



APPLICATIONS & APPEALS SERVICES

**LAND ADJACENT TO OLD MILL HOUSE
COWFOLD ROAD, BOLNEY, WEST SUSSEX,
RH17 5SE**

**SUPPORTING PLANNING, DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

JANUARY 2026

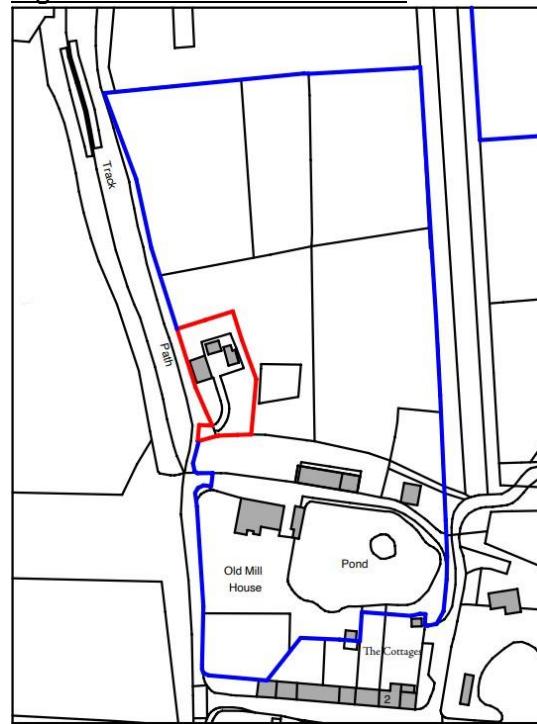


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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning permission is sought for the demolition of 3no. existing stables and the construction of a detached three-bedroom dwelling on Land Adjacent to Old Mill House, Cowfold Road, Bolney, West Sussex, RH17 5SE.

Figure 1.1 - Site Location Plan



Source: Border Oak (2025)

1.2 This Supporting Statement addresses the design and access issues as well as relevant planning policy, having regard to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015. The details of the proposals will be described and appraised having regard to the following aspects:

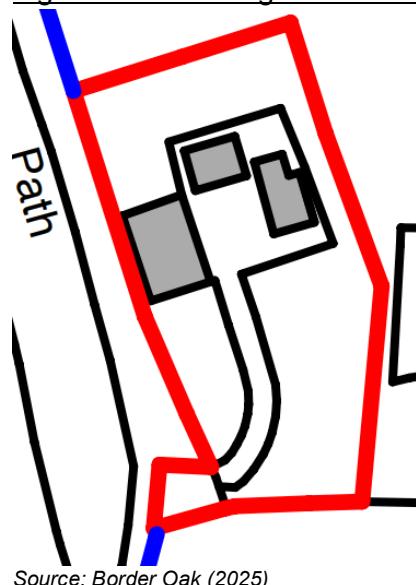
- **Physical Context** – explains the physical context of the site and its surroundings;
- **Planning Context** – the planning history of the site and broad policy requirements;
- **Use** – the purpose of the proposed dwelling;
- **Amount** – the extent of development on the site;
- **Scale** – the physical size of the development;
- **Layout** – the relationship of the proposed dwelling to neighbouring properties;
- **Appearance** – details of materials, style and impact upon the visual amenities of the area;
- **Landscape** – impact of the proposal on the existing landscape;
- **Access** – access to the development and parking provision.

1.3 The Council is requested to consider this Statement alongside the submitted plans and this demonstration that the proposed development accords with the relevant planning policies and is acceptable in all respects. It is hoped that the Council will support the proposal and grant planning permission.

2. PHYSICAL CONTEXT & PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 The application site comprises 740m² of land located north of Old Mill House, located off Cowfold Road to the west of the village of Bolney. The site is currently occupied by 3no. modest stable buildings and associated grazed grassland, an access track and hardstanding. It sits to the north-west of the main Old Mill House. It is accessed directly from an existing track leading from Cowfold Road.

