

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO:

‘Proposed erection of 1 no. new detached dwelling with car parking served by the existing access, following demolition of an existing garage’

**Land adjacent to No. 3 West Common,
Haywards Heath, RH16 2AE**

December 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought on behalf of the Applicant for the erection of 1 No. new dwelling to the north east side of a semi-detached property; 3 West Common, in place of an existing garage building.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the above planning application. The statement describes the site, its surroundings and the proposal itself. The Planning Policy background is considered along with an assessment of the proposal in light of the relevant policy and all other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 It is established that the application site is available, suitable and achievable. Our client considers that there is a need for Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) to continue to grant permission for residential development to maintain housing land supply. In any case, the site comprises previously developed land, lying within the built-up area of Haywards Heath, and the principle of redevelopment should be found to be acceptable.
- 1.4 As outlined at paragraph 11, the fundamental aim of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that *“plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) 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are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*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 clear 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”.*

1.5 This application accords with an up to date development plan and should therefore be approved without delay.

1.6 This planning application should be read in conjunction with the detailed drawing package that has been prepared by the scheme’s architects and the following supporting statements:-

- Preliminary Ecological; Appraisal, prepared by Environmental Assessment Services Limited;
- Biodiversity Net Gain metric;
- Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Environmental Assessment Services Limited; and
- A Sustainability / Energy Statement.

2. SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The site that is the subject of this planning application, comprises a parcel of land to the north east side of an existing semi-detached property, No.3 West Common.
- 2.2 No. 3 West Common (also known as Brooklea) is a semi-detached house situated on West Common in Lindfield. The property benefits from a large plot with detached double garage to the side. This garage building is on the site of the current application and would need to be demolished in order to facilitate the development proposals. The site area (as defined by the red edge) is 474 sqm in size.

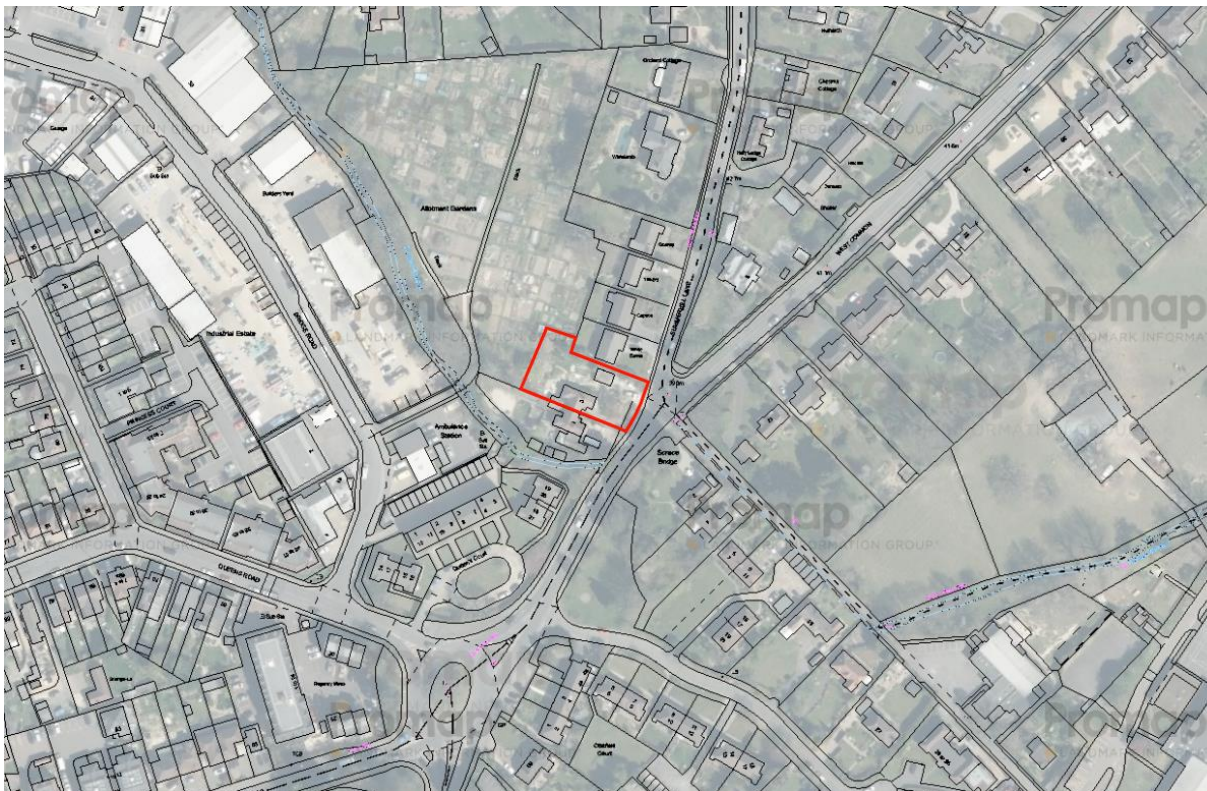


Fig 1. Aerial map showing the site and surroundings (*courtesy of Promap*)

- 2.3 The site is served by an existing access off West Common, which will be utilised as part of the development proposals.



