
Planning Statement

Full Planning Application Land Parcels adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne

September 2026

On behalf of Miller Homes

Planning Statement

Land Parcels adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Savills in support of a full planning application made on behalf of Miller Homes (the applicant) for the development of 69 new homes across two land parcels at Heathy Woods, Copthorne.
- 1.2 The Applicant, Miller Homes, is an established housing developer who is committed to creating new homes and communities for families to grow and thrive. They develop housing which is designed and constructed to the highest professional standards, alongside prioritising energy efficiency across the developments. Miller Homes is invested in developing sustainable communities and seeking opportunities to embed their new developments within the existing communities.
- 1.3 The two parcels of land proposed for new homes sit within the existing Heathy Wood residential scheme, herein referred to as the Northern Parcel and Southern Parcels. The wider Heathy Woods development benefits from outline planning permission which was granted in May 2016, under Application Ref. 13/04127/OUTES. Various Reserved Matters applications have been approved to bring forward the detailed design of the Heathy Wood scheme at Copthorne.
- 1.4 The two parcels were previously considered for a primary school and doctors surgery. However, through in-depth consultation with relevant stakeholders, it has become apparent that there is no longer an identified need to bring forward the primary school or doctors surgery at the site. The Education Authority has confirmed in dialogue with the Applicant that there is no demand for a primary school on site and a number of payments have been made in this regard. Furthermore, Pound Hill Surgery confirmed to SMH that it would be unviable for them to take on a new GP surgery, therefore again off site financial contributions to the Council were made, with the final payment made in December 2024.
- 1.5 Accordingly, there are two sustainably located parcels of land at Heathy Wood that are vacant and unused. It is proposed to deliver much needed new homes on these parcels to complement and integrate within the existing homes and wider Copthorne community.
- 1.6 The proposals have been subject to a positive pre-application meeting with Mid-Sussex District Council (DM/24/2241). Pre-application feedback was provided by Officers and the submitted scheme sought to incorporate comments received. Further details are provided in Section 2.
- 1.7 This Statement assesses the planning considerations associated with the proposals at the site in the context of national, regional and local planning policy and pre-application guidance.

Description of Development

- 1.8 The description of development to seek full planning permission is as follows:

Description of Development: *“Full planning application at two parcels of land adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne, each accessed from existing bell-mouth junctions at Worsell Drive and Langridge Way, for the erection of new homes (Use Class C3) including affordable homes; internal access roads, landscaping and associated infrastructure.*

Overview of Development

- 1.9 The proposed scheme comprises the delivery of 69 new homes, which will include 30% affordable homes, meeting the affordable housing policy requirement. The scheme will make the most efficient use of the land available which is set within the existing residential built form of Heathy Woods.
- 1.10 The proposed housing mix will comprise of a 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes. All the homes have been designed to meet the nationally described space standards with all dwellings provided with adequate private amenity space.
- 1.11 The scheme is sensitively designed to assimilate within its surroundings, whilst ensuring that the development holds its own character.

Accompanying Reports

- 1.12 This statement summaries the application proposals and provides an assessment of the development in the context of relevant national and local policy guidance and other material considerations. The statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans and drawings submitted as part of the application, as well as the following specialist reports:
- **Air Quality Assessment**, prepared by Stantec;
 - **Arboricultural Impact Assessment**, prepared by SLR;
 - **Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**, prepared by SLR;
 - **Architectural Drawing Package**, prepared by Roberts Limbrick;
 - **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Metric**, prepared by SLR;
 - **Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Covering Letter**, prepared by SLR;
 - **Design and Access Statement**, prepared by Roberts Limbrick;

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- **Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Statement**, prepared by Stantec;
- **Ecological Impact Assessment**, prepared by SLR;
- **Geo-Environmental Summary Note**, prepared by Stantec;
- **Landscaping Plans and Specifications**, prepared by SLR;
- **Lighting Assessment**, prepared by Stantec;
- **Noise Impact Assessment**, prepared by Stantec;
- **Side Wide Full Travel Plan**, prepared by Stantec;
- **Statement of Community Involvement**, prepared by Savills;
- **Transport Statement**, prepared by Stantec;
- **Utilities Statement**, prepared by UKPS;
- **Energy Statement**, prepared by Savills; and
- **Sustainability Statement**, prepared by Savills.

Structure of the Statement

1.13 The structure of this Planning Statement is as follows:

- **Section 2** (Background) sets out a description of the parcels of land and surrounding area, relevant planning history of the site, neighbouring sites and the Pre-application engagement undertaken;
- **Section 3** (Proposed Development) sets out a summary of the development proposals;
- **Section 4** (Planning Policy Context) outlines the relevant planning policy framework that the proposals are to be considered against;
- **Section 5** (Planning Considerations) provides a detailed assessment of the planning considerations arising from the application proposals; and
- **Section 6** (Conclusions and Summary) provides a summary of the proposals and our conclusions on the planning considerations.

2. Background

- 2.1 This section provides a brief description of the site and the immediate surrounding area, together with a summary of the relevant planning history and the pre-application feedback provided by Mid-Sussex District Council.

