



Planning Statement (incorporating Statement of Community Involvement and Affordable Housing Statement)

Land West of Marwick Close, Bolney Road, Ansty

Devine Homes PLC

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Basis of Report

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 SLR Consulting has been instructed by the applicant, Devine Homes PLC (hereafter referred to as 'Devine Homes' or 'the applicant'), to prepare a Planning Statement in support of the submission of a full planning application to Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) for a development of 34 homes on Land West of Marwick Close, Bolney Road, Ansty in West Sussex (the Site).

1.2 The full development description is as follows:

Full application for the erection of 34 new homes with access from Marwick Close, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works.

1.3 The location of the proposed development site is shown below:

Figure 1: Site Location



1.4 To assist the Council with its understanding of the site and with the decision-making process; this Planning Statement presents an analysis of the application site and



surrounding area and sets out the relevant planning history and planning policy context. The Statement explains why the proposed development is appropriate, having regard to the key planning policies, as well as technical and environmental considerations.

1.5 The Planning Statement includes an Affordable Housing Statement and Statement of Community Involvement, and is supported by (and should be read in conjunction with) a suite of supporting plans, reports and technical documents, as set out below:

- Application Form / Certificates
- Planning Obligation (s106) Instruction Form
- Full Pack of Plans and Elevations (by OSP Architecture)
- Design and Access Statement (by OSP Architecture)
- Accommodation Schedule (by OSP Architecture)
- Air Quality Assessment (by Omnia)
- Acoustic Assessment (by Acoustic South East)
- Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Report (by David Archer Associates)
- Energy and Sustainability Statement (by Doherty Energy)
- FRA and Drainage Strategy (by Motion)
- Ground Investigation Report (by Geo-Environmental)
- Heritage Impact Assessment (by TCMS Heritage)
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal (by Land Management Services)
- Landscape Masterplan and planting strategy (by Land Management Services)
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (by Ecology Partnership)
- Species Surveys: Bats, Reptiles, Dormouse (by Ecology Partnership)
- BNG Report and BNG Metric (by Ecology Partnership)
- Transport Statement (including Stage 1 Road Safety Audit) (by i-Transport)



2.0 The Site and Surroundings

Site Location

- 2.1 The Site is a draft allocation in the emerging Local Plan (reference DPA17) and is located adjacent to the defined settlement boundary of Ansty (a Category 4 settlement), surrounded by Bolney Road and existing dwellings to the north-west, newly built dwellings to the north (Upton Drive / Marwick Close), and pockets of grassland and woodland to the south and east.
- 2.2 Bolney Road (A272) to the north of the Site is a key A-Road that runs in a west to east direction connecting Cowfold to Haywards Heath and beyond. The A272 has links to the wider highway network through its access to the A23 to the west, which provides connectivity to Brighton and London (via the M23), located 14 miles south and 13 miles north respectively.
- 2.3 The Site is an irregular shaped parcel of land which can currently be accessed via Bolney Road (A272). The Site is gently sloping, falling to the south and west, and is lined by large mature trees and hedgerows along each boundary.
- 2.4 The Site is set within a semi-urban environment with a backdrop of existing development to its north and north-east and a busy road to its north-west and occupies a location which is both sustainable and easily accessible.
- 2.5 The parish of Ansty and Staplefield offers a range of essential amenities and services that provide a strong foundation to support the development of additional dwellings in the village. This includes a petrol station and convenience store, taxi service, car wash, a sports and social club and a recreational ground.
- 2.6 As well as this, the neighbouring village of Cuckfield, approximately 2km northeast, offers a large selection of day-to-day facilities and services. Facilities and services in Cuckfield include (but are not limited to):
- Education
 - Warden Park Academy (2.6km northeast)
 - Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School (2.3km northeast)
 - Retail and facilities
 - Co-op Food (2.7km northeast)
 - Nisa Cuckfield (2.1km northeast)
 - The White Hart pub (2km northeast)
 - Esso with Londis store (2.7km northeast)
 - Various restaurants including Spice Village, Tom's food, Good evening Thai, and several cafes
 - The Wheatsheaf Inn



- Leisure
 - Ockenden Manor Hotel & Spa (1.9km northeast)
 - Cuckfield Recreation Ground (2km northeast)
 - Health
 - Cuckfield Medical Practice & The Vale Surgery (2.3km northeast)
- 2.7 Other nearby villages and towns include Hayward Heath, approximately 4km east and Burgess Hill, approximately 3.3km south. Burgess Hill and Hayward Heath both benefit from the accessibility of mainline train stations, with regular services to London, Worthing and Brighton. This reinforces the Site's potential as a sustainably located and well-connected area for the Proposed Development.
- 2.8 Moreover, the wider location supplies ample opportunities for recreation including the Cuckfield Park (c. 2km) and Downlands Park (c.3km), Ansty Recreational Ground Play Area (c.200m) and Ansty Cricket Club (c. 200m).
- 2.9 The Site also benefits from existing infrastructure that has the potential to make the Proposed Development readily accessible for pedestrian and vehicular access. This includes existing paved footways leading down to the Site via Marwick Close, as well as a Public Right of Way (PROW Ref ANS-70CR). The PROW runs along the southern boundary of the Site, traveling in an east to west direction providing a pedestrian link from Cuckfield Road to Bolney Road.
- 2.10 The surrounding built environment comprises varying urban and rural forms by virtue of the Site's location on the edge of the built-up settlement. The existing residential development north of the Site follows a dispersed street pattern of small cul-de-sacs. The cul-de-sacs are characterised by a range of new-build homes including detached and semi-detached properties with private gardens. The dwellings located west of the Site along the western side of Bolney Road are larger in scale which is typical of their age and character.
- 2.11 The site is not located within a designated conservation area or an Archaeological Notification Area. There are no heritage assets located within the site itself, but there are four listed buildings located in close proximity to the Site. This includes:
- Butler's Farmhouse (Ref 1025727) – Grade II Listed Building – (c. 0.15km west)
 - The Ancient Farm (Ref 1193553) – Grade II Listed Building – (c. 0.35km northeast)
 - The Old Cottage (Ref 1025703) – Grade II Listed Building – (c. 0.4km northeast)



- Mount Noddy Cottage (Ref 1194056) – Grade II Listed Building – (c. 0.4km east)
- 2.12 There are no statutory or non-statutory designated ecological sites within or directly adjacent to the site boundary. Ditchling Common SSSI is the closest statutory designated site located approximately 5.4km south-east.
- 2.13 There are no statutory or non-statutory landscape designations within or directly adjacent to the site boundary. The nearest boundary of the High Weald National Landscape (formally AONB) is located around 300m to the north of the site. There are several pockets of Ancient Woodland located within 400m of the Site.
- 2.14 In summary, the Site is located in a suitable location for residential development, with existing built form to its immediate north and west, and services and transport connections nearby. The Site contains no major ecological or landscape constraints that would preclude development coming forward.

Site Description and Use

- 2.15 The Site is located entirely within the administrative boundary of Mid Sussex District Council (MDSC) and within Ansty, Staplefield & Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan boundary.
- 2.16 The Site encompasses an irregular open greenfield parcel and a small area of woodland, covering approximately 1.62 hectares (ha) in area. The Site is lined by belts of mixed hedges and mature trees which act as a physical divide between the Site and neighbouring greenfield parcels. The Site was most recently utilised as pastoral land supporting the grazing activities of sheep.
- 2.17 The Site is entirely located within Flood Zone 1 as shown on the EA map for flooding. This indicates that there is a low probability of fluvial flooding within and around the Site. No areas of surface water flooding are present within the Site.
- 2.18 Currently there is no formal vehicular access to the Site, save for an informal track leading to the site from Bolney Road. Access to the site by foot can be gained from the Public Rights of Way to the south (ANS-70CR) and from Marwick Close to the north which has been designed to enable future vehicular and pedestrian access to the Site.
- 2.19 The Site is not located within a mineral deposit safeguarding area.
- 2.20 The site is surrounded by existing trees and hedgerows on all boundaries. No trees within or directly adjacent to the site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders.
- 2.21 The Site is located approximately 300m south of the High Weald National Landscape.



3.0 Relevant Planning History

Planning Applications

3.1 The Site has a limited planning history, with only one application relating to the site itself (DC/18/0596) whereby permission was refused for the erection of 30 dwellings. This application was refused at a time when the Council had an up-to-date development plan and could demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. This is not now the case as outlined below.

