

Courthouse Farm, Copthorne

Planning and Affordable Housing Statement

Final
JB/HM/SC/35569
November 2025



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

1.1.1 This Planning and Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of Option Two Development Ltd ("the Applicant"), in support of an outline planning application in respect of land at Courthouse Farm, Copthorne Common Road, Copthorne, RH10 3LA.

1.1.2 The full description of the development is as follows:

"Outline planning application for the erection of residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including associated parking, outdoor amenity space, landscaping and drainage, with all matters reserved except for the new access proposed from Copthorne Common Road".

1.1.3 The planning application for this site has been prepared in conjunction with an application for C2 extra-care units. There is an identified need within the borough for both C3 residential dwellings and C2 extra-care units. Both applications fully comply with the development plan and will be determined on their own merits.

1.1.4 The indicative site masterplan is provided at **Appendix 1**.

1.1.5 This Planning and Affordable Housing Statement provides a detailed overview of the application site, its context and the relevant planning history, and a summary of the development proposal. It identifies all applicable development plans and relevant planning policies, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024) and other guidance. It then sets out the planning considerations which are regarded as material to the determination of the application.

1.1.6 The report concludes that the proposal is sustainably located, appropriate in planning terms and accordingly requests that planning permission be granted.

1.2 STATEMENT STRUCTURE

1.2.1 The structure of this Planning Statement is as follows:

- **Section 2** sets out the context of the site and the immediate surroundings;
- **Section 3** has regard to the proposed site use;
- **Section 4** has regard to the proposed development;
- **Section 5** reviews the planning policy context by which the planning application will be considered, including having regard to the advice contained in the NPPF (December 2024) and the formal policies of the development plan;
- **Section 6** sets out the current housing land supply and delivery position for Mid Sussex Districts;

- **Section 7** considers the pre-application engagement associated with the proposals;
- **Section 8** considers the 'principle' of the development and any other relevant planning considerations; and
- **Section 9** draws conclusions to justify why it is considered that the development is acceptable.

1.3 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- 1.3.1 This Planning and Affordable Housing Statement forms part of a suite of documents that support this outline planning application, and it is designed to be read in conjunction with the forms and documents listed in the table below.
- 1.3.2 This list accords with the Mid Sussex District Council Validation List (September 2020).
- 1.3.3 This application seeks outline consent with all matters reserved except for the new access proposed from Copthorne Common Road. Accordingly, the proposed plans to show the proposed access are submitted for approval and the remaining plans are submitted for illustrative purposes only.
- 1.3.4 Please see Table 1:1 which lists the drawings submitted for approval. Table 1:2 lists the drawings that have been submitted for illustrative purposes only and Table 1:3 lists the reports, surveys and other information submitted in support of the application.

DRAWING	AUTHOR
ECF485_104 Rev P1 – Site Location Plan	Jane Duncan Architects
1810-17 PL01 – Proposed Residential Access Arrangement	Transport Planning Associates
1810-17 SK01 – Ghost Island Junction Arrangement	Transport Planning Associates

TABLE 1.1: DRAWINGS FOR APPROVAL

DRAWING	AUTHOR
ECF485_101 Rev. M – Site Layout Plan – Option D – 100% Residential	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_201 Rev. P1- Residential Scheme-Street Elevations 1	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_202 Rev. P1 - Residential Scheme-Street Elevations 2	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_01-1000 Rev. P1 - 2B4P Aff-Terrace-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_02-1000 Rev. P1 - 2B4P Aff-Terrace-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_03-1000 Rev. P1 - 3B5P Aff+Market-Semi-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_04-1000 Rev. P1 - 3B5P Aff+Market-Single-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_05-1000 Rev. P1 - 3B6P Aff+Market-Rectangle-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_06-1000 Rev. P1 - 4B8P Aff+Market-Detached-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects

ECF485_07-1000 Rev. P1 - Flats-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_08-1000 Rev. P1 - 3B6P Market-Porch-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_09-1000 Rev. P1 - Single Garage-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
ECF485_10-1000 Rev. P1 - Double Garage-Plans and Elevations	Jane Duncan Architects
5096-LLB-XX-XX-D-Ab-0001 Rev. P02 - Tree Survey Plan 1	Lloyd Bore
5096-LLB-XX-XX-D-Ab-0002 Rev. P02 - Tree Survey Plan 2	Lloyd Bore
5096-LLB-XX-XX-D-Ab-0003 Rev. P01 - Tree Protection Plan 1	Lloyd Bore
5096-LLB-XX-XX-D-Ab-0004 Rev. P01 - Tree Protection Plan 2	Lloyd Bore
5096-LLB-XX-XX-D-L-0001 - Landscape Masterplan Residential Scheme	Lloyd Bore

TABLE 1.2: DRAWINGS SUBMITTED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

DRAWING	AUTHOR
ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS	
Application Form, Notices and Land Declaration	DHA Planning
REPORTS	
Air Quality Assessment	Entran
Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Lloyd Bore
Archaeological Desk-based Assessment	Hawk Heritage
BNG Feasibility Assessment	Lloyd Bore
BNG Metric	Lloyd Bore
Design and Access Statement	Jane Duncan Architects
Ecological Impact Assessment and supporting surveys:	Lloyd Bore
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reptile Survey Report • Hazel Dormouse Survey • Bat Survey Report 	
Energy & Sustainability Assessment	Whitecode Consulting
Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy	BDR
Landscape and Visual Appraisal	Lloyd Bore
Noise Impact Assessment Report	Entran
Phase 1 Desk Study (Contamination)	Ground and Environmental Services Ltd
Planning Statement including:	DHA Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing Statement • Statement of Community Involvement 	
Draft Heads of Terms	
Statement of Community Involvement	SEC Newgate
Transport Assessment including:	Transport Planning Associates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 Road Safety Audit 	
Travel Plan	Transport Planning Associates

TABLE 1.3: REPORTS, SURVEYS AND OTHER INFORMATION SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION

2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises a 4.3-hectare area of undeveloped grazing land to the south of Copthorne Common Road, approximately 2km east of the M23. It is also located at the southern boundary of Copthorne village, West Sussex. The site location is outlined in red in **Figure 2.1**
- 2.1.2 The site lies within the jurisdiction of Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) and Worth Parish Council.
- 2.1.3 The site is characterised by undeveloped land comprised of paddocks and equestrian related structures privately used by Courthouse Farm. The fields are subdivided by timber post and rail fencing and two linear ecological corridors formed of trees and other vegetation. The site is bounded by strong natural features along most of the perimeter, including a landscaped bund separating the site from Copthorne Common Road to the north. Courthouse Farm and its access road runs along the eastern boundary of the site.



FIGURE 2.1: SITE AERIAL SHOWING SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.2 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.2.1 The site is located adjacent to Copthorne, sitting just south of the village. The site is set in a semi-rural area characterised by a range of uses including residential properties and equestrian uses to the east; equestrian, residential and commercial

(Esso petrol station and car hire businesses) to the west; and residential properties to the north. Copthorne Golf Club is located adjacent to the site, across Copthorne Common Road.

- 2.2.2 Notably, there are a collection of outbuildings located within the grounds of the farmhouse which have facilitated its equestrian uses.
- 2.2.3 Notwithstanding the site's location outside the defined settlement boundary of Copthorne, the site benefits from existing pedestrian infrastructure and bus services which provide access into the village and further afield. An existing bus stop is located approximately 400m west of the site which provides regular services into Crawley, East Grinstead, Caterham and Horley.
- 2.2.4 The site is located within walking distance of a number of services and amenities including a golf club (180m), convenience store (1.1km) and pharmacy (1.3km). These amenities are accessible via uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points and continuous footways along the A264, The Green and Borers Arms Road.
- 2.2.5 There are no existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW) routes within the site, although Footpath 20W is located directly opposite to the existing farmhouse access which routes to Borers Arms Road.
- 2.2.6 Despite the existing development present to the south of Copthorne Common Road, this part of the village has undergone limited change in recent years. The most significant growth has been seen at Heathy Wood, to the west of the village, where outline planning application (ref: 13/04127/OUTES) for up to 500 homes and employment/community facilities was granted on 25 May 2016. A reserved matters application (ref: DM/21/1969) for the approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale was granted 01 December 2021. The application boundary comprises land located north of Copthorne Way Roundabout, approximately 550m northeast of M23 J10.

2.3 ACCESS

- 2.3.1 The site is currently accessed from Copthorne Common Road (A264) via the existing farmhouse access. There is no footpath along the road frontage of the site. A continuous footway is located along the northern boundary of the A264 which links with a signalised pedestrian crossing approximately 140m west of the site.

2.4 POLICY DESIGNATIONS AND SITE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Heritage

- 2.4.1 There is one designated asset near the site, comprising the Grade II listed Tye Cottage (Listing Entry Number: 1025565), located on A264/Copthorne Common Road. The building is located approximately 60m north of the proposed site and is well screened by existing intervening boundary vegetation around Tye Cottage and around the boundary of the application site.
- 2.4.2 The site does not fall within a Conservation Area.

Tye Cottage

- 2.4.3 Grade II listed Tye Cottage is located approximately 60m east of the site access along the A264/Copthorne Common Road. Due to the site's proximity to this heritage asset, it is considered prudent to assess the site's impact on the asset within this report.
- 2.4.4 Tye Cottage was listed as a heritage asset on 11th May 1983 by Historic England. It is described as having two-storeys, two windows, ground floor painted brick, above faced with weatherboarding, slate roof and modern casement windows.
- 2.4.5 The cottage itself is located to the northern boundary of the plot it sits on, with gardens towards the southern boundary which fronts onto Copthorne Common Road.
- 2.4.6 As shown at **Figure 2.2**, the site is well screened by trees and hedgerow and is not visible from the roadside. Additionally, due to the extensive screening available along the boundary of the proposed site, it is considered that there is no intervisibility between the site and the heritage asset.

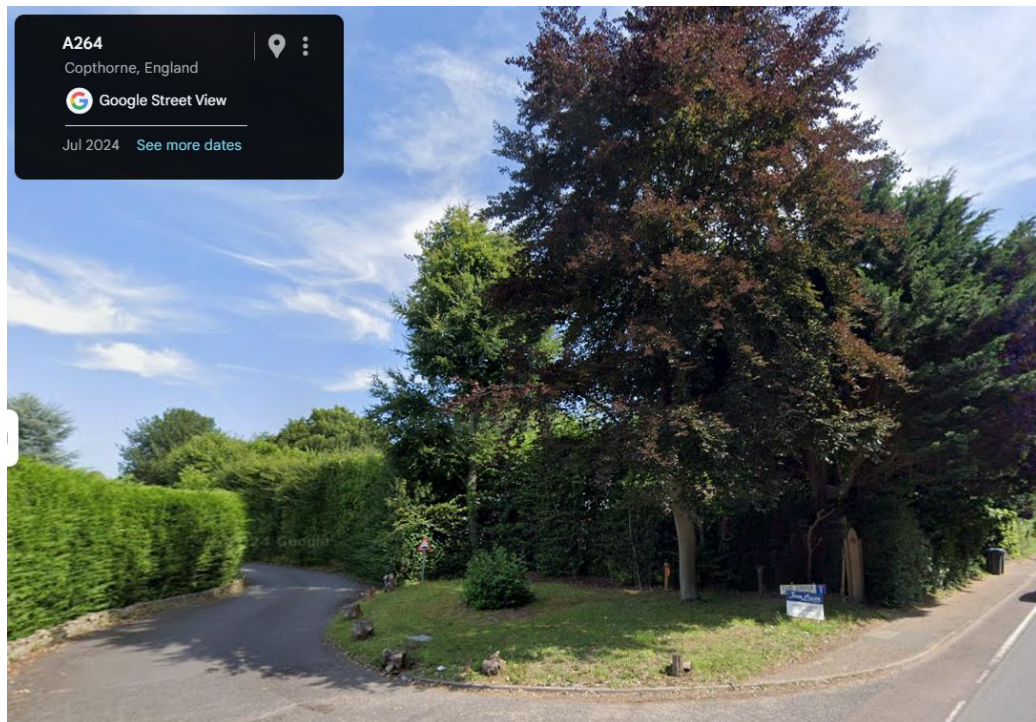


FIGURE 2.2: TYE COTTAGE – GOOGLE STREETVIEW

- 2.4.7 On 12 November 2019, the asset was approved planning permission for a detached garage to the front of the property (fronting onto Copthorne Common Road). The conservation officer noted the following:

"The building is therefore largely surrounded by more modern development, although there is open land to the southern side of the road. The cottage has modest front and rear gardens, that to the front being surrounded by tall trees and shrubs. The garden makes a positive contribution to the setting of the listed building

Although the loss of part of the front garden area could be potentially contentious, following pre-application discussion, the garage is proposed to be located to one side of the area, retaining as much as possible of the open space. In light of this, the lack of other potential positions in which the garage could be sited, and of the extent of screening around the garden, the proposal is considered acceptable in principle”.

