

PART TWENTY-ONE
PLANNING STATEMENT

Planning Statement for a proposal to develop a rural eco-dwelling of exceptional design on a former petrol storage unit on Land at Caldyne Park, Turners Hill Rd, West Sussex, RH10 4NB



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with other components of the submission, particularly the Design and Access Statement, the Biodiversity Plan and the reports on energy conservation both in building construction and in use. The structure of the Planning Statement is as follows:
- A description of the location and condition of the site
 - The planning history of the site and other sites close by where that is relevant
 - A summary of the proposal
 - A statement of the national and local policies which are relevant to the proposal
 - A summary of the specialist studies that are part of the submission
 - The extent to which the proposal confirms and the mitigation measures where there may be a degree of harm from the proposal.
 - The routine issues that would apply to any proposal for a house such as access, parking, noise, space standards.
 - A conclusion that focuses on the extent to which the proposal should benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

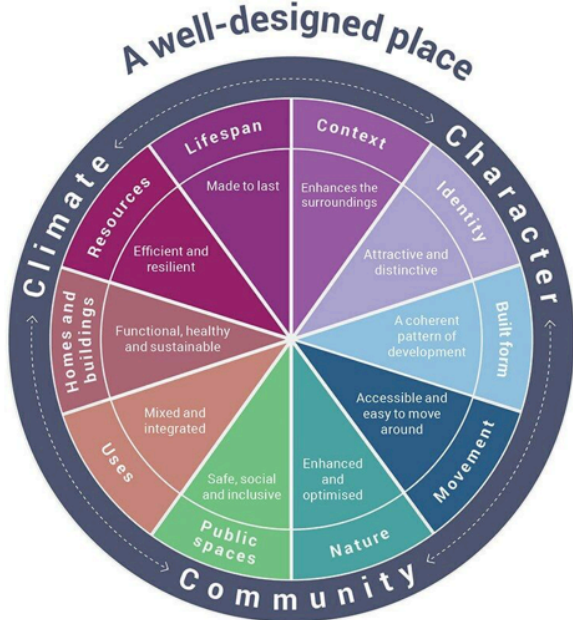
2.0 The site

- 2.1 The site is located approximately 2 km east of the M23 and the edge of Crawley. Gatwick International Airport lies some 5 km to the North West. The site is beyond the eastern boundary of Crawley, which consists of the M23. Crawley and Gatwick International Airport exert some functional and physical influences on the countryside in the area. There are a significant number of residential dwellings and commercial uses, including the Holiday Inn Gatwick Hotel. The site is excluded from the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2.2 The subject site is an ex-MOD fuel depot that was used in the Second World War and, until the late 1990s, contained a number of below- and above-ground fuel storage tanks. Therefore, the site has not been wooded in its entirety since before the MOD's use of the site, which is understood to be around the 1930s. It was cleared again of both woodland and the fuel storage tanks in 1999, but it is believed significant contamination remains.
- 2.3 Since 1999, non-native rhododendrons have invaded the woodland and are growing prolifically in the previous locations of the fuel storage tanks. Certain plants are unwelcome invaders of our woods. One of the most damaging, unfortunately most common, is rhododendron (Rhododendron ponticum), a naturalised, purple-flowered shrub introduced in 1763. It is fast spreading to other areas of the woodland.
- 2.4 The proposed house is located wholly upon the cleared portion of the site previously occupied by the MOD fuel storage tanks and is now surrounded by overgrown rhododendrons. There are NO native mature trees in the construction area, so the applicant would undertake no native mature woodland clearance. The MOD first undertook the woodland clearance before the Second World War and then again more recently in 1999. In our view, the site is previously developed land because the site has not been fully restored by reason of the contamination that remains. We will discuss this point in greater detail.

3.0 National Policy - The NPPF, December 2024

Design

- 3.1 It is arguable that the most important section of the NPPF so far as this proposal is concerned is Section 12. - Achieving well-designed places
- 3.2 *Paragraph 131. ‘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, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this.’*
- 3.3 The National Design Guide puts flesh on the bones of these objectives and neatly expresses the principles of good design in this graphic:



- 3.4 The sister publication Living with Beauty (Jan 2020) The report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission stresses the need for the process to be transparent. A good deal of the Design and Access Statement is taken up with an explanation of the evolution of what we submit is an exceptional building. In addition, part 20 (Design Response to Previous DRP and Council Comments) details how the project has evolved in response to previous council and DRP feedback.
- 3.5 Increasing emphasis is being placed on sustainability in planning in accordance with para 161. “The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050, take full account of all climate impacts, including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change.” The proposal meets or exceeds the relevant points within the section ‘Planning for climate change’ (paragraphs 162 - 169). The low-carbon design approach has ensured that the proposal's layout, orientation, massing, landscaping, and design significantly minimise its operational and embodied carbon beyond standard architecture. It also integrates innovative renewable and low-carbon energy strategies (heat, electricity, and water).