3.2 The table below shows relevant planning applications within and around the Site that are considered relevant to this application:

Table 1: Relevant Planning Applications within the wider area of the Site

Application Ref	Description	Location	Decision	Decision Date
DM/15/3787 (Crouch Fields)	Outline application for the approval of access, layout and scale details for new access and provision of 8 detached houses.	Land Adjacent To Barn Cottage Cuckfield Road Ansty West Sussex	Appeal Allowed	04 December 2015
DM/16/2347 (Marwick Close)	Outline planning application for the approval of access details for residential development for up to 20 dwellings with associated external works, landscape and access	Land South Of Bolney Road Bolney Road Ansty West Sussex	Approved	08 September 2017
DM/19/1235 (Marwick Close)	Reserved Matters application for the erection of 20no. dwellings (layout, scale, appearance and landscaping) including underground LPG gas tanks.	Land South Of Bolney Road Bolney Road Ansty West Sussex	Approved	06 September 2019
DM/18/0596	Proposed residential development of 30 dwellings with associated external works, landscaping and access. Amended plans received 11 June showing revised layout and elevations of proposed homes.	Land South Of Bolney Road Ansty West Sussex	Refused	03 August 2018



- 3.3 Planning Application References DC/16/2347 (Outline) and DM/19/1235 (Reserved Matters) constitute a successful development of 20 dwellings now known as Upton Close / Marwick Close. The implemented development is now fully complete and occupied and is located directly to the north of the application Site and has similar locational circumstances.
- 3.4 It is noted that the Council's Committee Report for the Outline application (Ref DM/16/2347) identifies that:
- "The western boundary of the site is well screened by trees and hedging. It is considered that the impact on the character and appearance of the will be acceptable in this instance and the proposal will appear as a natural extension of Ansty."*
- 3.5 Planning Application Ref DM/15/3787 is situated 0.1km east of the site and comprises 8 detached homes. Although initially refused, the decision was taken to appeal and was allowed on 4 December 2015.
- 3.6 Application DC/18/0596 was refused in August 2018 at a time when the Council had an up-to-date Local Plan and a 5-year housing land supply which cannot now be demonstrated. The is a matter which has now changed and must be balanced differently. The only other reasons for refusal related to the lack of provision of a Section 106 agreement and the proposed housing mix, with the scheme providing too many large 4 bed homes. The 2026 proposal provides a different housing mix, with no 4 bed homes but an emphasis on smaller family housing.



4.0 Application Proposal

- 4.1 Full planning permission is sought for the residential development of the site for 34 dwellings and associated infrastructure and landscaping on Land to the West of Marwick Close, Bolney Road, Ansty. The description of the development is as follows:

Full application for the erection of 34 new homes with access from Marwick Close, vehicle and cycle parking, landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure and highway works.

- 4.2 The mix of dwellings is proposed as follows:

Table 2: Housing Mix

Type	Number
2-bed	14
3-bed	20
TOTAL	34

- 4.3 Of the 34no. dwellings proposed, 10 homes (29.4%) will be affordable comprising a mix of 2 and 3-bed flats, maisonettes and houses, and an appropriate tenure split. Given the provision of whole units (10no) falls slightly short of the required 30% affordable housing (Policy DP31) a financial contribution will be offered to make up the difference.
- 4.4 Vehicular access to the site will be provided via a new shared surface access road which will be formed as part of an extension to the existing shared surface road at Marwick Close.
- 4.5 Separate pedestrian links are proposed on the southern boundary (linking to the PROW), and another pedestrian link is proposed to the east of the site to allow future connection to the land parcel adjacent. A separate 2m wide pedestrian access is proposed from Bolney Road to the west of the site which will include a crossing point to the opposite side of Bolney Road. Internal footpath networks are proposed including a mown path providing recreational access to the woodland and informal open space at the south-west corner, and within the community orchard at the site entrance.
- 4.6 Parking is provided for each plot in line with WSCC parking standards - there will be a total of 74 allocated parking spaces, through a combination of driveway parking



- and garages of which there are 4. In addition to this provision, there will be a further 7 visitor spaces.
- 4.7 In accordance with WSCC cycle parking standards, there will be a minimum of two cycle parking spaces per dwelling. Cycle parking will be accommodated in garages where they are proposed; and where a dwelling does not have a garage, a suitably sized cycle store is proposed in the rear garden.
- 4.8 Each of the 34no. plots would be fitted with an EV charging point in line with Building Regulation requirements.
- 4.9 The proposed dwellings have been designed to the highest quality, utilising high quality materials that reflect the local vernacular. The scheme has been designed with a traditional vernacular to compliment the immediate surrounds.
- 4.10 Hard surfacing is proposed to include a mix of tarmac and block paving. Areas of permeable block paving are proposed to assist with the site drainage strategy.
- 4.11 Boundaries will primarily include an appropriate mixture of hedging, brick walls, and fencing. Close boarded fencing will primarily be used for rear garden divides, with hedging and brick walling used in more prominent positions.
- 4.12 Two areas of open space are proposed in the north-east corner near the site entrance, and in the south-west corner of the Site. An area of informal natural play is proposed within the latter, with seating distributed throughout the site. Following pre-application advice, no formal play facility (Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)) is proposed, given the proximity to established facilities within Ansty, with a financial contribution towards ongoing local provision anticipated in the event of recommendation for approval.
- 4.13 An attenuation swale is proposed on land to the south of the site, and an electricity substation is proposed near the south-west corner.
- 4.14 The vast majority of existing hedgerows and trees along the Site's boundaries will be retained and enhanced, albeit some maintenance will be required to enable pedestrian access to the PRow (currently blocked by overgrown vegetation) and to deliver new connections to it. The tree report identifies a number of trees within the site that are dead or dying (some being affected by ash die back). These are proposed for removal so that they don't pose a risk to future residents. New trees and hedge planting are proposed to the hedge to the south where dying ash trees are proposed to be removed, further new planting will bolster this hedge line. Throughout the site, replacement and additional tree planting is proposed, including street trees, a community orchard and additional tree planting to the woodland and northern boundary adjacent to Bolney Road to enrich the existing natural wooded character of the site and maximise on-site BNG. New hedge planting is proposed to the north-eastern and southern boundaries and within the western extent of the site to screen the substation.



- 4.15 A detailed Site Layout Plan has been submitted in support of the application, demonstrating how the Proposed Development will integrate within the surrounding area, and sit appropriately in its setting. The Proposed Site Layout (Ref 22129-P101) shows that each home has its own private outdoor amenity space, covered bins and bike sheds, as well as sufficient off-road allocated parking. A suite of measures, including use of Air Source Heat Pumps, water efficiency measures and EV chargers will be incorporated into the design of each home to ensure the sustainability credentials meet the Council's ambitious targets for climate change reduction, and to empower new residents to make adaptations to a more sustainable way of living.
- 4.16 Devine Homes is an experienced local housebuilder with a track record of successful delivery of similar sites in the southeast region and is confident this site can be delivered quickly and to the highest quality.



5.0 Statement of Community Involvement

- 5.1 As is best practice, the proposal has been the subject of targeted pre-application engagement with the Council. The PPG recognises that the parties involved at the pre-application stage will vary on a case-by-case basis, and the level of engagement needs to be proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposed development.
- 5.2 The purpose of this engagement was to give the Council an opportunity to be involved in the site design at an early stage and help the application to be determined more quickly by identifying and resolving issues or desired changes as soon as possible.
- 5.3 The engagement that the applicant has undertaken prior to the submission of this application has included direct (face to face) discussions with the District Council and engagement with Officers from the Local Highways Authority.
- 5.4 The applicant contacted the Clerk at Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council to request an opportunity to meet the Parish councillors to present and discuss the emerging proposals for the site so they would also have an opportunity to influence the application. The applicant's request to meet was declined. Although it is disappointing not to have the opportunity to discuss the plans with the Parish and to have direct local input; the Parish's decision to decline has been recorded and respected. The applicant is very willing to discuss any elements of the proposed development with the Parish should they wish, during the determination of the application.

Pre-Application Discussions

- 5.5 Formal pre-application advice from Mid Sussex District Council was sought in May 2024, which included a face-to-face meeting at the Council offices followed by a written response which was received in August 2024.
- 5.6 Although the pre-application response advised against submitting an application at that stage (2024), the Officer recommended that the Applicant could consider submitting an application once the Inspector's findings on the emerging District Plan were known as these could potentially support the Proposed Development. Since the pre-app feedback was received in 2024, progress has been made with regard to the emerging Local Plan, and given the plan is now progressing towards likely adoption, it is the applicant's view that now is the right time to submit an application for this site which is included as a draft allocation.
- 5.7 Prior to the formal pre-application process, the applicant participated in the Regulation 19 Consultation in February 2024. The Regulation 19 Consultation letter submitted to the Planning Policy Team at MSDC conveyed support for the proposed housing allocation of the Site. The letter also outlined the ways in which the



forthcoming proposal accords with the emerging Local Plan and how it is anticipated to deliver a range of positive impacts for the local area.

- 5.8 Whilst some comments on design and layout of the Site were helpfully provided, on the whole, the overarching design and layout of the proposed development was considered satisfactory by the Council's Urban Design Officer who stated that:

'The layout is well thought through, with houses and apartments facing the street. Buildings are aligned well and create clear, readable streets with car parking hidden behind the buildings. Main open space is located correctly.'