- 2.4.8 As highlighted by the conservation officer, the garden contributes positively to Tye Cottage but its setting and significance is contained within the garden due to the surrounding tall trees and shrubs. This would suggest that the asset is considered to have contained significance and therefore would not be impacted by the proposed development.
- 2.4.9 Whilst it is considered that the proposals would cause no harm to the heritage asset, in the event that the council suggests there is less than substantial harm to the asset, it is considered that there are a number of public benefits that would outweigh any perceived harm.
- 2.4.10 Mid Sussex cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, nor can the adjacent districts of Lewes and Tandridge. Therefore, there is a significant need for housing within and around the district. The proposed development would significantly contribute to Mid Sussex's housing land supply, whilst also providing a much needed contribution of 30% affordable housing. In doing this, the scheme proposes footway provision at the frontage of the site along Copthorne Common Road and a new pedestrian crossing which will act as a key benefit for local residents.
- 2.4.11 It is also important to note that the site will have a significant ecological benefit, providing ecological enhancement throughout the site, aligning with the national requirement of 10% BNG provision. The development will provide a high quality, landscape-led design with the inclusion of a play area, open space and a pond, alongside the non-accessible managed BNG land.
- 2.4.12 Based on the above, it is therefore considered that there will be no harm caused to the significance of Tye Cottage as part of the development proposals but in the event that the Council disagrees and considers there to be less than substantial harm, this would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposals.

Flood Risk/Drainage

- 2.4.13 The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning shows that the site is located within Flood Zone 1 which is a low flood risk area. This is shown at **Figure 2.3**.

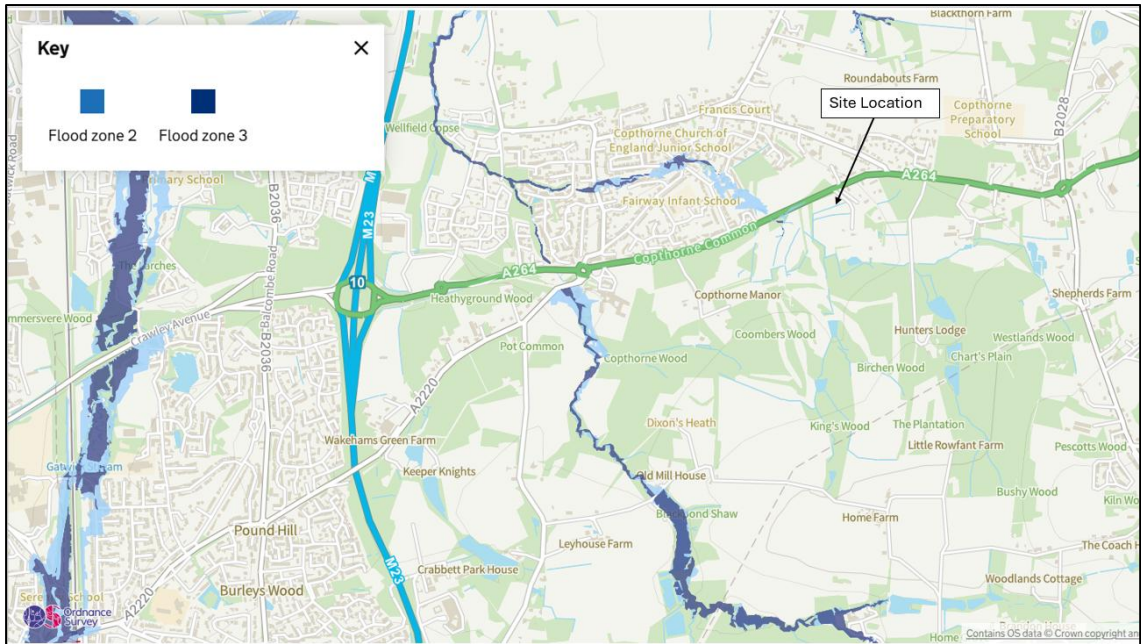


FIGURE 2.3: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY FLOOD RISK MAP

2.4.14 Additionally, **Figure 2.4** shows any risk of surface water flooding. The Flood Risk and Drainage Report confirms that the government's Long Term Flood Risk Map for Surface Water shows one small area within the site located to the west between the ditches at high risk of flooding and two small areas within the site located to the east and west between the ditches at Medium risk of flooding. Reference to the topographical survey shows both these areas to be relatively flat, however there is a fall towards the western boundary. Therefore, these areas are unlikely to flood. There is consequently a low risk of flooding from surface water.

2.4.15

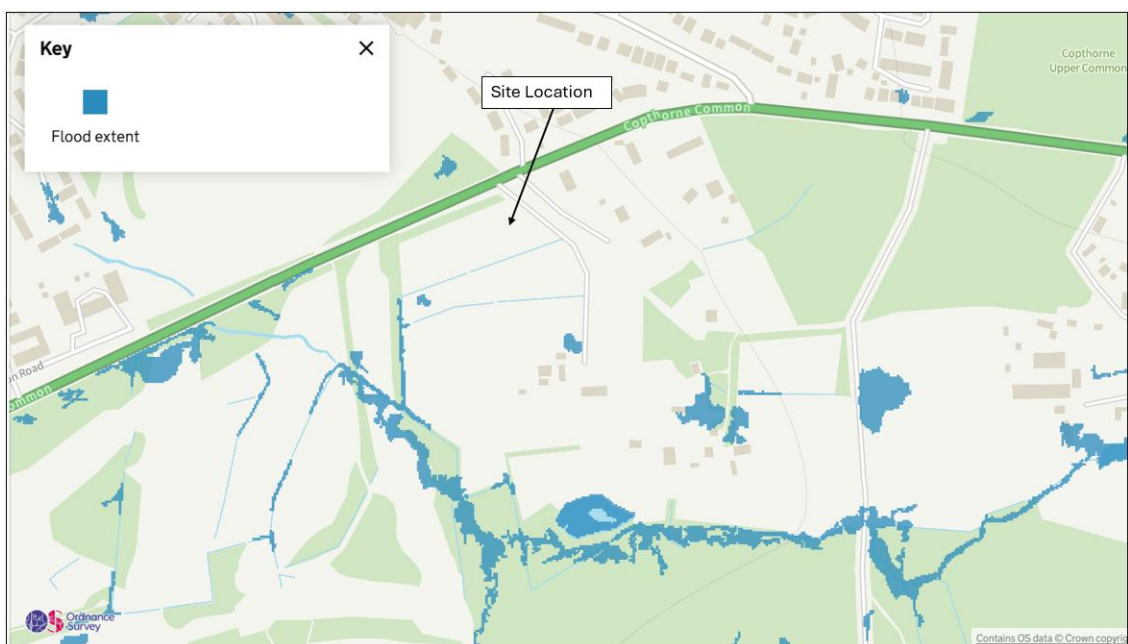




FIGURE 2.6: LOCATION OF THE TPOS ENFORCED EAST OF THE SITE (SOURCE: MID SUSSEX TREE PRESERVATION ORDER MAP)

2.5 PLANNING HISTORY

2.5.1 According to Mid Sussex District Council's online planning history there have been 7no. historic planning applications that relate to the nearby farmhouse. The application site itself is currently undeveloped and has no prior planning history.

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
WP/036/76	<i>One mobile home 7m x 10m (Approximately) for Widow (Mrs. K.E.S. Bentley)</i>	Refused 25/05/1976
WP/162/88	<i>Proposed conservatory with swimming pool.</i>	Approved 08/08/1988
WP/082/93	<i>Proposed conservatory with indoor swimming pool.</i>	Approved 12/07/1993
WP/082/93/AP1	<i>Amended plans: Proposed Conservatory with indoor swimming pool. Amended plans showing minor revisions to elevations.</i>	Approved 03/12/1993
DM/16/3060	<i>Conversion of redundant farm buildings to form 2no. two-bedroom dwellings</i>	Withdrawn 16/09/2016
DM/17/0135	<i>Conversion of redundant farm buildings to form a three bedroom cottage with construction of a link.</i>	Approved 31/05/2017
DM/18/4071	<i>Discharge of planning condition nos. 3, 6 and 10 relating to planning application DM/17/0135</i>	Split Decision 22/11/2018

TABLE 2.1: SITE PLANNING HISTORY

2.5.2 The site was included within the 2023 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) report under reference 990. The Council's Stage

1 assessment concluded that the site is relatively unconstrained and has a reasonable prospect of being developed within the plan period. It was noted that the development would not have a negative impact on a Conservation area and/or Area of Townscape Character. It was also noted that the development of the site would not affect any listed buildings. Safe access was noted to not already be existing but there is potential to easily gain access.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 OVERVIEW

3.1.1 The full description of the development is as follows:

"Outline planning application for the erection of residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including associated parking, outdoor amenity space, landscaping and drainage, with all matters reserved except for the new access proposed from Copthorne Common Road".

3.1.2 The proposed residential development is submitted in outline form, with all matters reserved except for access. The following sub-sections demonstrate how the illustrative proposal has been designed to preserve and make use of the site's key landscape features and to manage the constraints identified in **Section 2**.

3.1.3 Further details are contained within the Design and Access Statement prepared by Jane Duncan Architects, which includes a detailed analysis of the site, its local context, the design evolution and the justification for the outline layout, form and external appearance.

3.2 PROPOSED USE

3.2.1 The proposed development will comprise approximately 86 residential dwellings (Use Class C3). A proposed indicative mix of dwellings is provided at **Table 3.1**.

FULL PLANNING ELEMENT	
UNIT TYPE	NUMBER
Market Dwellings	60
3 Bedroom Houses	54
4 Bedroom Houses	6
Affordable Dwellings	26
1 Bedroom Apartment	4
2 Bedroom Apartment	4
2 Bedroom Houses	15
3 Bedroom Houses	2
4 Bedroom Houses	1

TABLE 3.1: RESIDENTIAL DWELLING MIX

3.2.2 The final mix of dwellings will be confirmed in a future Reserved Matters application. It is proposed that the total number of units subject to the permission could be controlled through an appropriately worded condition, if required.

3.2.3 The development will provide a central village green and other associated public open space. While the layout of the development is reserved for future determination, the indicative layout provided with this application demonstrates how the development could be arranged in such a way that is appropriate to the site and its context adjacent to the settlement of Copthorne.

3.3 LAYOUT

- 3.3.1 The layout of the development is reserved for future determination; however, the indicative plans submitted with the application demonstrate how a proposal of up to 86 residential units could be accommodated on the site in a way that is appropriate to the site's edge of settlement location, surrounding grain and landscape features.
- 3.3.2 The proposed buildings are arranged along a central access route leading from the proposed entrance from Copthorne Common Road to the north, set between four retained linear wildlife corridors running in an east to west orientation through the site (including the retained trees along the road, and the perimeter landscaped boundary to the rear). The limited area of surface water flooding identified is attenuated in a pond located to the east of the site.
- 3.3.3 A play area approximately 415sqm in size will be provided alongside associated open space throughout the site.