- 3.6 Furthermore, paragraph 139 (b) states that ‘SIGNIFICANT WEIGHT’ should be given to ‘outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.’
- 3.7 The sustainability of the proposal is outstanding and innovative, promoting high levels of sustainability and design standards in the area.
- Housing
- 3.8 The proposal adds a dwelling to the stock using Brownfield land and so is fully in accordance with the following sections of the NPPF:
- 3.9 Section 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Paragraph 61. ‘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, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.’

- 3.10 It is a Brownfield site and so is in accordance with Section 11. Making effective use of land

Paragraph 124. 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. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.

Homes in Rural areas

- 3.11 The site in a rural area where new dwellings are not normally allowed and so we have to go to para 84 of the NPPF:
- ‘Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:*
 - a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*
 - b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;*
 - c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;*
 - d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or*
 - e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:*
 - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and*
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.’*

- 3.12 It is our case that the proposal meets the requirements of 84e and in support of that we have submitted the following documents:
- Wider Landscape & Immediate Setting Analysis (Parts 1 - 10)
 - Design Development Statement (Parts 10 - 14)
 - Energy Assessment & Passivhaus Statement (Part 15)
 - Innovative Low Carbon Energy Strategies Statement (Part 16)
 - Low Carbon Building & Construction Strategies (Part 17)
 - Biodiversity Statement (Part 18)
 - Design and Access Statement (Part 19)
 - Response to Previous DRP and Council Comments (Part 20)

- 3.13 We anticipate that after submission, the proposal will be sent to the Design Review Panel (DRP). This project has been extensively developed in response to the previous DRP feedback, and we believe we have now finalised a scheme that satisfies the NPPF 84 e criteria, demonstrating exceptional design quality.

Biodiversity

- 3.14 Paragraph 192 of the NPPF deals with biodiversity and says ‘To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶⁵; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶⁶; and*
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.*
- 3.15 In Addition, paragraph 193 (d) of the NPPF deals with biodiversity and says ‘When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.’*
- 3.16 A primary objective of this scheme is to remediate and enhance the local biodiversity through the bioremediation and removal of contaminated land and invasive species, with the careful integration/addition of diverse and species-rich planting and woodland management.
- 3.17 A PEA, Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and HMMP (February 2026) prepared by Arun Ecology is part of the submission. The proposal will bring significant improvements to the biodiversity (30.73% BNG) of the site and adjacent areas to the extent that the proposed dwelling is not only intrinsically acceptable but can also be seen as “enabling development”, but it is the enhancement of biodiversity that is enabled rather than conservation of heritage assets.

