

Planning Statement

Project Address:	Land at Mill Lane, Sayers Common, West Sussex, BN6 9JA
Proposal:	Planning Application for 9 new build houses
Application:	Full Planning
Local Authority:	Mid Sussex District Council
Application number:	-
Statement prepared by:	M Landivar
Date:	April 2026

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1. Preface

This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicants, Ms Carol Harris, Mr C Harris and Mr A Harris, in support of the Full Planning Application for 9 new build houses at:

Land at Mill Lane, Sayers Common, West Sussex, BN6 9JA.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents:

- Architectural drawings contained within submission.
- Design and Access Statement
- Application and CIL forms
- Biodiversity Checklist.
- Sustainability Statement.
- Ecology and BNG report.
- Landscaping proposals.
- Sustainable drainage design.
- Arboricultural statement

This statement sets out the site's Planning history and seeks to demonstrate compliance with both the relevant National and Regional Planning policies.

2. Introduction and Planning history.

2.1 The application site has been the subject of the following recent planning history:

DM/25/0045: Planning in Principle (PIP) for the development of the land for five residential dwellings. Refused: 18th February 2025.

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2.2 Following the refusal of DM/25/0045, The application site was the subject of a successful appeal to the Secretary of State following the Council's refusal of a Permission in Principle (PIP) application:

- Local Authority Ref: DM/25/0045
- Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/W/25/3361729
- Decision: APPEAL ALLOWED, 02 October 2025.

2.3 In allowing the appeal, the Planning Inspector (L. Francis) made several determinations that are directly material to this full application for 9 dwellings:

- Sustainability of Location: The Inspector concluded that the site is a suitable location for housing, noting that while it technically sits outside the built-up area boundary, it is well-related to the settlement and accessible to local services.
- Policy Conflict vs. Benefits: The Inspector acknowledged the technical conflict with Policies DP6, DP12, and DP15, but determined that the benefits of boosting housing supply and the Council's land supply position "significantly and demonstrably outweigh the harm".
- Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development: The decision confirms that Paragraph 11 of the NPPF applies to this site, indicating that permission should be granted.

3. SITE ANALYSIS & CHARACTER

3.1 The **0.4ha** application site is a self-contained parcel of unmanaged scrubland on the edge of Sayers Common. The village of Sayers Common is in West Sussex, with the nearest town being Burgess Hill.

3.2 The site sits between the established residential grain of Mill Lane and the strategic infrastructure of the A23. Existing vehicular access is from the

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north of the site, via an access road coming off the roundabout, with residential gardens and churchyard to the south and west and the A23 running along the eastern boundary.

3.3 Sustainability Credentials: As set out in the appeal decision the site has been established as a sustainable location for development. It is situated within 400m of the B2118 bus corridors and is within walking distance of the Sayers Common Community Shop, the public house, and the village church.

Appeal Decision APP/D3830/W/24/3342371 explicitly confirms that the site is a sustainable location suitable for residential development.

4. STATUTORY PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY (NPPF)

The proposal has been assessed against the relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

4.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. (Paragraph 11)

- Compliance: For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. While the site is currently classified as countryside, it is physically and visually contained. The 9-dwelling scheme delivers significant social and economic benefits that outweigh any perceived conflict with settlement boundaries, particularly in the context of local housing need, as set out in the appeal decision.

4.2 Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes (Chapter 5)

- Paragraph 60: To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed.