3.4 DESIGN

- 3.4.1 The illustrative layout proposals have been landscape-led, with the intention being to preserve as much of the established vegetation as possible. It is important to note that the design of the development is subject to a Reserved Matters application. However, the following commentary provides an illustrative approach to the design of the development.
- 3.4.2 The site will be designed to respect the existing character of the village and the natural features of the site. Multiple wildlife corridors aligned in an east to west direction will be retained onsite, linking with the area of land designated for biodiversity net gain (BNG). The proposals have been informed by site visits, in addition to expert technical advice from the appointed architect, ecologist and arboriculturist.
- 3.4.3 The chosen architectural design will be informed by a study of the local vernacular. In terms of architectural design and character, the scheme aims to respond to the local architecture and materials. The submitted Design and Access Statement should be referred to for a detailed interpretation of the local vernacular.
- 3.4.4 It is proposed that the development will be accessed via a primary access point for both vehicles and pedestrians (including bicycles) from Copthorne Common Road at the western site boundary. Moreover, in order to promote sustainable travel, the site has been designed in a way that maximises the usage of cul-de-sacs to minimise the presence of road infrastructure where possible.
- 3.4.5 The main access point will pass through a high quality and verdant entrance, featuring retained trees and vegetation. An attenuation pond and associated pumping station will be provided onsite. The pumping station has been appropriately sited to minimise visibility to residents whilst allowing access for service vehicles. The pond will have newly planted trees to its perimeter to screen it from the residents. Whilst the landscaping matters are detailed further in Section 3.6, it should be highlighted that the site landscaping is structured around the retention of existing vegetation which will be retained and enhanced where

possible. A comprehensive landscaping scheme will be provided, including the provision of open space areas and a wildflower meadow.

- 3.4.6 The key ecological features of the site comprise boundary vegetation and non-accessible BNG land. All ecological features are retained and enhanced wherever feasible and relevant. All dwellings will be orientated such that they are provided with rear amenity spaces. Overall, significant levels of tree, shrub and vegetation planting are proposed.
- 3.4.7 At the northern site boundary, an area of non-accessible managed land will be provided to achieve the BNG requirements of this development. Alongside this, open space with a wildflower meadow will be provided towards the eastern site boundary and further open space including a children's play area will be provided towards the south of the site.
- 3.4.8 The scheme will provide a mix of apartments and two-storey dwellings. The provision of a variety of house sizes and apartments ensures that the development provides a varied housing mix.
- 3.4.9 For further detailed design considerations, please refer to the submitted Plans and Design and Access Statement.

Materials and Details

- 3.4.10 The development will be designed to reflect the context of the local vernacular and surrounding environment, so that it is in keeping with the design of the village and nearby properties.
- 3.4.11 These details will be confirmed at the Reserved Matters stage, but might include red and buff brick buildings, with red or multi plain tiled roofs.

3.5 PARKING, ACCESS AND SERVICING

- 3.5.1 It is anticipated that details pertaining to parking and servicing will be determined via a Reserved Matters application. Details regarding the access will be provided in full within this Outline application. The following commentary provides more information concerning the proposed access.

Access

- 3.5.2 Access to the site will be provided via a simple priority T-junction at the western site boundary onto the A264/Copthorne Common Road. Drawing PL01 (dated: 09.09.25) of the accompanying Transport Assessment shows the proposed site access arrangements. The access will include a 6m wide carriageway and 2m wide footway.
- 3.5.3 Additionally, a 3m wide ghost island right turn lane will be implemented along the A264, with 3.5m wide running lanes either side. This will facilitate safe turning into the site access.

- 3.5.4 Visibility splays of 4.5m x 160m can be achieved at the access junction, with forward visibility splays of 160m shown to the proposed pedestrian crossing.
- 3.5.5 Pedestrian access will be provided as part of the access. The internal carriageway will feature footways along its length. A formalised footway will be provided to the west of the site access along the A264, linking with the existing footway provision. Additionally, a 2m wide pedestrian refuge with tactile paving will also be implemented to the east of the site access enabling safe crossing to the existing pedestrian footway at the northern boundary of the A264. Due to the existing footway provision along the A264, it is considered that safe pedestrian/cycle access can be achieved from the site into Copthorne and the surrounding local facilities.

Parking

- 3.5.6 The layout of the site is reserved for future determination in which the provision of parking will be concerned. However, the indicative site plan demonstrates that the site will accommodate approximately 166 parking spaces including 12 visitor bays.
- 3.5.7 The scheme will provide policy compliant cycle parking and electric vehicle parking in accordance with the West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking at New Developments (September 2020).

Servicing

- 3.5.8 A swept path analysis has been undertaken for the proposed access junction and is contained within the accompanying Transport Assessment. This demonstrates that a refuse vehicle, fire tender and 7.5T box van can enter and exit the site in a safe and suitable manner.
- 3.5.9 Moreover, all dwellings within the Site will be provided with dedicated areas for the storing of refuse / recycling bins. Refuse and recycling will be collected from the indicated bin collection points located no more than 25 metres travelling distance for waste operators.

3.6 LANDSCAPING

- 3.6.1 An illustrative Landscaping Plan has been produced by Lloyd Bore (August 2025). The proposals include the following landscaping measures:
- Significant retention of trees and hedgerows where possible, particularly along the site boundaries, alongside the planting of new vegetation and trees which will establish a high-quality landscape setting. Native tree species and hedge planting will be provided along the northern site boundary to separate the development from the farm access road and mitigate impacts on views from the A264 and the nearby PROW.
 - A large area has been allocated for BNG enhancements at the northern end of the site.

- At the western site boundary, the existing bund and trees will be retained to provide a strong landscape buffer and reduce the amount of built form visible from the A264.
- An attenuation pond will provide biodiversity and amenity benefits. The associated pumping station will be appropriately screened from residents with native tree and hedge planting.
- Tree-lined streets will be integrated appropriately into the street scene to soften the built form throughout the development, and garden planting amongst the dwellings will provide defensible space and privacy for ground floor windows. Additionally, existing tree-lined ditches will be retained onsite.
- The mature oak tree in the centre of the site will be retained alongside new tree planting within the proposed open space and play area.
- The designated area of open space to the east of the site will be enhanced through the provision of a wildflower meadow which will provide a visually interesting landscape setting.

4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1 Under the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan in force unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 In this case, the adopted Development Plan of most relevance to this site comprises:
- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (2018)
 - Saved policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004)
 - Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (2022)
 - Mid Sussex Small Scale Housing Allocations DPD (2008)
 - West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) and Waste Local Plan (2014)
 - Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
- 4.1.3 In addition to these Development Plans, other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) ('NPPF'), the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan Review, and the various supplementary planning documents, guidance and technical notes adopted at the local level. The following are of relevance to this site:

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND TECHNICAL NOTES

Design Guide SPD (2020)
Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD (2019)
Development Viability SPD (2019)
Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex (2021)
Policy for the Management of Surface Water (2018)
Parking Guidance (2020) (West Sussex)
Planning Noise Advice Document (2023)

TABLE 4.1: MID SUSSEX PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 4.1.4 There are number of 'saved' policies set out in the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004). However, these policies are not relevant to the application site and so are not discussed any further. The site is not allocated in the Mid Sussex Small Scale Housing Allocations DPD, therefore there are no relevant policies, and this document is also not discussed further.

4.2 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mid Sussex District Plan (2018)

- 4.2.1 The Mid Sussex District Plan was adopted on 28th March 2018 and sets out the spatial strategy and accompanying development policies for new development in Mid Sussex within the period between 2014 and 2031. The following policies (shown in **Table 4.2**) are of relevance to this site.

POLICY	POLICY NAME
DP3	Village and Neighbourhood Centre Development
DP4	Housing
DP5	Planning to Meet Future Housing Need
DP6	Settlement Hierarchy
DP12	Protection and Enhancements 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
DP26	Character and Design
DP27	Dwelling Space Standards
DP28	Accessibility
DP29	Noise, Air and Light Pollution
DP30	Housing Mix
DP31	Affordable Housing
DP34	Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP37	Trees Woodland and Hedgerows
DP38	Biodiversity
DP39	Sustainable Design and Construction
DP41	Flood Risk and Drainage
DP42	Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment

TABLE 4.2: MID SUSSEX DISTRICT PLAN – RELEVANT POLICIES

Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (2022)

- 4.2.2 The site is not allocated within this document, however there are three policies that will be of relevance as shown in **Table 4.3**.

POLICY	POLICY NAME
Policy SA10	Housing
Policy SA38	Air Quality
Policy SA GEN	General Principles for Site Allocations

TABLE 4.3: MID SUSSEX SITE ALLOCATIONS DPD POLICIES

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.2.3 The Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan was made (adopted) in June 2021. Policies of relevance to the site within the boundary of the Mid Sussex District are as follows (**Table 4.4**):

POLICY	POLICY NAME
Policy CNP1	General Development Requirements
Policy CNP10	Copthorne Common and Woodland
Policy CNP14	Sustainable Transport
Policy CNP15	Car Parking
Policy CA2	Agricultural Belt

TABLE 4.4: COPTHORNE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICIES

4.3 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

- 4.3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. A revised NPPF was published in December 2024 and is a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 4.3.2 **Paragraph 7** asserts that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.3.3 **Paragraph 8** states that to help achieve sustainable development, it means that the planning system has three overarching objectives as follows:
- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.3.4 **Paragraph 11** states that plans and decision making should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means:

- 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 provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

4.3.5 **Paragraph 61** states that in order to support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

4.3.6 **Paragraph 63** states that within the context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing, families with children, looked after children, older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing with-care and care homes), students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

4.3.7 **Paragraph 73** states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built out relatively quickly.

4.3.8 **Paragraph 82** states that in rural areas planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

4.3.9 **Paragraph 83** adds that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

4.3.10 **Paragraph 98** continues by stating that decisions plan positively for the provision of shared spaces and community facilities within residential developments to improve the sustainability of these communities. It also discusses how the delivery

of local strategies will improve the health, social and cultural well-being of the community involved.

- 4.3.11 **Section 12** sets out policies that work towards achieving well-designed places. Planning decisions should ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of an area, are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history. They should establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live. Furthermore, they should create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

Supplementary Planning Guidance and other Documents

- 4.3.12 SPDs are prepared to further elaborate on particular policies or proposals from the adopted Local Plans to give guidance on how they will be implemented. The relevant SPDs and SPGs are outlined previously in this section and are addressed where relevant later in this report.

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 4.3.13 The Affordable Housing SPD identifies the council's requirements relating to affordable housing.
- 4.3.14 At Policy DP31, the SPD sets out the required provision of affordable housing. This comprises the following in relation to the proposals:
- A minimum of 30% on-site affordable housing;
 - A mix of tenure of affordable housing, normally approximately 75% social or affordable rented homes, with the remaining 25% for intermediate homes; and
 - Free serviced land for the affordable housing.
- 4.3.15 Moreover, it notes that all affordable housing should be integrated with market housing and meet national technical standards for housing.

Mid Sussex District Plan Review

- 4.3.16 MSDC in the process of preparing a revised District Plan which was submitted for Examination on 8th July 2024. Subject to the outcome of the Examination in Public, the revised District Plan will have increasing weight as it moves towards adoption.

5 HOUSING NEED AND SUPPLY OVERVIEW

5.1 CONTEXT

- 5.1.1 Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, as set out in adopted strategic policies. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should include the requisite buffer of 5% or 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply.

Mid Sussex District

- 5.1.2 Turning to Mid Sussex, the District's 5YHLS has recently been confirmed in the "Updated Statement of Common Ground on Housing Land Supply at 1st April 2024" agreed between Mid Sussex and Gladman Developments Ltd in the determination of the appeal relating to application reference DM/24/0446, dated 18th December 2024. The document confirms in paragraph 2.6 (emphasis added):

"Both parties agree that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5YHLS as it is required to under paragraph 78 of the Framework. Against the local housing need of 1,356 dwellings (calculated by the December 2024 revised Standard Method) and a 5% buffer (as now required by the updated Framework), the Council's deliverable supply of 4,815 dwellings equates to 3.38 years..."