	<u>Conserving and enhancing the natural environment</u>		
3.18	Paragraph 187 of the NPPF says “Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: <i>a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);</i> <i>b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;</i> <i>c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;</i> <i>d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;</i> <i>e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and</i> <i>f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.’</i>	<i>Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.</i> <i>The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.</i> <i>Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council. Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.’</i> And...	<i>Applications for the removal of agricultural occupancy conditions will only be permitted where it can be proven that there is no longer any need for the dwelling for someone solely, mainly or last working in agriculture or forestry or other rural based enterprise. This will be based on an up to date assessment of the demand for farm (or other occupational) dwellings in the area as a whole, and not just on a particular holding.</i> <i>New ‘granny annexes’ that are physically separate to the dwelling are defined as a new home and are subject to the same requirements as above.</i> <i>Re-use of rural buildings for residential use</i> <i>The re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for residential use in the countryside will be permitted where it is not a recently constructed8 agricultural building which has not been or has been little used for its original purpose and:</i> <i>• the re-use would secure the future of a heritage asset; or</i> <i>• the re-use would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting and the quality of the rural and landscape character of the area is maintained.</i>
3.19	In addition, the NPPF Says: <i>Paragraph 188 - ‘plans should: ...allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework62; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.’</i>		<i>Replacement dwellings in the countryside</i> <i>Replacement dwellings in the countryside will be permitted where:</i> <i>• The residential use has not been abandoned;</i> <i>• Highway, access and parking requirements can be met; and</i> <i>• The replacement dwelling maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the natural and/or built landscape particularly in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, especially if a significant change in scale from the existing dwelling is proposed.</i>
3.20	The proposal’s exceptional design exceeds the requirements set out in the NPPF. These features are fully explained in the Biodiversity plan, Arun Ecology Reports and the Supporting Statements.	Provided that they would not be in conflict with Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, new homes in the countryside will be permitted where special justification exists. Special justification is defined as: <i>• Where accommodation is essential to enable agricultural, forestry and certain other full time rural workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work; or</i> <i>• In the case of new isolated homes in the countryside, where the design of the dwelling is of exceptional quality and it enhances its immediate setting and is sensitive to the character of the area; or</i> <i>• Affordable housing in accordance with Policy DP32: Rural Exception Sites; or</i> <i>• The proposed development meets the requirements of Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy.</i>	<i>4.4</i> It is our case that we meet the exceptional design criterion DP15, in that not only is the architecture and energy conservation of the proposed dwelling exceptional, but also, by reason of decontamination and the removal of invasive species alongside significant biodiversity enhancement, the immediate setting is enhanced. We see no conflict with Policy DP12.
	4.0 Local Policy - The Mid Sussex District Plan, March 2018		5.0 The Biodiversity Plan (Rewilding)
4.1	The two key policies with the Mid Sussex District Plan are DP12 & DP15.		5.1 The rewilding strategy aims to enhance existing woodlands and create new habitats to improve ecological diversity on the site. Developed in collaboration with Arun Ecology and landscape designer Nicholas Dexter, this plan addresses the currently poor habitat conditions.
4.2	<u>DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside</u> <i>‘The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:</i> <i>• it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or</i> <i>• it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.</i>	<i>Permanent agricultural (includes forestry and certain other full time rural worker) dwellings will only be permitted to support existing agricultural activities on well-established agricultural units where:</i> <i>• The need cannot be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on or any other existing accommodation near the agricultural unit; and</i> <i>• It can be proven that it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times; and</i> <i>• It can be proven that the farming enterprise is economically viable; and</i> <i>• It can be proven that the size of the dwelling is commensurate with the established functional requirement of the agricultural unit.</i> <i>Temporary agricultural dwellings essential to support a new farming activity either on a newly created agricultural unit or on an established one will be subject to the criteria above and should normally be provided by temporary accommodation.</i>	5.2 To maximise biodiversity net gain (BNG) and promote ecological enhancement, the residential garden is confined to an area running along the dwelling’s perimeter. This area is clearly defined with estate fencing along the border, allowing the rest of the site to be returned to nature and flourish.
			5.3 Key components include: 1. Enhancement of Existing Woodland: Both the ancient woodland and the woodland within the site suffer from invasive and problem species, which, in combination with its history and neglect, have had a profoundly detrimental effect on their baseline habitat conditions (Poor). Therefore, the first component of the rewilding strategy is to enhance the existing lowland mixed deciduous woodland parcels. The method of enhancement focuses on: establishing woodland understorey with native woody plants, establishing a woodland ground flora and the removal of INNS (Rhododendron ponticum), management of canopy cover and composition, and re-establishing woodland processes such as natural decay. 2. Habitat Creation and Ecological Enhancements: Following woodland enhancements, the next phase focuses on creating diverse habitats and implementing ecological improvements that foster species richness and habitat diversity. This involves extending the Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland through planting and enhancement efforts. The plan also includes establishing a variety of ecosystems within the clearing, including Neutral Grassland, Mixed Scrub, a large new Wild Pond, a Traditional Orchard, and Individual Tree Planting to support connectivity. The proposed enhancements extend beyond basic or mandatory requirements by introducing unique habitats and expanding foraging opportunities for local wildlife. This includes the creation of Soil Banks, Refugia/Hibernacula, deadwood log piles, bee central hives, bat boxes, and deadwood log stack walls throughout the rewilded landscape. Furthermore, the dwelling features several integrated habitats, such as an intensive green roof and additional habitats like bat boxes, house sparrow boxes, and insect boxes, which are strategically placed in the voids of the ‘Ray Wall’ structure of the dwelling. 3. Long-Term Management: The plan includes a 30-year habitat management and monitoring strategy, ensuring the health and sustainability of the newly created and enhanced habitats. Overall, the rewilding strategy represents an exceptional proactive approach to ecological restoration that not only meets but exceeds statutory biodiversity net gain requirements (x3), achieving a notable 30.73% increase across the 5.87-hectare site, including 1.92 hectares of irreplaceable habitat (ancient woodland). This comprehensive approach is vital for fostering a thriving ecological landscape and promoting long-term biodiversity. Please see Parts 19 and 20 for further information on the Biodiversity strategy, alongside the submitted comprehensive ecology and BNG reports prepared by Arun Ecology.