Fig 2. View of the front of the site showing No. 3 West Common and adjacent garage building (*courtesy of Google Maps*)

- 2.4 The surrounding area is residential, characterised by a mixture of detached and semi-detached properties, as well as some flatted development. Buildings are varied in scale, form, design and their use of materials.
- 2.5 In terms of site designations, the site is located within the defined built-up area boundary for Haywards Heath where the principle of new development is generally accepted, subject to other policies in the plan. The site is also within an Area of Townscape Character. To our knowledge no other planning constraints or restrictions relate to this site.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This application proposal is for the provision of 1 no. detached house to be erected on land adjacent to 3 West Common. An existing detached garage would need to be demolished in order to facilitate the development proposal.



Fig 3. Proposed Site Plan

- 3.2 The proposed house would comprise a two story detached dwelling, with pitched roof. The property would have a total internal floor area of 147m² (ground floor 72m²; first floor 75m²).

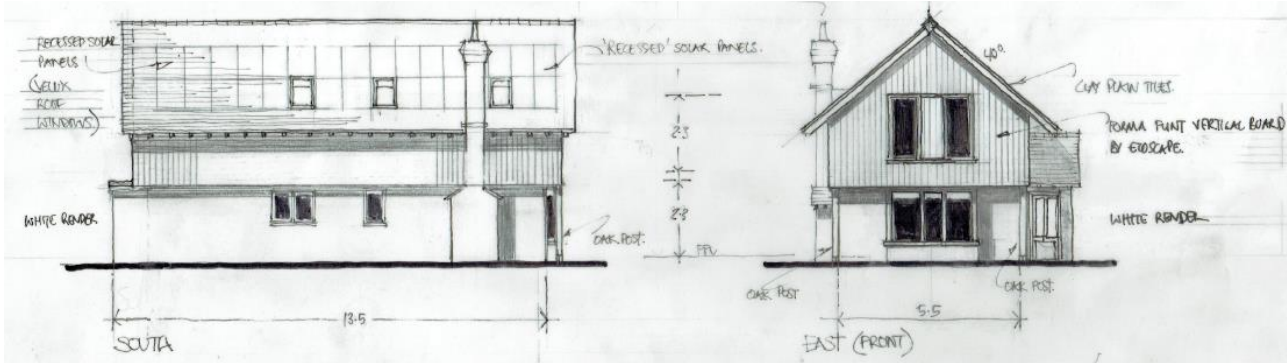


Fig 4. Proposed South (Side) and East (Front) Elevations

- 3.3 The proposal would comprise an open plan kitchen/ diner, with lounge and utility at ground floor level, with 4 No. bedrooms and a family bathroom above.
- 3.4 Materials would comprise white render at ground floor level, with FORMA 'Flint' vertical board by Echospace. Clay plain tiles to roof, with a portion of lead flat roof. All window/ frames aluminum 'Anthracite'.
- 3.5 The property would have an area of private amenity space located to the rear north west side.
- 3.6 The existing access to the site would be utilised as part of the development proposals. The development proposal would provide ample space for the turning and parking of 3 no. vehicles associated with the proposed new dwelling. 3 No. spaces would also remain for the existing property (3 West Common).

4. POLICY CONTEXT

a. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK ('THE NPPF')

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was originally published on 27th March 2012 and has been subject to a number of updates, the most recent being on 19th December 2023. The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 4.2 The NPPF confirms that planning law, as set out at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires that applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The focus of the revised NPPF continues to be achieving sustainable development. The NPPF clarifies that *"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"* (taken from Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations). However, at paragraph 8 the Framework sets out that in planning terms, and in order to achieve sustainable development there are *"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 objectives are economic, social and environmental, which *"should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area"* (paragraph 9).