- 5.1.3 Prior to this, the District's 5YHLS was considered in the determination of an appeal relating to 120 dwellings in Henfield Road, Albourne¹ at which it was concluded that Mid Sussex was able to demonstrate a 5.04 year supply of houses, with a 47 dwelling surplus. It is clear therefore that the revised method introduced for calculating housing need at the end of 2024 has had considerable implications for the District.
- 5.1.4 It is also noted that MSDC is in the process of preparing a new District Plan which is currently subject to Examination. The first Hearing session was held in October 2024 at which there were significant concerns raised by third parties regarding the unmet need in neighbouring authorities with greater planning constraints, including but not limited to Lewes District. We note in the signed Statement of Common Ground between MSDC and LDC (signed 12 August 2024, after submission of the District Plan) that LDC will not have enough suitable land available to meet its housing need; with a shortfall anticipated between 2,675 and 6,628 homes.
- 5.1.5 Whilst it is applaudable that Mid Sussex is meeting its own housing needs in the emerging District Plan, with a buffer, it is clear from the Duty to Cooperate

¹ Appeal Ref: APP/D3830/W/23/3319542

evidence, which is set out at Policy DP5 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan, that the Council is not planning positively to assist with unmet needs from elsewhere, including Lewes. The application site is well located to accommodate some of this need, providing a sustainable southern extension to Copthorne village. The application site proposes the development of residential housing units. It was highlighted within Table 2.2 of The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) that a minimum of 3,005 dwellings over the plan period should be provided in Settlement Category 2 locations such as Copthorne. The table also demonstrates that the planned supply is insufficient for Category 2 locations, demonstrating a difference of -93 between residual and supply. The proposed development would nearly cater for the insufficient supply.

- 5.1.6 The principle of development on the application site within this context is discussed in **Section 8**.

5.2 PAST DELIVERY

- 5.2.1 Paragraph 79 states that to maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply:
- a. Where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;
 - b. Where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph 78 of the framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan.
 - c. Where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.
- 5.2.2 The most recent Housing Delivery Test results were published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in December 2024. The Housing Delivery Test shows that Mid Sussex achieved 142% delivery. However, Mid Sussex cannot currently demonstrate an up-to-date 5-year housing supply, therefore the presumption of sustainable development is in effect. This has been considered further as part of the wider planning case set out in **Section 8**.

6 AFFORDABLE HOUSING STATEMENT

- 6.1.1 The proposed site will provide approximately 86 residential housing units falling within Use Class C3. In line with Policy DP31 of the Local Plan, 30% of the proposed housing units will comprise affordable housing. Based on the indicative scheme, this equates to 26 affordable housing units which will be in the form of 75% social or affordable rent and 25% intermediate homes.
- 6.1.2 An indicative housing schedule, providing the number, mix, number of bedrooms and proposed number of occupants is set out at **Table 6.1** below.

UNIT TYPE	NUMBER	AREA PER TYPE (M ²)	COMMENTS
Affordable Dwellings	26		
1B4P – Apartment	4	51.4	2 Storey Flats
2B3P – Apartment	4	68.7	2 Storey Flats
2B4P	15	73.6	
3B6P	2	117.1	
4B8P	1	141.1	

TABLE 6.1: AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEDULE

- 6.1.3 The Mid Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (October 2021) report set out that there is a “notable need for affordable housing, and it is clear that provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue in the area”. It is considered that the site will provide sufficient affordable housing provision which will contribute to this need.
- 6.1.4 It is important to note that there will be a good mix of tenures across the site, with no difference in the level of sustainability experienced by each dwelling.
- 6.1.5 The SHMA identifies the following need for affordable housing:

Social/Affordable Rent

- 1-bedroom: 30-35%
- 2-bedrooms: 40-45%
- 3-bedrooms: 15-20%
- 4-bedrooms: 5-10%

Affordable Home Ownership

- 1-bedroom: 10-15%
- 2-bedrooms: 50-55%
- 3-bedrooms: 25-30%
- 4-bedrooms: 5-10%

- 6.1.6 The site will provide a mix of 75% social or affordable rent and 25% intermediate homes in line with Policy DP31 of the Local Plan. It is considered that a good mix of units that is broadly in line with the Council’s need requirements.
- 6.1.7 At this stage, the registered partner taking over the affordable housing units has not been established. This will be concluded within a future Reserved Matters application.

- 6.1.8 The affordable housing units will be provided in perpetuity to be secured in the S106 agreement.

7 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

- 7.1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) is intended to set out the details of the public consultation and engagement that has been undertaken in respect of the application. It outlines the consultation process undertaken and includes a copy of a letter provided to local residents.
- 7.1.2 The NPPF gives great weight and support to proposals where active community engagement has taken place, with paragraph 16 promoting early and proportionate engagement between local stakeholders.

7.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Letter

- 7.2.1 A leaflet was delivered to nearby local residents detailing the online exhibition for the site. The aim of this was to ensure that all local residents and stakeholders were made aware of the online exhibition and to give them the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals.
- 7.2.2 The leaflet detailed the site location, rationale for bringing forward two separate planning applications, as well as a link and QR code for the site. This was sent out to approximately 1,272 local residents and businesses, alongside Mid Sussex ward members, Worth Parish Council and the West Sussex division member.
- 7.2.3 A copy of the leaflet has been provided at **Appendix 2**.

Online Exhibition

- 7.2.4 A community engagement website was provided for viewing and commenting between 20th October–3rd November 2025, giving sufficient time for residents to view and consider the plans and feedback. A summary of both schemes and the proposed plans were accessible online at copthorneconsultation.co.uk.
- 7.2.5 The website detailed a summary of the schemes, alongside information relating to sustainable travel initiatives for the site and the proposed configuration of the site access.
- 7.2.6 Residents were asked to leave their feedback. A total of 16 responses were received and the key comments received are summarised below:
- **Strong Preference for Older Residents' Housing**
 - All respondents stated a desire for homes and services for older residents over new family homes, citing benefits such as enabling downsizing, maintaining community ties, and providing independent living with shared amenities.

- **Infrastructure Concerns**
 - There is concern about overstretched local services, especially healthcare and schools as well as traffic congestion on the A264 and inadequate drainage and footpaths.
- **Design and Sustainability**
 - Respondents gave preference for low-rise, traditional-style buildings, retention of trees and green spaces, and sustainability features on any proposed development.

7.2.7 Further details of the results from the online consultation is provided within the accompanying Statement of Community Involvement report provided by SEC Newgate.

8 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

- 8.1.1 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it is necessary to consider whether the application proposal accords with the statutory development plan and if not, whether any material considerations indicate, that planning permission should nevertheless be granted.
- 8.1.2 In determining whether the proposal accords with the development plan, the following planning policy considerations are assessed in this Section in relation to the proposal:
- (1) Principle of Development;
 - (2) Design and Layout;
 - (3) Landscape;
 - (4) Access, Parking and Servicing;
 - (5) Flood Risk and Drainage;
 - (6) Ecology and Trees;
 - (7) Heritage and Archaeology;
 - (8) Energy and Sustainable Construction; and
 - (9) Other Environmental Matters.

8.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 8.2.1 It has been established that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is currently in effect in Mid Sussex due to an out-of-date local plan and shortfall in 5YHLS – a position confirmed by MSDC in December 2024.
- 8.2.2 Paragraph 11d of the NPPF states that planning permission must be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance² provide a strong³ reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

² The areas or assets of particular importance referred to are defined by the NPPF as being habitats sites and/or those designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

³ Changed from 'clear' from the 2023 version of the NPPF.

- 8.2.3 Policy DP6 of the District Plan sets out MSDC's spatial strategy for meeting local housing needs. In addition to support for development within defined settlement boundaries, the policy states that the growth of settlements will be supported where it meets identified local housing, employment and community needs.
- 8.2.4 Policy SA10 of the Site Allocations DPD sets out the housing need necessary to meet the identified housing target for the District within the plan period. Copthorne is a designated category 2 settlement in which a shortfall of roughly 105 dwellings was identified within the policy, based on homes already built or committed. The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment Addendum (August 2016) identified a forecast need of 754 dwellings per year at 2031. This includes the provision of affordable housing which is set at 30% provision. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the proposed development would effectively contribute to this housing need.
- 8.2.5 It is recognised that the development site does not fully align with Policy SA39 as the site is not allocated and the site is not contiguous with the settlement, the result being a conflict with the adopted spatial strategy. Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that this is only a minor conflict on the grounds that:
- The site would be contiguous⁴ with the existing built-up boundary of Copthorne, as shown in **Figure 8.1** below, if it were not for Copthorne Common Road which runs between them.
 - The development is sustainable for the reasons set out in the paragraphs below.

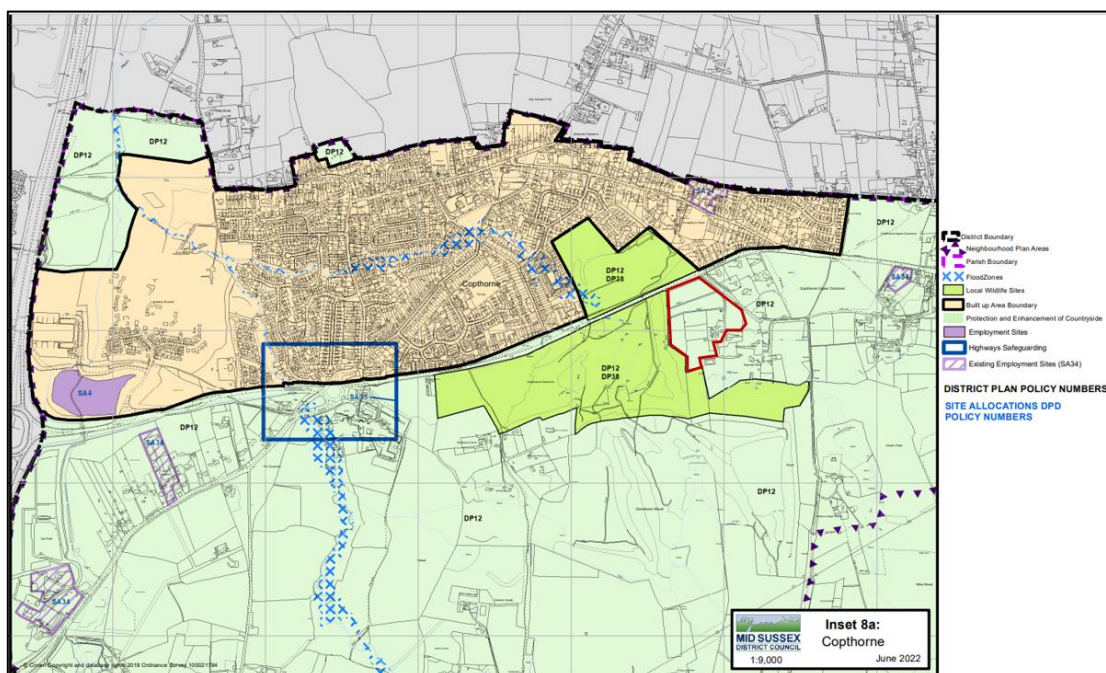


FIGURE 8.1: EXTRACT OF MSDC'S DISTRICT PLAN OVERLAYED WITH APPLICATION BOUNDARY

- 8.2.6 The Mid Sussex District Plan defines Copthorne as a Category 2 settlement – i.e. the second most suitable location for new development out of the five given

⁴ Defined by the District Plan as 'sharing a common border, touching'

categories. Category 2 settlements are defined as *"Larger villages acting as Local Service Centres providing key services in the rural area of Mid Sussex. These settlements serve the wider hinterland and benefit from a good range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and access to public transport"*.

- 8.2.7 The site benefits from its location to nearby local facilities and public transport links, as shown in the below table.