The Site

- 2.2 The site is located on the western edge of Copthorne, Mid Sussex. The site comprises two parcels of land which combined covers an area of approximately 2.05 hectares in total. The southern parcel is approx. 1.82ha and the northern parcel is approx. 0.23ha. The site falls under the jurisdiction of Mid-Sussex District Council, specifically within the area defined as the Copthorne area.
- 2.3 The two land parcels are located within the existing Heathy Woods residential development area, and thus is located appropriately within the sustainable surrounds which comprise a residential context and benefits from existing infrastructure and services.
- 2.4 To the west of the southern parcel is ancient and semi-natural woodland, and to the north the Copthorne Brook. The eastern boundary of the southern parcel adjoins Worsell Drive and the southern boundary is bound by Langridge Way. The northern parcel adjoins an existing tree line to the east and south and is bounded by Worsell Drive to the north and west.
- 2.5 A site location plan accompanies the planning application and is extracted below:

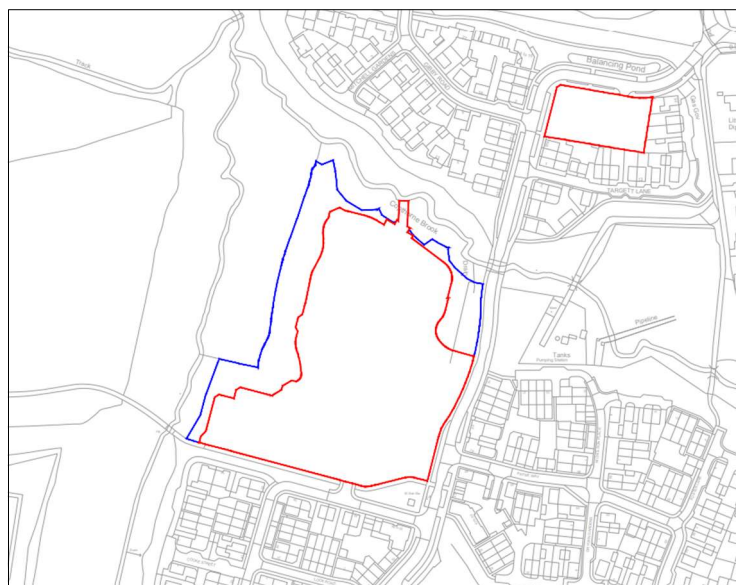


Figure 1: Site Location Plan

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- 2.6 The parcels of land benefit from existing bell-mouths that were consented as part of the wider outline permission. These adjoin the principal spine roads (Worsell Drive and Langridge Way) that afford manoeuvrability throughout the Heathy Woods development area.
- 2.7 With reference to Copthorne's Inset Map (8a of Mid Sussex District Council's adopted policy maps), the site is designated within the built-up area boundary and comprises no form of identified constraint.
- 2.8 Referencing the Environment Agency's online flood map for planning, both parcels are located within Flood Zone 1 indicating the lowest probability of river and / or sea flooding and therefore is suitable for residential development. Neither parcels are in proximity to any heritage sites nor are they located within a conservation area.

Planning History

- 2.9 The wider Heathy Woods development area has been subject to a number of planning applications in relation to the residential redevelopment of the land. Those of specific relevance are the applications identified below:

LPA Ref	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
13/04127/OUTES	Outline planning application for up to 500 homes, a primary school and doctors surgery, up to 15,500sqm employment floorspace (B1c light industry/B8 storage and distribution), public open space, allotments, associated landscaping, infrastructure (including sub stations and pumping station) and pedestrian and cycle access, with a principal vehicular access from the A264 and a secondary vehicular access from Shipley Bridge Lane with all matters reserved except for access.	Approved	25 May 2016
DM/17/4875	Reserved Matters application for the access road to the employment area (phase A4), cycle/footpath (phase A5iii), strategic landscape and landforming for phase L1 (including re-use of material from the excavations required to form the access roads to the site), a foul water pumping station and an electricity substation; pursuant to outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES as amended by DM/17/1979.	Approved	19 April 2018
DM/18/2098	Reserved matters application in respect of outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES for earthworks to create a development platform as part of Phases C1 and C2 detailing layout and landform.	Approved	30 Aug 2018
DM/18/1098	Reserved matters application for earthworks to create a development platform as part of Phases C1 and C2 detailing layout and landform - pursuant to condition 1 (reserved matters) of outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES dated 25 May 2016 as amended by non-material amendments DM/17/1979 dated 25 May 2017.	Approved	22 Oct 2018
DM/18/2120	Reserved matters application in respect of outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES for spine road and associated infrastructure and landscape works pursuant to condition 1.	Approved	22 Oct 2018
DM/18/3874	Reserved matters application for B8 warehouse building, service yard and parking area, access road, foul pumping station, electricity substation and landscape works pursuant to condition 1 (reserved matters) of outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES as amended by non-material amendment DM/17/1979. For the matters of the Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale. Amended plans received: 06/12/2018 showing revised layout and fencing details and updated public footpath plan	Approved	18 Jan 2019
DM/18/4321	Reserved Matters application for the approval of the layout, scale, appearance, landscaping, and internal access for residential phases 1 and 2 pursuant to condition 1 (Reserved matters) of outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES, comprising 303 residential dwellings, public open space, car parking, and associated infrastructure works. Amended plans received 22/03.2019 showing revisions to the elevation design of dwellings within phase 1.	Approved	3 June 2019

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DM/19/0812	Reserved Matters application for B8 warehouse building, service yard and parking area, access road, foul pumping station, electricity sub station and landscape works, pursuant to Condition 1 (Reserved Matters) of Outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES dated 25 May 2016 as amended by Non-Material Amendments DM/17/1979 dated 25 May 2017.	Approved	27 Feb 2019
DM/19/4504	Reserved Matters application for details of the footpath/cycleway (phase A5iv) including bridge across stream - pursuant to Condition 1 (Reserved Matters) of Outline planning permission 13/04127/OUTES dated 25 May 2016 as amended by Non-Material amendments DM/17/1979 dated 25 May 2017 and DM/18/0500 dated 28 March 2018.	Approved	14 May 2020
DM/21/1969	Reserved Matters application for the approval of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale, following outline application 13/04127/OUTES.	Approved	1 Dec 2021

Pre-Application Engagement and Discussions

Pre-application Enquiry with MSDC

- 2.10 The Applicant and its team met with officers of MSDC on 28/10/2024. At the meeting, emerging draft proposals were presented to bring forward 77 new homes. Formal pre-application written feedback was received on 11/12/2024 from MSDC, under pre-application ref. DM/24/2241.
- 2.11 The feedback concluded that the principle of development was considered acceptable, with some amendments to the design of the scheme being recommended, specifically regarding density and open space provision (please refer to the DAS for further detail). The pre-application feedback has been taken into consideration and has informed the revised scheme submitted under this application.

