



Design & Access Statement

PROPOSAL:
ERECTION OF SELF-BUILD SINGLE
STOREY DETACHED, TWO-BED
DWELLING WITH ANCILLARY CAR PORT

SITE:
DOWN PARK PLACE
TURNERS HILL ROAD
CRAWLEY DOWN
WEST SUSSEX RH10 4HQ

APPLICANT:
MR & MRS M TUPPEN

The Proposal

Consent is here sought for a contemporary two-bed, single storey, detached dwelling on land forming part of the curtilage of Down Park Place. Reproduced below and overleaf are elevations, floor plan and CGI renders of the proposal.

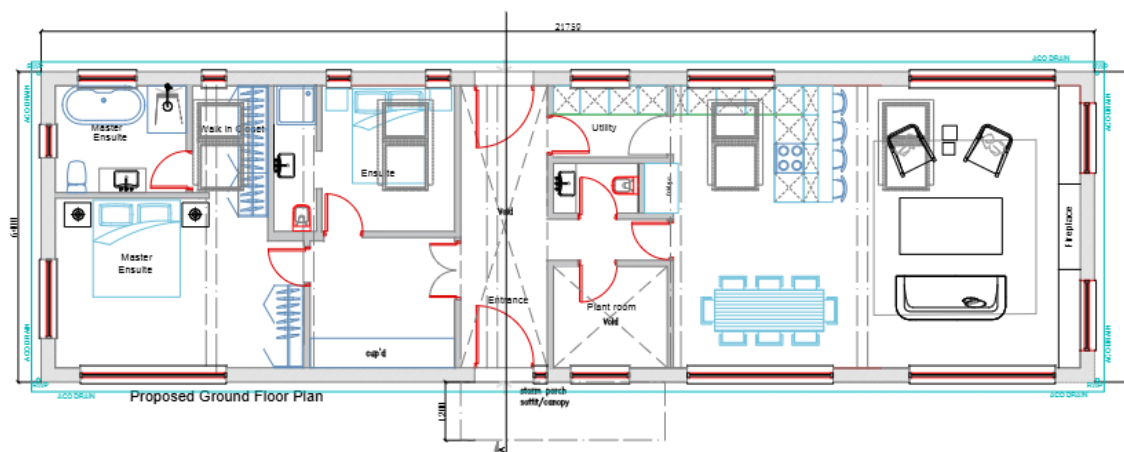


Figure 1 – Floor plan of proposed dwelling



Figure 2 – Elevations of proposed dwelling

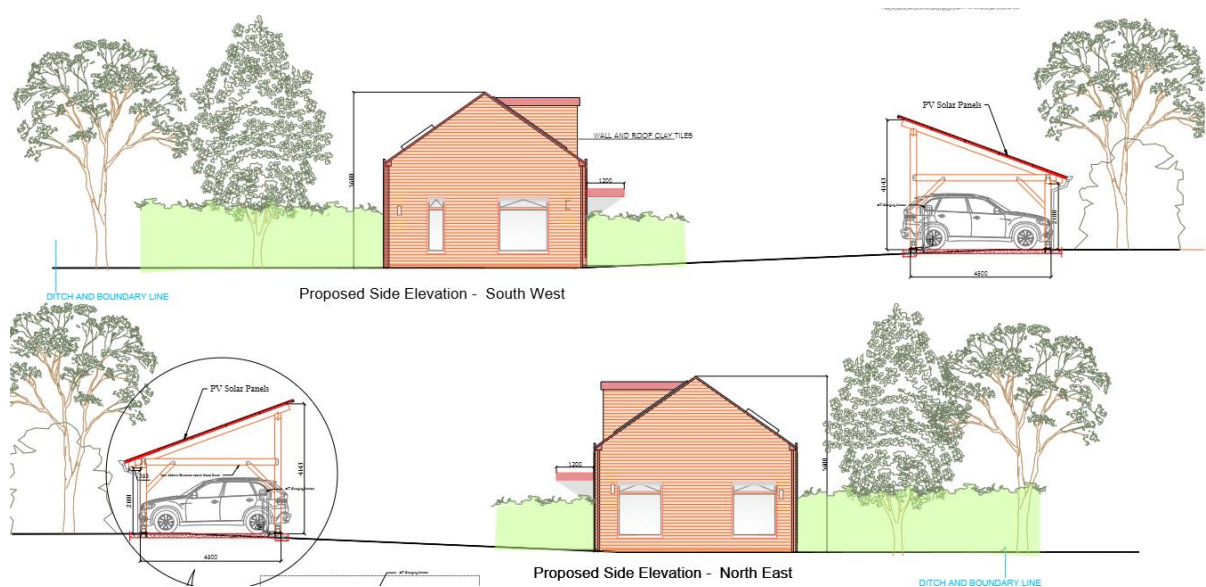


Figure 3 – Side elevations of proposed dwelling



Figure 4 – CGI renders of proposed dwelling

The dwelling will be located on the footprint of the ancillary domestic building approved under application ref. DM/24/2646. This application was approved on the 25th September 2025. Reproduced overleaf are the floor plans, elevations and block plan approved as part of this application.