Figure 2.1 - Existing Block Plan



2.2 The site sits within the wider curtilage of the Old Mill House, a Grade II listed building (ref: 1193216), the former Tithe Barn 'The Smithy' is also a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (see submitted Heritage Assessment). The southern boundary is formed by a public footpath running east to west between the Old Mill House and the site, whilst the north and east boundaries are formed by undeveloped grazing land. The western boundary is formed by an existing track that runs north to south along the edge of the site.

2.3 The site lies within the rural setting of Bolney, approximately 1 km north-west of the village centre, which contains a range of local facilities including a primary school, village shop, public house and recreation ground. The wider area surrounding the site is characterised by dispersed rural dwellings, farmsteads, and open countryside. The site is well connected to the local road network via Cowfold Road, providing access to Bolney, Cowfold and the A23.

2.4 The site is not subject to any ecological or landscape designations and lies within Flood Zone 1, meaning it is at the lowest risk of river or surface water flooding. There is one existing tree on the site which will be protected as part of

the proposal, and further tree planting to enhance the landscape character is proposed.

2.5 The following photographs provide views of the site in its existing condition, including the stable buildings to be demolished and the surrounding landscape context.



View Of Site Looking South (Old Mill House In Background)



View Of Site Looking South (Old Mill House In Background)



View Of Site Looking West (Old Mill House On Left)



View Of Site Looking North-West

Source: NJA Town Planning (2025)

Planning History

2.6 The application site lies within the administrative area of Mid Sussex District Council for planning purposes. An inspection of the planning register reveals the following relevant planning history for the site:

- **01/01762/FUL** – Erection of an open fronted two-bay cart shed with small lean-to pig sty. *Approved 02 November 2001.*
- **10/00927/FUL - 10/00928/LBC** - Conversion of workshop outbuilding into annex. *Approved 19 May 2010.*

3. PROPOSAL

3.1 The proposal is for the demolition of 3no. existing stable buildings and the construction of a detached two-storey, three-bedroom dwelling on land adjacent to Old Mill House.

3.2 The proposed dwelling is sited within the existing developed portion of the plot, broadly aligned with the former stable buildings and accessed from the established private track serving Old Mill House, with associated parking, turning space, residential curtilage and landscaping arranged to respect existing boundaries, retained vegetation and the adjacent public footpath.

3.3 The dwelling provides well proportioned family accommodation arranged over two floors. The ground floor includes a sitting room, kitchen/dining area, utility, WC, plant room and storage cupboards, along with an oak-framed porch. The first floor consists of three bedrooms, including a principal bedroom with en-suite, family bathroom and storage areas.

3.4 The proposed dwelling benefits from natural screening provided by existing trees and boundary vegetation, supplemented by new tree planting shown on the Site Plan. These landscape features, together with the careful placement of the dwelling within the plot, ensure the development remains well-contained and visually separated from Old Mill House and surrounding land.

3.5 Access to the dwelling will be taken from the existing private track serving Old Mill House, requiring no new opening onto Cowfold Road. Parking is provided within the site for at least two vehicles, including an area adjacent to the house for manoeuvring so vehicles can enter and exit the site in a forward gear. Provision is made for electric vehicle charging, and refuse/recycling storage is located discreetly to the west of the dwelling.

3.6 The proposed dwelling is of high-quality, traditional rural design, the elevations incorporate plain clay roof tiles, tile hanging at first floor, render, weatherboarding to side elevations, and an oak-framed porch. This gives the dwelling a sensitive, locally distinctive appearance. The form, proportions and material palette ensure that the dwelling

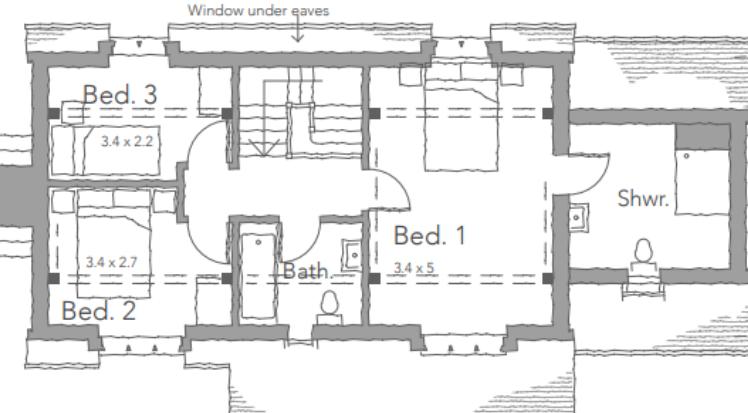
assimilates into its countryside setting while respecting the character of the existing Old Mill House. An air source heat pump is proposed on the side elevation to support low-carbon energy use.