Public Consultation and Community Involvement

- 2.12 The Applicant held a public consultation event on 04 December 2024, during which a draft proposal for approximately 60–80 dwellings was presented. The event provided an opportunity for local residents and stakeholders to review the scheme and share feedback prior to finalising the proposal for formal submission.
- 2.13 The scope of the consultation and the feedback received is set out in Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) accompanying this application.

Further Public Consultation and Community Involvement

- 2.14 The Applicant has continued communication with the surrounding residents, demonstrating their continued commitment to inform and involve the existing community.
- 2.15 The management firm currently on site (Preim) has provided residents with regular contact and updates on this application, with the most recent meeting held on the 25th November 2025 in which an update on the position of the application and the revised proposals was provided.

3. The Proposed Development

3.1 This application seeks full planning permission for:

Description of Development: *“Full planning application at two parcels of land adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne, each accessed from existing bell-mouth junctions at Worsell Drive and Langridge Way, for the erection of new homes (Use Class C3) including affordable homes; internal access roads, landscaping and associated infrastructure.*

3.2 The scheme has been sensitively prepared with technical input from various external consultants, incorporating a design-led approach to ensure coherence and integration with the surroundings. Further to this, the design of the proposal has been informed by formal pre-application feedback and public consultation feedback.

Design and Layout

3.3 The development proposals being brought forward by Miller Homes will provide a high quality residential scheme which meets the required building and living standards, and reflects the distinctive character of the surrounding residential built form whilst comprising unique design features to create a sense of place.

3.4 The proposed house types set out within the DAS and House Type plans submitted in support of this application demonstrate a contemporary approach to traditional detailing, comprising red brick elevations, grey slate roof tiles, blue brick and buff render detailing / fenestration – please also refer to drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3202 C02 Proposed Materials Plan* for further detail on materiality proposed. The proposed materiality utilised responds positively to the surrounding built form, whilst providing a new palette of materials as requested by the LPA in the pre-application response. The palette of materials allows the scheme to comprise individuality to form a sense of place whilst being visually coherent with the existing character.

3.5 In terms of layout, the proposed units are sited sympathetically within each of the parcels, providing active frontages along the street as well as secure back-to-back arrangements at the rear of dwellings. Further to this, the proposed layout seeks to achieve connectivity with the surrounding development by proposing footpaths to the existing movement network.

Density, Height and Massing

3.6 The density of the proposed scheme will deliver 34 dwellings per hectare (dph) across the two parcels overall, of which is considered to respond positively to the plots' physical characteristics and spatial context.

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- 3.7 The design approach for the southern parcel aims to direct the higher densities and urban form to the main spine, creating a sensitive transition to the perimeters to safeguard the woodland edges. The northern parcel directs the higher densities to the corners of the plot to support positive placemaking purposes, replicating the design approach with the surrounding homes to the west and north.
- 3.8 The proposed buildings range between 1 – 3 storeys in height – please refer to drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3204 C02 Proposed Heights Plan* for further detail. The variety in building heights and enclosure of specific spaces proposed replicates the surrounding built form to continue the successful streetscape.

Residential Amenity

- 3.9 The layout and orientation of the proposed homes are carefully considered in relation to neighbouring properties, both existing and proposed, to prevent overlooking, overshadowing and being overbearing to ensure optimal residential amenity. The residential amenity for existing and future occupiers across the Heathy Woods scheme is therefore considered safeguarded.
- 3.10 All homes will be served by good levels of amenity space to allow for functional and recreational amenity purposes and needs. The proposed garage, cycle and bin store provisions per dwelling are set out in the requisite plans submitted in support of this application.

Housing Mix

- 3.11 The proposed housing mix of part of the scheme across the two parcels is set out below:

Market Dwelling Mix

House Type	No.	% Mix
4 Bed	9	18%
3 Bed	25	52%
2 Bed	6	13%
1 Bed	8	17%
Total No. of Units = 48		

Affordable Homes Mix

House Type	No.	% Mix
4 Bed	1	5%
3 Bed	5	24%
2 Bed	11	52%
1 Bed	4	19%
Total No. of Units = 21		

- 3.12 The proposal seeks to provide a range of accommodation sizes to meet the diverse needs of local people including family sized homes and smaller homes. Please refer to drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3206 C02 Proposed Unit Mix Plan* for further detail.

Affordable Housing

- 3.13 The proposed residential development will provide 30% of units as affordable, to ensure that the scheme is policy compliant with the local plan and representative of local demand set out in recent pre-application feedback.

- 3.14 The majority of the proposed affordable units are located within the northern parcel, whilst the remaining are located sporadically across the southern parcel. This layout was considered adequate by Officers as set out in the pre-application feedback.
- 3.15 The proposed affordable units will comprise of a mix of 1-4 bed properties, ranging from 1-3 storeys in height. With regards to the tenure split, of the 30% affordable dwelling, 29% will be provided through Shared Ownership. The remaining 71% of the affordable provision will be made up of social / affordable rented housing. Please refer to drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3203 C03 Proposed Affordable Housing Plan* and drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3200 C03 Proposed Site Plan* for further detail.

Landscaping and Public Open Space

- 3.16 The southern parcel is partially surrounded by a designated ancient and semi-natural woodland. This asset is to be maintained and safeguarded throughout the development with adequate mitigation, so that the proposal is well-screened naturally. Further to the existing thresholds, the proposal comprises additional soft and hard landscaping on its eastern and southern boundaries along Worsell Drive, incorporating green and open spaces for softening and placemaking purposes. Principally, the south-eastern boundary includes a community orchard with seating, benches and informal play. The northern parcel does not benefit from any existing natural screening, albeit is proposed to comprise additional planting on its northern and western boundaries in the form of hedging, grass / lawn and wildflower planting to provide natural screening and to soften the proposed built form. Please refer to drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3201 C02 Proposed Boundaries Plan*, the DAS, and the supporting Landscaping plans submitted alongside this application for further detail on proposed landscaping.
- 3.17 In response to pre-application feedback, the proposed development incorporates generous public open space provisions strategically positioned along all site boundaries. These landscaped areas serve multiple purposes: they introduce a strong greening and screening effect, help to soften the visual impact of the built form, and create a welcoming, high-quality environment. Please refer to drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3100 C02 Proposed POS Provision Plan* and the supporting Landscaping plans for further detail.