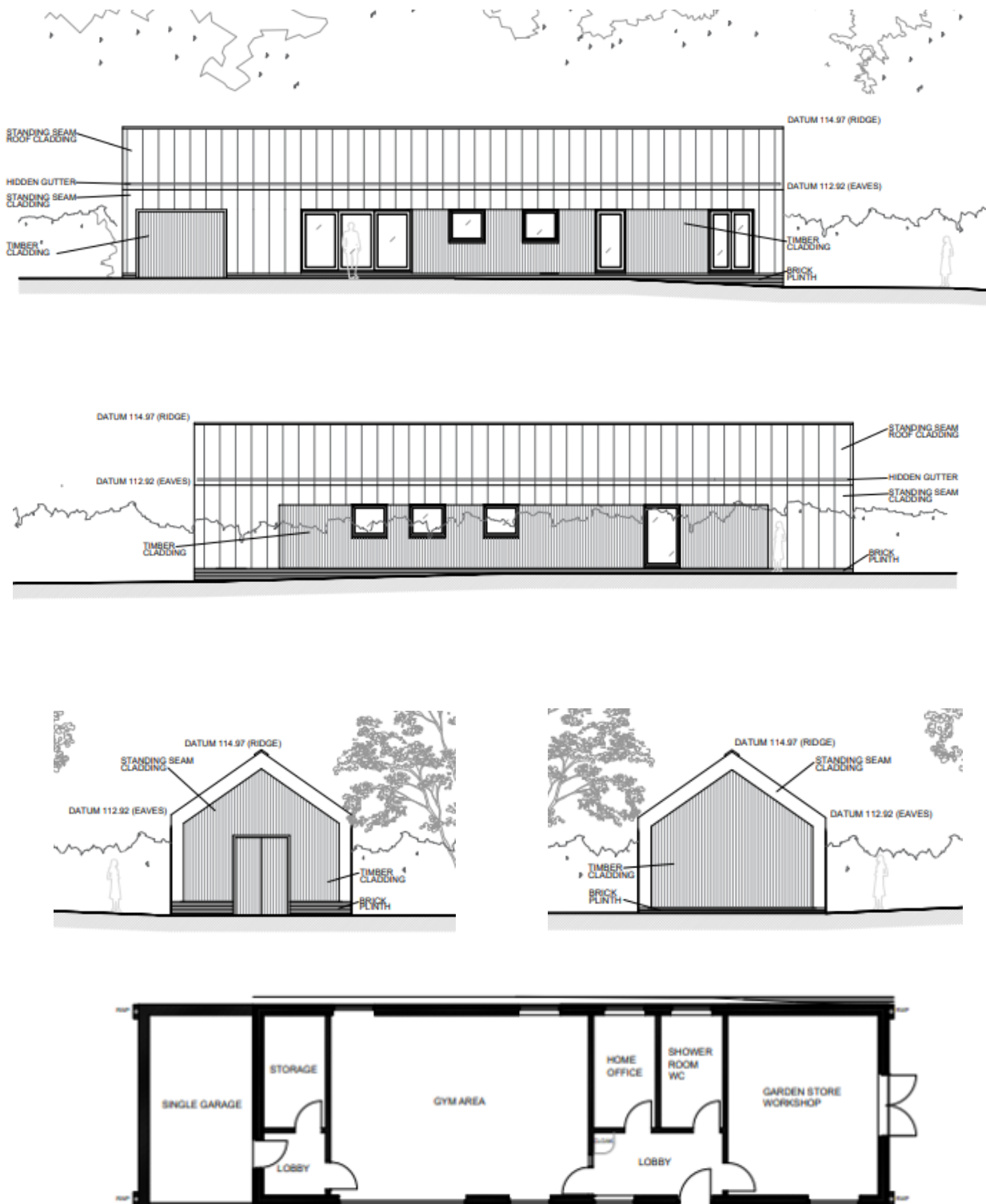


Figure 5 – Proposed elevations and floor plan of approved ancillary domestic building on the application site