- 4.4 Paragraph 11 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) 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 clear 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”.*
- 4.5 Paragraph 12 confirms 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 usually 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.”*
- 4.6 Section 4 of the Plan refers to Decision Making. At paragraph 38 of the Framework, it sets out that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should... 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.**”*
- 4.7 Section 5 relates to delivering housing. It reiterates at paragraph 60 that the Government’s objective is to significantly boost the supply of new homes. Paragraph 65 confirms that non-major development schemes should not have to provide

affordable housing (although a lower threshold is applicable in designated rural areas). Paragraph 70 identifies the important role small and medium sized sites can make to meeting the housing supply of an area. It states that local planning authorities should *“support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes...”*

- 4.8 At paragraph 75 the NPPF sets out that *“strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, as set out in adopted strategic policies”*.
- 4.9 Paragraph 76 notes that *“local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing for decision making purposes if the following criteria are met;*
- a) their adopted plan is less than five years old; and*
- b) that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time and its examination concluded”*.
- 4.10 Paragraph 77 states that *“in all other circumstances, local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide either a minimum of five years’ worth of housing, or a minimum of four years’ worth of housing if the provisions in paragraph 226 apply. The supply should be demonstrated against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against the local housing need whether the strategic policies are more than five years old. Where there has been significant under delivery of housing over*

the previous three years, the supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period)”.

- 4.11 Section 9 discusses sustainable transport, including the need to support opportunities, and give priority to walking, cycling and public transport, in addition to creating places that are safe, accessible, address the needs of people with disabilities, and are designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 4.12 At paragraph 109 the Framework confirms that *“Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making”.*
- 4.13 Paragraph 112 sets out that *“Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport”.*
- 4.14 Paragraph 114 confirms that the main considerations in transport terms when determining specific planning applications is that proposals should provide: *“a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and c) the design of street, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and d) any significant impacts from the development on the*

transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree”.

- 4.15 At paragraph 115 the Framework also confirms 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”.*
- 4.16 Section 11 is entitled ‘Making effective use of land’. Paragraph 123 confirms 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. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that **makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land**”.*
- 4.17 Paragraph 124 sets out that decision makers are required to give regard to benefits of development, including environmental gains, and should *“**give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes...** [and] promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to **meet identified needs for housing** where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively.”*
- 4.18 Paragraph 126 states that *“decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land... **applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.**”*
- 4.19 Paragraph 127 states that *“**Local planning authorities should also 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 development needs. In particular, they should support proposals***

to: a) use... employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework...”

- 4.20 Paragraph 128 discusses the need to achieve appropriate densities. Account needs to be given to the identified need for different types of housing and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it, local market conditions, sustainability, existing character and setting, and *“the importance of securing well-designed and beautiful, attractive and healthy places.”*
- 4.21 Section 12 refers to achieving good design. Paragraph 131 states *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development...”*
- 4.22 Paragraph 135 sets out that *“decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience”.

4.23 Paragraph 139 confirms 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 in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings”.

4.24 Further parts of the Framework that are of particular note include Section 14, which relates to matters of climate change, flooding and coastal change and Section 15, which refers to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

b. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

4.25 On 28th March 2018 Mid Sussex District Council adopted the Mid Sussex District Plan (MSDP). This plan replaces the saved policies contained within the Mid Sussex Local

Plan, 2004. The District Plan sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031 to deliver the social, economic and environmental needs for the District.

- 4.26 The Council's Proposals Map (refer to **Fig 5**), shows the application site within of the built-up area boundary for Haywards Heath. The site is also within an Area of Townscape Character (as depicted by light blue shading).