6.0	Low-Carbon Building & Energy Strategies	
6.1	We choose materials and construction techniques with the least embodied energy, create the least waste, and use locally grown or manufactured materials to embody our buildings with an appropriate sense of place. We also design our buildings to very high insulating and air-tightness standards to ensure long-term sustainability and low embodied carbon.	
6.2	The reports on low-carbon building and energy strategies (Parts 15-17) include the following key features: • Prefabricated CLT walls, floors, and roof • Highly insulated raft system, with low carbon concrete groundwork • Flexible wood fibre insulation utilising a narrow chords larsen truss • Innovative timber cladding using locally sourced sweet chestnut timber • Intensive green & blue hybrid roof • Nine highly efficient AIKO photovoltaics that provide 5540 kWh/yr • High-performance Passivhaus dwelling. (See Part 15) • Integrated power technologies, heating strategies and drainage & water treatment system significantly reducing the dwellings operational carbon (See Part 16)	
6.3	Other Technologies: • Heat recovery Ventilation System • Immersun unit (diverting excess PV energy (2 x 3kW to immersion) • Actis multifoil insulation also provides airtightness & Vapour control • 3x 13.5kWh Tesla Powerwall 2 battery storage system • Vphase Voltage Optimisation • Low Energy LED lighting throughout • Extensive Building Physics & Lifestyle Monitoring • Biosolar Roof which maximises solar energy generation. The cooling effect increases panel output by up to 5%.	
6.4	The outline energy specification is: • Treatable Floor Area = 560 m² • Airtightness = Less than 0.6 ach@50Pa • Upper Wall u-value = 0.12 W/m²K • Lower Wall u-value = 0.14 W/m²K • Roof u-value = 0.12 W/m²K • Floor u-value = 0.13 W/m²K • Triple Glazed Windows = Whole window < 0.85 W/m²K • Thermal Bridges = Thermal Bridge Free Design • Frequency of Overheating = 0% (>25oC) • Space Heating Demand = 13 kWh/m²/yr • Energy Generation = 15 kWh/m²/yr	
6.5	Part 16 of the supporting statement - Innovative low carbon energy strategies - deals with the building in use (operational carbon). The three key technical innovations used are:	
6.6	i. Innovative Biosolar Photovoltaics System: Our proposal includes the installation of nine AIKO N-Type ABC Black Hole Series Solar Panels. These Cutting edge mono-crystalline Silicon Panels can each produce up to 615pW and only have an annual degradation of <0.35%. Using output analysis software these panels have been purposefully placed to optimise the solar electricity generation. Yearly PV Energy Production (on-site) is 5540 kWh/yr.	
6.7	ii. Installation of 3 Tesla Powerwalls: This innovative system stores on-site generated DC electricity during daylight hours and uses the stored electricity during evening hours, dramatically improving the building's independence and removing the need for grid-based electricity. It uses a high-capacity Lithium-ion battery to store energy produced from solar panels, just like those used in everything from laptops to electric cars, working in harmony with the Solar Panels.	
6.8	iii. ImmerSUN Unit: The immerSUN unit transfers all surplus solar generated electricity (after Telsa Powerwall is fully charged) and diverts it to an immersion heater element in the phase change heat store. This stores the excess electricity as heat, which can be used when it is in demand, fully utilising the on-site generated electricity.	
6.9	In addition, the dwelling utilises Mechanical Heat ventilation, a Ground vertical borehole heat pump and a Sunamp phase change material heat store to sustainably utilise the renewable and available heat sources on site. Further, an Aquatron, Biodigester, and Reaqua + are components used as part of the drainage and water treatment strategy, which results in solids that can be composted and a liquid that can be pumped into the onsite seasonal wetland.	
6.10	The scheme has been tested and validated that the proposed design and specification MEETS PASSIVHAUS REQUIREMENTS. (Please see parts 15 of the supporting statement)	
6.11	The schemes incorporation of its own combined heat and power source will meet policy DP39 of the District Plan 2014-2031.	
6.12	‘With the specification as outlined in this report, this development will achieve a cumulative saving of 12.11 tonnes CO2 / year which is equivalent to a 140.65% improvement on the baseline. This is a significant improvement over the current requirements of Part L1A of the Building Regulations - exceeding the TER by 140.61%. The predicted water consumption has been calculated as 85.79 litres per person per day which is a significant reduction over the requirements of the Part G Building Regulations.’	
6.13	In the above connection, the proposal is truly innovative and of exceptional design in that it is ‘well above average’, ‘special’, ‘inspiring’ and ‘unique’ when assessed against the general standard of normal housing proposals locally and nationally.	