- 5.9 The submitted scheme has sought to take on board the pre-application advice received in 2024, and the re-design has been carefully considered to accord with the Council's advice. The submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS) explains in more detail how the scheme has responded to the Council's feedback, and how the design evolution incorporates the comments, including:

- The inclusion of 10 affordable housing units in accordance with the 30% affordable housing requirement of the District Plan Policy DP31. The location of the affordable housing units has also been identified on a site layout plan as requested in the pre-application response.
- Opportunities to incorporate additional residential development to the south of the Proposed Development have been incorporated within the Site layout, as requested in the pre-application response.
- All flood risk management structures and shared drainage features are located outside of private curtilage and within public open space to ensure access availability at all times if required.
- Various design changes responding directly to the points raised by the Council's Design Officer.

- 5.10 The pre-application engagement with the District Council in 2024 has been a valuable exercise which has allowed constructive discussions to take place with Officers to ensure the proposed scheme is designed and delivered in accordance with policy requirements and aspirations of the emerging Local Plan. Amendments to the initially proposed scheme have been made to respond to the feedback received.

- 5.11 Pre-application consultation was also undertaken with the Local Highway Authority (West Sussex County Council) in January 2022 to seek advice on access, traffic generation and highway safety matters. The feedback received has been taken into account in the design and layout of the proposed development. The applicant has sought to ensure that the proposals have been developed with due regard to local context, relevant planning policy, and Officer advice.



- 5.12 The applicant remains committed to constructive engagement through the planning application process in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement, including responding to representations received during the statutory consultation period.



6.0 Planning Policy Context

- 6.1 This section sets out the key relevant planning policy at national and local levels. Section 7 will then discuss the principle of development, as it relates to the relevant policies, and why the scheme is considered acceptable when taking account of the adopted plan, and material considerations.
- 6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, in the determination of planning applications, decisions are made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The following section will first note the national policies of relevance before focusing on the local policies considered of most relevance to the consideration of the proposal for the site.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Dec 2024)

- 6.3 The most recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2024, and this carries full weight in decision making. The new NPPF continues to establish a presumption in favour of sustainable development. **Paragraph 2** states that the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 6.4 A consultation on a new draft NPPF was launched in December 2025 and runs to March 2026. At present, the policies contained in the consultation draft hold very limited weight in decision making.
- 6.5 **Paragraph 8** of the adopted NPPF confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development - economic (building a strong, competitive economy); social (providing the supply of housing required to meet needs and creating a high quality-built environment); and environmental (protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment).
- 6.6 **Paragraph 9** confirms that these roles should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of policies but also taking into account local circumstances to reflect the need and opportunities in each area.
- 6.7 **Paragraph 11** continues to stress that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area, and proposals should accord with an up-to-date development plan, or 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 ('Footnote 7' areas) 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.

- 6.8 **Footnote 8** of the NPPF clarifies that the presumption in favour applies in situations where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites; or, where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery of housing is substantially below (less than 75%) of the housing requirement over the previous three years. This is currently the case in Mid Sussex as a 5-year supply cannot be demonstrated.
- 6.9 **Paragraph 12** states 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. If material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed, local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan.
- 6.10 **Paragraph 14** continues to confirm that where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with a neighbourhood plan (NP) is likely to outweigh the benefits - provided that the neighbourhood plan was made within the previous 5 years, and the plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified needs. The **Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan was Made** in February 2017, and allocates two sites for housing development, however as the NP is now nearly 9 years old it is not fully consistent with the NPPF and does not reflect the current housing need and therefore the provisions of paragraph 14 do not apply.
- 6.11 **Paragraph 20** relates to strategic policies where it is set out that these policies should make sufficient provision for: housing (including affordable housing), infrastructure, community facilities, and conservation of the natural and built environment.
- 6.12 In terms of determining applications, **paragraph 39** of the framework states that it is a requirement for Local Planning Authorities to approach decisions in a positive and creative way. Planning Authorities should also work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area, whilst seeking to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 6.13 **Paragraph 48** reiterates the requirements set out in planning law that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It actively encourages decisions on applications to be made as quickly as possible.



- 6.14 **Paragraph 56** states that planning conditions can be used to make a development acceptable, where it might otherwise be unacceptable. **Paragraph 57** goes on to say that the use of conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed if necessary, relevant, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all respects.
- 6.15 **Section 5** (delivering a sufficient supply of homes) sets out clearly that the Government is committed to significantly boosting the supply of homes (**paragraph 61**) in order to meet local needs and help make sure that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 6.16 **Paragraph 63** states that the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be reflected in planning policies, and should include those who require affordable housing, older people, people with disabilities, travellers, and people wishing to build their own homes.
- 6.17 **Paragraph 70** outlines the importance of small and medium size sites in the contribution to achieving the housing requirement of an area. These sites are often built out quicker and have less infrastructure requirements and associated risk.
- 6.18 **Paragraph 78** requires local planning authorities to identify an annual supply of deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of 5 years' worth of housing calculated against the latest local housing needs figure (plus a buffer of either 5% or 20%). The latest figures published by the Council indicate that the district has a **3.38-year supply** of housing. As such, the Mid Sussex district does not currently have a 5-year housing supply as required by paragraph 78.
- 6.19 **Paragraph 83** seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas by directing new housing in suitable location where it will help to enhance the vitality of village communities and to enable them to thrive.
- 6.20 **Section 8** seeks to promote healthy and safe communities, with **Paragraph 103** highlighting the importance of providing access to a range of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity in order to promote the health and wellbeing of communities.
- 6.21 **Section 9** supports the provision of sustainable modes of transport, with **Paragraph 109** stating that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan making so that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.
- 6.22 **Paragraph 116** is clear 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 would be severe*' [our emphasis].
- 6.23 **Paragraph 117** states that new development should give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, should facilitate access to high quality public transport, should



- address the needs of people with reduced mobility, and should be designed to create places that are safe, secure and attractive.
- 6.24 **Section 11** relates to making the most effective use of land to make sure that decisions meet the need for housing as effectively as possible whilst improving the environment and making safe and healthy communities. **Paragraph 129** requires decisions to support developments that make efficient use of land taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development as well as the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive and healthy places.
- 6.25 Design is covered in **Section 12**, where the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. This policy emphasises that good design is an important component of sustainable development and that it should be inseparable from good planning, which should improve the quality of life in communities.
- 6.26 **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, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 6.27 **Paragraph 135** states that new developments should be visually attractive due to good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping, as well as being sympathetic to local character, history, surrounding built environment and landscape setting.
- 6.28 **Paragraph 170** states that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future).
- 6.29 **Section 15** covers the natural environment. **Paragraph 192** stresses the importance of protecting and safeguarding ecological networks, including national and locally designated sites of importance to biodiversity, wildlife corridors. It also promotes the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection of priority species. **Paragraph 193(d)** seeks for a net gain in biodiversity to be demonstrated, which accords with the requirement set out in the Environment Act 2021 to secure a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain.
- 6.30 **Paragraph 193(d)** states that developments that conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported and that opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged.



Adopted Development Plan

6.31 The application site falls within the jurisdiction of Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) where the adopted development plan comprises:

- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (MSDP) adopted March 2018;
- Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD) adopted June 2022;
- West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (WSJMLP) adopted 2018, and partially updated in 2021;
- All made Neighbourhood Plans;

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018)

6.32 The Mid Sussex District Plan was adopted in March 2018. Those policies of the adopted MSDP of most importance to the application proposals are listed below.

DP4: Housing

DP5: Planning to Meet Future Housing Need

DP6: Settlement Hierarchy

DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

DP13: Preventing Coalescence

DP15: New Homes in the Countryside

DP20: Securing Infrastructure

DP21: Transport

DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes

DP23: Communication Infrastructure

DP24: Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities

DP25: Community Facilities and Local Services

DP26: Character and Design

DP27: Dwelling Space Standards

DP28: Accessibility

DP29: Noise, Air and Light Pollution

DP30: Housing Mix

DP31: Affordable Housing

DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

DP38: Biodiversity

DP39: Sustainable Design and Construction



DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage

DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment

Site Allocations Development Plan Document (2022)

6.33 The SADPD was adopted in June 2022 and supplements the allocations with the adopted Local Plan to allocate additional housing and employment sites to meet needs to 2031. The Site subject to this application is not allocated in the SADPD.

West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018)

6.34 The West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan 2018 was adopted in July 2018, and part-updated in 2021. Policy M9 (Safeguarding Minerals) is considered to be most relevant in the context of this proposal.

Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan (2017)

6.35 The Site is located within the administrative boundary of Ansty and Staplefield Parish, therefore the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan is relevant in this case, which was formally made in February 2017.