Highways, Access and Parking

- 3.18 Due to broader development across Heathy Wood, both land parcels are served by an existing transport network capable of absorbing additional residents and thus traffic flows.
- 3.19 In terms of access, the southern parcel will be via the delivered priority junction to Langridge Way. This access has a carriageway width of 5.5m wide with 6m junction radii and is appropriate to serve the development. Residents from this parcel will access the development from the south via Worsell Drive and Copthorne Roundabout.

- 3.20 Access to the northern parcel will be via the delivered priority junction from Worsell Drive. The access has a carriageway width of 5m wide with 4.5m junction radii which is appropriate to serve this small parcel of dwellings. Given the bus gate restrictions access to these houses will be via Shipley Bridge Lane only as agreed for the outline application for this parcel of land.
- 3.21 Pedestrian and cycle infrastructure has already been delivered to serve the wider site including a 2m footway on the western side of the Worsell Drive and a 3m shared pedestrian / cycleway on the eastern side of the carriageway. In addition, crossing points have been delivered at appropriate locations throughout the development. The proposal has been designed to connect to the existing network.
- 3.22 In terms of parking, the proposal comprises 149 allocated spaces in total, with 9 unallocated visitor spaces. All spaces are discreetly and adequately situated to the side of dwellings in line with policy guidance. Cycle parking will be provided to encourage sustainable transport methods, with cycle storage provision throughout the site in garages or sheds.

Sustainability and Energy

- 3.23 The development proposal incorporates a range of sustainability measures within its design, along with reducing its carbon impact, at the forefront of its design. A sustainability and energy statement confirms the sustainability measures proposed within the scheme, including a fabric first approach to reduce energy demand, and is submitted in support of this application imminently.

4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications should be judged in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Development Plan

- 4.2. The Mid Sussex District Council's District Plan 2014-2031 was adopted on 28th March 2018 and superseded the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004. The statutory development plan documents for Mid Sussex comprise the following:

- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (adopted March 2018)
- Saved policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (adopted May 2004)
- West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (adopted 2018)
- West Sussex Waste Local Plan (adopted 2014)
- Mid Sussex Supplementary Planning Documents, including:
 - Affordable Housing SPD (July 2018);
 - Design Guide SPD (November 2020);
 - Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD (July 2018);
 - Air Quality SPD (April 2021);
 - Parking Guidance SPD (September 2020); and
 - Planning Noise Advice SPD (November 2023);
- Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan (adopted September 2021)

- 4.3. The National Planning Practice Guidance (2014, as amended), Supplementary Guidance notes (SPGs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are all relevant material considerations and will be referred to where necessary and appropriate.

- 4.4. The NPPF (August 2026) directs a presumption in favour of sustainable development which underpins the Framework. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides clarity and guidance on the interpretation of Policy.

National Planning Policy

- 4.5. At national level, the Government published its revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in August 2026. The NPPF provides a framework for the production of local policy documents and at the heart of this document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 4.6. In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), most recently revised in August 2026, is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The revised Framework places increased emphasis on supporting housing delivery and establishing a stronger in-principle support for residential development in sustainable locations.
- 4.7. Chapter 4 of the NPPF establishes the presumption in favour of sustainable development and confirms that the planning system should proactively support sustainable development through both plan-making and decision-taking. Specifically, paragraph 1 of Policy S4 states: *“Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework”*.
- 4.8. Chapter 6 focuses on housing delivery and emphasises the importance of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The Framework highlights the need for the planning system to support housing growth through the allocation and development of suitable sites, including previously developed land in sustainable locations. It also places significant emphasis on maintaining an adequate supply of deliverable housing sites and supporting the delivery of new homes in appropriate locations.
- 4.9. Chapter 12 of the NPPF promotes the effective and efficient use of land in meeting development needs. The Framework encourages the optimisation of suitable sites, particularly previously developed (brownfield) land and sites located in accessible and sustainable locations. The chapter also highlights the importance of achieving an appropriate density of development whilst responding positively to local character, design considerations and the creation of high-quality places.
- 4.10. In support of the NPPF the Government has published an online guidance resource, known as the Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). This covers a range of topics including procedural matters, policy application matters, extended guidance on certain topics and clarifications on processes. Where relevant, specific notes are referred to within this Planning Statement.

Emerging Planning Documents

- 4.11. The Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031) was adopted in March 2018, and therefore the District Council is in the process of reviewing and updating the Plan where necessary. The emerging district plan was submitted for examination on the 8th July 2024 and received the Inspector’s Matters, Issues and Questions in August 2024, alongside a Hearing Programme which took place in October 2024.
- 4.12. The Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031) was adopted in March 2018 and the District Council has been progressing a review of the Plan through the preparation of the new Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2040). The emerging District Plan was submitted for examination on 8 July 2024 and is currently undergoing independent examination by a government-appointed Planning Inspector.

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- 4.13. Following the submission of the Plan, examination hearings were initially paused while procedural and evidential matters were addressed. A new Planning Inspector was subsequently appointed in December 2025 and issued an updated hearing programme. Examination hearing sessions were then held during February and March 2026.
- 4.14. Following the hearing sessions, the Inspector issued interim conclusions and a series of actions for the Council, including testing the District's ability to accommodate a higher housing requirement and reviewing potential additional site allocations. In response, the Council undertook further evidence gathering, including additional site selection work and in-combination testing, the outcomes of which have informed a revised strategy and proposed modifications to the Plan.
- 4.15. The examination remains ongoing. Following the completion of the Council's additional evidence work, the Inspector has recommended a series of Main Modifications necessary to make the Plan legally compliant and sound. A six-week consultation on the Schedule of Main Modifications, together with the supporting Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment updates, commenced on 27 July 2026 and runs until 7 September 2026. Following the close of the consultation, representations will be considered by the Inspector before the next stage of the examination process and the eventual publication of the Inspector's final report.