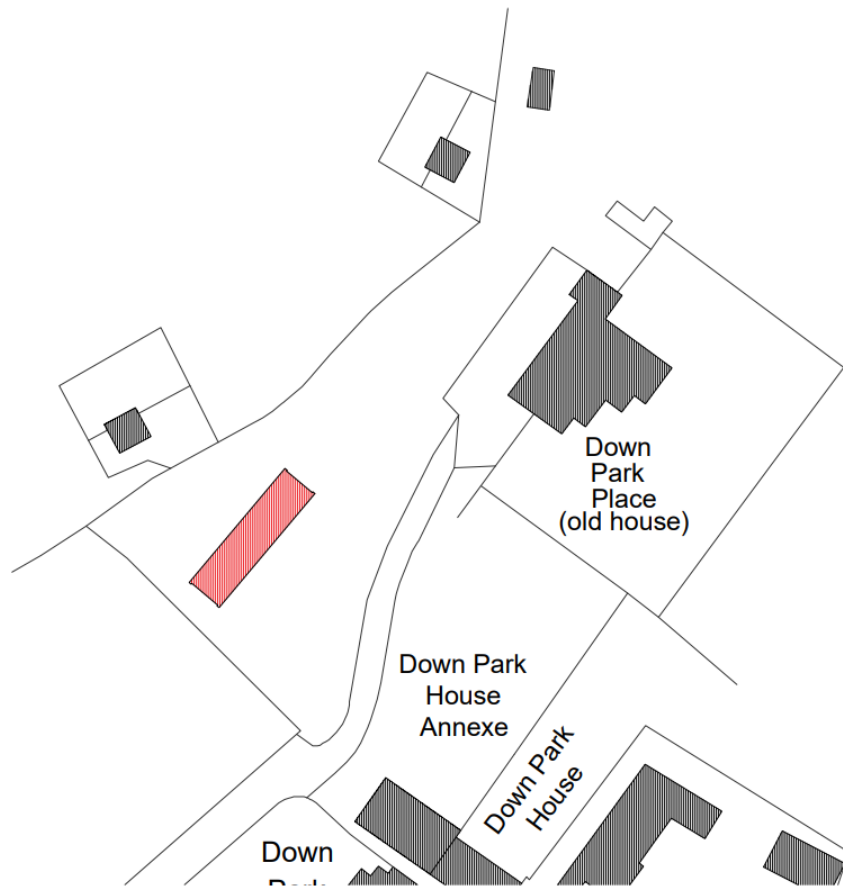


Figure 6 – Block plan of approved ancillary domestic building on the application site

Access to the proposed dwelling would be off the private drive leading to Down Park Place. Down Park Place sits to the east of the application site and is a modern, recently completed, replacement dwelling set within the Victorian walled garden originally attached to Down Park.

Down Park is a large, mid-19th century mansion, now split into multiple residential units.

The application is made as a self-build proposal, with the applicant intending to construct it themselves and subsequently reside in it. To this end, a condition requiring the applicants to construct the dwelling themselves and live in it for a minimum of 3 years upon completion would be accepted.

Context of the Application Site

Down Park Place comprises a recently completed replacement dwelling constructed in a striking contemporary style. It replaced a 1980's bungalow. As with the original dwelling, the replacement has been constructed cutting through one wall of a courtyard Victorian kitchen garden. This kitchen garden originally served the large mid-19th century mansion which forms Down Park. Down Park now comprises a total of five individual dwellings and is located immediately to the west of the application site.

The application site, itself, comprises part of the domestic curtilage to Down Park Place. Historically, the site was part of the kitchen garden and contained a series of glass houses, log store and boiler. Below is a 1910 OS extract demonstrating that the application site contained a number of buildings associated with the kitchen garden.