DESTINATION	TRAVEL TIME
Convenience Store	10-minute walk (Asda Express) 14-minute walk (Morrisons Daily) or 16-minute walk (Village Store)
Health	19-minute walk or 11-minute bus journey via 291/281 services (Rivermead – Copthorne Mediparmacy)
Leisure	11-minute walk (Copthorne Village Golf Club), 21-minute walk or 13-minute bus via 291,281 services (Copthorne Sports and Community Association Ltd)
Cafe	9-minute walk (Olivers Coffee and Wine)
Petrol Station	13-minute walk (Esso inc. ASDA Express, Greggs, Subway)
Public House	17-minute walk or 10-minute bus journey (Dukes Head)

TABLE 8.2: LOCAL FACILITIES

- 8.2.8 The Department for Transport's National Travel Survey states that the average trip duration by bus in England was 37 minutes in 2023. The above travel times by bus are well within this average, meaning that it would be a reasonable option for new residents to travel to local services by public transport as an alternative to the car. All of the services provided within the above table fall within a 20-minute walking distance which aligns with the broad principles of creating sustainable communities within the 20-minute neighbourhood concept encouraged in MSDC's emerging District Plan.
- 8.2.9 Indeed, the site is comparable in accessibility terms to the approved Land West of Copthorne development which is located at the western boundary of Copthorne Village – outside of the built-up area's boundary. The Officers concluded in accessibility terms that *"residents of the proposed development could realistically use walking or cycling to replace some trips that would have been made by the private car"*. The development agreed to upgrading / providing new footpaths that integrate the proposed development to the existing village.
- 8.2.10 It is considered that the location of the proposed site, it is not dissimilar to the Land West of Copthorne development. In actuality, the proposed site proves to be more accessible with existing footways and bus services available within its immediate vicinity. Additionally, whilst the site is outside of the Copthorne development boundary, it is within a more central location to enable local residents to walk to local services and amenities within Copthorne.
- 8.2.11 On balance, despite the minor conflict with Policy DP6, it is deemed outweighed by the presumption in favour of sustainable development currently in effect. In addition, as a result of the tilted balance and the undersupply of housing land in Mid Sussex, the proposed site is considered ideal to meet some of Mid Sussex' housing requirement in a sustainable location adjacent to one of the larger settlements in the district and in proximity to the regional town of Crawley.

- 8.2.12 Moreover, the proposals would align with the objectives of Policy DP5 which states that the Council will continue to work under the 'Duty-to-Cooperate' with all other neighbouring local authorities on an ongoing basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Housing Market Areas. For example, the adjacent districts of Lewes and Tandridge are highly constrained by the National Park and Green Belt, with approximately 56% of Lewes' land area located within the South Downs National Park and almost 94% of Tandridge covered by the Metropolitan Green Belt. The delivery housing in the districts of Horsham and Crawley has been significantly impacted by issues surrounding water neutrality.
- 8.2.13 The following sections will demonstrate that there would be no adverse impacts of granting planning permission which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 8.2.14 For the reasons set out above, it can be clearly demonstrated that the site will be locationally sustainable in light of its proximity to a key road connection, public transport links, and pedestrian infrastructure, despite its edge-of-settlement location.

8.3 DESIGN AND LAYOUT

- 8.3.1 As noted previously, the appearance and layout of the proposed development are Reserved Matters. However, the indicative site plan submitted with this application demonstrates how the development could be arranged on site to ensure that it is appropriate in its edge-of-settlement context and respects key existing landscape features and constraints such as the linear wildlife corridors and limited area of surface water flood risk.
- 8.3.2 Policy DP26 of the Local Plan highlights that all development must be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages whilst being sensitive to the countryside. The policy further notes that development should create a pedestrian friendly layout which positively considers sustainability considerations. This is underpinned by the NPPF, which within Section 12 emphasises that design of new development is important, with Paragraph 131 emphasising the creation of high quality, beautiful, and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. The NPPF is clear that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and it creates better places in which to live and work.
- 8.3.3 The overall vision for the scheme is to create a thriving, attractive place which sits comfortably within its context, protects the countryside and enhances Copthorne. The proposals seek to develop a sustainable community, providing a high-quality living environment in addition to an accessible and inclusive public realm.
- 8.3.4 The Design and Access Statement shows how the proposals have been arrived at through a thorough analysis of the Site and its surrounding context, including the landscape setting and architectural vernacular. The proposed layout has been led by the landscape which creates the Site's sense of place. The design has been informed by site visits and advice from appointed consultants, which has led to the development of a framework that the architect has been able to utilise in their production of the final layout.

- 8.3.5 The Parameters Plan submitted with the application defines the main development parcels within the site which are reflective of the constraints and opportunities outlined previously. This also emphasises the extent of the site that could be available for public open space, helping to soften the appearance of the development and offering recreational opportunities for existing and future residents to enjoy.
- 8.3.6 In considering the above, it is considered that the proposed development is entirely in accordance with Policy DP26 of the Local Plan and Section 12 of the NPPF. Notwithstanding this, it is noted that the submitted Design and Access Statement and plans should be referred to for more detailed considerations.

Accessibility

- 8.3.7 All dwellings will meet the M4(2) standard of the optional requirements in the Building Regulations as a minimum as set out in the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan. The objective of this being to raise accessibility standards for new homes.
- 8.3.8 An internal road network will provide access to all dwellings, including the central access road which will have a continuous footway available along its length.

Housing Mix and Density

- 8.3.9 MSDC Policy DP30 (Housing Mix) states that housing development should provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development (including affordable housing) that reflects current and future local housing needs.
- 8.3.10 Indicative Accommodation Schedules for the site are submitted to demonstrate how the mix of homes could comply with the above policies. The indicative house types include a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes comprising apartments and houses, with a mix of affordable and market units. At the outline stage this is provided for indicative reasons only and the exact mix will be decided at the Reserved Matters stage.
- 8.3.11 With regards to density, Policy SA GEN of the Site Allocations SPD states that development should have a density that is appropriate for the location. Higher or lower densities may be justified by the specific character and context of a site.
- 8.3.12 The proposed provision of apartment buildings will disproportionately raise the average density of the site. The indicative layout nevertheless shows how the apartment buildings can be sited within a heavily landscaped setting which would have the perception of a low-density development appropriate to this edge of settlement location.
- 8.3.13 The site will provide 30% affordable housing which will include a mix of tenure comprising 75% social or affordable housing and 25% intermediate homes. This is compliant with Policy DP31 of the Local Plan.

8.3.14 Amenity and Open Space

- 8.3.15 MSDC Policy DP24 states that onsite provision of new leisure and cultural facilities, including the provision of play areas and equipment will be required for all new

residential developments, where appropriate in scale and impact. The site will provide a play area of approximately 415sqm, as well as other associated public open space throughout the site.

- 8.3.16 Policy DP26 of the Local Plan sets out that development should contribute positively to public and private realms and should provide areas of public open space.
- 8.3.17 The indicative landscape strategy submitted with this application demonstrates how a landscape led approach can be taken to the development of this site, which focuses on the retention of existing important ecological features and the overall softening of the development with a significant proportion of the site available for open space. A detailed assessment of local plan Policy DP26 (Character and Design) will be included in any future Reserved Matters application. The indicative biodiversity net gain strategy is set out later in this section.

8.4 LANDSCAPE

- 8.4.1 The proposals include an indicative landscaping scheme, which has been informed by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal. Policy DP26 of the Local Plan sets out that development should create a sense of place whilst addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape. Moreover, Policy DP37 looks to incorporate existing trees, woodland and hedgerow into the design of new development and its management scheme.
- 8.4.2 The appraisal concluded that while the proposed development will extend the settlement boundary; this will be made in the context of the surrounding golf course and A264 road, giving it an urban-edge character. Given its proximity to the A264, it is more connected to the road than the surrounding rural areas beyond the golf course. Therefore, as nearby residential areas lie outside the settlement boundary, the overall impact on landscape character is considered neutral and minimal; thus the site does not significantly influence any designated Landscape Character Areas.
- 8.4.3 Further, the appraisal found in terms of visual impact, the proposed development would be visually contained and would only affect views from nearby residential areas. Short-term adverse impacts are limited and mainly due to proximity, rather than poor design. The scheme features high-quality architecture and landscaping that complements the local character. In the long term, therefore, the visual impacts are expected to be neutral, with new views seen as different rather than worse.
- 8.4.4 Moreover, the assessment found that the site would have no physical impact on any conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, ancient woodland or National Landscape due to the location of the site.
- 8.4.5 The landscape masterplan has been designed to create an attractive and safe environment, including the provision of publicly accessible open space, play area, attenuation pond and an area of non-accessible managed land. In respect of this, the indicative landscaping on site is considered to satisfy local and national planning policy and create a site that integrates well within the existing settlement of Copthorne.

Settlement Coalescence

- 8.4.6 MSDC Policy DP13 states that individual towns and villages in the District each have their own unique characteristics. Provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP12, development will be permitted if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements which harms the separate identity and amenity of settlements and would not have an unacceptably urbanising effect on the area between them.
- 8.4.7 The proposed development would be located to the south of Copthorne Common Road, which would form part of a linear pattern of development which already exists to the south of Copthorne Common Road. The proposed development would end approximately 1.5km away from Crawley Down to the south east and would be separated from it by a considerable area of woodland and the B2028. Moreover, the Copthorne Golf Course is located immediately west of the site. Therefore, there would be no perception of settlement coalescence as a result of this development. The development would be naturally enclosed by existing boundary vegetation along its borders and would be clearly read as the southern boundary of Copthorne. A significant level of screening would be provided by the woodland to the south.

8.5 ACCESS, PARKING AND SERVICING

- 8.5.1 A Transport Assessment has been undertaken by Transport Planning Associates to assess the development proposal in terms of any highways or transport impact.
- 8.5.2 WSCC Highways provided a positive pre-application response which did not raise any immediate concerns with the highways proposals. The Transport Assessment has been provided according to the pre-application correspondence.

Access

- 8.5.3 The proposed development will form the creation of a new site access off the A264/Copthorne Common Road via a new simple priority junction with a ghost island right turn lane. A new pedestrian footway connecting to the existing signal-controlled crossing on the southern boundary of the A264 will be provided, alongside a new uncontrolled crossing with pedestrian refuge island within the immediate vicinity of the site access. The access has been designed in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) CD123. Appropriate visibility splays for a 50mph road are achievable at the site access junction.
- 8.5.4 Swept path tracking has been completed, demonstrating that the proposed site access can accommodate a refuse vehicle, box van and a fire tender. Moreover, the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit completed for the site has identified no issues with the preliminary design.

Car and Cycle Parking

- 8.5.5 Policy DP21 of the Local Plan sets out that adequate car parking should be provided, taking into account accessibility of the development and opportunities for the use of public transport. It also notes that developments should incorporate facilities for electric vehicle charging where practical and viable.

- 8.5.6 Provision of vehicle and cycle parking will be confirmed as part of future Reserved Matters applications but will be provided in accordance with the most current parking standards for Mid Sussex. The illustrative masterplan indicatively demonstrates that a total of 166 car parking spaces including 12 visitor spaces will be provided onsite. Electric vehicle charging will also be provided in accordance with local parking standards. Safe and secure cycle parking will be provided in garages and dedicated cycle storage areas for the apartment units. The indicative parking provision is considered more than adequate for the development, thus satisfying local planning policy and providing dwellings with the means of sustainable travel through cycle parking facilities.
- 8.5.7 The Transport Assessment concludes that the proposed development would not result in any unacceptable highway or transport impacts, in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

Trip Generation and Distribution

- 8.5.8 The Transport Assessment assessed TRICS data and concluded that the development of 86 dwellings will result in approximately 44 two-way vehicle trips in the AM peak and 41 two-way vehicle trips in the PM peak. Overall, this would constitute approximately 363 two-way vehicle trips over a 12-hour period (07:00-19:00).
- 8.5.9 It has been concluded that this level of trip generation is not anticipated to have an adverse impact that could be considered severe in all reasonable scenarios. The site is therefore in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF.
- 8.5.10 Furthermore, a distribution exercise was undertaken to determine the level of impact likely to occur within the local network junctions. A maximum of 23 peak hour movements are expected at the Brookhill Road / Copthorne Common Road / Copthorne Way Roundabout and a maximum of 22 additional peak hour movements at the Dukes Head Roundabout.
- 8.5.11 Based on WSCC's Transport Assessment methodology, it was concluded that no further junction capacity analysis is required.