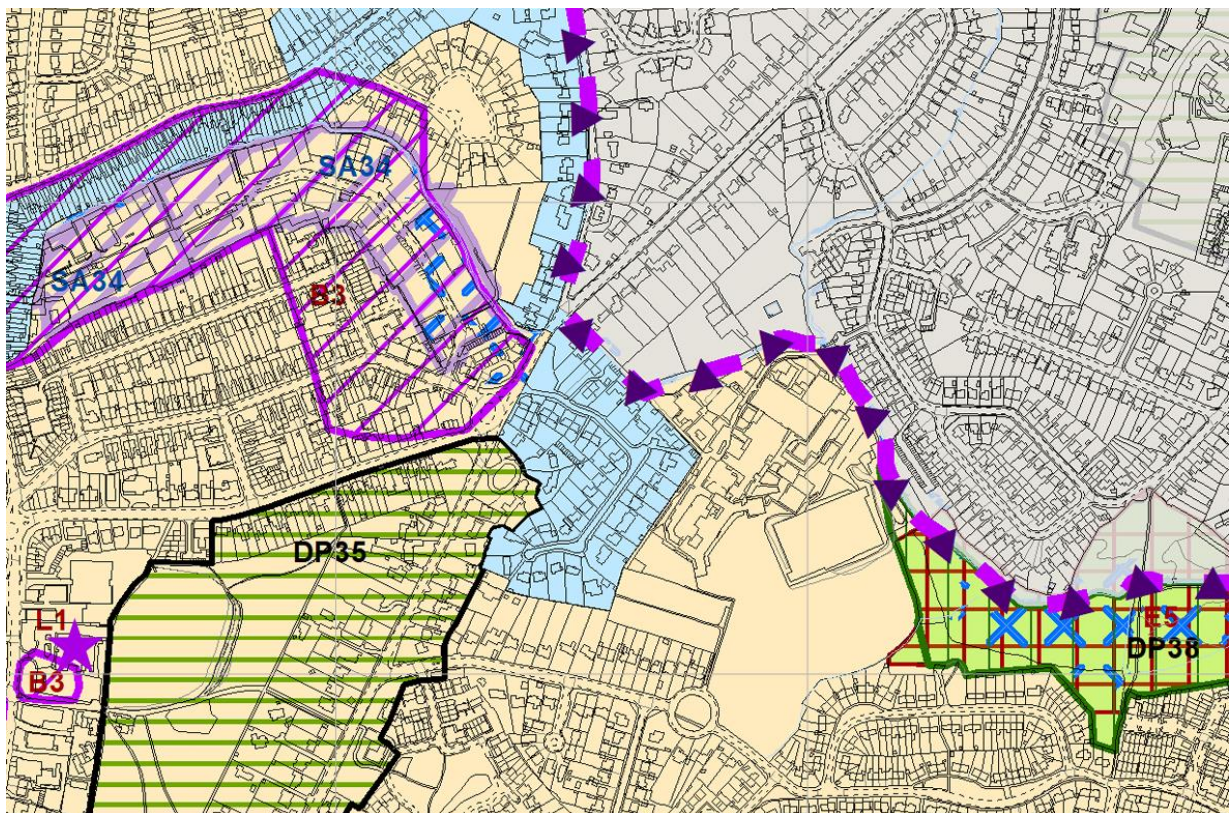


Fig 5. Extract from Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) Inset Map 13: Haywards Heath

- 4.27 **Policy DP4** is the Council's general housing policy. It states that *"the District's OAN is 14,892 dwellings over the Plan period. Provision is also made of 1,498 dwellings to ensure unmet need is addressed in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. There is a minimum District housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031...The Plan will deliver an average of 876 dwellings per annum (dpa) until 2023/24. Thereafter an average of 1,090 dpa will be delivered between*

2024/25 and 2030/31, subject to there being no further harm to the integrity of European Habitat Sites in Ashdown Forest...The Council commits to commencing preparation of a Site Allocations DPD in 2017 to be adopted in 2020. The DPD will identify further sites which have capacity of 5 or more residential units. The Council will review the District Plan, starting in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023”.

- 4.28 **Policy DP6** refers to Settlement Hierarchy. This policy states that *“Development will be permitted within towns and villages with defined built-up area boundaries. Any infilling and redevelopment will be required to demonstrate that it is of an appropriate nature and scale (with particular regard to DP26: Character and Design), and not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement...The growth of settlements will be supported where this meets identified local housing, employment and community needs.*
- 4.29 Haywards Heath is classified as being a Category 1 Settlement, which is described as being a *“settlement with a comprehensive range of employment, retail, health, education leisure services and facilities. These settlements will also benefit from good public transport provision and will act as a main service centre for the smaller settlements”.*
- 4.30 **Policy DP26** relates to Character and Design states that *“all development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:*
- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;*
 - contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;*

- *creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*
- *protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*
- *protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;*
- *does 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 (see Policy DP29);*
- *creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*
- *incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*
- *positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*
- *take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;*
- *optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development”.*

4.31 The following policies are also considered to be of relevance to this planning application:

- **Policy DP21:** Transport;
- **Policy DP27:** Dwelling Space Standards;
- **Policy DP28:** Accessibility;
- **Policy DP29:** Noise, Air and Light Pollution
- **Policy DP30:** Housing Mix;
- **Policy DP37:** Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows;
- **Policy DP38:** Biodiversity;

- **Policy DP39:** Sustainable Design and Construction;
- **Policy DP41:** Flood Risk and Drainage.

C. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 4.32 Mid Sussex District Council formally 'made' the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2014-2031) part of the Local Development Plan for the Neighbourhood Plan area of Haywards Heath as of 15th December 2016. The policies contained therein carry full weight as part of the Development Plan for planning decisions within the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (HHNP) area.
- 4.33 The most relevant HHNP policies are considered to be as follows:

Policy E7 requires new development proposals to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Policy E9 relates to matters of character and design, stating that *“developers must demonstrate how their proposal will protect and reinforce the local character within the locality of the site”*. A number of criteria are set out that identify how this can be achieved, and includes having regard to the scale and design of new development, open spaces, improving connectivity, car parking, and making efficient use of land.

Policy E10 relates to the Area of Townscape Character designation, noting that *“development proposals in an Area of Townscape Character will be required to pay particular attention to retaining the special character and to demonstrate how they support and enhance the character of the area in question”*.

