

Planning Statement

Project Title: Proposed New Dwelling at 48 Wickham Way

Date: 5 September 2025

Applicant: Mr Stephen Dowds

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement supports the application for the sub-division of the plot at 48 Wickham Way, Haywards Heath, and the construction of a single residential dwelling. The proposal has been developed in accordance with the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031), the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2016), the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (2020), and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024).

2. Site Description

Address: 48 Wickham Way, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1UQ

Area: 600 sqm

Existing Use: Garden plot within a private residential road.

The site lies within the built-up area boundary of Haywards Heath, a Category 1 settlement under District Plan Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy. Such settlements are recognised as sustainable locations for growth, given their range of services, employment opportunities, and transport links.

Wickham Way is characterised by detached two-storey dwellings, typically from the 1930s–50s, with Arts-and-Crafts influences. Properties are well-spaced, with front gardens and verdant boundary planting creating a coherent streetscape.

The site is not within a conservation area and has no specific ecological designations. It lies within Flood Zone 1.

3. Planning History

Applications in the late 1980s (HH/006/88 and HH/190/88) for additional dwellings on the site were refused under a different policy context, when policies favoured lower densities. Since then, national and local planning policy has evolved, placing greater emphasis on efficient land use and sustainable infill development within established settlement boundaries.

4. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024)

Relevant sections include:

- Paragraph 11 – presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- Paragraphs 8 & 9 – promoting sustainable patterns of development.
- Chapter 5 – delivering a sufficient supply of homes.
- Chapter 9 – promoting sustainable transport.
- Paragraphs 125, 131 & 135 – well-designed, beautiful and healthy places.
- Paragraph 139 – efficient use of land.

Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031)

- DP4 & DP5 – Housing and meeting future housing need.
- DP6 – Settlement hierarchy.
- DP17 – Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC (site lies beyond 7km zone).
- DP21 – Transport.
- DP26 – Character and Design.
- DP27 – Dwelling Space Standards.
- DP29 – Noise, air and light pollution.
- DP37 – Trees, woodland and hedgerows.
- DP38 – Biodiversity.
- DP39 – Sustainable design and construction.
- DP41 – Flood risk and drainage.

Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan (2016)

- H8 – Housing development within the built-up area boundary.
- E7 – Sustainable drainage.
- E8 – Sustainable development.

- E9 – Local character.
- E13 – Amenity space.
- T3 – Parking provision.

Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD (2020)

Relevant design principles: DG13–DG16 (frontages, enclosure, legibility, edges), DG21–DG24 (servicing, refuse, cycling), DG27 (landscaping), DG30 (inclusive design), DG37–DG39 (innovation and context).

5. Proposal and Design Justification

The proposal is for a two-storey, four-bedroom detached dwelling within the curtilage of 48 Wickham Way. The scheme represents sustainable residential infill in a Category 1 settlement, contributing to housing supply in line with DP4, DP5, and HHNP Policy H8.

Character and Design

- **Building line and spacing:** The new dwelling will be set back to align with the established building line of Nos. 48 and 52, ensuring it sits comfortably within the street scene. Adequate side spacing is maintained, respecting the rhythm and verdant character of Wickham Way (DP26; HHNP E9).
- **Architecture and Build Quality:** A high-specification timber-frame system will deliver excellent thermal performance. The design draws on Arts-and-Crafts features—red brick, clay-tiled pitched roof, modest gables—while incorporating subtle contemporary elements such as slim-line black-framed windows. Materials will match the local palette (DP26; HHNP E9).
- **Rear elevation:** The parapet-roofed rear element will be slightly inset from the side walls to ensure it reads as a subservient addition. Rear dormers are proportionate and subservient to the main roof (DP26).

Neighbour Amenity

- The dwelling is designed to safeguard the privacy, daylight, and outlook of neighbouring occupiers (DP29; HHNP E13).
- Flat roof sections will not be used as balconies, and conditions could secure this.
- The scheme will meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (DP27).

Trees, Landscaping and Biodiversity

- Two mature fir trees at the frontage will be removed due to scale, conflict with overhead cables, and construction needs. Four replacement trees (three birches and one Amelanchier) will be planted to maintain the green character of Wickham Way (DP37).

- As a self-build dwelling on a site under 0.5 hectares, the proposal is exempt from the statutory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain requirement introduced by the Environment Act 2021. Nevertheless, the applicant is committed to delivering biodiversity enhancements proportionate to the scale of the scheme, consistent with District Plan Policy DP38 and HHNP Policy E3. Measures include:
 - Portuguese Laurel hedging to front boundaries, underplanted with hardy geraniums.
 - A Hydrangea hedge, underplanted with ornamental grasses for seasonal structure.
 - Pollinator-friendly planting in shaded areas where vegetation currently fails under the fir canopy.
 - A mixed native hedgerow to the rear boundary.
 - Wildflower and perennial borders.
 - Bird boxes, a bat box, hedgehog highways, and a log pile.
- Collectively, these enhancements will deliver a clear ecological uplift while enriching the landscaped setting.

Transport, Parking and Servicing

- Two off-street parking spaces will be provided, consistent with West Sussex County Council guidance (DP21; HHNP T3).
- Secure cycle storage will be accommodated within the garden shed, and refuse/recycling storage will be integrated into the site layout, in line with SPD principles DG21–DG24.
- The proposal will utilise the existing vehicular access, which will be upgraded by widening the driveway to the existing parking area. The removal of the two fir trees at the site frontage will improve visibility and sightlines onto Wickham Way. The scheme will therefore provide safe and suitable access for all users, consistent with Policy DP21 of the District Plan. Given that no new access onto the public highway is proposed, a separate pre-application consultation with the Highways Authority is not considered necessary; however, the applicant remains willing to engage further if required during the application process.

Drainage and Flood Risk

- The site lies in Flood Zone 1 (low risk).
- A SuDS-compliant strategy will include a permeable driveway, rain gardens, and rainwater harvesting (DP41; HHNP E7).

Sustainable Design and Construction

- The dwelling adopts a fabric-first approach: high insulation, airtightness and high performance windows.

- Heating and hot water will be provided by an air source heat pump.
- An EV charging point will be installed.
- Locally sourced materials, where possible, will reduce embodied carbon.
- Measures meet and exceed DP39, HHNP E8, and align with the Future Homes Standard.

Garden Infill and Use of Land

- The proposal represents a modest infill within the established residential boundary of Haywards Heath, in accordance with Paragraph 71 of the NPPF, which supports the efficient use of land within existing settlements.
 - The scheme has been carefully designed to ensure that the size, scale, and appearance are appropriate to the context and maintain the existing spatial pattern of development in Wickham Way. The generous plot size ensures the new dwelling will not represent overdevelopment.
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6. Conclusion

The proposed dwelling at 48 Wickham Way:

- Sits within the built-up boundary of a Category 1 settlement, where infill is supported (DP4, DP5, DP6; HHNP H8).
- Respects the character of Wickham Way through appropriate siting, scale, spacing, and materials (DP26; HHNP E9; SPD DG13–DG16, DG39).
- Protects residential amenity and meets national space standards (DP27, DP29; HHNP E13).
- Provides sustainable drainage and proportionate biodiversity enhancements, together with tree replacement (DP37, DP38, DP41; HHNP E7, E3).
- Promotes sustainable transport and adequate parking (DP21; HHNP T3).
- Achieves high environmental performance and contributes to Mid Sussex's net zero objectives (DP39; HHNP E8).

In light of the above, the proposal represents a sustainable, policy-compliant development that will make a positive contribution to local housing supply, design quality, and environmental objectives. Planning permission is therefore respectfully sought.