Refuse and Recycling

- 8.5.12 Access for emergency, servicing and refuse vehicles will be taken from the A264 via the proposed new access. The site will provide suitable turning facilities to aid vehicles to access and egress the site in a forward gear. This will be determined as part of a future Reserved Matters application.
- 8.5.13 Household waste will be stored in a dedicated location adjacent to the accommodation blocks and within easy access to the residents. Recycling waste will be segregated and similarly stored.

Travel Plan

- 8.5.14 A Travel Plan produced by Transport Planning Associates has been provided with this application. It sets out a range of measures and incentives to facilitate and

encourage users of the site to utilise sustainable modes of transport where possible.

8.5.15 The primary objectives of the TP are as follows:

- Raise awareness of sustainable, active and healthy modes of travel (e.g. walking and cycling) available to residents and visitors;
- Reduce congestion in the neighbouring area by discouraging car use;
- Educate residents and visitors on road safety and alternative means of travel;
- Increase the number of residents using sustainable modes of travel; and
- Regularly monitor and review the post-occupation Travel Plans targets and initiatives with a view to increasing sustainable transport mode share on a year-by-year basis.

8.5.16 It is concluded that the proposed development should not have any material adverse transport impacts and therefore the proposals are entirely in line with Section 9 of the NPPF and Policy DP31 of the Local Plan.

8.5.17 The Air Quality Assessment submitted in support of this application recommends a Travel Plan be prepared, implemented and monitored for a period of 5 years.

8.6 FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

Flood Risk

8.6.1 A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy (FRADS) has been prepared by BDR and has been submitted to demonstrate compliance with MSDC Policy DP41 and DP42.

8.6.2 According to the Environment Agency's mapping, the Site is located in Flood Zone 1 and is defined as having a low risk of flooding, in this regard fluvial flood risk at the Site is assessed as being none. Moreover, the assessment determined that the site is at a low risk of surface water flooding and a low risk of groundwater flooding.

8.6.3 Whilst the site is at an overall low risk of flooding, there are inherent uncertainties in predicting flooding from surface water and sewers. Therefore, the FRADS suggests that ground floor finished floor levels are set a minimum 150mm above existing ground levels, and the on-site drainage design will accord with national planning policy.

8.6.4 The proposed development will have no impact on flood risk off-site.

Surface Water Drainage

- 8.6.5 The underlying geology has been identified as Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand – sandstone and siltstone, interbedded – sedimentary bedrock. This geology has been identified as having poor soakage potential and it is therefore unlikely that infiltration sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) will work effectively on-site.
- 8.6.6 A variety of SUDS have been considered, and the following have been suggested as suitable for the site including sub-surface storage and a pond.

Foul Water Drainage

- 8.6.7 The foul water drainage strategy suggests that the proposed development will connect by gravity to the on-site pumping station. Flows will be pumped to the site entrance where a short length of gravity sewer will connect to the existing public foul sewer on the A264. It has been confirmed by Thames Water that there is capacity within the public foul sewerage network.
- 8.6.8 In considering the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Statement it is concluded that the proposals are completely in accordance with Local Plan Policy DP41 and the NPPF.

8.7 ECOLOGY AND TREES

- 8.7.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken to establish the ecological baseline conditions within the site and to identify any potential ecological constraints to the proposed development. Policy DP37 of the Local Plan sets out the need to protect and enhance trees, woodlands and hedgerows whilst also encouraging new planting.
- 8.7.2 The assessment found that there are no statutory designated sites of international importance within 7km of the site or national importance within 2km of the site. There is one non-statutory designated site located within 2km (the Copthorne Common Local Wildlife Sites) which was considered to be at 'county level' importance.
- 8.7.3 The assessment recorded no veteran trees or irreplaceable habitats on site and it was considered that the proposals would be unlikely to adversely affect the nearby ancient woodland.
- 8.7.4 Surveys have not been undertaken for Great Crested Newts (GCN). Due to the site's proximity to dry and unsuitable water bodies, alongside access restrictions to other nearby waterbodies, it was considered that further surveys were not required. However, precautionary mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure no GCN populations are adversely affected. It was also considered that further surveys in relation to breeding birds were not required, and instead precautionary measures with regard to disturbance will be a proportionate approach.
- 8.7.5 Further surveys have been undertaken in relation to reptiles, bats, badgers and the hazel dormouse.

- 8.7.6 The reptile surveys found that the site comprises a habitat of 'moderate' suitability for reptiles comprising of grassland with a good sward and species diversity. A total of 1 non-adult grass snake was recorded on site and no amphibians were recorded. It is estimated that there is a 'low' population of grass snake on site. The report concluded that the site is assessed as being of 'local' importance for reptiles.
- 8.7.7 Hazel Dormouse surveys found that they are present on-site with all suitable habitat considered to be occupied. These were considered to be of 'local' importance. Additionally, eight bat species were identified on site and are considered to be of 'county' importance.
- 8.7.8 Bat surveys were undertaken during the day and at night to determine the presence of bats at the site. It was concluded that appropriate measures to ensure the mitigation, compensation and enhancement related to bats are contained within the associated PEA.
- 8.7.9 The badger survey considered that badgers were of negligible importance on the site.
- 8.7.10 The accompanying PEA has set out a number of mitigation measures to ensure any adverse impacts on local wildlife populations are limited. Moreover, appropriate measures in relation to dust management and compensatory measures through BNG will be implemented.
- 8.7.11 The assessment concluded that the proposals will not result in any significant cumulative adverse effects.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 8.7.12 A Biodiversity Net Gain Feasibility Assessment was undertaken by Lloyd Bore. Based on current proposals, the landscaping design has been devised to maximise existing habitat retention on site, with associated enhancements.
- 8.7.13 Based on the results of the completed metric calculations, the proposed development will result in an overall gain of 11.18% habitat units and 23.96% hedgerow units, therefore exceeding the 10% statutory BNG requirement.

Trees

- 8.7.14 MSDC Policy DP37 states that the Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.
- 8.7.15 An Arboriculture Impact Assessment and Tree Survey has been prepared by Lloyd Bore and is submitted with this application. The report confirms that 11 individual trees and 3 tree groups were identified as Category A and 12 individual trees and 7 tree groups were identified as Category B within the site. Both category A and B items by default shall be prioritised for retention, where practicable, due to their condition, age and retention span. No trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order nor is the site within a Conservation Area.

- 8.7.16 The survey identified a total of six individual trees, four tree groups and two hedgerows as Grade C trees, the condition of which were considered to be of low quality and value.
- 8.7.17 The illustrative layout submitted with the application demonstrates that the site has taken careful consideration of the existing tree placement. As such a carefully crafted layout sensitive to existing Category A and B trees on the site has been provided.
- 8.7.18 The proposals include the removal of one Grade B tree, the partial removal of two Grade B tree groups and the partial removal of one Grade C tree group. It is also anticipated that four trees will require pruning works. Moreover, the proposed scheme will fall within the root protection area (RPA) for 11 trees. A detailed method statement will be provided as part of a future Reserved Matters application. The proposed removals and partial removals have been recommended where it is necessary and unavoidable to site development.
- 8.7.19 A tree protection plan has been provided to accompany the application.
- 8.7.20 To retain as many trees as possible, it is likely that specially engineered structures may be required for five trees where the footprint of houses and garages conflict with the RPA's.
- 8.7.21 The AIA confirms that an Arboricultural Method Statement should be produced and should take into account any specific planning conditions stipulated by the LPA.

8.8 HERITAGE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology

- 8.8.1 A desk-based Archaeological Impact Assessment has been carried out to determine the possible archaeological implications of the site.
- 8.8.2 The report concludes that the site has a low potential for any periodic remains of significance. On this basis, it is considered that further archaeological work is not required.

Heritage

- 8.8.3 The site is located close to the Grade II listed Tye Cottage. On this basis, a Heritage Statement was included within this report to assess the impact of the proposed site on the heritage asset.
- 8.8.4 Tye Cottage is located approximately 60m east of the site access and is accessed from The Drive. The asset is well screened by trees and hedgerow and is therefore not visible from the roadside. The proposed planting along the boundary of the site would further prevent any intervisibility between the site and the heritage asset.

- 8.8.5 Moreover, a review of Mid Sussex's planning portal found that the site was approved planning permission in 2019 for a detached garage at the front of the property, between Tye Cottage and the site. In providing comments on this application, the conservation officer agreed that there are no positive contributors to the setting of the listed building beyond the garden of Tye Cottage due to the screening around the property. As set out in the Heritage Statement at Section 2.4, there will be no impact caused to Tye Cottage as a result of the development proposals, but in the event the Council considers there to be less than substantial harm, the public benefits of the scheme would sufficiently outweigh this.
- 8.8.6 It is also important to note that Courthouse Farm itself has not been identified as a designated or non-designated heritage asset.
- 8.8.7 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the site accords with the NPPF and Policy DP34 of the Local Plan.

8.9 ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION

- 8.9.1 To demonstrate compliance with LPP1 Core Policy 14, MSDC Policy DP39 (Sustainable Design and Construction) a Sustainability and Energy Statement has been submitted with this application.
- 8.9.2 The proposed energy strategy is based upon the principles of the Energy Hierarchy on the basis that it is preferable to reduce carbon dioxide emissions through reduced energy consumption above decarbonisation through alternative energy sources.
- 8.9.3 It is proposed to incorporate high levels of passive and energy efficient design measures in order to reduce the development's energy consumption and associated CO2 emissions, utilising a 'fabric first' approach to reduce energy demand. Details will be provided at reserved matters stage, however options are presented to demonstrate how this could be achieved.
- 8.9.4 In accordance with MSDC Policy DP23, the development can incorporate digital infrastructure to provide telephone and internet connection for the new dwellings, for personal use and to support home working.

8.10 OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Minerals

- 8.10.1 A review of the relevant Minerals Plans has revealed that the site does not fall within any Minerals Safeguarding Area. The nearest Safeguarding Area is the Brick Clay Resource Minerals Safeguarding Area which runs to the south of the site. A review of British Geological Survey's online mapping system confirms that the site is not underlain by clay and falls outside of this Safeguarding Area.

Air Quality

- 8.10.2 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) has been prepared by Entran (October 2025) to accompany the application. This determines the potential impacts of the proposed development on local air quality during construction and operational phases.
- 8.10.3 It was concluded that the site represents a medium risk of dust impacts and low risk to human health during the construction phase. In line with IAQM guidance, the 'highly recommended' (Appendix E of the AQA) measures will be adhered to in the construction phase. Following implementation of these measures, it is considered that the impact of emissions during construction will be negligible.
- 8.10.4 The AQA concluded that future occupants are unlikely to be exposed to elevated concentrations of NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.
- 8.10.5 Following the Emissions Mitigation Assessment, the proposal seeks to provide mitigation that will exceed the damage cost figure in the form of a travel plan and travel plan monitoring.

Land Contamination

- 8.10.6 A Phase 1 Contamination Risk Assessment was carried out by Ground and Environmental Services Ltd. As the Site sits on previously developed land, the report aimed to identify environmental liabilities associated with the Site and delineate any areas of potential contamination resulting from the Site's previous use.
- 8.10.7 The report concluded that the risks to human health, plants, and buildings are considered to be low-moderate.
- 8.10.8 The report further found that there is potential for contamination in the underlying soils, particularly from metals and pesticides. This is owing to the lands previous agricultural use. However, in the absence of a more details contamination assessment, the risks to human health, plants and water resources are considered to be low-moderate.

Noise

- 8.10.9 The dominant noise source at the site is road noise. A noise assessment has been prepared in support of the development proposals which confirms that typical insulated double glazing and attenuated trickle ventilation is calculated to be sufficient across the site. It sets out that whilst specific noise mitigation is not required, glazing and ventilation to facades to the north of the site should achieve certain levels of reduction set out in the report to provide good levels of amenity, albeit windows do not need to be sealed and may remain openable.