Figure 3.1 - Proposed Layout Plan



Source: Border Oak (2025)

Figure 3.2 - Proposed Floor Plans



Source: Border Oak (2025)

Figure 3.3 - Proposed Elevations





SIDE



SIDE

Source: Border Oak (2025)

4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024)

Sustainable Development

4.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and Wales and how these should be applied. It provides a framework for the preparation of local plans for housing and other development. The NPPF should be read as a whole.

4.2 Paragraph 2 of the NPPF sets out that '***Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements***'.

4.3 Paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has the following three overarching objectives which are independent but need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:

- 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 a 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'.

4.4 Paragraph 10 states '**So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11).** For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

4.5 Paragraph 12 of the Framework states that '**The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making.** Where a

planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed'.

Plan and Decision Making

4.6 Paragraph 34 requires local plans and spatial development strategies to be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. In particular, 'Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the future'.

4.7 In terms of decision-making, the Framework states at paragraph 39 that '**Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a**

positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.

Housing Provision

4.8 Paragraph 61 states '***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. The overall aim should be to meet as much as an area's identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community'.***

4.9 Paragraph 62 states that to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice. Within this context, paragraph 64 requires the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups include (inter alia) people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

4.10 Paragraph 72 requires strategic policy-making authorities to have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. Planning policies should identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption and specific deliverable sites or broad locations for growth for the subsequent years 6-10 and where possible, years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.

4.11 Paragraph 73 sets out 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'.***

4.12 Paragraph 78 requires local planning authorities to 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.

4.13 In rural areas, paragraph 82 requires planning policies and decisions to be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities (Paragraph 83).

4.14 Paragraph 84 states that planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside, unless certain circumstances apply.

Highways and Car Parking

4.15 Paragraph 109 requires transport issues to be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular

places. This is to ensure that (inter alia) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed.

4.16 Paragraph 112 states that if setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account the accessibility of the development, its type, mix and use, the availability of land and opportunities for public transport, local car ownership levels and the need to ensure that adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

4.17 Paragraph 116 makes it clear that '***Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.***'

Effective Use of Land

4.18 Paragraph 124 requires planning policies and decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring healthy living conditions.

4.19 Paragraph 125 states that planning policies and decision should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land. Furthermore, paragraph 128 sets out that local planning authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans where this would help to meet identified needs.

4.20 Paragraph 129 states that '***Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.....'***

Design

4.21 In terms of design, Section 12 seeks to achieve well designed places sets out that the '***The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities***' (Paragraph 131).

4.22 Paragraph 135 further states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area, are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. Development should also be sympathetic to local character and history and should be designed with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

4.23 Paragraph 139 states that '***Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:***

a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes: and/or

b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings'.

Climate Change

4.24 Paragraph 161 requires the planning system to support the transit to a low carbon future and to taking into account flood risk. New development should be planned in ways which avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change (paragraph 164).

Countryside

4.25 Paragraph 187 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural local environment by: (inter alia) '***recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside....***'.

4.26 Paragraph 189 sets out that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which

have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

Biodiversity

4.27 Paragraph 192 requires the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity. Paragraph 193 states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should avoid significant harm to biodiversity which should be adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for. Development should not result in the loss of deterioration of irreplaceable habitats unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Ground Conditions and Pollution

4.28 Paragraph 196 requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for

securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner (paragraph 197).

4.29 Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment (paragraph 198).

Local Planning Policy

4.30 Planning policy for Mid Sussex is set out in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 adopted in March 2018. A District Plan Review 2021-2031 was submitted for examination in July 2024, given the advanced stage of this Plan, and as per paragraph 49 of the NPPF the draft policies in this Plan can be given some weight in the decision-making process.