6.36 The Site is not allocated in the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, but the policies contained within the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan that are considered most relevant to this application are:

- Policy AS1: New Housing Development
- Policy AS2: Preventing Coalescence
- Policy AS3: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Policy AS4: Housing Mix
- Policy AS8: Improvement of Community Facilities
- Policy AS11: High Speed Broadband
- Policy AS13: Traffic Management
- Policy AS14: Walking and Cycling Routes

6.37 The Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan was Made in February 2017 and allocates two sites for housing development in Ansty (allocations 'AS5' and 'AS6' – both now completed). The Neighbourhood Plan is now 9 years old, and the policies it contains are not therefore consistent with the latest NPPF. As such, whilst the policies contained within the NP hold weight in decision making, the provisions of paragraph 14 (which disengages the tilted balance of NPPF 11d) do not apply.



Emerging Development Plan

Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2039)

- 6.38 The Council is at an advanced stage of creating a new Local Plan. The emerging plan underwent Regulation 19 Consultation in February 2024 and was formally submitted for independent examination to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2024. Stage 1 of the examination hearings were concluded by October 2024. This was followed by a letter from the Inspector in June 2025 which indicated concerns about the soundness of the plan, particularly with regard to the Duty to Cooperate. The plan's progression has been paused since this time, although since national changes regarding the duty to cooperate position were announced, it has recently been confirmed that examination hearings in Mid Sussex will re-commence in February and March 2026.
- 6.39 Adoption of the new Local Plan is now currently expected later in 2026. At present, although the policies and allocations in the emerging plan do not carry full weight, the emerging plan and its evidence base is a material consideration and holds increasing weight in decision making and shows a clear direction of travel for the emerging policies and allocations that the Council supports.
- 6.40 The key policy within the emerging District Plan that is relevant to this Site is **Policy DPA17 (Land to the West of Marwick Close, Bolney Road, Ansty)** which allocates the Site for up to 45 homes.
- 6.41 The 10 policy requirements for DPA17 are:

1. Provide suitable access from Upton Drive and Marwick Close.
2. Retain and enhance the trees and retain the ground levels along the A272 Bolney Road which forms the western boundary of the site.
3. Particular attention should be given to trees and hedgerows on the southern boundary adjacent to the PRow and in the southwest of the site.
4. Maintain the rural character of the PRow on the southern boundary of the site.
5. The layout of the site should take into account the location of the trees and allow for their future retention and to prevent overshadowing into private gardens.
6. The design and layout of the site should reflect a transition from the built environment to the rural countryside.
7. The design and layout of the site should reflect the rural character of the settlement and avoid being urban or suburban in character.
8. Integrate development with the site to the east (DPA16) by providing pedestrian and cycling connections and green infrastructure connectivity.



9. Provide good acoustic design to address noise impacts associated with the A272 Bolney Road.

10. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.

6.42 In addition to the above requirements, Policy DPSC6 requires the Site to deliver natural, semi natural and amenity green space; and seeks financial contributions towards the provision of sustainable transport, improvements at Haywards Heath station, Education, Library, Community Buildings, Local Community Infrastructure, Health, Play Area, Other Outdoor Provision, Outdoor Sports, and Parks and Gardens.

6.43 It should also be noted that to the immediate east of allocation DPA17 is a further draft allocation for up to 30 homes (Policy DPA16: Land West of North Cottages and Challoners). As per criteria 8 of the policy requirements for both DPA16 and DPA17, the Proposed Development has been designed to ensure both sites are integrated by providing suitable pedestrian links and an appropriate layout.

6.44 Other policies and allocations contained within the emerging District Plan that are considered most relevant to this application are:

Sustainability Policies

DPS1: Climate Change

DPS2: Sustainable Design and Construction

DPS4: Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

DPS6: Health and Wellbeing

Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

DPN1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery

DPN2: Biodiversity Net Gain

DPN3: Green and Blue Infrastructure

DPN4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

DPN6: Pollution

DPN7: Noise Impacts

DPN8: Light Impacts and Dark Skies

DPN9: Air Quality

Built Environment Policies

DPB1: Character and Design



Transport Policies

- DPT1: Placemaking and Connectivity
- DPT2: Rights of Way and Other Recreational Routes
- DPT3: Active and Sustainable Travel
- DPT4: Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

Housing Policies

- DPH1: Housing
- DPH2: Sustainable Development Outside the Built-Up Area
- DPH7: Housing Mix
- DPH8: Affordable Housing
- DPH9: First Homes
- DPH11: Dwelling Space Standards
- DPH12: Accessibility

Infrastructure Policies

- DPI1: Infrastructure Provision
- DPI2: Planning Obligations
- DPI5: Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities
- DPI17: Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

MSDC Planning Position Statements (1 and 2) – December 2025

- 6.45 Until the emerging Local Plan is formally adopted later in 2026, the Council has published two Planning Position Statements – (1) Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex, and (2) Infrastructure.
- 6.46 These documents outline the Council's interim position on the weight to be afforded to the draft policies and allocations within the emerging Local Plan and how contributions are to be calculated. Paragraph 5.2 of the 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' Position Statement states:

'Therefore, the Council continues to support the delivery of the housing sites and the sustainable communities identified for development in the Submission Draft District Plan and continues to work with site



promoters/developers to bring them forward as soon as practically possible'.

- 6.47 The two position statements were approved by the Council in December 2025 and whilst they do not form part of the statutory planning framework, they now form a material consideration in decision making. As a draft allocation in the emerging Local Plan, the Site subject to this Planning Statement is named in the 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' Position Statement as a site that the Council will look to support in principle.

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

- 6.48 The Council has also adopted several separate Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other guidance documents which are material considerations in decision making. Those most relevant to the proposals are:

- Mid Sussex Affordable Housing SPD (adopted 2018)
- Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (adopted 2020)
- County Parking Standards and Transport Contributions Methodology (2020)
- Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex (2021)



7.0 Planning Assessment

- 7.1 This section sets out the key planning considerations including the sustainability merits of the proposal and the economic, social and environmental benefits which the proposal will deliver, with regard given to the policies set out in the preceding section.

Principle of Development

- 7.2 In accordance with the NPPF, the starting point for determining planning applications is the current development plan, which in this case comprises the Mid Sussex District Plan (adopted 2018), the subsequently adopted Site Allocations DPD (adopted 2022), and the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan (made in 2017). It is acknowledged that the application site is not formally allocated for development in the adopted plan, nor are there any specific existing policies that directly support the development of the proposed site. However, as explained in this report, the Council is looking to allocate the site for development in the forthcoming Local Plan review, which is at an advanced stage of progression and the Council's published 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' Position Statement supports this application in principle.
- 7.3 Notwithstanding the above, as the District Plan (2018) was adopted over 5 years ago, the Council's housing target is now derived from the Government's updated Standard Method rather than the adopted housing target of 876 dwellings per annum. The Government's latest Standard Method now requires the delivery of 1,358 homes per annum in Mid Sussex (a 55% increase on the District Plan figure).
- 7.4 As such, MSDC acknowledges¹ that the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply as required by Paragraph 78 of the NPPF, with the latest appeal-derived figure from May 2025 suggesting the land supply position is in the region of 3.38 years².
- 7.5 Paragraph 11 of the Framework sets out the '*Presumption in favour of sustainable development*' which for decision making means either approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay, or: 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 [see Footnote 7] provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*

¹ See Paragraph 2.9 of the 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' Position Statement

² 90 Dwellings at Scamps Hill, Lindfield – APP/D3830/W/24/3350075 (2 May 2025)



- 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.*

- 7.6 The Framework directs that where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land, that development plan policies relevant to the supply of housing are to be considered out of date. As this is the acknowledged case in Mid Sussex, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 11d of the NPPF is engaged, and (as there are no Footnote 7 matters that apply to this site) the provisions of paragraph 11d part (i) do not apply, and applications must be considered positively in line with the '*tilted balance*'. As will be demonstrated below, there are no adverse impacts that would significantly or demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the scheme and therefore the provisions of part ii do not apply either and so planning permission should be granted.
- 7.7 The current unmet housing need position in Mid Sussex will remain until a new Local Plan is formally adopted. The emerging Local Plan has been paused since June 2025 due to concerns about soundness specifically relating to the Duty to Cooperate. In light of recent changes to the national position on duty to cooperate, the examining Inspector has recently written to the Council to confirm that hearings will recommence in February and March 2026, therefore it is reasonable to consider that the emerging plan could progress towards adoption in 2026.
- 7.8 Whilst the emerging plan does not carry full weight, its evidence base and the policies and allocation it contains, show a clear direction of travel for how the Council sees the district developing over the plan period, and as such, carries some material weight in decision making. Should the plan not progress then the Council will still need every site in the Plan and additional sites to meet the scale of housing required in the district and so all proposed allocated sites would still be expected to be supported.
- 7.9 In addition, owing to the pause in the examination process in 2025 (and in acknowledgement of the 5-year housing supply position and application of the tilted balance); the Council has published the 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' Position Statement which provides guidance on how the Council will consider application on sites not allocated in the adopted plan. The document explains that the Council is pro-growth and '*wants to do all it can to boost the overall supply of housing and to ensure the district's housing needs are met*' (paragraph 1.6). The Planning Position Statement is not policy, and does not carry full weight in decision making, but nonetheless is another material consideration that must be considered in the balance.