8.11 PROPOSED SECTION 106 HEADS OF TERMS

- 8.11.1 Appendix 5 of the Mid Sussex District Council Submission Draft District Plan sets out the Council's approach to securing developer contributions towards the

provision of infrastructure and affordable housing to mitigate the impact of new development.

8.11.2 Provision standards and/or financial contributions are based on the number of dwellings and size of population that will occupy a proposed development. The Council recognises that for outline applications such as that submitted for the development proposals at Courthouse Farm, some, or even all, of these requirements may not be known as they may be amongst the reserved matters for a subsequent planning application.

8.11.3 In such circumstances, the Council requires for the relevant cost formulae for developer contributions to be included in the section 106 agreement, so that there is a clear commitment to providing appropriate contributions and they can be calculated upon the reserved matters stage once the number, type/and or size of dwellings is known (without having to amend the legal agreement).

8.11.4 It is proposed the following is secured in the section 106 agreement:

- **Affordable Housing:**
 - Provision of 30% on-site affordable housing at a 75% social or affordable rent and 25% intermediate tenure split (in line with Policy DP31 of the Local Plan)
- **Health:**
 - Formula for financial contribution towards HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE
- **Community Facilities:**
 - Formula for financial contribution towards COMMUNITY BUILDINGS
 - Formula for financial contribution towards LOCAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE
- **Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities:**
 - Formula for financial contribution towards OUTDOOR SPORT
 - On-site play equipment provision
 - Formula for financial contribution towards OTHER OUTDOOR PROVISION
 - Formula for financial contribution towards PARKS AND GARDENS
 - On-site amenity greenspace provision
 - On-site natural and semi-natural space provision
- **Emergency Services:**
 - Formula for financial contribution towards POLICE
- **Monitoring Fees for Planning Obligations**

8.12 SUSTAINABILITY AND THE TILTED BALANCE

Sustainable Development

- 8.12.1 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 8.12.2 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives) - these being economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 8.12.3 The development is assessed against these objectives below:

An Economic Objective

- The delivery of up to 86no. new homes will introduce new residents to the local area who will pay for goods and services, thereby contributing to the local economy and increasing demand that will help to secure the supply of additional facilities. Nevertheless the level of development is appropriate and proportionate in scale to the existing settlement.
- The construction phase of development will provide construction jobs on site, with associated benefits to local supply chains and other associated construction related services.
- The new dwellings will result in increased council tax income for the local authority.

A Social Objective

- The proposals include a significant number of affordable and market housing to address the current under provision in the district.
- The new residents within the development will form an expansion to the existing Copthorne settlement boundary, enhancing and expanding the local community networks.
- The proposal includes a large area of amenity space which will help to support community cohesion, establish a sense of place and aid with natural surveillance.

An Environmental Objective

- As noted previously, the Applicants' ecologist has provided input to the design team throughout the design process to ensure that the development layout reflects the measures required to avoid, mitigate or compensate for ecological impacts as well as other measures designed to provide long-term ecological enhancements. It is concluded that, in light of the embedded mitigation and

enhancement measures proposed, the proposed development can deliver net benefits for wildlife and biodiversity.

- The proposals will also provide a large area of amenity and green space which provide ample opportunity for biodiversity enhancements, resulting in a greater than 10% net gain for biodiversity.

Tilted Balance

- 8.12.4 Taking the above assessment into consideration, the below matters are considered to be the most pertinent in determining whether the adverse impacts of the development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

ADVERSE IMPACTS	COMMENTARY
Conflict with LDC's and MSDC's spatial strategy.	<p>The principle of sustainable development is engaged in Mid Sussex as the relevant housing policies in the adopted plans are out of date. It has been established in this report that the conflict with MSDC's adopted strategy is only a partial conflict on the grounds that extensions to existing settlements is supported in principle under MSDC Policy DP6, subject to those extensions being allocated, contiguous with the defined built-up area, and sustainable. It is concluded that the development only conflicts with the first part of this policy. The site is otherwise contiguous with the defined settlement of Copthorne and is demonstrated to be sustainable.</p> <p>Discussions on the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan have revealed that there are significant concerns regarding the extent to which Mid Sussex have accommodated unmet need from adjacent local authority areas. The application is well positioned to meet some of this unmet need (such as within Lewes District) due to its position being adjacent to a Category 1 settlement (East Grinstead) with a suite of shops, services, employment opportunities and education provision.</p>
Landscape impact and loss of agricultural land.	<p>This report has demonstrated that the site is located at the southern boundary of Copthorne village as a result of existing residential development to the north/east of the site. There is a clear natural boundary to the south which is occupied by deciduous woodland. As a result, there would be no perception of settlement coalescence. The proposal has been designed appropriately for the edge-of-settlement context and is heavily landscaped to reduce visual impact. The site comprises Grade 4 agricultural land meaning that it is not the highest quality agricultural land. Its loss is outweighed by the significant need for housing in this location.</p>
Less than substantial harm to the Grade II listed Tye Cottage	<p>The application site forms part of the setting of Copthorne village. An assessment has demonstrated that there is one Grade II listed building located within the vicinity of the site. Tye Cottage is located approximately 60m east of the site. The existing screening around Tye Cottage together with the proposed planting of vegetation around the perimeter of the site will ensure little to no visibility between the proposed development and Tye Cottage.</p> <p>Accordingly, the level of harm is deemed to be none but in the event the Council considers there to be a low level of 'less than</p>

ADVERSE IMPACTS	COMMENTARY
	substantial', this would be outweighed by the suite of public benefits outlined below.

TABLE 8.3: ASSESSMENT OF ADVERSE IMPACTS

8.12.5 The proposed development offers a number of public benefits that are concluded to outweigh the above adverse impacts. These are listed below:

- The provision of up to 86 residential dwellings (comprising affordable and market housing) in an area with a need for additional housing provision, specifically to cater for the unmet needs in neighbouring districts. The approval of such development would time well with the emerging District Plan and assisting with MSDC's duty to cooperate and meeting a considerable unmet need in Lewes District.
- The opportunity to provide an area of public open space which can be enjoyed by residents of the development and existing residents of the local area. There are recreational opportunities in the vicinity of the site, including a public right of way (20W) located adjacent to the site, routing via the Copthorne village golf club to Borers Arms Road.
- A significant proportion of the site will be designed to incorporate landscaping and the creation of high-quality habitats, resulting in a 11.18% net gain for habitat units and 23.96% for hedgerow units.

8.12.6 For the reasons summarised above it is clear that the adverse impacts of permitting the proposed development will not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Site Assessment

8.12.7 This site has been assessed for potential allocation in the emerging District Plan and a summary of the site's scoring in MSDC's Site Selection Report has been outlined in the table below. Alongside this, our own assessment of the site against MSDC's is provided in reflection of the technical reports submitted with the application and as outlined above.

8.12.8 This table utilises the same 'traffic light' system set out in the MSDC's Site Selection Methodology report (October 2023), summarised below.

	Very Positive		Negative
	Positive		Very Negative
	Neutral		

- 8.12.9 The application of the traffic light system differs depending on the criteria, as defined in MSDC's Methodology Report. It should be noted that the assessment methodology has been changed from the Site Selection Report in respect of accessibility. The Site Selection methodology grades accessibility based on a 20-minute walking distance, however this does not reflect the 20-minute neighbourhood concept that the emerging District Plan seeks to promote which includes the use of public transport.

CRITERIA	MSDC ASSESSMENT	OUR ASSESSMENT
Landscape	Negative Low/medium potential in landscape terms.	As noted previously in this section, the Landscape and Visual Appraisal concludes that the overall impact of the development on landscape character is considered neutral and minimal. This is due to its proximity to the A264 road, giving it an urban-edge character rather than rural character. It was further concluded that the visual impacts of the proposed development would be neutral, with new views seen as different, rather than worse.
Flood Risk	Very Positive The site lies within Flood Zone 1, the area of lowest fluvial risk.	The site lies within Flood Zone 1, the area of lowest fluvial risk. The identified surface water flood risk can be mitigated and improved as a result of the proposed drainage strategy.
Trees	Very Positive Site is within a 15m buffer from the deciduous woodland located south of the site.	The indicative proposal submitted with this application demonstrates that this buffer can easily be accommodated as part of the proposed landscape strategy.
Biodiversity	Very Positive Site is not adjacent to a SSSI/Local Wildlife Site/LNR	No comment.
Listed Buildings	Very Positive As set out in Section 6.9.	This report concludes that the development will not affect any nearby listed buildings.
Conservation Areas	Very Positive There are no conservation areas near the site.	No comment.
Archaeology	Very Positive No archaeological designations on / adjacent to the site. No impact on archaeological asset.	No comment.
Availability	Very Positive The site is available for development.	No comment.
Access	Positive Access does not exist but can be achieved within landholding adjacent to highway.	Access does not yet exist but can be achieved from the site boundary onto Copthorne Common Road.
Bus Service	Positive	Bus stops are within close proximity of the site.
Train Service	Negative	20-minute bus journey (towards Crawley)

CRITERIA	MSDC ASSESSMENT	OUR ASSESSMENT
Public Transport	Positive	Footways and bus stops are within close proximity of the site. Currently there is an informal pedestrian access along a verge. The development will provide a new 2m footway and pedestrian crossing point.
Main Service Centre	Negative	Crawley High Street is within a 24-minute bus journey.
Primary School	Very Positive	There is an infant and junior school within an approximate 15-minute walk from the site.
Health	Positive	19-minute walk or 11-minute bus journey to local pharmacy
Retail	Negative	The High Street is within a 24-minute bus journey.

TABLE 8.4: ASSESSMENT AGAINST MSDC SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

8.12.10 For the reasons set out above, the proposed development is considered to score very positively and measures appropriately for an edge of settlement site. The site was assessed within the Mid Sussex SHELAA report in which it was considered to score positively in regard to environmental constraints.

CRITERIA	MSDC ASSESSMENT	OUR ASSESSMENT
Adopted Local Plan Policies	Positive Site is outside existing planning boundaries of Copthorne but is located within the boundaries of Mid Sussex.	As noted previously, the site is contiguous with the Copthorne boundary and the principle of development in this location is deemed acceptable for the reasons set out previously in this report.
Minerals and Waste Designations	Very Positive There are no minerals or waste constraints identified in the adopted Minerals and Waste Plans.	No comment.
Flood Zone	Very Positive The site is located in Flood Risk Zone 1.	The site lies within Flood Zone 1, the area of lowest fluvial risk.
Land Contamination	Positive The site is not known to be contaminated land.	A Phase 1 Ground Study has been submitted with this application which confirms that the risk of ground contamination and ground gas is deemed to be very low.
Topography	Positive No significant topographical features identified.	The site is relatively flat, around 75m AOD, falling gently from southeast to northwest.
Environmental Constraints	Very Positive The site is not located within or adjacent to any identified environmental designations.	No comment.
Ecological Constraints	Negative Adjacent to priority deciduous woodland, requiring buffer.	The requisite buffer has been provided for in the indicative layout.

CRITERIA	MSDC ASSESSMENT	OUR ASSESSMENT
Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	Very Positive Outside any AQMA's.	No comment.
Agricultural Land Classification	Positive Grade 4.	No comment.
Distance from Ashdown Forest SAC	Very Positive Greater than 7km.	No comment.
Availability of Utilities	Very Positive Available adjacent to site.	No comment.
Bad Neighbours	Very Positive No bad neighbours identified.	No comment.
Within Setting of SDNP	Very Positive No.	No comment.
Landscape Sensitivity	Positive The site is assessed as having a low to medium sensitivity to development.	As demonstrated previously within this report, the site is characterised as an edge of settlement development, influenced by the presence of existing residential development. It differs in character from the more open rural landscape beyond the southern boundary. The existing trees and hedgerow boundaries have been retained within a heavily landscaped residential scheme, set back from the road frontage by a suitable distance. The submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment demonstrates that the development is acceptable in landscape terms.
Historic Built Environment Constraints	Positive Adjacent to Tye Cottage Grade II listed. MSDC SHELTA appraisal finds that the development will not affect any listed buildings.	No comment.
Impacts on Highway Network	Positive Highway impacts are provided within the Transport Assessment.	The submitted Transport Assessment demonstrates that the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the local highway network.
Public Transport	Positive Within walking distance of bus stops on Copthorne Common Road with services to Crawley and Caterham.	No further comment, although the nearest train station is Three Bridges (4.7km southwest) which can be accessed by the local bus service.
Active Travel	Positive Footpaths on A264, albeit informal on the southern boundary within the vicinity of the site. No dedicated cycle path.	The application proposes to create a pedestrian connection from the site access to link with existing provision.
Public Rights of Way	Very Positive None identified on-site.	No comment.