7.0	The Positive Benefits of the Scheme
	Housing
7.1	The latest five year supply statement shows a supply of around 5.5 years. We have mentioned the addition of an additional dwelling to the site. We accept it is in itself a minor addition but small sites make up 7% of the supply and provide an element of flexibility and choice out of proportion to that number.
	Biodiversity Net Gains
7.2	Certain plants are unwelcome invaders of our woods. One of the most damaging, and unfortunately most common, is Rhododendron (Rhododendron ponticum). The thick evergreen foliage smothers native plants, and its roots exude a ‘cocktail’ of toxic chemicals, including cyanide, which further poisons the ground. Eventually, nothing is left beneath the trees but Rhododendron, to the detriment of wildlife. The likely ground works to remove residual contamination are an opportunity to also remove the invasive Rhododendron.
7.3	Non-native Rhododendron has invaded the woodland and is growing prolifically. It is fast spreading to other areas of the local woodland and is extant on the majority of the woodland around the county.
7.4	As set out by the Forestry Commission and Natural England on the gov.uk web site (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences) the applicant will agree a compensation method to ensure the longevity of the remaining Ancient Woodland throughout Mid Sussex.
7.5	As a compensation method, the applicant would also enter into a Woodland Management Plan to ensure the removal of Rhododendron from a significant portion of the county's ancient woodland over the next three to four years. Such Woodland Management Plan, in helping to conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the ancient woodland within the county would be undertaken by a team of specialists to restore or manage the ancient woodland by planting new native trees and removing Rhododendron invading the woodland. With no natural predators and a benign climate, invasive alien species can out-compete our native plant and animal species. For example, some invasive alien plants species can change light levels, decrease dissolved oxygen in water, change soil chemistry and its structure, and increase surface run-off and soil erosion. On a more subtle level, invasive alien species can affect ecosystem processes such as nutrient cycling, pollination and regeneration of soils. Invasive fauna can compete with native species, displace them, consume them, act as parasites or transmit diseases, reduce growth and survival rates, cause the decline or extinction of local populations or even entire species. Left unchecked, the Rhododendron would have an irreversible effect on the native vegetation (flora and fauna), mammals, birds, invertebrates, etc.
7.6	The implementation of the scheme will lead to substantial net gains in the site's biodiversity. This improvement far surpasses the statutory minimum requirements and is three times greater, achieving a 30.73% biodiversity net gain (BNG) through a unique and exceptional rewilding (ecological and landscape) strategy.

	Immediate Setting
7.7	The proposal has evolved from an extensive and sensitive analysis of the defining characteristics of the local area to develop a design that will significantly enhance its immediate setting. Furthermore, the proposal's exceptional quality and innovative design will also help raise the design standards in rural areas whilst promoting outstanding levels of sustainability.
8.0	Highways and Access
8.1	Accidents in the vicinity are uncommon; and the site access provides suitable visibility splays. In fact the recent Highways council consultant comment (13th September 2021 by Kyran Schneider) stated the following: <i>‘The site is served by two existing accesses: one on Wallage Lane and one on Turners Hill Road. From inspection of local mapping, there are no apparent visibility issues with the existing access on Turners Hill Road... the LHA does not anticipate that this proposal would give rise to a material intensification of use of these existing accesses... In addition, an inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last five years reveals no recorded injury accidents attributed to road layout within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing accesses are operating unsafely or that the proposal would exacerbate an existing safety concern.’</i>
8.2	On this basis it is considered that a satisfactory access can be achieved to the site that would be appropriate for the level of traffic associated with one dwelling. As such policy DP21 of the District Plan 2014-2031 would be met.
8.3	Access to the site will be over the existing driveway from Wallage Lane which serves the Commercial as well as residential site. There will be no increase in traffic over the access road; the existing sight lines comply with highways requirements and will remain.
8.4	The proposal meets and/or exceeds the standards set out by highways: • The proposal exceeds the minimum three car parking spaces required. • The proposed turning circles within the residential sites allow vehicles to exit the site in forward gear. • The proposed garage exceeds the minimum internal specifications for double-car garages of 6m x 6m as set out in Manual for Streets (MFS). (6.65m x 7.5m+) • The proposal has parking spaces for two electric cars (within the garage). • The site has nearby bus stops to Crawley and East Grinstead. • The nearest Main Line Rail station is Three Bridges 2.8 miles away; this has routes to London, local towns and Gatwick. • Ample provision is made for Cycles and for the storage of refuse collection bins

