defined planning boundary, within a sustainable location.
- It is noted that there is planning history in relation to a new property being proposed adjacent to Great Haywards; however there have been material changes in planning circumstances since this time with the site's size being reduced, and the position of the development and its curtilage being set away from the Listed building. This allows the retention of an area of undeveloped and open land to be retained that will buffer the proposed development from Great Haywards.
- Additionally, the planning policy position has been updated since the previous decisions for development at this site. The latest NPPF was published in 2024, and MSDC have a District Plan that was adopted in 2018. A new District Plan is at examination, but the Inspector has concluded that the plan is unsound. MSDC cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. Therefore the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.
- It is our opinion that cumulatively these changes warrant a positive view being taken in relation to this reduced proposal for a single high quality designed self-build dwelling, which will be set away from Great Haywards.
- The application is accompanied by a Heritage Statement, which demonstrates that *“the proposed development by virtue of its good design and location is considered to have limited impact setting of the listed building. Such impact has been minimised as far as possible, resulting in less than substantial harm but at the lower end of*

the spectrum. The proposal is, therefore, compliant with respect to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Mid Sussex Local Plan".

- This new scheme is materially different from the previous Appeal dismissals, and Manorwood confirm that it will now lead to no more than lower end less than substantial harm. Our position is that this significantly reduced level of harm to the setting of the Listed building will be clearly outweighed in the planning balance by the social and economic benefits of providing a self-build family dwelling in a sustainable location, at a time when the Local Authority have a heightened need for housing, as evidenced by the inability to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply.
- It is not considered that the proposed development would demonstrably harm the amenities of any neighbouring property. Further, the proposal meets the Council's requirements in respect of Space Standards.
- The new vehicular access would meet required standards and would provide ample space for parking and turning of vehicles to serve the new dwelling.
- The proposal meets all the necessary policy requirements, and will cause no significant harm to the character of the surrounding area. In our opinion the overwhelming weight of evidence supports the proposal as it is shown to comply with all relevant Development Plan policies.
- The proposed redevelopment optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development as required by the NPPF, whilst respecting the character of the area and taking due account of the setting of the neighbouring heritage asset. It is strongly considered that the proposed development constitutes a sustainable form of development that accords with the Development Plan for the area and should therefore be approved without delay.

8.2 Given the above, it therefore follows that planning permission should be granted without delay.

September 2025