4.31 The policies of relevance within the plans are set out below and discussed further in sections.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

- Policy DP6 - Settlement Hierarchy

- Policy DP12 - Protection and Enhancement of Countryside
- Policy DP15 - New Homes in the Countryside
- Policy DP21 - Transport
- Policy DP26 - Character and Design
- Policy DP27 - Dwelling Space Standards
- Policy DP37 - Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- Policy DP39 - Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy DP41 – Flood Risk and Drainage

Mid Sussex District Plan Review 2021-2031

- Policy DPH1 – Housing
- Policy DPH2 – Sustainable Development – Outside the Built-up Area
- Policy DPH6 - Self and Custom Build Housing
- Policy DPC1 - Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside
- Policy DPC3 - New Homes in the Countryside
- Policy DPT1 – Transport
- Policy DPB1 – Character and Design
- Policy DPH11 – Dwelling Space Standards
- Policy DPN4 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

- Policy DPS2 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy DPS4 – Flood Risk and Drainage

Rural Housing (Case Law)

4.32 In terms of the provision of housing within the countryside, the 'Braintree' case (Braintree DC v SSCLG [2018] Civ 610) afforded particular attention in the assessment of 'isolation' when having regard to the NPPF. The term 'isolated' was considered by the Court of Appeal (who upheld a High Court decision) confirming that the word 'isolated' should be given its ordinary meaning as being 'far away from other places, buildings and people; remote'.

4.33 In ruling on the case, Lindblom LJ held that, in the context of paragraph 55 of the NPPF 2012 version, (now paragraph 84 in the present NPPF), 'isolated' simply connotes a dwelling that is physically separate or remote from a settlement. Whilst previous hearings had considered that the term 'isolated' could have a dual meaning, in that it referred to physical and functional (i.e. from services and facilities) isolation; this argument was rejected by the Court.

4.34 The Judgement additionally drew reference to transport opportunities in rural areas where it is consistent with the Framework that sustainable transport opportunities are likely to be more limited in rural areas. This therefore further acknowledges that rural areas should not necessarily preclude new development.

4.35 The Court of Appeal's judgment in Bramshill v SSHCLG [2021] forms more recent case law addressing the interpretation of 'isolated dwellings' in the countryside. This upheld the previous interpretation of Braintree that the term 'isolated' should be given its ordinary meaning as being 'far away from other places, buildings and people; remote' and that in determining whether a particular proposal is for "isolated homes in the countryside", the decision-maker must consider whether the development would be physically isolated, in the sense of being isolated from a settlement. What is a "settlement" and whether the development would be "isolated" from a settlement are both matters of planning judgment for the decision-maker on the facts of the particular case.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The Principle of Development

5.1 NPPF paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental (NPPF paragraph 8).

5.2 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF states '***So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). For decision-taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.***

5.3 The site lies outside the built-up area boundary of Bolney and is therefore classified as countryside for policy purposes. Although outside the settlement boundary, the site is not remote. It forms part of an established cluster of built form associated with Old Mill House, with further residential properties situated along Cowfold Road and within the immediate rural setting. It is visually and physically related to existing development, benefits from an established access, and lies within walking and cycling distance of services within Bolney. The proposed dwelling would integrate comfortably into the existing pattern of development and would not appear intrusive, sporadic or harmful to the rural setting.

5.4 Under policy DP6 'Settlement Hierarchy' Bolney is identified in the settlement hierarchy as a Category 3 settlement with a primary school, village shop, public house and recreation areas supporting everyday needs. A single dwelling replacing an existing structure is a modest scale of development that aligns with this hierarchy and supports the economic and social aims of sustainable development.

5.5 Additionally, the site does not constitute an isolated location for NPPF paragraph 80 purposes as confirmed by the established interpretation in Braintree District Council v SSCLG (2017). The proposal therefore does not trigger the "exceptional quality" test and should instead be assessed against the overarching countryside protection policies.