Policy E13 states that proposals for new residential development should provide good quality private outdoor space which is appropriate to the development proposed.

Policies T1 and T2 relates to providing good pedestrian and cycle connections and the need for S106 obligations to be provided in relation to new cycle routes. Policy 3 relates to car parking provision.

In the housing section of the NP it sets out that *Haywards Heath Town Council (HHTC) has investigated the feasibility of meeting their objectively assessed housing need of 2204 units within the NP area. The HHNP includes the following proposed housing provision:*

Source of Supply	Units
Completions (1/4/14 to 31/3/16)	432
Committed / Pending sites (including Rookery Farm allocation and land north of Birchen Lane)	837
Greenfield Sites	540
Brownfield Sites	97
Allowance for Windfall Sites	128
Total	2034

This leaves a shortfall of 170 units against the assessed housing requirements for the NP area. The application site is not identified within the NP, but the NP does state: *“HHTC supports the principle of making the best use of Brownfield sites and expects sites to continue to come forward during the period of the Plan.”*

Finally, **Policy H8** relates to windfall housing development within the built up area boundary, and states that *“Housing development within the Haywards Heath built-up area boundary, as defined, will be permitted including infill development and change of use or redevelopment to housing where it meets the following criteria:*

- *The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing buildings and the character of the street scene.*
- *Gaps which provide views out of the Town to surrounding countryside are maintained.*
- *Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.*
- *The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible reinforced.*

· *The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded”.*

- 4.34 It is important to note that **Core Aim ‘F’** of the HHNP states that *“the Plan prioritises making best use of Brownfield Sites. This includes supporting making best use of Brownfield sites within the built up boundary line of the town and safeguarding the rural setting of the town by retaining key local gaps with nearby communities.”*
- 4.35 Neighbourhood Plan ‘**objective 6F**’ (as referenced in the supporting text to Policy E10) states: *“Development should reinforce the character and quality of the locality of the scheme”*. It is then followed by a range of design focussed requirements, which have been taken into account in the preparation of this planning application.

D. OTHER RELEVANT POLICY GUIDANCE

- 4.36 The District Council has adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) relating to infrastructure provision, including affordable housing.
- 4.37 In addition, Mid Sussex District Council formally adopted a Design Guide on 4th November 2023 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning application and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the district.

5. PLANNING HISTORY & PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

(i) Planning History

5.1 According to the Council's online planning records, 3 West Common, Lindfield (known as Brooklea) has the following planning history:-

- **Planning ref: DM/20/3352/:** Erection of new 2m high close boarded fence along road frontage. Withdrawn 10th November 2020.
- **Planning ref: DM/20/0262/:** Ground floor rear extension. Approved 25th February 2020.
- **Planning ref: DM/19/5114/:** Erection of a single storey rear extension extending beyond the rear wall of the original house by 1.5m, to a maximum height of 3m and the height of the eaves to 2.08m. Withdrawn 20th January 2020.

(ii) Pre-application advice – WSCC Highways

5.2 A pre-application enquiry to consider the *'development of a domestic residential site of 1 existing property to include 1 new 3 bed detached property'* was submitted to WSCC Highways for consideration. A written response was received, via email dated 1st May 2024.

5.3 The submission showed the existing vehicular access point being utilised, shared between the existing and proposed dwellings. The site would be accessed from West Common, a B-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30mph in this location.

5.4 The response stated that *"from inspection of WSCC mapping, there are no apparent visibility concerns with the existing point of access on to West Common. Furthermore, the addition of one dwelling would not be anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of use of the existing access point.*

The existing access point does appear too narrow for two cars to pass one another when using this access. An access point of 4.2m in width would be sufficient

to allow two cars to pass one another. However, given the access would serve only two dwellings, the chances of vehicular conflict would be low, and as such, access widening works would likely not be sought at full planning stage. Therefore, no concerns would be raised in this regard. An inspection of collision data provided to WSCC by Sussex Police from a period of the last five years reveals no recorded injury accidents attributed to road layout or the use of the existing access point, within the vicinity of the site. Therefore, there is no evidence to suggest the existing access point has been operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.

In terms of parking, two off-street car parking spaces should be provided for a three-bedroom dwelling as per WSCC Parking Standards. The parking arrangement shown in the indicative plans demonstrate this parking demand for both the existing and proposed dwellings, with on-site turning being achievable. Such arrangement would be considered acceptable for the proposed dwelling.

No details of cycle parking provision have been provided. The LHA would request that secure and covered cycle parking provision for two bicycles be demonstrated for the proposed dwelling at full planning stage, in accordance with WSCC Parking Standards”.