- 7.10 The Position Statement (at paragraph 5.2) states that draft allocations in the Submission Draft District Plan will continue to be supported:

'Therefore, the Council continues to support the delivery of the housing sites and the sustainable communities identified for development in the Submission Draft District Plan and continues to work with site promoters/developers to bring them forward as soon as practically possible.'

- 7.11 The Site subject to this application is allocated for development in the emerging Local Plan in Policy DPA17 (Land to the West of Marwick Close) for up to 45 dwellings. This allocation sits alongside neighbouring site allocation DPA16 (Land West of North Cottages and Challoners) which is allocated for up to 30 homes. Together, the two allocations will create a logical and organic extension to the village to meet the identified needs of the growing community.
- 7.12 Given the residential allocation of the site in Policy DPA17 of the emerging Local Plan, alongside the direction provided in the Council's Planning Position Statement coupled with acknowledgement of the Council's housing land supply position and application of the '*tilted balance*'; it is our view that the principle of residential development on this site is acceptable.
- 7.13 It is acknowledged that the Proposed Development seeks permission for 34 units, which falls short of the site allocation which seeks up to 45 units. As this statement will explain, it is not considered possible to deliver more than 34 units on this site due to its shape and other land constraints which limits the layout and overall number of units. The applicant is of the view that 34 is the maximum number of units the site can deliver without compromising on design quality and/or neighbouring amenity. We understand that the Council is in agreement with this view and has suggested that a Main Modification to the policy wording is made to reduce the maximum number of units on this site to 40.
- 7.14 Overall, it is considered that subject to the acceptability of detailed site design matters (including accordance with DPA17 policy requirements which this statement explores), planning permission should be granted.
- 7.15 The next section of this statement summarised the technical areas of the proposal, which are supported by accompanying technical reports.

Landscape and Visual Effects

- 7.16 In support of this application, a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (by Land Management Services) has been submitted. The study notes that whilst the site reflects some characteristics described in the High Weald NCA and Local Character Assessments, its location adjacent to the A272 and next to neighbouring residential developments means it portrays more of a settlement edge character as opposed to a rural character.



- 7.17 The LVS also notes that the site has a restricted visual envelope due to existing boundary screening (particularly on the western edge) and confirms that the site is not subject to any statutory or local landscape designations. The majority of the existing boundary screening will be retained and enhanced which will ensure long distance views to the site will not be affected. The appraisal concludes that the Proposed Development will have no visual impact on the setting of the High Weald National Landscape.
- 7.18 As is expected for any development on an open field, the LVS concludes that there will be some minor localised effects on landscape character in the short term. However, it is judged that any adverse impact will improve over time as the proposed landscaping scheme (presented in the submitted Landscape Masterplan) matures and creates a strong landscape setting to the development.
- 7.19 Views of the site from public viewpoints (including from the PROW to the south of the Site and from Marwick Close to the north) will inevitably be altered, however the magnitude of change is limited and this coupled with the positively designed scheme (which includes a significant amount of retained trees and areas of informal open space, pedestrian permeability and habitat creation) means that the scheme will be seen in the context of the existing built form to the west and north which limits the scale of perceived change.
- 7.20 Overall, owing to the existing settlement edge character of the surroundings and the landscape-led design that has been applied, the site is considered to have the capacity to accommodate the Proposed Development without substantial negative landscape and visual effects. The proposal therefore accords with the policy aspiration of allocation DPA17 (specifically criterion 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7) as well as the requirements of NPPF paragraphs 135-136, and Policies DP22 and DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Character and Appearance

- 7.21 The scheme has been guided by the principles of good design, as set out within the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and to ensure it responds to local context and character. The design of the site has been informed by the requirements of draft policy DPA17 which seeks the site to provide a suitable access from Marwick Close, to retain and enhance the site's boundary trees and hedgerows, to integrate with site DPA16 to the east, and to ensure good acoustic design.
- 7.22 The accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) sets out the key constraints of the site, which includes gently falling levels, woodland to the south-west corner, mature trees along the eastern edge, various utilities constraints, ground conditions for drainage, noise constraints, and the presence of a public footpath to the south. The DAS demonstrates how the layout of the site has evolved, and how it responds to the relevant planning policy context and design guidance.
- 7.23 Pre-application engagement was undertaken with Officers from Mid Sussex Council prior to the submission of the application, which has helped to shape the design of the site to ensure it delivers an appropriate number of units without compromising



on design quality or amenity. The applicant has carefully considered the advice received from the Council's Urban Design Officer and has sought to amend the scheme to accommodate their suggested improvements. This has included a reduction in larger homes and a focus on smaller family sized units, together with the removal of the problematic rear parking court. The scheme has also evolved to integrate car barns throughout the layout and a flat over garages (FOG unit) as was requested, together with an increase in the size of the informal open space at the site entrance. The layout continues to utilise a perimeter block approach, a well-established way of organising residential development that allows development to face onto the street and provide traditional back to back gardens, however with a revised and simplified geometry. The design provides an active frontage onto Bolney Road mirroring the rhythm of development opposite whilst reflecting the pattern of development in Marwick Close and Crouch Fields where plots back on to the countryside edge to deliver a soft transition to the rural edge, with attractive boundary planting around the site.

- 7.24 In order to ensure the Site includes the key policy requirements of DPA17 as well as all other necessary policy requirements as set out in the Development Plan including the need to provide sufficient space for biodiversity gain, it is clear that the Site cannot deliver the 45 units originally envisaged by the Council without creating other unacceptable impacts. Design work undertaken by the applicant has concluded that a mixed scheme of 34 units is the optimal level of development for this site.
- 7.25 The site has been laid out to retain the vast majority of existing boundary vegetation, as well as the woodland buffer to the south-west corner. The development parcel is located to the centre/east of the site to ensure that sufficient screening is retained along Bolney Road and between the south of the site and the PROW.
- 7.26 The proposed units are all proposed to be two storeys and will include a mix of flats (FOG units), maisonettes and houses. The design approach for the new homes is a traditional Sussex vernacular, including red/brown tile hanging, Sussex multi-stock bricks, quoining in contrasting brick, white weatherboarding and a mix of Sussex brown roof tiles, and charcoal roof tiles. Chimneys will also feature throughout the site.
- 7.27 Further details of the design evolution, material palette and why the applicant considers the proposed design to be appropriate in this setting, is presented in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

Access and Highways

- 7.28 In support of the application a Transport Statement (by i-Transport) has been submitted. The Transport Statement includes proposed access drawings and swept path analysis drawings to demonstrate the access proposals are compliant with standards and are acceptable. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit is included at Appendix B.



- 7.29 The site is situated within a sustainable location benefiting from good connections to the strategic road networks (A272 and A23). The nearest bus stop is located on Bolney Road within a 3-minute walk of the site, providing regular services to key destinations including Horsham and Haywards Heath. The nearest railway station is Haywards Heath (approx. 5km from the site) and can be accessed by bus, car or cycle. Haywards Heath train station is served by Thameslink and Southern, and offer quick and direct connections to Gatwick, London and Brighton.
- 7.30 The site is well served by an existing network of pedestrian links and public rights of way. PROW ANS-70CR is located to the south of the site and links Cuckfield Road to Bolney Road. An existing footway along Bolney Road provides pedestrian links to the village centre.
- 7.31 In accordance with criteria 1 of policy DPA17, safe and suitable vehicle access to the site is proposed to be gained via an extension of Marwick Close to the northeast of the site. The existing shared surface arrangement at the southern end of Marwick Close will extend into the site at a width of 5m which will also allow access for cyclists and pedestrians. The access arrangement is show in drawing GA-003 of the TS.
- 7.32 The proposal includes additional pedestrian links to maximise active travel opportunities and non-motorised links between the site and surrounding destinations. A separate 2m wide pedestrian access is proposed from Bolney Road to the west of the site which will include a crossing point to the opposite side of Bolney Road and is shown in drawing GA-004 of the TS. In addition (and in accordance with criteria 8 of policy DPA17), a pedestrian/cycle access point is proposed up to the boundary of site DPA16 to the east to enable future non-motorised connectivity between the two sites as required. A pedestrian link between the site and the PROW to the south is also provided.
- 7.33 74 allocated parking spaces and 7 additional visitor spaces are proposed which is in accordance with the WSCC Parking Standards. In accordance with WSCC cycle parking standards, there will be a minimum of two cycle parking spaces per dwelling. Cycle parking will be accommodated in garages where they are proposed; and where a dwelling does not have a garage, a suitably sized cycle store is proposed in the rear garden.
- 7.34 The Transport Statement details the predicted additional trips that would be generated from the Proposed Development. The assessment concludes that trip generation from the development would be minimal and would have a negligible effect on the local highways network.
- 7.35 Whilst the scale of the proposal does not require the submission of a Travel Plan, Section 5 of the TS explores how sustainable travel can be promoted and how the Site is located to enable sustainable choices to be made by future residents.
- 7.36 Overall, it is reasonable to consider that the proposed development is acceptable in access and highway terms, and accords with the requirements set out in Section 9 of the NPPF, particularly paragraph 116 which states that applications should only



be refused on highways grounds if there would be a severe impact on the highways network. Further details are set out in the accompanying Transport Statement which demonstrates that the proposal will not result in a significant impact on the local highways network and is in full accordance with the requirements of Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan, and the active travel policies of the emerging plan (DPT1 and DPT3).