5.6 Countryside policies DP12 'Protection and Enhancement of Countryside' and emerging policy DPC1 restrict inappropriate development in the countryside, but allow proposals that maintain or enhance the rural character of the area and is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

5.7 Policies DP15 'New Homes in the Countryside' and Emerging Policy DPC3, which concern the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for residential use, are relevant in assessing the acceptability of residential development in the countryside. Although the proposal involves the demolition and replacement of the existing stable buildings rather than its direct re-use, the overall policy objective, namely that residential development should lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting and maintain the quality of rural and landscape character, is clearly met.

5.8 The existing structures are of limited architectural or landscape value, whereas the proposed dwelling introduces a high-quality vernacular design with appropriate materials and a strengthened landscape framework. As such, the development represents a clear improvement to the site and its surroundings, fully aligning with the enhancement test contained in DPC3 and supporting compliance with wider countryside protection policies DP12, DP15 and emerging policies DPC1 and DPC3. The principle of development is therefore acceptable and represents a sustainable, policy-compliant form of rural redevelopment.

Self-Build Housing

5.9 In addition to ensuring that the supply of a sufficient amount of new homes, the NPPF at paragraph 63 requires the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community to be assessed and reflected in planning policy. This includes '**people wishing to commission or build their own homes**'. The proposal comprises a self-build dwelling.

5.10 Emerging Policy DPH1 'Housing' confirms a minimum of 19,620 net additional dwellings should be provided in Mid Sussex over the updated plan period (2021-2039). Emerging Policy DPH6 confirms the Council will support proposals for self-build/custom-build housing where in accordance with all other relevant policies in the Plan.

5.11 The Planning Portal advises that self-build projects account for 7-10% of new housing in England each year (around 12,000 homes) and it is reiterated that the Government's PPG acknowledges that self-build or custom build homes help to diversify the housing market and increase consumer choice. Self-build and custom housebuilders choose the design of their own home, and can be innovative in its design and construction. The provision of such homes is clearly supported by the Framework and which play an important role in helping to tackle the housing crisis, with projects cumulatively making an important contribution to meeting housing need and increased choice and variety in the type of new homes.

5.12 This is even more important at this present time given the historic rise in inflation which has seen higher costs of raw materials, fuel and energy. These higher costs, combined with supply chain issues mean that construction has become costlier which may impact upon the longer term provision of homes. There is as such a need to apply a more flexible approach to planning policy (in accordance with the principles of sustainable development) especially where there is a clear

under provision and high need for new homes, such as within the District.

5.13 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF states that '***Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.***'

Sustainable Development

5.14 Having regard to the three key objectives of sustainable development set out at paragraph 8 of the NPPF, the proposed development complies as follows:

a) an economic objective – the proposal will make a small contribution to the local building industry and associated trades in constructing the new dwelling. Furthermore, occupiers of the new dwelling will help to support local services and facilities. The proposal complies with the economic objective of sustainable development.

b) a social objective – the proposal provides a suitable site for the creation of a new dwelling in close proximity to

local services and facilities including schools, public transport and work opportunities. The proposal will also make a modest but important contribution to the supply of new homes within the district (contributing towards the Council's windfall target) and will provide an opportunity for a self-build home. The proposal complies with the social objective of sustainable development.

c) an environmental objective – The proposal would not result in harm to the visual amenities of the landscape. The proposed dwelling is sustainably located and of a highly sustainable design. The dwelling will be constructed to the highest insulation standards along with triple glazed windows to achieve exceptional thermal values. The proposal complies with the environmental objective of sustainable development.

Design and Appearance

5.15 The NPPF sets out that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Developments should be visually attractive and sympathetic to the local character of the surrounding area and should

optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (paragraphs 131 and 135).

- 5.16 Policies DP26 'Character and Design' and emerging policy DPB1 mirror the design quality requirements of chapter 12 of the NPPF that requires sympathetic and visually attractive development.
- 5.17 The proposed dwelling has been carefully designed to reflect the traditional rural vernacular of the Bolney area. Its height, scale and massing sit comfortably within the plot and are proportionate to the established built form at Old Mill House. The use of materials such as plain clay tiles, tile hanging, weatherboarding and an oak-framed porch draws directly from local rural architecture, ensuring that the dwelling integrates harmoniously with its surroundings and does not appear prominent or incongruous within the wider countryside setting.
- 5.18 Existing boundary vegetation will be retained, supplemented by new planting as shown on the Site Plan. This landscaping will reinforce the rural character of the site and assist in

visually assimilating the dwelling into the landscape, ensuring no harm arises to the visual amenities of the surrounding countryside or the Grade II listed building. The plot size and arrangement allow the dwelling to be accommodated comfortably, maintaining generous separation to boundaries and avoiding any perception of overdevelopment or cramping.