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- Paragraph 70 (Small and Medium Sites): The NPPF states that small and medium-sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly. This proposal for 9 units is a prime example of a windfall site that makes efficient use of land to support local housing delivery.
- 4.3 Promoting Sustainable Transport (Chapter 9)
- Paragraph 109: The NPPF requires 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."
 - Compliance: The site is situated within the village of Sayers Common. It benefits from existing pedestrian links to Oakhurst (under the same ownership) and immediate proximity to the local bus network, reducing reliance on the private car for essential services.
- 4.4 Making Effective Use of Land (Chapter 11)
- Paragraph 123: 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.
 - Compliance: The move from an "in principle" 5-house concept to a detailed 9-house layout represents a more efficient use of the land. It provides a density that is appropriate to the site's semi-rural character while maximising the contribution to housing supply.
- 4.5 Achieving Well-Designed Places (Chapter 12)
- Paragraph 135: Planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and are sympathetic to local character and history.
 - Compliance: The proposal has references to a rural vernacular language as detailed in the Design & Access Statement. The architectural approach is sympathetic to the neighbouring Christ Church and ensures

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that the massing of the 9 dwellings does not appear as a singular, dominant block within the landscape.

4.6 Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change (Chapter 14)

- Paragraph 173 (Flood Risk): Development should be directed away from areas at highest risk of flooding.
- Compliance: The site is located in Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk). As per NPPF Paragraph 175, the scheme incorporates Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to ensure that surface water run-off is managed effectively and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

4.7 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural and Historic Environment (Chapters 15 & 16)

- Paragraph 180 (Natural Environment): Decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. The site's containment by the A23 ensures it does not impact the wider open countryside.
- Paragraph 191 (Noise/Pollution): Planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects of pollution on health and living conditions.
- Compliance: In direct accordance with NPPF Paragraph 193 (The Agent of Change Principle), the applicant has submitted a full Planning Noise Assessment. This ensures that the noise from the A23 is mitigated through design (acoustic fencing and bunds), protecting the amenity of future residents without placing unreasonable restrictions on the existing road infrastructure.
- Paragraph 203 (Heritage Assets): The development has been designed to sustain and enhance the significance of the nearby Grade II Listed Christ Church by maintaining a robust landscaped buffer and appropriate scale.

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COMPLIANCE WITH MID SUSSEX DISTRICT PLAN 2014-2031

4.8 Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy

- Policy Requirement: Development should be focused within or contiguous to built-up area boundaries.
- Compliance: While the site sits just outside the current boundary, the detailed layout demonstrates it is physically and functionally contiguous with the existing residential neighbourhood to the south. The proposal represents a logical completion of the village fabric, bounded by the A23 to the east, preventing further sprawl while utilising a contained site.

4.9 Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

- Policy Requirement: The countryside will be protected for its own sake. Development is only permitted if it maintains or enhances the quality of the rural landscape.
- Compliance: The site is heavily enclosed by existing mature trees and dense hedgerows, limiting its contribution to the "open" countryside. The 9-dwelling scheme is a sensitive, low-density rural vernacular design that maintains the character of the area through significant landscape retention and enhancement.

4.10 Policy DP15: New Homes in the Countryside

- Policy Requirement: New homes in the countryside are generally restricted unless they meet specific criteria (e.g., essential for agricultural workers or a specific local need).
- Compliance: This application argues that the site's sustainable location, proximity to village services, and physical containment by major infrastructure (A23) make it an appropriate "windfall" site. The provision of 9 family homes supports the District's ongoing requirement for a high-quality housing supply in sustainable locations.

4.11 Policy DP26: Character and Design

- Policy Requirement: All development must be of high-quality design and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages.

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- Compliance: The proposal adopts a rural vernacular style, utilising materials and forms that harmonise with Sayers Common. The site layout avoids a "suburban" feel, instead opting for a cluster of dwellings that reflect the semi-rural transition of the site.

4.12 Policy DP27: Dwelling Space Standards

- Policy Requirement: New dwellings must meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS).
- Compliance: All 9 dwellings have been designed to exceed NDSS requirements for internal floor area and storage. Furthermore, each unit is provided with generous private external amenity space (gardens) that meet the standards set out in the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD.