9.0 Noise

9.1 The site is not close to any major source of noise and it will not itself be a source of significant noise.

10.0 Space Standards

10.1 The scheme would meet the Council’s dwelling space standards for room sizes. The outdoor amenity space available to the residents would be exemplary.

11.0 Flood Risk & Drainage

11.1 The application site is over 1 hectare; therefore, a flood risk assessment is required under the National Planning Policy Framework. This has been undertaken by RIDA flood risk assessments and drainage strategy (reference 0228-DD-01) and has been attached to this submission.

11.2 The flood risk assessment states that the site is within flood zone 1 and is at a low fluvial flood risk (risk of flooding from Main Rivers). The site is not within an area identified as having possible surface water (pluvial) flood risk. There are no historical records of flooding occurring on this site and in this area.

11.3 The BGS infiltration potential map shows the site to be in an area with high potential. Therefore the proposal will utilise a rainwater harvesting tank and infiltration drainage, such as the TTE turf frid permeable paving, to manage surface water drainage. The drainage strategy has been produced based on an assumed infiltration rate and designed to cater for the 1 in 100-year storm event with a 40% allowance for climate change.

11.4 In addition, it is proposed that the development will utilise an ecological treatment plant with discharge into a drainage field to manage foul water on site. Infiltration testing will be undertaken to ensure the drainage field is designed appropriately.

11.5 We anticipate that after submission, the proposal will be sent to the Flood Risk & Drainage Team, which will recommend a condition of details of the proposed foul and surface water drainage and means of disposal to be submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the dwelling can be occupied. We would agree with this condition.

12.0 Conclusion

12.1 The scheme’s outstanding design and sustainable credentials satisfy the standards set out in terms of DP15 of the MSDP and paragraph 84e of the NPPF. In addition, significant weight is given to it due to its high levels of sustainability, satisfying pragrapgrah 139b of the NPPF. The scheme has multiple positive benefits, including the removal and remediation of the remaining contamination, the removal of the extensive invasive Rhododendrons allowing for significant net biodiversity increase, extensive new planting of native species-rich flora and the preservation and enhancement of the ancient woodland (management plan). The proposals outstanding the primary objective of remediating and significantly enhancing the local biodiversity should be supported in accordance with paragraphs 185 and 186d of the NPPF.

12.2 Furthermore, the proposal is situated on a brownfield site (due to its contamination from its historical use as a MOD fuel storage), which should be promoted - due to its effective use of land to meet the needs of homes whilst safeguarding and improving the environment - in accordance with paragraph 123 of the NPPF. The scheme falls within the definition of sustainable development, and so the presumption is in favour of granting planning permission.

12.3 For all of the aforementioned reasons, it is submitted to the council that the multifaceted nature of the proposed development represents a truly outstanding and of exceptional design quality, reflecting the highest standards in architecture that will significantly enhance its immediate setting whilst being sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area, thereby helping to raise the consciousness of high-quality, sustainable design, construction and standards of design more generally in rural areas.

12.4 The proposals will secure the necessary conservation and enhancement of the landscape characteristics of the site and provide significant net gains in biodiversity to the benefit of the surrounding area. The application will also result in the safeguarding of the parts of the ancient woodland that remain and will assist in mitigating the impacts of climate change.

12.5 There are not considered to be any highway safety or neighbour amenity issues in relation to this application.

12.6 Overall it is considered that the proposal is exceptionally designed, respects the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings, and will significantly enhance the character of the area, the immediate countryside and public realm. For these reasons the application proposals should be supported.

12.7 It is considered that the application meets the specific requirements of the NPPF and MSDP in relation to new homes in the countryside, and increasing biodiversity as a result of its high-quality design and proposed woodland management plan and on this basis there is a clear material planning consideration that justifies the grant of planning permission in this instance.

12.8 It is therefore respectfully requested that the council supports the objectives inherent within the proposals and gives substantial weight to the benefits that would flow from the grant of planning permission, in accordance with the advice, aims and policy objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, the suite of plans and documents designed to protect and enhance the landscape and ecological value of our environment.