- 5.5 it is clear that the development proposal is compliant with WSCC Highway requirements.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 6.1 This application proposes the demolition of a detached garage, and the erection of 1 no. detached dwelling on land adjacent to No. 3 West Common. The site is previously developed, and benefits from an existing access with frontage parking.
- 6.2 As set out above, the Mid Sussex District Plan proposals map identifies that the site lies within the defined built-up area boundary, where there is a presumption in favour of new development, subject to other Development Plan Policies. The site is also within an Area of Townscape Character.
- 6.3 Government Planning Policy supports effective and efficient use of land for sites such as this but also advises that new housing is well integrated with and complements neighbouring buildings and its local area in terms of scale, density, layout and access.
- 6.4 It is clear that the principle of new development in this location is acceptable and fully compliant with government guidance and local level policies.

Design & Character of the Area

- 6.5 The site is within the defined built-up area boundary for Haywards Heath. The surrounding area is characterised by residential development.
- 6.6 The site is also located within an Area of Townscape Character, where **Policy E10** of the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan requires development proposals to *“support and enhance the character of the area in question”*. The supporting text to the policy specifies that proposals should *“retain trees, frontage hedgerows and walls which contribute to the character and appearance of the area; retain areas of open space, (including private gardens) which are open to public view and contribute*

to the character and appearance of the area; and avoid the demolition of existing buildings which contribute to the character and appearance of the area". In this respect we can confirm that no trees are to be removed, the garden is not open to public view (it lies behind the fairly dilapidated existing garage), and in any case it is not an open space that positively contributes positively to the character of the area. The Neighbourhood Plan says that it does not wish to "impose a particular architectural style... [and] Good quality design is not just about what buildings look like, but it is also how buildings relate to the street, how new development is designed to relate to nearby buildings, the sustainability of the scheme and fostering good neighbour relations and access to public open spaces". With this in mind the Applicant has carefully designed an attractive, appropriately proportioned new building that will successfully infill the space between existing properties. Taking its cues from local buildings, whilst respecting the streetscene – we consider the proposal will be a positive, yet discrete, addition to West Common.

- 6.7 The site is sustainably located, positioned within a relatively central location, within easy reach of a host of services and facilities in the main Haywards Heath town centre. The site is also well connected in terms of public transport, Haywards Heath Train Station is located approximately 810 yards south west of the site and there are a number of regular bus services within the immediate vicinity (28 stops within 1 km of the site).
- 6.8 **Policy DP26** in the MSDP seeks for new development to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of its surroundings.
- 6.9 In addition, the NPPF is supportive of good design and making efficient use of land. Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that *"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 123 of the NPPF states in part *"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."* Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states *"Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land"*.

- 6.10 This proposal seeks permission to erect a sensitively designed two storey detached four bedroom dwelling. The building would replace existing built form, albeit of a smaller scale. A high quality design solution is proposed. The detached house would be located adjacent to the existing property and would be of a high quality design, with a modest scale and form and a sensitively designed pitched roof. Great care and consideration has been paid to materials and our client would be happy for this to be conditioned accordingly.
- 6.11 It is our opinion that the clearance of the site and its redevelopment to provide an additional detached dwelling would result in an efficient use of the available land resource without leading to an overdevelopment or over-intensive use of the site.
- 6.12 As will be evident from a site visit, the surrounding area is residential, being predominantly characterised by two storey detached and semi-detached properties, as well as some flatted development. It is clear that residential development in this location is established.
- 6.13 It is our opinion that the site is a sufficient size to comfortably accommodate the level of development indicated, and the resultant density would be entirely appropriate given the sites relationship with adjacent existing housing. The plot division would create a residential curtilage, which would be commensurate with the size of the existing plot to the south west (No. 3 West Common).

- 6.14 The proposal presented within this application submission would provide an efficient use of the available land resource in a sympathetic form via an appropriate density layout that would not jar with the established pattern of development in the area, and nor would it introduce an obtrusive or visually harmful form of development that would affect the character of the immediate area. The dwelling has been designed to sympathetically relate to neighbouring development and would result in a development, which would result in a visual improvement and enhance both the character and appearance of the surrounding area, thus protecting the special character of the Area of Townscape Character. The proposal is considered to accord with **policy DP26** of the District Plan and policies **E9, E10** and **H9** of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.15 It is considered that the proposed development would represent a high quality development in this location, which would appear perfectly in keeping with existing housing in this locality, and it would not detract from the character of the surrounding locality. For these reasons outlined above, it is our view that the proposal is fully compliant with **Policy DP26** of the MSDP, and the relevant sections of the Haywards Heath NP, and the more general advice contained in the Government's NPPF.