5. Material Planning Considerations

5.1 This section of the Planning Statement sets out the main planning considerations arising from the application proposals with reference to the planning policy framework set out in the previous chapter. The material planning considerations of relevance are considered to be the following:

- *Principle of Development*
- *Sustainable Development*
- *Housing: Affordable Housing and Housing Mix*
- *Design and Layout*
- *Landscaping*
- *Residential Amenity*
- *Highways and Parking*
- *Sustainability*
- *Air Quality*
- *Ecology and Biodiversity*
- *Heritage and Archaeology*
- *Lighting*
- *Flood Risk and Drainage*
- *Infrastructure*

5.2 The above aspects will be reviewed in turn below.

Principle of Development

5.3 The general thrust of national and local planning policy and guidance is to secure sustainable patterns of development through concentrating development in sustainable locations. This is encapsulated in the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in Chapter 4 of the NPPF. In line with this, Policy DP6 of the Council's District Plan seeks to direct housing development to defined / designated built-up area boundaries. Given the proposal's siting within the built-up area of Copthorne, the proposals meet the definition of sustainable development and thus is considered to be acceptable in principle.

5.4 The extant outline consent (Application Ref. 13/04127/OUTES) proposed the site be utilised for a primary school and doctors surgery. Paragraph 1.3 Schedule 3 of the completed S106 agreement subject of the outline consent stipulates that *"If the County Council decides not to proceed with the Primary School within the Site then the Developer and the Owner shall be free to develop the Primary School Site in any manner for which planning permission may be obtained"*.

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- 5.5 Through in-depth consultation with relevant stakeholders, it has become apparent that there is no longer an identified need to bring forward the primary school or doctors surgery at the site. The Education Authority has confirmed in dialogue with the Applicant that there is no demand for a primary school on site and a number of payments have been made in this regard. Furthermore, Pound Hill Surgery confirmed to SMH that it would be unviable for them to take on a new GP surgery, therefore again off site financial contributions to the Council were made, with the final payment made in December 2024.
- 5.6 In light of the above therefore, the delivery of residential use at the Land Parcels adjacent to Worsell Drive are considered to be acceptable in principle, as was established by Officers at pre-application stage.

Sustainable Development

- 5.7 There are a number of benefits associated with the scheme that contribute to the three overarching objectives of sustainable development of which there is a presumption in favour of as established in Chapter 4 of the NPPF.
- 5.8 With respect to the economic benefits of the proposed scheme, the development is well located in close proximity of existing facilities and services essential for day-to-day needs, with further, greater provision at nearby settlements. This development would encourage use of these facilities and service and thereby supporting local businesses. Additionally, during the construction period the scheme would make an important contribution to the construction industry via the creation of jobs and demand for building materials. In the longer term, new homes and a new community will support an economically active workforce supporting the local economy.
- 5.9 The scheme provides social benefits that arise as a result of the creation of a new community along with the delivery of much needed new homes and affordable housing. The scheme seeks to facilitate social inclusivity and enhances community cohesion through the range and types of houses that can be provided at the site. This provision of affordable and open market housing should be given significant weight in the context of the NPPF as it is a substantial social benefit produced by the scheme.

- 5.10 The scheme includes environmental benefits including the incorporation of green infrastructure in the form of areas of enhanced publicly accessible open space and enhanced permeability across the site. The scheme includes sustainable drainage systems which can promote biodiversity enhancements. Connectivity with the existing public rights of way and the additional pedestrian and cycle links proposed promote healthier and more active lifestyles within the community – not only for the future residents of the scheme, but for those to be housed within the development and the established communities in the vicinity of the site. The wider picture of the scheme would then present an opportunity for net biodiversity gains as a result of the proposals and changes which enhance the immediate and wider environmental landscape. Furthermore, a number of detailed design considerations have been given toward the effects of climate change and the need for sustainability in this context.
- 5.11 In light of the above therefore, it is considered that the development proposal aligns with the sustainable development principles endorsed by the NPPF.

Housing: Market and Affordable Provision

Market Housing

- 5.12 The proposal comprises the development of 69 units apportioned across two site parcels. Policy DP4 (Housing) of the District Plan sets out a minimum housing provision figure of 16,390 homes in the 17-year period 2014 – 2031, which equates to an average of 876 dwellings per annum (dpa) until 2023/24, and an average of 1,090 dpa thereafter until 2030/31. The proposal is considered to assist in meeting the required annual housing threshold, and thus is considered to accord with Policy DP4.
- 5.13 In regard to Housing Mix, Policy DP30 (Housing Mix) aims to provide the amount and type of housing that reflects current and future local housing needs and meets the requirements of all sectors of the community.
- 5.14 The development proposes a range of dwellings with house types ranging from single occupancy units to large family homes. Additionally, a mix in housing typologies such as terraces, semi-detached and detached units are proposed to reflect the range of housing found in the local area. The diverse mix of housing aims to attract and foster a broad demographic and will also encourage a mixed community all furthering the cohesive and sustainability rich principles of the development.
- 5.15 The proposed private mix is considered to reflect local demand, and thus suitable for the surrounding needs.

Affordable Housing

- 5.16 In regard to Affordable Housing, Policy DP31 (Affordable Housing) of the District Plan and the Affordable Housing SPG (adopted July 2018) states that the Council will seek a minimum on-site affordable housing provision of 30% for residential proposals of 11 dwellings or more.