5.19 The overall design is of high quality and reflects a traditional yet refined rural character appropriate to this countryside location. The internal layout provides well-proportioned accommodation across three bedrooms, two bathrooms and generous living spaces, significantly exceeding the nationally described space standards set out in policy DP27 and emerging policy DPH11. The dwelling also incorporates a modern and sustainable approach through its proposed air source heat pump, efficient building fabric and appropriate orientation.

5.20 The site is accessed from the existing private track serving Old Mill House, avoiding any new incursions into the countryside. Adequate on-site parking and turning space is provided, along with discreet provision for refuse and recycling storage. These arrangements ensure no adverse

effect on the surrounding locality or the functioning of the existing access.

5.21 Overall, the proposed dwelling is of a scale, siting and design that is entirely appropriate to its rural location. It represents a substantial enhancement compared with the existing stable buildings, integrates effectively with the Old Mill House cluster, and preserves the visual amenity and rural character of the wider landscape. The proposal therefore fully accords with the design requirements of the NPPF and complies with policies DP26 and DP27, as well as emerging policies DPB1 and DPH11.

Impact Upon Residential Amenity

5.22 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning should ensure a good quality of amenity for existing and future uses. Emerging Policy DPB1 'Character and Design' requires proposals to ensure they do not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution.

5.23 The proposed dwelling has been carefully positioned within the plot to ensure that it causes no unacceptable amenity impacts for surrounding properties. The nearest dwelling is Old Mill House to the south-east. The separation distance, combined with existing boundary vegetation and the orientation of the proposed dwelling, ensures that there would be no harmful overlooking, loss of privacy, overshadowing or overbearing effects.

5.24 Beyond Old Mill House, the nearest dwellings along Cowfold Road are set at substantial distances, separated by open curtilage land, intervening vegetation and the existing track. As a result, the proposal will have no material impact on the privacy, daylight or outlook of any neighbouring properties. The arrangement of windows has been designed to avoid any direct overlooking, and the rural plot size ensures ample spacing between buildings.

5.25 The residential use of the proposed dwelling is compatible with the surrounding environment and will not result in noise, light or general disturbance beyond that ordinarily associated with a single dwelling. Adequate private garden space is

provided for future occupants, ensuring a high level of amenity for residents of the new home.

5.26 Accordingly, the proposal will not give rise to any unacceptable overbearing, overshadowing or overlooking impacts on Old Mill House or any neighbouring property. The development therefore fully accords with the amenity requirements of the NPPF and emerging policy DPB1.

Natural Environment

Ecology

5.27 Emerging Policy DPN1 'Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery' requires all development to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and nature recovery assets. Development must avoid direct or indirect harm to designated sites, protected species, priority habitats, irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and veteran trees) and areas forming part of ecological networks.

5.28 The policy also requires development to retain and enhance existing biodiversity features, improve ecological connectivity, incorporate biodiversity enhancements such as nest

boxes and native planting, and secure long-term management of ecological measures.

5.29 A Preliminary Ecology Assessment prepared by Arun Ecology has been submitted in support of this planning application. This assessment concluded the existing site is of low ecological value. No irreplaceable habitats, priority habitats or notable plant or invertebrates were identified on site. The survey found no evidence of protected species, and the site offers only negligible suitability for bats, badgers, dormice, reptiles, great crested newts, amphibians, riparian mammals, notable birds or other protected fauna. Accordingly, the development is not anticipated to result in adverse effects on designated sites, protected species or habitats.