Residential Amenity

- 6.16 **Policy DP26** of the MSDP requires that proposals for new development will not cause significant harm to the amenities of nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings. Matters to consider include the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and noise, air and light pollution.
- 6.17 In terms of residential amenity, we can confirm that the proposed development has been adequately laid out so as to ensure that the relationships with neighbouring dwellings will be acceptable. The surrounding area is residential in character, with residential gardens to the south and north sides and open land to the rear.

- 6.18 Window orientation and placement has been given due consideration. No first floor windows are proposed to either side elevation, in order to prevent any undue overlooking towards neighbouring properties and our client would be happy for this to be ensured via condition. It is considered that the relationship between the proposal and all other neighbouring dwellings would be wholly acceptable, given the scale and height of the dwelling, window placement, orientation and distance between the proposal and neighbouring properties.
- 6.19 The new house will have an appropriately sized area of private amenity space to the rear north west side, which will be commensurate with the size and shape of the adjoining No. 3. The plot would reflect the size of neighbouring amenity areas and the spatial pattern of development in this area generally.
- 6.20 Taking into consideration all of the above, it is our view that the proposed development would not have a detrimental effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of any neighbouring dwelling by way of noise impact, overbearing effect, loss of privacy or loss of light and would be fully compliant with **policy DP26** of the MSDP.

Space Standards

- 6.21 The proposal has been designed to be fully compliant with the National Space Standards, with respect to the internal floorspace of the proposed new houses and flats.
- 6.22 The Government's Technical Housing Standards - national described space standards sets out minimum gross internal floor areas and storage. The proposed development would comprise 1 No. new four bedroom, 7 person occupancy dwelling, which at 147sq m would exceed the required standards for a property of this type (115 sq. m). The proposal would be compliant with the Government's guidance, and **Policy D27** of the MSDP.

Access & Parking Arrangements

6.23 The existing vehicular access point would be utilised, shared between the existing and proposed dwellings. The site is accessed from West Common, a B-classified road subject to a speed restriction of 30 mph in this location.

6.24 Prior to this application being submitted, pre-application advice was sought from WSCC Highways. At this time, they stated that *‘The addition of one dwelling would not be anticipated to give rise to a significant material intensification of use of the existing access point.’*

An access point of 4.2m in width would be sufficient to allow two cars to pass one another. However, given the access would serve only two dwellings, the chances of vehicular conflict would be low, and as such, access widening works would likely not be sought at full planning stage.

There is no evidence to suggest the existing access point has been operating unsafely, or that the proposals would exacerbate an existing safety concern.’

6.25 Further, although it is accepted that the proposal would result in the loss of garaging to serve the adjoining development; the proposal would have sufficient space for the onsite turning and parking of 3 No. vehicles. Further, the adjoining property would also have space for off road parking of 3 no. vehicles.

6.26 It is considered that the proposal will not give rise to highway safety or car parking concerns, and the proposal would accord with the NPPF, **Policies DP21 and DP28** of the MSDP, the intentions set out in the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan, and WSCC’s document “Guidance for Parking at New Developments, August 2019” - in that satisfactory access and on-site car parking will be provided as part of the development proposals.

Ecology and BNG

6.27 The application is accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, which has been prepared by Environmental Assessment Services.

6.28 The statement draws the following conclusions:-

- *“The site comprises a well (regularly) maintained urban garden with lawn, ornamental planting, hedging and several trees. The site is considered to be of generally low ecological value.*
- *The proposed development, comprising the removal of an existing double garage and development of a second detached residential dwelling within the site, is deemed unlikely to have a significant impact on local ecology.*
- *The proposed development is not considered likely to have a significant impact on European (SPA and SAC) or Ramsar sites, or wildlife associated with these sites.*
- *Mitigation recommendations in this case have been limited to precautionary protected measures for amphibians, reptiles, bats and birds. Recommendations for the ecological enhancement of the site have been given in section 5 above. Where enhancement measures are incorporated into the development of the site, there may be an overall net gain in ecological value of the site.*
- *It should be noted that planning permission for development does not provide a defence against prosecution relating to protected species. Should any protected species be identified before or during development, all works should cease, and a suitably qualified / experienced ecologist should be contacted for advice”.*

6.30 The application is also accompanied by a BNG metric, which demonstrates that the BNG targets are met as a result of the development.

6.31 It is clear that the proposal would be acceptable from an Ecology perspective. Our client is committed to carrying out the suggested mitigation measures and would be happy for this to be ensured via condition. The proposal would be compliant with government guidance contained within the NPPF and **Policy DP38** of the District Plan.

Flood Risk

6.32 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment, which has been prepared by Environmental Assessment Services.