Ecology and BNG

- 7.37 There are no statutory designated ecological sites within or directly adjacent to the site boundary, and none within 2km of the site. The nearest statutory site is Blunts and Paiges Wood (LNR) located around 2.9km to the east. There are five non-statutory sites located within 2km of the site boundary.
- 7.38 In support of the application, a Preliminary Ecology Appraisal (PEA) has been submitted which has identified all ecological constraints associated with the site, as well as any recommended mitigation. The PEA identifies that the existing site largely comprises species-poor grassland and concludes that subject to the implementation of enhancements as recommended within the report, there will be no residual effects with regards to ecology.
- 7.39 Surveys for bats, dormice, and reptiles have been undertaken, and the results are described in the PEA. Other habitats within the site that may be suitable to support other species (such as newts, birds, other mammals, invertebrates, and hedgehogs) were also assessed.
- 7.40 Ecological enhancements have been recommended in the PEA which include the following:
- establishment of wildlife corridors along the northern and southern site boundaries
 - use of flowering lawn mixes and wildlife rich grasslands
 - Inclusion of street trees (including fruit trees where appropriate)
 - Provision of artificial bird and bat boxes within the mature trees in the western woodland
 - Use of hedgehog shelters, and hedgehog holes in garden fencing
 - Use of log-piles and hibernacula along edges of the site, and underground
 - Enhancements to the attenuation pond/swale
- 7.41 Where relevant, these features have been designed into the site layout plans, and it is expected that more detailed matters will be secured by condition. Sensitive lighting measures will also be implemented, as well as precautionary methods of working.



- 7.42 A Biodiversity Net Gain Report and Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric (by Ecology Partnership) have also been submitted with the planning application.
- 7.43 Overall, the proposal results in a -1.76% net decrease in habitat units, a +214.08% net increase in hedgerow (linear) units.
- 7.44 Whilst the post development proposals will result in a significant gain of hedgerow biodiversity units, to address the loss of woodland and to achieve a +10% overall net gain, the purchase of off-site biodiversity credits (comprising 0.05 units of 'lowland mixed deciduous woodland' and 0.74 units of any habitat type) is required to meet the trading rules. Discussion with regard to this compensation are underway, and it has been confirmed that units are available for purchase from a locally registered habitat bank. It is envisaged that the securing of off-site habitat units would be evidenced to the Council by way of condition.

Trees

- 7.45 In support of the application, a Tree Report and Arboricultural Method Statement (by David Archer Associates) has been submitted which includes a Tree Survey and Tree Protection Plan.
- 7.46 The site is lined with mature trees along the western, southern and eastern boundaries, and a cluster of woodland is located to the south-west corner. None of the trees are covered by Tree Preservation Order, nor are they located within a conservation area. There are no ancient woodlands, veteran or ancient trees on the site or in the immediate locality.
- 7.47 The tree constraints have been carefully considered, and the proposed layout has respected the constraints where possible and has provided suitable mitigation measures where necessary. The scheme retains the key tree features of the site and only proposes to remove a total of one individual tree (T31, category C), two groups of trees (G8 and G13, both category U) and partial removal of G7 (category C) in order to facilitate the development. Some minor coppicing and maintenance of group G9 and hedge H1 may also be required, as well as cutting back of overgrown vegetation to enable improved access via the PROW to the south.
- 7.48 The tree assessment concludes that the proposed removals will represent only a minor alteration to the arboricultural character of the site, which will be mitigated through the proposed tree and hedge planting shown on the Landscape Masterplan. The tree assessment notes that the development will have no adverse impact on the other retained trees.
- 7.49 The proposed dwellings have been designed to avoid interference between retained trees and the use or enjoyment by future occupiers, which might otherwise lead to occupants seeking to inappropriately fell or prune trees i.e. no existing trees will fall within the curtilage of any private homes. As such, the proposals are considered to be acceptable with regard to tree constraints and in accordance with Policy DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.



Heritage and Archaeology

- 7.50 In support of the planning application a Heritage Impact Assessment (by TCMS Heritage) has been submitted. The assessment notes that the Site does not form part of the setting of any relevant designated or non-designated built heritage assets and is not located within an Archaeological Notification Area or within a Conservation Area as defined by Mid Sussex District Council.
- 7.51 The assessment identifies four listed buildings within 150 and 190m from the Site that have the potential to be affected by the proposed development. The assessment concludes that none of these buildings share a historic or functional relationship with the Site and are visually separated by intervening vegetation and built form.
- 7.52 The DBA concludes that the development will have no impact on the historic significance or setting of the nearby listed buildings, and as such results in no conflict with the requirements of paragraph 212 of the NPPF, and Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.53 The Site is located wholly within Flood Zone 1 meaning it has a very low chance of flooding from rivers and seas. The EA Risk of Flooding from Surface Water maps show that the Site is in the 'Very Low' surface water flood risk category.
- 7.54 The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy and Drainage Strategy Plans (by Motion) demonstrate how the development will manage surface water and foul water discharge to ensure the development does not increase flood risk elsewhere. The drainage strategy includes a mix of SuDS features including permeable paving, underground geocellular storage tanks, and an open swale at the southern boundary of the site, which will store water during periods of heavy rainfall before being discharged at restricted greenfield rates (6.7l/s using hydrobrakes) into a nearby watercourse. Water butts are also proposed to be installed at each property to help manage surface water run-off and to encourage sustainable water re-use habits.
- 7.55 Foul water generated from the development will be directed to the existing public sewer to the south of the site.
- 7.56 The FRA and Drainage Strategy concludes that flood risk and foul/surface water management can be controlled appropriately and in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and the principles set out in the 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' Position Statement.



Air Quality

- 7.57 Whilst there are no AQMA's in Mid Sussex, as the proposal is for more than 10 dwellings and is therefore classed as a "major development", an Air Quality Assessment (by Omnia) has been submitted with the application.
- 7.58 The Air Quality Assessment demonstrates that, subject to good practice measures, residual air quality and dust impacts during construction are not significant. In addition, operational air quality impacts are also assessed as not significant due to relatively low number of vehicle movements and the avoidance of use of any combustion plant (gas boilers).
- 7.59 An Emissions Mitigation Assessment has been carried out within the Air Quality Assessment. This calculates a 'damage cost' contribution of £5,396 towards local air quality initiatives to offset residual impacts. It is anticipated that specific measures to provide costed mitigation can be secured by a suitably worded condition.
- 7.60 Subject to the securing of suitable air quality mitigation measures, the development is not likely to result in any permanent adverse impact on air quality in line with Policy DP29 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Noise

- 7.61 A Noise Assessment (by Acoustic South East) has been submitted with the application to demonstrate that the noise levels generated primarily from traffic on Bolney Road to the west of the site is not detrimental to the amenity and health of future residents.
- 7.62 The Noise Assessment identifies that the site is affected by road noise; however, this only has an impact on facades closest to Bolney Road. However, rigorous calculations on the plot deemed most affected (Plot 24) demonstrate that even on this plot, acceptable internal noise levels can be achieved with standard double glazing and acoustic vents. Open windows are possible on this plot for overheating purposes, although mechanical ventilation may provide an alternative. The Assessment demonstrates that noise levels in all private gardens would be within the relevant guidelines.
- 7.63 Overall, provided the recommended noise mitigation measures are secured, the Noise Assessment concludes that the site is suitable for the proposed residential development. The proposal therefore accords with criteria 9 of draft Policy DPA17 which requires the site to showcase good acoustic design.

Lighting

- 7.64 Given the scale of the proposal, it is anticipated that precise details regarding lighting design within the scheme will be secured by an appropriately worded condition. It is anticipated that lighting within the site can be arranged to ensure



unnecessary light spill and adverse impacts on amenity, landscape character or ecology is avoided. Lighting is likely to include street light columns to provide an energy efficient strategy that also minimises light spill.

Utilities

- 7.65 Overhead cables currently traverse the site and would be undergrounded as per the adjacent Marwick Close development. An existing perimeter drainage wayleave to Marwick Close is a known constraint and has been integrated into the layout. There is no gas provision proximate to the site.

Land Quality

- 7.66 In support of the application, a desk study has been undertaken by Geo-Environmental which outlines an assessment of the land quality and potential contaminants. The study concludes that due to its historic agricultural uses, the site has a very low risk of contamination, and that the proposed residential use of the site is suitable. The study sets out recommendations for further investigations and monitoring, which we anticipate can be secured by a suitable worded condition.