CRITERIA	MSDC ASSESSMENT	OUR ASSESSMENT
Site Access	Very Positive Access is shown from the A264 in submitted vision document.	The access is achievable and the proposals accord with relevant national and local planning policy.

TABLE 8.5: ASSESSMENT AGAINST MID SUSSEX SHELAA REPORT

9 CONCLUSIONS

9.1.1 This Planning and Affordable Housing Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of Option Two Development Ltd ("the Applicant"), in support of an outline planning application in respect of Land at Courthouse Farm, Copthorne, Mid Sussex.

9.1.2 The full description of the development is as follows:

"Outline planning application for the erection of residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including associated parking, outdoor amenity space, landscaping and drainage, with all matters reserved except for the new access proposed from Copthorne Common Road"

9.1.3 This application relates to a site located in Mid Sussex (West Sussex). In accordance with National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the policies assessed herein relate to the adopted (and where relevant, emerging) Local Development Plan for the authority area.

9.1.4 It has been concluded that the presumption in favour of sustainable development currently applies by virtue of a lack of five-year housing land supply in the Mid Sussex District. In such circumstances the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning permission must be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.

9.1.5 This Statement provides a full assessment of the proposal within this context and following conclusions can be made:

- The site lies within the defined settlement, albeit outside of the built-up area, of Copthorne and immediately adjacent to the settlement of Crawley where a range of services and facilities are available and accessible by existing footways and the local bus service. The application site aligns with Policy SA39 of the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD and broadly with MSDC Policy DP6 of the Local Plan.
- The proposed development would result in a context-appropriate extension to the built-up area and would not be perceived as an inappropriate encroachment of development into the countryside or coalescence of settlements due to the existing natural boundaries and local topography. The proposal is compatible with the immediate landscape character which is heavily influenced by existing residential development, before the landscape becomes more rural to the south.
- The proposed development contains up to 86 residential dwellings, including 26 affordable units which can be delivered quickly and efficiently to meet the need for housing in the district.
- The layout of the site will be carefully landscaped to retain as many trees and hedgerows as possible.

- The development will not have an adverse impact on any important heritage sites or sites of environmental significance.

9.1.6 The site is contiguous with the defined settlement of Copthorne and is demonstrated to be sustainable. Discussions on the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan have revealed that there are significant concerns regarding the extent to which Mid Sussex have accommodated unmet need from adjacent local authority areas. In accordance with MSDC's duty to cooperate, the application is well positioned to meet some of this unmet need being primarily within Lewes District but adjacent to a built-up settlement with a suite of shops, services, employment opportunities and education provision. Moreover, it is relevant to note that a residential development at Land West of Copthorne has been approved to provide a primary school, doctors surgery and an employment area.

9.1.7 For these reasons, the proposed development is deemed to be acceptable in the current planning context and will result in the sustainable development of a well-placed site close to well established community networks and services.

APPENDIX 1 – INDICATIVE SITE MASTERPLAN

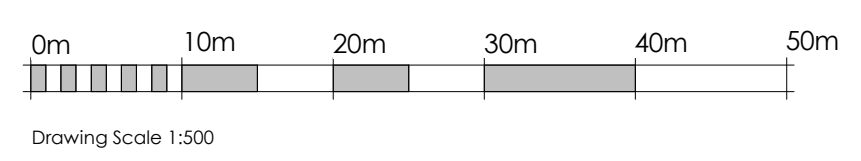


- 1B4P- Aff Apartment
 - 2B3P- Aff Apartment
 - 2B4P-Aff
 - 3B5P-Aff
 - 3B5P-Mkt
 - 3B6P-Aff
 - 3B6P-Mkt
 - 3B6P-Porch
 - 4B8P-Aff
 - 4B8P-Mkt
- Development Site
- Root protection zones
- Badger Sett protection zone

Proposed Accommodation Schedule					
Occupancy	Affordable	Area per Type	Total Unit Count	Total Area	Comments
1B4P- Aff Apartment	Affordable	51.4 m²	4	205.8 m²	2 Storey Flats
2B3P- Aff Apartment	Affordable	68.7 m²	4	274.7 m²	2 Storey Flats
2B4P-Aff	Affordable	73.6 m²	15	1104.4 m²	
3B5P-Aff	Affordable	94.2 m²	8	753.2 m²	
3B5P-Mkt	Private	94.2 m²	27	2542.1 m²	
3B6P-Aff	Affordable	117.1 m²	3	351.3 m²	
3B6P-Mkt	Private	117.1 m²	16	1873.7 m²	
3B6P-Porch	Private	124.2 m²	2	248.4 m²	
4B8P-Aff	Affordable	141.1 m²	3	423.4 m²	
4B8P-Mkt	Private	141.1 m²	4	564.3 m²	
Grand total			66	8341.5 m²	

Parking Schedule-Master	
Comments	Parking-Quat
Affordable	48
Private	106
Visitors	12
	166

M	01.08.25	Garages omitted, parkings adjusted and plots 44-46 moved to avoid RPA of trees T27 and T28	
L	25.07.25	Plots around Badger Sett omitted and re-arranged	
K	10.07.25	Adjustmentys made to observe critical tree protection area	
J	30.06.25	Amendments made to co-ordinate with tree locations	PT
I	26.06.25	Revised to relocate play area. Additional houses types added.	PT
H	19.06.25	RPA comments assessed. Pumping Stations re-positioned	PT
G	16.06.25	Pumping Station and Pond relocated	PT
F	13.06.25	Tree protection areas added	PT
E	12.06.25	Pumping Station added	PT
D	10.06.25	Works in progress	PT
C	21.05.25	Area schedule updated	PT
B	16.05.25	Revised Scheme	PT
A	30.04.25	First Issue	PT
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CHK



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CLIENT
Option Two Development Ltd

ADDRESS
Cophorne Common Rd
Cophorne, RH10 3LA

PROJECT
Court House Farm, Cophorne

DRAWING TITLE
Option D - 100% Residential

DRAWING NO.
ECF485_101

REV
M

SCALE
1:500

DATE
30.04.25

DRAWN
BB

CHECKED
PT

APPENDIX 2 – CONSULTATION LEAFLETS

Online Exhibition

Courthouse Farm - October 2025

Courthouse
Farm



07915 744753



info@copthorneconsultation.co.uk



copthorneconsultation.co.uk

Option Two Developments will shortly be bringing forward two outline planning applications at Courthouse Farm in Copthorne.

We are pleased to present our proposals via an online exhibition where you can find out more information and ask any questions you may have.

To view the online exhibition, please visit www.copthorneconsultation.co.uk or scan the QR code below.

Why are we bringing forward two applications?

Copthorne and the wider Mid Sussex District faces dual pressures: young families being priced out of the local market, and older residents living in homes that no longer suit their needs. This strategy gives Copthorne the flexibility to respond to whichever pressure is most significant when development begins.

Proposal 1: 86 new homes, offering a mix of private and affordable houses and flats to help meet the identified local demand for a range of housing types.

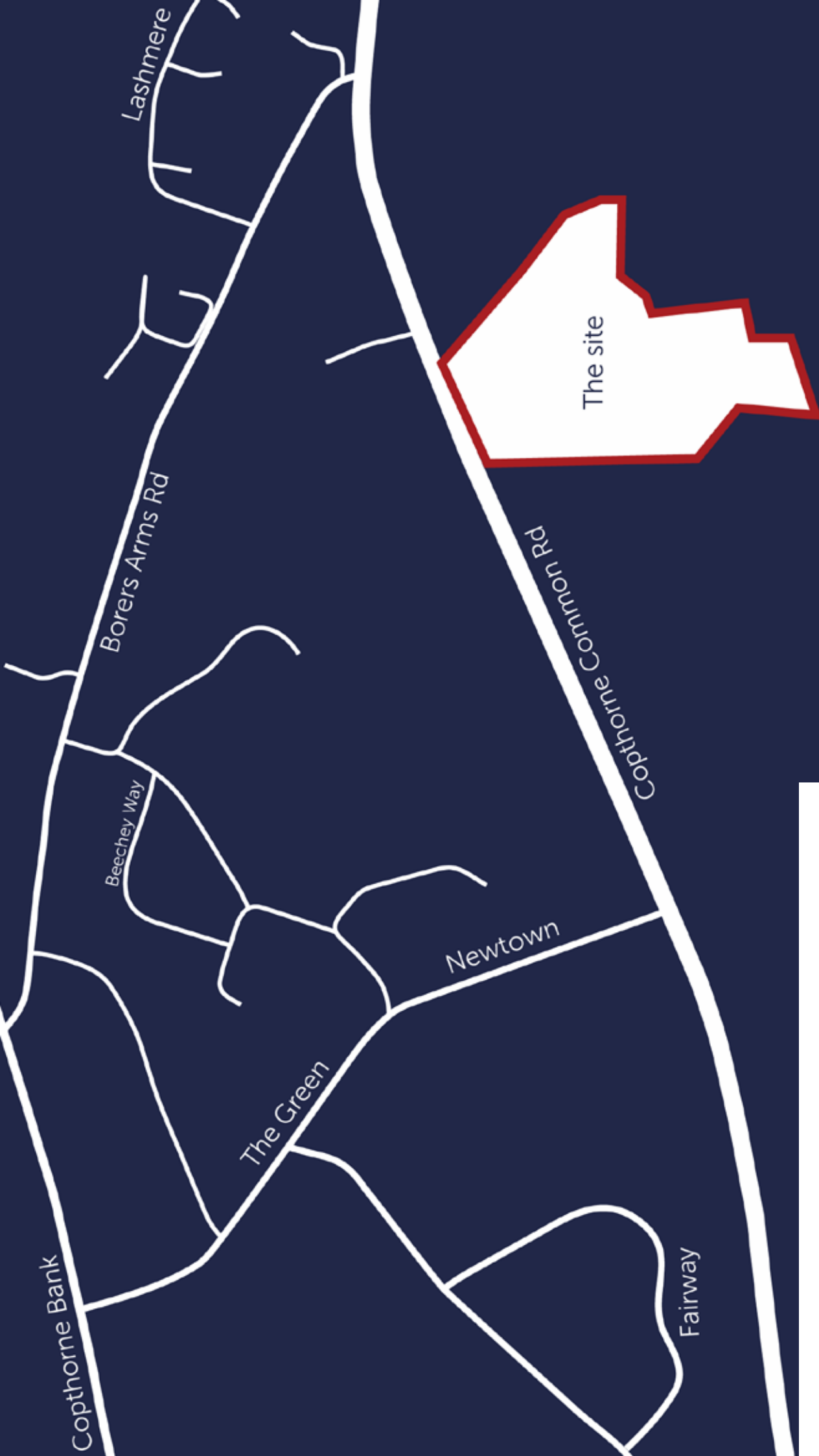
Proposal 2: A care village would provide 101 bedrooms with specialist support, helping people in later life to live independently with access to tailored care.

By bringing forward these proposals, we aim to contribute to the local community, sustain the vitality of Copthorne, and help address the district's housing and care needs as set out in local planning policy.

We invite you to visit our exhibition website to view the plans, ask questions, and provide feedback before the applications are submitted to Mid Sussex District Council.

Scan to visit
online exhibition





The site

The site at Courthouse Farm is approximately 4.3 hectares in size and is accessed directly from Copthorne Common Road. Currently, the land is used for low-quality grazing. To the immediate west and south is Copthorne Golf Club.

Copthorne Golf Club