- 5.17 The recent pre-application feedback received from the Housing Officer was based on 77 units, albeit confirmed that following affordable mix and unit sizes was most reflective of market demand / need currently:
- 26% (6) x 1B/2P flats, Coach Houses /FOGS, maisonettes, or bungalows @ a minimum of 50m² (excluding the staircase and entrance hall in the case of any Coach Houses/FOGS or maisonettes or 58m² including them).
 - 45% (11) x 2B/4P houses and flats or all houses (the rented units should all be houses) @ a minimum of 79m² in the case of houses (2 storey) and 70m² in the case of flats (excluding the staircase and entrance hall in the case of any Coach Houses /FOGS or maisonettes or 79m² including them). Maisonettes should each have their own private garden area
 - 20% (5) x 3B/5P houses @ a minimum of 93m² (2 storey) or 99m² (3 storey)
 - 5% (1) x 4B/6P house @ a minimum of 106m² (2 storey) or 112m² (3 storey)
 - 4% (1) x 3B/5P wheelchair accessible house for rent @ a minimum of 121m² which complies with all of the requirements contained in Part M(4)(3)(1)(a) and (b) and Part M(4)(3)(2)(b) for wheelchair accessible dwellings as contained in Category 3 – wheelchair user dwellings of schedule 1 of the Building Regulations 2010 as amended
- 5.18 Further to the above, in regard to tenure, pre-application feedback confirms that the latest evidence demands the affordable tenure to comprise 25% First Homes, and 75% Social / Affordable Rented.
- 5.19 Notwithstanding the above, upon review of the latest Mid Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment it sets out a requirement for intermediate tenure, and that First Homes should not be included. Para 6.2 on page 31 states: *“The evidence indicates that intermediate should focus on shared ownership and intermediate rented homes, and does not support the provision of First Homes”*.
- 5.20 As per drawing ref. 11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3203 C03 Proposed Affordable Housing Plan, the proposed affordable housing mix is largely representative of the preferred mix as set out by the LPA, and meets the required internal floor area (GIA) standards. Further to this, the scheme is proposing a total of 21 affordable units on site (a total of 30%), 29% of which comprise shared ownership (6 units), and 71% comprise Social / Affordable Rented (15 units). Accordingly, from the perspective of affordable housing provision and tenure, the proposal is considered acceptable in light of Policy DP31, the Affordable Housing SPG and the latest guidance as set out in the Mid Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 5.21 In light of the above information, the proposal is considered entirely acceptable in regard to housing mix and provision of affordable housing, in accordance with DP28 (Accessibility), DP30 (Housing Mix), Policy DP4 () and the Affordable Housing SPD.

Design and Layout

- 5.22 Policy DP26 (Character and Design) of the District Plan, and the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, requires development to be well designed and laid out to reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages.
- 5.23 Pre-application consultation feedback recommended the development parcels develop its own character whilst integrating with the existing street scheme as an extension of the Taylor Whimpey development surrounding. It is considered that the proposed material schedule responds positively to the surrounding built form, whilst providing a new palette of materials. The palette of materials allows the scheme to comprise individuality to form a sense of place whilst being visually coherent with the existing character. The proposed palette of materials includes a range of red and blue brick, slate grey roof tiles, render and a mix of tarmac and tegular paving.
- 5.24 The proposal has been sensitively designed to protect and enhance existing green spaces that contribute to the surrounding character, and soften the proposed built form. Accordingly, the boundaries of both parcels benefit from proposed greening. For example, a designated green space open space area with associated tree planting and informal play is located to the south-eastern proportion of the southern plot – a visible prominent corner location. This assists in creating a sense of place whilst contributing to the surrounding natural character.
- 5.25 Reinforcing the positive pre-application comments, the layout provides positive / active frontages along large parts of the street frontage and a secure back-to-back arrangement at the rear of dwellings that is consistent with perimeter block principles. This clearly defines public and private realms for both the northern and southern parcel, and ensures amenity is safeguarded.
- 5.26 The internal road layout is sympathetic, limiting the amount of engineered junctions and hammer-heads. This results in a pedestrian-friendly layout that is legible, safe and accessible, and allows the parking provision to be integrated throughout the proposal without dominating the street environment.
- 5.27 In line with the above, Policy DP24 (Leisure and Cultural Facilities) requires appropriately scaled provision of cultural facilities such as play areas. As set out above, the south-eastern corner of the southern plot comprises the provision of an informal play area with associated tree planting, to provide a shared community facility for the proposed development (please refer to Landscape Plans submitted in support of this application). Further to this, it is important to note that the wider Copthorne development scheme is in the process of delivering allotments, which will provide community infrastructure sought under Policy DP24.

5.28 In light of the above, the proposal is considered to comply with policies DP24 and DP26 of the District Plan, and the design and layout principles within the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD, most notably (DG12 and DG40). Please refer to the Design and Access statement submitted in support of this application for further information.

Landscaping

5.29 Policy DP37 (Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows) states that development proposals that protect and enhance existing trees, woodland and hedgerows will be assessed favourably. Further to this, Policy DP26 (Character and Design) requires layouts to include appropriate landscaping and greenspace.

5.30 As per the Ecological Impact Assessment, prepared by SLR, the two parcels of land comprise predominantly neutral grassland assessed as not being a significant ecological constraint to the proposed development, and as such there is no requirement to protect the existing thresholds on site. Further to this, the Arboricultural Report & Impact Assessment confirms that the proposal has a negligible effect on the long-term health and vitality of the trees affected and all remaining vegetation are to be retained and protected with tree protection fencing where necessary. In regard to the land surrounding the site, the southern parcel is located in proximity to an area designated as an ancient and semi-natural woodland. This valued asset has been protected through the implementation of a 15 metre buffer, and enhanced through the additional planting of woodland, grasses and hedges in proximity to the protected asset. The south-eastern corner plot of the southern parcel is considered a focal point within the scheme, and comprises a community orchard with informal play, seating and benches for placemaking purposes. The northern parcel also benefits from additional planting predominantly on its northern and western boundary, with courtyard spaces with benches and planting. Please refer to the DAS and Landscaping Plans for further detail.

5.31 The landscaping approach ensures that both plots benefit from a range of additional planting in order to soften the visual impact of the development, providing greening benefits, and ensures all designations are safeguarded and enhanced.