5.30 The PEA concludes that the small scale of the proposals and the nature of the existing habitats mean no significant ecological effects are expected, and no further species-specific surveys are required. Standard precautionary measures during construction, such as sensitive vegetation clearance, avoidance of disturbance to any nesting birds should works occur in breeding season, and general care for incidental wildlife are recommended.

5.31 The report also identifies opportunities for ecological enhancement, in line with Policy DPN1 and the NPPF, including the incorporation of bat or bird boxes, native planting and habitat features that support local biodiversity. These can be secured through a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan at the detailed design stage. As this is a self-build dwelling below the threshold for mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, statutory BNG does not apply.

Climate Change

5.32 Paragraph 161 requires the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future and to take flood risk into account. New development should be planned in ways which avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change (paragraph 164).

5.33 Policy DP39 'Sustainable Design and Construction' and emerging policy DS2 state '***all development proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development and should where appropriate and feasible according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures***'.

5.34 The dwelling will be constructed to the highest insulation standards. Energy-efficient design is embedded into the design principles, an airtight structure which combined with high levels of insulation would achieve high thermal values to minimise energy use. The location of the proposed large windows ensures natural daylight is available throughout the whole dwelling.

5.35 The dwelling will incorporate mixed renewable energy technology including an air source heat pump. Additional smart control systems such as a weather compensation unit may also be incorporated into the heating specification. Details may be agreed and secured by condition to ensure compliance with the NPPF and Policy DP39.

5.36 Space for refuse and recycling bins will be provided on the site. Where possible, recycled materials will be used during construction. The proposed dwelling will be installed with water reducing appliances, the re-use of water through rainwater harvesting tanks and greywater recycling.

5.37 The site is located in Flood Zone 1, as such, the proposals follow the sequential risk-based approach to risks associated with climate change.

5.38 Overall, the proposed dwelling has been carefully and specifically designed to ensure that it is environmentally sustainable in its construction and future occupation and meets policy requirements at a national and local level.

Trees

5.39 Policy DP37 'Trees, Woodland and Hedgerow' confirms '***development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted***'.

5.40 Existing boundary trees and hedgerows are to be retained, as reflected on the submitted Site Plan, and will continue to contribute positively to the rural character of the site and its surroundings.

5.41 In addition, new tree planting is proposed as part of the landscaping scheme, which will enhance the landscape structure and further strengthen the visual amenity of the area. As such, the development will not damage or lead to the loss of any important arboricultural features and instead provides an overall improvement to the site's landscape setting and therefore the proposal meets the requirements of Policy DP37.

Drainage

5.42 Policy DP41 'Flood Risk and Drainage' sets out '**SuDS should be sensitively designed and located to promote improved biodiversity, an enhanced landscape and good quality spaces that improve public amenities in the area, where possible. The preferred hierarchy of managing surface water drainage from any development 1. Infiltration Measures, 2. Attenuation and discharge to watercourses; and if these cannot be met, and 3. Discharge to surface water only sewers'**'.

5.43 As set out in the accompanying Drainage Report prepared by CGS Civils the site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding.

5.44 Detailed infiltration testing undertaken on site has demonstrated that the ground conditions are suitable for infiltration. The drainage strategy utilises the SuDS hierarchy, with all roof and hard-surfaced runoff managed on site through a combination of permeable paving, a rain garden and an infiltration basin sized to accommodate the 1 in 100 year storm event plus 45% climate change allowance and 10% urban creep.

5.45 No discharge to sewer or watercourse is required, and foul drainage will be managed via a new cesspool, with provision for CCTV survey work to confirm the potential to connect into the existing private network if feasible.

5.46 The report therefore confirms that the development can be drained sustainably without increasing flood risk and with biodiversity benefits, accordingly, the development can meet the requirements of DP41.

Access and Parking

5.47 The NPPF sets out at paragraph 116 that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

5.48 Policy DP21 'Transport' and emerging policy DPT3 confirm '**development will be required to help remove barriers to active and sustainable travel and create a healthy environment in which people choose to walk, wheel and use sustainable transport**'.

5.49 Emerging Policy DPT4 sets out '**development must provide adequate and well-integrated car parking, taking account of the guidance in the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and the WSCC Guidance on Parking at all new residential buildings with associated parking to have access to electric vehicle charging points and will seek to ensure developments are designed to be able to accommodate the relevant requirements for residential development**.