Energy and Sustainability

- 7.67 An Energy and Sustainability Statement (by Doherty Energy) has been submitted with the application which outlines the measures proposed to seek to reduce the impact of the development on climate change in line with Policy DP39 of the Mid Sussex District Plan, Principle DG37 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD, as well as Building Regulation and Future Home Standard requirements.
- 7.68 The applicant is committed to providing highly sustainable and energy efficient new homes to meet the requirement of the latest building regulations and reduce householder bills whilst contributing to reducing carbon emissions. The applicant's approach intrinsically follows the energy hierarchy by utilising a fabric first approach in the design and layout of the site. This is achieved by installing energy saving measures, such as those included in the list below, prioritising measures that improve the efficiency of the homes to reduce energy use whilst also reducing costs for future residents.
- 7.69 By doing this it is expected that the development will result in a reduction in carbon emissions against the latest building regulations targets. This accords with the aspirations of the Council's adopted policy on climate (MSDP Policy DP39) which supports proposals that meet the energy hierarchy to contribute to achieving zero-carbon development and positively contribute to addressing climate change.
- 7.70 The proposed development seeks to accord with environmental policy requirements and building regulation standards by implementing the following measures:
- Dwelling to be designed and constructed with a fabric first approach to adapt to climate change



- Dwellings to be orientated to maximise solar gain
- Gas free development
- Use of Air Source Heat Pumps to supply heating and hot water
- Water butts
- Solar PV panels to be installed where regulatory requirements apply
- Use of water efficient fixtures and fittings to reduce water use to under 100L/p/day.
- Installation of EV charging points for each dwelling in line with Building Regulation requirements

Planning Conditions and Obligations

- 7.71 NPPF paragraph 57 confirms that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where necessary and relevant to planning and the proposed development. It goes on to confirm that conditions required to be discharged prior to commencement should be avoided unless there is clear justification.
- 7.72 This application intentionally includes sufficient information to minimise the need for additional conditions where possible. However, where conditions are necessary, the applicant is happy for these to be included in order to make the development acceptable to the Council.
- 7.73 Mid Sussex is not a CIL charging authority therefore it is expected that a legal agreement will be required as part of the planning permission. At this stage, it is anticipated that this will cover the following Heads of Terms:
- 10no. Affordable Housing Units and financial contribution
 - BNG on-site Implementation
 - BNG off-site credits
 - BNG Monitoring
 - Open space provision
 - Off-site highways works
 - Financial contributions towards the following (as per Policy DPA17) calculated in accordance with the MSDC Infrastructure Position Statement:
 - Sustainable transport
 - Improvements at Haywards Heath Station
 - Education
 - Library
 - Community Buildings
 - Local Community Infrastructure
 - Health
 - Play Area
 - Other outdoor provision
 - Outdoor Sports
 - Parks and Gardens



8.0 Affordable Housing Statement

- 8.1 The proposed scheme has had regard to the aims and objectives of housing delivery and the latest housing need within the district. The table below sets out the proposed mix of unit sizes within the development which comprises a mix of 2-and 3- bedroom homes. This reflects the demand for smaller and medium sized family housing.
- 8.2 Whilst no 1-bed or 4-bedroom houses are proposed, we understand that 2 and 3-bed houses are most in need within the Parish. When considering the site-specific constraints and the Council’s desire to maximise the number of units delivered on this site, we contend that the mix proposed is appropriate in this case. Further we note the comments at pre-application relating to the reduction in the number of 4 bed units provided. The inclusion of a meaningful proportion of 2-bedroom homes also supports opportunities for first-time buyers and downsizers, enabling residents to remain within the local area as their housing needs change over time, in accordance with Policy DP30.
- 8.3 Policy DP30 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires housing mix to be appropriate for the site, the locality, and the surrounding character, and we consider that the mix shown in the submitted plans accords with these aims.

Table 3: Affordable and Market Housing Mix

Bedrooms	Market	Affordable
2-bed	6 (25%)	8 (80%)
3-bed	18 (75%)	2 (20%)
TOTAL	24	10
SPLIT	70.6%	29.4%

- 8.4 As shown above, 10no. of the dwellings are proposed to be affordable tenure. This equates to 29.4% on-site affordable housing which is acknowledged as being slightly below the policy requirement of 30% as set out in Policy DP31. If it is required by the Council, the remaining 0.6% requirement can be provided for by a commuted sum calculated in line with the Council’s latest guidance.
- 8.5 The affordable housing will be delivered across a mix of tenures that is both policy-compliant and deliverable. Marketing and engagement undertaken to date indicates that there is currently limited appetite from Registered Providers to take on units of this nature. In recognition of this, the precise tenure mix and delivery mechanism



- will be secured through a planning obligation in consultation with the Council's Housing Authority, ensuring that the affordable housing provision is capable of being implemented in practice and reflects local housing need and market conditions at the point of delivery.
- 8.6 The affordable homes are fully integrated within the layout and are indistinguishable in design, scale and materials from the market housing, ensuring a cohesive and inclusive residential environment. All homes meet or exceed National Space Standards.
- 8.7 It is considered that the proposed mix is suitable both in design terms and in achieving efficient use of the site. The applicant is committed to ensuring that the proposed scale and density of the development respects the surrounding locality. There is justification for the proposed mix and tenure split outlined above in regard to both a landscape perspective and the importance of the preservation of the semi-rural community, where blocks of flats are not a distinctive feature. Overall, the proposed housing mix and tenure are policy-compliant and responsive to identified needs, delivering 30% affordable housing alongside a balanced market mix. In doing so, the scheme will provide meaningful choice across different household types and life stages, whilst securing the affordable homes through a planning obligation.



9.0 Summary and Planning Balance

9.1 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. As set out in NPPF Paragraph 8, the planning system has three overarching objectives which are key to achieving sustainable development. These are social, economic and environmental objectives.

9.2 The proposed development would result in **social** benefits through:

- The provision of a mix of 34no. dwellings in a sustainable location and on a site which is a draft allocation for residential development within the emerging Local Plan, to add to the much-needed housing stock in the district, representing a very substantial benefit in the context of the Council's housing supply and delivery position;
- The provision of 10no. on-site affordable housing dwellings and a suitable mix of house types and sizes to accord with identified local needs representing a very substantial benefit in the context of the pressing need for housing of all types and sizes;
- Areas of public open space within the site and retention and enhancement of existing landscape features for the enjoyment of incoming and existing residents, as well as private outdoor amenity space for each dwelling;
- Provision of new pedestrian links through the site to enable better connectivity and to enhance the wider active travel network; and
- Provision of new homes in a thriving village, enabling new residents to support the vitality of existing local facilities; and enjoying convenient connections to the wider recreational routes and strategic highways network.

9.3 The proposed development would result in **economic** benefits through:

- The generation of employment related to construction;
- Household expenditure and contributions to the local economy by future residents;
- New Homes Bonus payments, council tax receipts and s106 contributions to fund identified local infrastructure projects; and

9.4 The proposed development would result in **environmental** benefits through:

- Retention and enhancement of existing mature planting along the site boundaries in order to retain the verdant character of the site and to protect wider landscape views;



- Highways improvements and new pedestrian / active travel links in the form of links within the site, and new links connecting to the existing footpath network;
- Provision of ecological enhancement measures, including mitigation measures to prevent harm to sensitive habitats and to achieve at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain;
- Protection from flooding for the lifetime of the development by utilising sustainable drainage systems which also provide ecological and landscape benefits;
- Careful landscape design to produce a development of the highest quality, ensuring it respects the local area; and
- Design of the homes to meet and exceed current environmental standards, including adopting a fabric first approach and the use of sustainable energy technologies including EV car charging at each dwelling.

9.5 This statement demonstrates that the proposed development of 34no. homes on this site would deliver multiple benefits, particularly the significant benefit of a mix of much needed housing in a location that is considered to be sustainably located and very well related in character to the surrounding built up area and form of the village.