6.33 The Assessment draws the following conclusions:-

- “- The site lies within Flood Zone 1, at low risk of flooding from fluvial sources. The site is at very low risk of flooding from surface water. The site drains southeastwards towards the Scrase Stream.*
- As the location lies within Flood Zone 1 in an area developed for housing, it is assumed that the Sequential Test has been satisfied. As the site lies within Flood Zone 1 there will be no requirement to apply the Exception Test.*
- The surface water flood maps show some flood risk in the middle of the adjacent highways. Residents at the new house would be able to leave site and walk northwest to other areas of Flood Zone 1 on the Summerhill Lane pavement. Surface water flood depths on the highway will be too shallow to inhibit the travel of motor vehicles.*
- The 0.1% AEP design flood level appears to be +38.65 m OD. The site lies between 1.0 and 1.2 m above this level. Finished ground floor level should be at least 300 mm above adjacent ground level.*
- There should be no significant flood related risk to the proposed building or its occupants.*
- Subject to the adoption of sustainable (SuDS) drainage, there should be no increase in flood risk elsewhere as a result of the proposed redevelopment. There*

are some opportunities to incorporate more SuDS measures into the design. Foul sewage may be drained to the existing public foul sewer in the adjacent highway.

- *It is recommended that:*

i. Percolation testing should be carried out to determine whether surface water drainage to soakaway would be practicable.

ii. Design flood level should be reviewed once the Product 4 is received”.

- 6.34 it is clear that the proposal would be acceptable from a Flood Risk perspective and compliant with guidance contained within the NPPF and **Policy DP41** of the District Plan.

7. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

- 7.1 As outlined above, the focus of the new NPPF is for development to be sustainable. It sets out there are three principle 'objectives' to achieving sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In this part of the Planning Statement the main factors that inform the judgement as to whether the proposal would be a sustainable form of development are summarised. In reaching that view all matters referred to in the above report have been taken into account.

The Economic Objective

- 7.2 The proposed development would result in the creation of construction jobs during the build period. The additional population could help generate more local spending in the local community, provision of infrastructure and services, and generate New Homes Bonus funding as well as additional Council Tax receipts. These are all material considerations that weigh in favour of the development. It is considered that the proposal would satisfy the economic role of sustainable development.

Social Objective

- 7.3 The provision of 1 No. new family dwelling will make a small, albeit notable contribution to the District's housing supply. The NPPF seeks to promote "*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*". Due to the location of the site within the built-up area of Haywards Heath where there are a large number of services, it is considered that the location of the site is sustainable. Overall it is considered that the proposal would be satisfactory from a social perspective.

Environmental Objective

- 7.4 There is an overriding need to ensure that development should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. The proposed

development in terms of layout, scale and appearance is considered to be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and hence would not result in an adverse impact to the character of the surrounding built environment. There are no biodiversity or landscape constraints that relate to this site. The proposal would not result in any highway safety problems.

- 7.5 Further NPPF paragraph 124 also confirms that Authorities should give regard to the benefits of development, including environmental gains. In this case, such benefits are evident in terms of meeting 10% biodiversity net gain. As such, the environmental role of sustainable development would be satisfied by this proposal.

8. CONCLUSIONS

8.1 In conclusion, the proposed development is considered acceptable for the following reasons:

- The proposed development of the site would appear as a natural infill, and would provide an opportunity to increase the housing stock within this location, whilst enhancing the character and appearance of the locality.
- The land is used for garaging and as such, it is our view that the clearance of the site and redevelopment to form 1 No. four bedroom family home would result in a clear visual improvement and enhance both the character and appearance of the surrounding area, thus protecting the special character of the Area of Townscape Character.
- The surrounding area is residential in character.
- The proposed development would not appear as an overdevelopment or out of character, and it is evident that our proposal will similarly sit comfortably within the site.
- The site is located within the defined planning boundary, within a highly sustainable area. The existing spatial pattern of development will be respected, via a well-considered planning proposal for 1 No. new property.
- It is not considered that the proposed development would demonstrably harm the amenities of any neighbouring property by way of overbearing effect, loss of light, privacy or overlooking effect, due to the proposal replacing existing built form, as well as distance, and property orientation. Further, the proposal meets the Council's requirements in respect of Space Standards.
- The proposal meets all the necessary policy requirements, and will cause no significant harm to the character of the surrounding area. In our opinion the overwhelming weight of evidence supports the proposal as it is shown to comply with all relevant Development Plan policies.

- The proposed redevelopment optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development as required by Section 11 of the NPPF. It is strongly considered that the proposed development constitutes a sustainable form of development that accords with the Development Plan for the area and should therefore be approved without delay.

8.2 As the proposal accords with the aims and objectives of national, regional and local guidance, the application site is a suitable for the proposed development and permission should therefore be granted.

December 2024