5.50 The development will utilise the existing private access track serving Old Mill House, avoiding the need for any new access onto the public highway and ensuring there is no unacceptable impact on highway safety. The small scale of the proposal means it will not result in any material increase in traffic or cause any residual cumulative impacts on the road network.

5.51 Adequate on-site parking and turning space is provided in accordance with Policy DP21 and emerging policy DPT4, allowing vehicles to enter and exit the site in a forward gear and supporting safe operation of the access. The proposal also includes provision for electric vehicle charging, consistent with emerging policy requirements, and the site layout enables safe and convenient pedestrian movement within the plot. As such, the scheme accords fully with the transport objectives of the NPPF, policy DP21 and emerging policies DPT3 and DPT4, and raises no concerns in respect of highway safety or parking provision.

6. HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

6.1 Section 16 of the NPPF refers to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. The Framework requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting (paragraph 207). NPPF paragraph 212 sets out that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

6.2 Any harm to, or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) will require justification (paragraph 213).

6.3 In line with the NPPF, Policy DP34 'Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets' sets out Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that a thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated.

6.4 The Historic England register sets out the description for Old Mill House as:

“Restored late C16 timber-framed building with plaster infilling, refaced except on the west front, with red brick on ground floor and tile-bang above. Gable to south wing with moulded bargeboards and pendant. Horsham slab roof. Casement windows. Two storeys. Three windows.”

6.5 'The Smithy' is a former 17th-century (or earlier) timber-framed tithe barn, historically identified on the 1879 tithe map. Its principal elevation faces north-east with characteristic double-height doors and an eastern gable end. The rear elevation overlooks the pond and sits closest to Old Mill House. Owing to its age and historic fabric, it is regarded as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA).

6.6 As set out in the Heritage Assessment prepared by Chilcroft Heritage Planning the proposed dwelling replaces three modest equestrian buildings of no heritage value and is positioned on land historically occupied by farm structures associated with Old Mill House

6.7 The assessment confirms that the proposed dwelling is deliberately sited to one side of the listed building, outside its historic farmyard core and maintaining the open aspect directly north of the farmhouse. Its 1.5-storey form, low eaves and vernacular detailing, including timber weatherboarding, clay-hung tiles and gable ends, ensure that the development adopts a subservient character reflective of the traditional farmstead and does not detract from the listed building's architectural or historic significance.

6.8 The report identifies that the historic setting of Old Mill House was previously more enclosed and contained, with views north filtered by former outbuildings and tree cover, rather than the open aspect that exists today.

6.9 The replacement of the existing timber buildings with a sensitively designed dwelling in the same visual envelope, together with the retention and enhancement of boundary ensures long-range views from the listed building are preserved and its rural context is maintained. Accordingly, the scheme preserves the significance of the Grade II listed Old Mill House and aligns with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF and Policy DP34.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This Statement supports an application for the demolition of 3no. existing stable buildings and the construction of a detached three-bedroom dwelling on land adjacent to Old Mill House, Bolney. The proposal replaces the low-quality stable structures with a sensitively designed modest dwelling that responds positively to its rural surroundings.

7.2 The development accords with relevant adopted and emerging local planning policies and with the NPPF. It represents an appropriate form of countryside redevelopment which enhances the appearance of the site, preserves the setting of the Grade II listed Old Mill House, and respects the character of the wider landscape through the use of high-quality design, traditional materials and a carefully considered layout.

7.3 This Statement has demonstrated that the proposal raises no concerns regarding residential amenity, highway safety, access, parking, drainage or ecological impact, and that existing trees and boundary vegetation can be retained and enhanced as part of the scheme. The site can comfortably accommodate the dwelling without harm to the landscape character or the amenities of neighbouring properties.

7.4 When assessed as a whole, the proposal represents a sustainable form of development in accordance with the NPPF's economic, social and environmental objectives. There is no overriding conflict with national or local planning policy, and the scheme delivers clear benefits through the enhancement of the site and its contribution to local housing supply. Planning permission should therefore be granted.