9.6 The statement has highlighted the significant benefits the proposal would offer and demonstrates that the proposed development would not result in any adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated to an acceptable level. The statement has outlined that the proposed development accords in full with the 10 policy requirements listed in Policy DPA17 of the emerging Local Plan, as summarised in the table below:

Table 4: Compliance with Policy DPA17 (overleaf)



DPA17 Requirement	How the Proposed Development Complies
1. Provide suitable access from Upton Drive and Marwick Close.	The main vehicular access to the site has been designed as an extension from Marwick Drive as shown in the Site Layout Plan and the technical drawings contained with the Transport Statement.
2. Retain and enhance the trees and retain the ground levels along the A272 Bolney Road which forms the western boundary of the site.	Aside from some clearance of dead trees and vegetation necessary to facilitate the pedestrian footpath, the vast majority of existing trees along the western edge of the site are proposed to be retained, with enhancements shown in the submitted Landscape Masterplan.
3. Particular attention should be given to trees and hedgerows on the southern boundary adjacent to the PRow and in the southwest of the site.	As above, the vast majority of existing vegetation along the southern boundary is proposed to be retained, with only a small group of Category U Ash trees to be removed which are proposed to be replaced by the planting of 5no. new trees as shown on the Landscape Masterplan. Hedge 1 is proposed to be retained and maintained as such. Vegetation clearance along the PRow is proposed to enable improved access and use of this route.
4. Maintain the rural character of the PRow on the southern boundary of the site.	As above, the retention of much of the existing vegetation around the PRow will ensure its rural character is preserved, and the proposed clearance of overgrown vegetation will enable improved access via this route to. The submitted LVA concludes that long distance views towards the site from the south will not be adversely impacted by the proposed development.
5. The layout of the site should take into account the location of the trees and allow for their future retention and to prevent overshadowing into private gardens.	No existing or proposed trees are shown within the rear residential gardens, and it is not anticipated that any existing trees along the southern or eastern boundaries of the site will result in unacceptable shading or leaf drop into private gardens.
6. The design and layout of the site should reflect a transition from the built environment to the rural countryside.	The site has been designed to ensure existing boundary treatments are retained, including the retention of important mature trees and the woodland to the south-west which screens the site and allows it to transition into the rural countryside beyond. The built form is proposed to be limited to 2-storeys, and sufficient spacing is proposed between dwellings to allow viewing corridors towards the verdant boundaries.
7. The design and layout of the site should reflect the rural character of the settlement and avoid being urban or suburban in character.	The Design and Access Statement details how the site has been designed to complement the surrounding character of Ansty, including the architectural design of the homes, and the proposed materials which are of a traditional Sussex vernacular. By limiting the number of dwellings to 34, the site is able to better reflect the more rural layout and densities seen elsewhere in the village.



DPA17 Requirement	How the Proposed Development Complies
<p>8. Integrate development with the site to the east (DPA16) by providing pedestrian and cycling connections and green infrastructure connectivity.</p>	<p>A pedestrian/cycle link is proposed to the north of Plot 1 which links to the boundary of site DPA16 to the east. This will allow for future connectivity via both sites as required by criteria 8. The existing boundary vegetation between the two sites will be retained. The proposed area of Open Space at the north-east corner of the site will be easily accessible to future residents of DPA16 via this link, as will access to bus stops on Bolney Road.</p>
<p>9. Provide good acoustic design to address noise impacts associated with the A272 Bolney Road.</p>	<p>The submitted noise assessment concludes that the effects of noise from Bolney Road will only affect the dwelling facades closest to the road. At these plots, acceptable internal noise levels can be achieved with standard double glazing and acoustic vents. Open windows are possible for overheating purposes, although mechanical ventilation may provide an alternative. The Assessment demonstrates that noise levels in all private gardens would be within the relevant guidelines.</p> <p>These measures will be incorporated into the design of the new homes in order to ensure the noise environment for all future residents is within the required standards. No additional noise mitigation is required for the external amenity areas, and no acoustic fencing is required.</p>
<p>10. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.</p>	<p>All other requirements of the development plan policies have been considered in this report and subject to the conditions and obligations suggested, it is considered that the proposal accords in full with the requirements.</p>

9.7 The confirmation by the Council that only a 3.38-year supply of housing is currently being achieved demonstrates the urgent need for housing to be delivered in sustainable locations within the district and triggers the application of the ‘tilted balance’.

9.8 Not only is the site already a draft allocation for residential development in the emerging Local Plan, the development proposal for 34 new homes complies with the provisions of the ‘Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex’ Position Statement³ and makes the most effective use of the land available whilst creating a well-designed place for new residents to live. The Position Statement is an important material consideration in the determination of the application and clearly identifies how the Council will approach the determination of applications during the period until a new Local Plan for Mid Sussex is adopted. Published in December 2025 the Position Statement provides up to date explicit in principle support for the delivery of housing in accordance with policy DPA17 on this identified site, and an

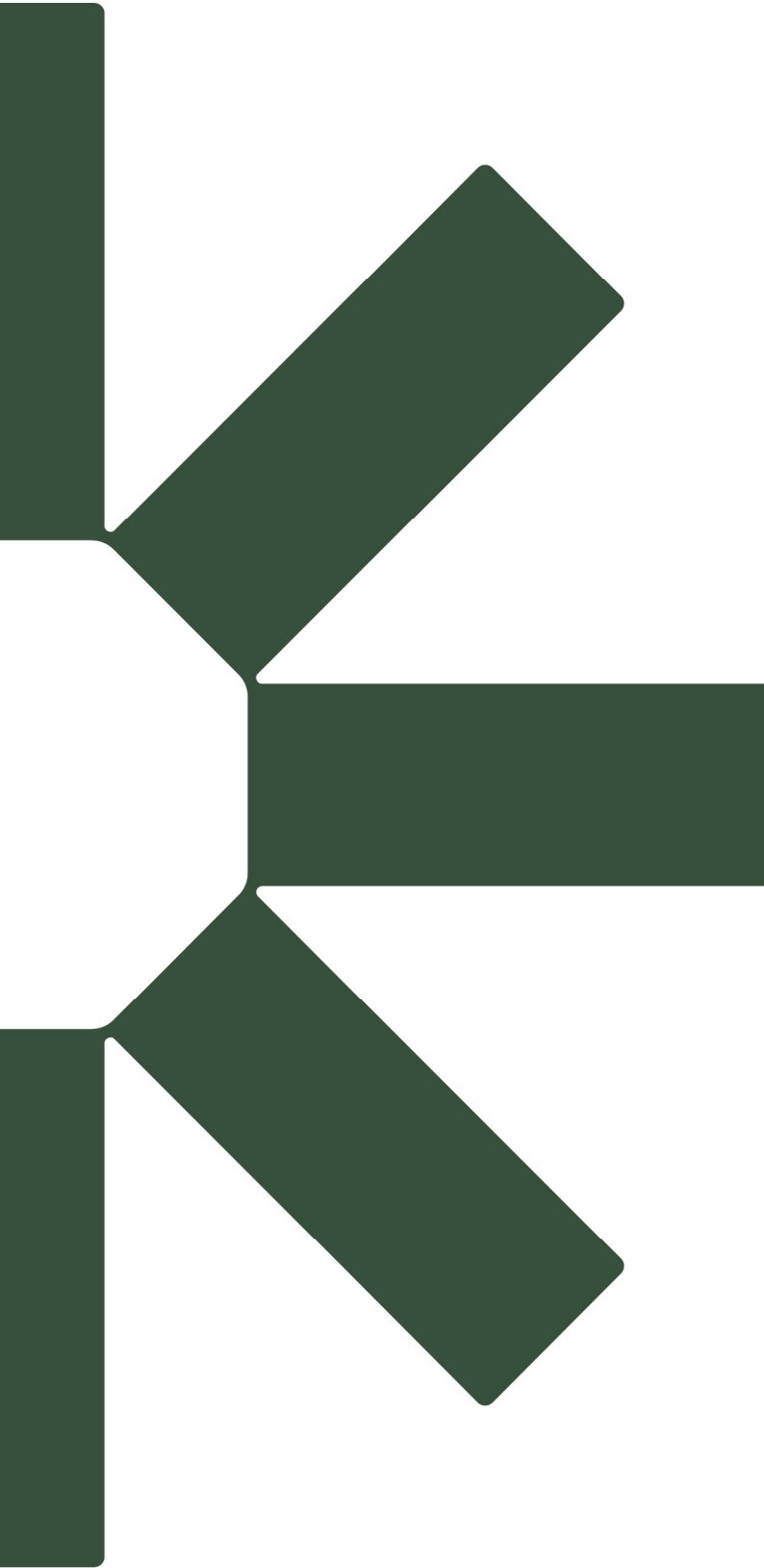
³ Relevant sections of the Position Statement include paragraphs 1.5, 4.2, 5.1-5.3 and Appendix C.



acknowledgement that the delivery of development on the “*Council’s preferred sites*” should not be delayed but be brought forward “*as soon as practically possible*”.

- 9.9 As this statement has outlined, the proposed development has been designed in full accordance with the requirements of Policy DPA17 and meets all 10 of the stated criteria (see Table 4). The LVA shows that the scheme is acceptable in terms of landscape effects, and appropriate mitigation has been included where necessary to ensure all environmental impacts are addressed. The scheme will include enhancements to existing vegetation, improvements to the PROW route and links to adjacent land parcels to ensure active travel is maximised and travel by non-car modes is encouraged.
- 9.10 The scheme has been informed by valuable feedback from the Council at pre-app stage and has been designed with a full appreciation of the existing development to the north (Marwick Close) and the future development of the parcel to the east (DPA16). This shows that the scheme can be delivered comprehensively and will not prejudice the future delivery of DPA16.
- 9.11 In summary, the benefits that would result from the proposed development are significant, and there are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the delivery of these benefits. As such, having regard to the policies contained within the adopted development plan, the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, as well as direction from the NPPF and other material considerations identified (including the Planning Position Statement and the policies and allocations in the emerging Local Plan); it is considered that the planning balance lies in favour of the proposal, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.





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