The proposed units are compared against the NDSS below:

Unit No.	Bed / Person	National Standard	Proposed GIA
Plots 1–7	3B / 5P	93.0 sqm	110.0 sqm
Plot 9	4B / 8P	124.0 sqm	160.0 sqm

The units exceed minimum standards by an average of 20%, providing exceptional internal amenity and generous levels of natural light.

4.13 Policy DP29: Noise, Air and Light Pollution

- Policy Requirement: Development must be appropriate for its location and not cause unacceptable levels of pollution, including noise.
- Compliance: A full Planning Noise Assessment supports this application. It confirms that through the implementation of a 2m earth bund, 1.8m acoustic fencing, and high-performance glazing/ventilation (MVHR), a high standard of residential amenity will be achieved despite the proximity to the A23.

4.14 Policy DP34: Heritage Assets

- Policy Requirement: Development must protect the setting of Listed Buildings.

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- Compliance: The proposal maintains a respectful separation from the Grade II Listed Christ Church. By retaining existing boundary vegetation and utilising sensitive building heights, the scheme ensures that the significance and setting of the heritage asset are preserved.
- 4.15 Policy DP37 & DP38: Trees, Woodland and Biodiversity
- Policy Requirement: Development should protect and enhance biodiversity and existing trees.
 - Compliance: The scheme is "landscape-led." Existing boundary trees are retained to maintain visual screening and ecological corridors. New planting will result in a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), supporting the local ecosystem.
- 4.15 Policy DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage
- Policy Requirement: Development must manage surface water drainage effectively.
 - Compliance: Located in Flood Zone 1, the site is at low risk. The proposal utilises Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), including permeable paving, rain gardens and soakaways, to manage runoff at the source and ensure no increased risk to the surrounding area.

5. Conclusion and Planning Balance

5.1 This Planning Statement has demonstrated that the proposed erection of 9 dwellings on the site at Mill Lane represents a sustainable, high-quality residential scheme that aligns with the overarching objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

7.2 The Weight of the Appeal Decision (Ref: 3361729)

The fundamental principle of residential development on this site has been established and affirmed by the Planning Inspectorate in Appeal Decision APP/D3830/W/25/3361729. The Inspector's findings are a significant material

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consideration that must be afforded substantial weight in the determination of this application. Specifically:

- **Suitability of Location:** The Inspector explicitly ruled that the site is a suitable location for housing, noting its accessibility to local services in Sayers Common and its functional relationship with the existing settlement.
- **Application of the "Tilted Balance":** The Inspector determined that the presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF Paragraph 11) applies to this site. The decision notice confirms that the benefits of boosting housing supply "significantly and demonstrably outweigh" any perceived conflicts with Policies DP6, DP12, and DP15 regarding countryside protection.
- **Planning principle:** The appeal decision effectively nullifies the Council's previous reasons for refusal regarding the "principle" of development, shifting the planning focus entirely toward the technical and design merits of the specific scheme.

7.3 Optimising site potential via Full Planning

While the appeal granted Permission in Principle (PIP) for 5 units, this full application for 9 dwellings represents a more efficient and "design-led" use of the site that better aligns with the NPPF objective of making effective use of land (Chapter 11).

- **Acoustic Mitigation:** This application provides the definitive technical solution to the A23 noise constraints identified in the PIP stage. The submitted Planning Noise Assessment outlines a robust strategy—utilising a 2m earth bund and 1.8m acoustic fence—that ensures a high standard of occupant amenity in full compliance with Policy DP29.
- **Architectural Design:** The detailed "rural vernacular" design ensures that the increased density is achieved without compromising the character of the area or the setting of the Grade II Listed Christ Church.

7.4 The Inspector's concluding remarks were definitive: "The presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and this indicates that permission should be granted".

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7.5 The Applicant has addressed the relevant technical requirements, referenced within the appeal decision, while maintaining the landscape containment that the Inspector found acceptable. As the principle of development has already been established, and the technical details are now fully substantiated, we respectfully request that the Local Planning Authority approves this sustainable development.