5.32 From the perspective of landscaping therefore, the proposal is considered to accord with Policies DP37 and DP26 of the District Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 5.33 With regard to residential amenity, Policy DP26 (Character and Design), DP27 (Dwelling Space Standards) Policy DP29 (Noise, Air and Light Pollution) seeks to ensure development proposals do not cause significant implications on existing residents and provide adequate amenity for future occupants of new dwellings, in regard to amenity space standards, privacy, and noise, air and light pollution. These principles are endorsed also by the Design Guide SPD (November 2020), and Policy CNP1.2 of Copthorne's Neighbourhood Plan. These have been taken into account in the design layout, composition, orientation, and appearance of the dwellings proposed.

Amenity Space

- 5.34 Policy DP27 (Dwelling Space Standards) requires all minimum nationally described space standards and building regulations for internal floor space and storage space to be applied to all new residential development. In light of this, all private and affordable dwellings proposed, including the M4-type dwellings, conforms to nationally described space standards and building regulations.
- 5.35 In regard to amenity space, each proposed unit is designed in line with the relevant National Space Standards and Building Regulations for dwellings, and thus comprises appropriate levels of functional and / or recreational amenity space to serve future residents.

Privacy

- 5.36 The internal layout, siting and orientation of the proposed dwellings are considered to preserve the amenity of existing residents (as confirmed by the pre-app response), as well as future residents, as demonstrated by drawing ref. *11965-RLA-25-00-DR-A-3200 C03 Proposed Site Plan*, which will ensure no overlooking or overshadowing between units. A suitable living environment is therefore achieved for each proposed unit.

Noise Pollution

- 5.37 A Noise Report has been produced by Stantec to support the proposals. It considers that the site is suitable for residential use subject to appropriate mitigation.
- 5.38 By way of mitigation, proposed units have been orientated appropriately and are supported by garden fencing around external amenity areas. Accordingly, appropriate noise levels in private amenity areas are likely to be achieved.

- 5.39 In regard to internal noise levels, the results of the assessment indicate that it is unlikely that open windows can be used to mitigate overheating. Therefore, dynamic thermal modelling will be completed at detailed design stage to determine the method of ventilation for homes to ensure compliance with Building Regulations.
- 5.40 For the purposes of achieving planning permission therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable from the perspective of noise.

Air Quality

- 5.41 Policy DP29 (Noise, Air and Light Pollution) requires development proposals to ensure no unacceptable levels of air pollution arise as a result of the scheme. In line with the District Policy, the Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation SPG (2021) sets out guidance in regard to control of pollutants during the demolition and construction of development projects.
- 5.42 In regard to air quality, and Air Quality Assessment was produced by Stantec was carried out to support the proposals, and identifies mitigation measures which can be applied on the proposed development and thus offset the damage cost associated with the proposed development. The AQA concludes that the proposal accords with relevant national and local planning policy and guidance regarding air quality, including the interim PM2.5 guidance, and is therefore considered to be acceptable from the perspective of air quality.
- 5.43 In light of the above it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy DP29 of the District Plan and the Air Quality SPG.

Light Pollution

- 5.44 Policy DP29 (Noise, Air and Light Pollution) states that in regard to light pollution, development proposals will be permitted subject to the impact on local amenity being minimised in terms of intensity and quantum of lighting.
- 5.45 A Lighting Statement has been prepared by Stantec to support the proposals, which concludes that during hours of use the ambient luminosity is considered to be low. In light of this the proposal is considered to be acceptable from the perspective of light pollution.

Interim summary

- 5.46 In summary, there are considered to be no implications which would arise from the proposals in regard to residential amenity in terms of privacy, light, air and noise pollution, and internal amenity space. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with the District Plan, Design Guide SPD and Copthorne's Neighbourhood Plan.

Highways and Parking

- 5.47 Policy DP21 (Transport) requires development proposals to be sustainably located, promote alternative means of travel by providing suitable infrastructure, not cause detriment to road safety and / or cause congestion, and be designed to adoptable standards. Further to this, the Mid Sussex Design Guide (2020) and the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan (2021-2031) require proposals to make appropriate provision of parking infrastructure, and sustainable modes of travel.
- 5.48 The Applicant consulted the Local Highway Authority under their pre-application service in November 2024. In light of the feedback, the Applicant commissioned a Transport Assessment, where the scope of works, methodology, and principles of the assessment were prepared in accordance with the LHA pre-app advice. The results of the Transport Assessment confirm that the development proposal satisfies the relevant transport tests and is considered acceptable in regard to relevant national and local planning policy and guidance.
- 5.49 In regard to sustainable travel, section 5.4 of the Transport Statement outlines that the scheme provides for sustainable modes of transport in the form of cycling, walking and the use of hybrid cars, by providing adequate operational and storage infrastructure that integrates with the existing transport network. This accords with Policy CNP15 (Sustainable Transport) of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.50 In regard to parking, the Transport Statement confirms the scheme accords with provision requirement set out within West Sussex County Council's (WSCC) Guidance on Parking for New Developments (2020). Further to this, in regard to the design and layout of the parking provision, the proposed units are considered to integrate well with the overall develop to be sympathetic to the streetscape. This demonstrates accordance with Principle DG18 of the Mid Sussex Design Guide, and Policy CNP16 (Car Parking) of Copthorne's Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.51 Accordingly, the application should therefore be considered acceptable in regard to the District Plan, the Design Guide, and the Neighbourhood Plan, in respective of Highways and Parking.

Sustainability

- 5.52 Policy DP39 of the District Plan seeks to improve the sustainability of developments.
- 5.53 The development proposal incorporates a range of sustainability measures within its design, along with reducing its carbon impact, at the forefront of its design. The Sustainability Statement and Energy Statement submitted in support of this application sets out the proposed development positively responds to policy requirements through efficient use of land within the surrounding residential context, a fabric first approach, the utilisation of PV panels and accounting overheating risk from the inception of the design. Further, the scheme positively aims to utilise a SUDS led drainage strategy which in turn will manage the surface water risk.

5.54 Further to this above, the proposal considers the impact of the development, and aims to apply good site management practice through applying the circular economy principles and utilising appropriate measures to mitigate noise and air quality impacts demonstrating that the scheme has a comprehensive approach to sustainable development.

5.55 The proposals are considered to comply with Policy DP39 of the District Plan accordingly.

Ecology and Biodiversity

5.56 Policy DP38 (Biodiversity) of the District Plan seeks to protect and enhance the biodiversity of sites and adequately mitigate for any adverse impacts accordingly.

5.57 An Ecological Impact Assessment has been prepared by SLR and is submitted in support of this application that confirms that no statutory ecological designated areas are located within the site or within 2km proximity. Overall, the report considers there is no likely significant adverse ecological impacts predicted and that the proposals will provide a gain for biodiversity. Further to this, the results of the assessment confirm that although the presence of some protected species have been identified within the findings of the survey(s), when indorsing the mitigation proposed there are no residual impacts on conservation status of any habitat or species located within or in proximity to the site.

5.58 In regard to biodiversity, Appendix C of the EcIA comprises a BNG assessment and supporting letter, which confirms that pre-development biodiversity value of the site is taken from the date the planning application is submitted, as no activities have been carried out on the site prior to the date of the application which would have resulted in a loss of onsite biodiversity value. The letter also confirms that following the implementation of on-site creation and enhancement measures, together with off-site habitat creation on land controlled by the Applicant, there would be a 42.48% gain in habitat units, a gain of 0.82 in hedgerow units, and a loss of - 62.86% in watercourse units. A total of 0.01 watercourse units will be required via an off-site provider.

5.59 In light of the above therefore, the proposal is considered acceptable from the perspective of Ecology and Biodiversity in light of the accordance with Policy DP38 of the District Plan.

Heritage and Archaeology

5.60 Policy DP34 (Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets) requires proposals to conserve assets of historical and / or archaeological value.

- 5.61 With reference to Copthorne's Inset Map (8a of Mid Sussex District Council's adopted policy maps), the site is not designated by or located in proximity to any heritage sites and is not within a conservation area. To further support this, an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment was undertaken to support the proposal. The assessment confirms that both parcels subject of this application are considered to have no potential for significant archaeological remains of all dates. As such there are no design or planning constraints in relation to archaeology.
- 5.62 In light of the above, the proposals would be consistent with the provisions of Policy DP34 in respect of Heritage and Archaeology.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 5.63 In regard to flood risk and drainage, Policy DP41 (Flood Risk and Drainage) in the District Plan seeks to ensure development is safe across its lifetime and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Further to this, it states SUDs are required for schemes in surplus of 10 dwellings.
- 5.64 A Drainage Assessment and Flood Risk Strategy prepared by Stantec is submitted in support of this application. As per the supporting drainage drawings, the on-site foul drainage network for the Northern plot will drain by gravity to the western corner of the plot and connect into the Spine Road (Worsell drive) existing infrastructure. In regard to the Southern Plot, the on-site foul drainage network will drain by gravity to the east of the plot and then connect into the Spine Road (Worsell Drive) existing infrastructure.
- 5.65 In regard to surface water, the Northern parcel has a discharge rate of 5.0l/s which will be achieved by the use of SuDS features including permeable paving and cellular storage tanks, where the total storage within the tanks equates to 30.4m³. The Southern parcel achieves a discharge rate of 5.0l/s and through the use of SuDS features including permeable paving, hydrobreak chambers, oversized pipes, and tank storage which can hold 672.7m³. In summary, both parcels will be served by SuDS features to ensure surface water is adequately drained from both parcels.
- 5.66 In regard to flood risk, the Drainage Assessment and Flood Risk Statement refers to the original Flood Risk Assessment conducted by Hydroland in November 2013, and reaffirms the findings of the assessment concluding that the proposal will not result in the increase risk of flooding elsewhere.
- 5.67 The proposal is therefore considered to accord with Policy DP41 of the District Plan.

Planning Statement

Land Parcels adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne



Infrastructure

- 5.68 As confirmed in the recent pre-application feedback, due to the scale and nature of the development proposal, the Applicant must accord with the assumptions of the Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD (July 2018).
- 5.69 The Applicant requests that any obligations / contributions sought are imposed by way of suitably worded condition.

6. Conclusion

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a submitted Application for the proposed development of the Land Parcels adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne. This application seeks permission for:

Description of Development: *“Full planning application at two parcels of land adjacent to Worsell Drive, Copthorne, each accessed from existing bell-mouth junctions at Worsell Drive and Langridge Way, for the erection of new homes (Use Class C3) including affordable homes; internal access roads, landscaping and associated infrastructure.*

6.2 The development proposals optimise the development opportunity of the site to provide 69 new dwellings for the Borough, including a significant amount of affordable housing. The proposals will provide a range of planning benefits for the site and surrounding area, as set out below:

- Effectively utilising sustainable land to deliver demanded high quality new homes including the provision of affordable homes;
- The provision of adequate private amenity space for each unit, as well as access to high quality landscaped communal amenity space;
- All units will meet nationally described space standards and building regulations;
- Provision of adequate private and visitor parking in line with policy requirements;
- The development will encourage sustainable modes of transport with the provision of walking and cycling, including secure cycle parking and storage;
- Sustainable design and construction measures will be utilised to reduce carbon emissions according with Building Regulations, such as the Fabric First approach; and
- The provision of contributions towards development infrastructure, in line with the SPD (to be secured via condition).

6.3 The Applicant has engaged in extensive pre-application consultation with MSDC and, wherever possible, the scheme reflects the comments that have been received. This Full Planning Application is supported by assessments and reports addressing technical issues.

6.4 This Planning Statement has assessed the material considerations arising from the proposals against the prevailing planning policy framework and has demonstrated that the scheme complies with the relevant national, regional and local planning policy guidance.