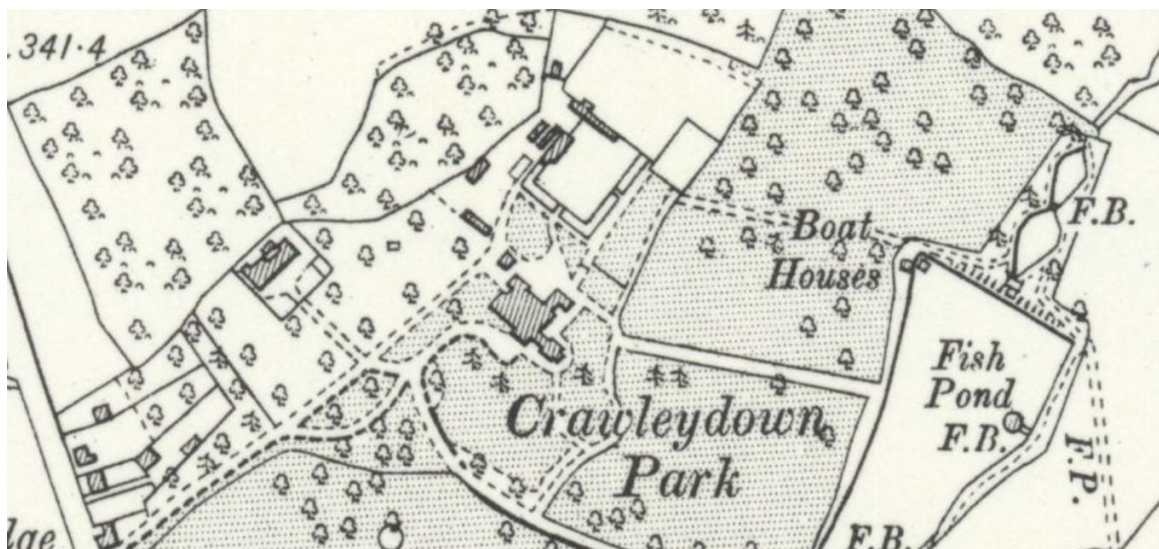


Figure 7 – 1910 OS extract showing the application site containing a number of buildings used as part of the kitchen garden associated with Crawleydown Park (now known as Down Park)

Until recently, one of these original buildings remained on site and was the log store used to store timber which fuelled the boiler heating the glass houses. This building had been used, until recently, as an ancillary domestic building by the original occupant of Down Park Place. The building was demolished as part of the approval for a replacement ancillary domestic building approved under application ref. DM/24/2646.

The footings of this building have been installed and the dwelling here proposed would be built off these foundations.

The application site has a number of mature trees, and these are plotted and described on the accompanying Arboricultural Survey.

Otherwise, the site has been cleared of undergrowth, but, as part of the Biodiversity Net Gain Plan, approved on application DM/24/2646, compensatory planting comprising largely hazel coppice, was proposed. This planting scheme is taken forward in the BNG report accompanying this application.

Down Park is a small cluster of development located on the east side of the B2028 Turners Hill Road. This runs south off the A264 Copthorne Road. Down Park lies on the northern edge of the settlement of Crawley Down. Crawley Down is a substantial settlement having a wide range of facilities and services. The centre of Crawley Down lies approximately 1km from the appeal site. The aerial photograph below places the appeal site in its wider context.



Figure 8 – Application site (red star) shown in relationship to the village of Crawley Down

As can be seen from **Figure 8**, the application site lies 1km to the north of Crawley Down. Crawley Down is a settlement containing a wide variety of services including Co-op convenience store, pharmacy, post office, pub, church and community centre and primary school. It is a vibrant settlement that continues to grow and is seen as a sustainable location for residential development.

The main bus service through the village (Metro Route 291) runs east/west between Crawley and Tunbridge Wells and takes in the settlements of Copthorne and East Grinstead. It runs an hourly daily service from about 6.30am to about 11pm on Mondays to Saturdays. A more limited service applies on Sundays. This bus service runs along the Turners Hill Road and there are stops just to the north of the entrance to the application site.

There is a footway running along the east side of Turners Hill Road from the application site which runs into Crawley Down village. It is a 10 – 15 minute walk into the village from this point.

Planning Policy Context

The statutory Development Plan comprises the following documents:

- Mid-Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031
- Mid-Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 Regulation 19 Submission
- Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan 2014 – 2031

Mid-Sussex District Plan 2014 - 2031

Relevant policies within the MSDP are:

- DP4 – Housing

The District Plan seeks to deliver a minimum housing provision of 16,390 homes in the Plan period 2014 – 2031. It provides for 14,892 dwellings with the remainder to be allocated in future site allocations DPD.

- DP12 – Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

The Policy states that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains, or where possible, enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District.

- DP21 – Transport

Development will be required to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011 – 2026. Decisions on development proposals will take account of whether the scheme is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel and appropriately located to facilitate use of alternative means of transport to the private car.

- DP26 – Character and Design

This Policy requires all development to be well designed and reflect the character of towns, villages and the surrounding countryside.

- DP38 – Biodiversity

This Policy requires that biodiversity be protected and enhanced by ensuring that development contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity. New development is required to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity through incorporating biodiversity features within developments.

- DP39 – Sustainable Design & Construction

This Policy requires development proposals to improve sustainability and, if appropriate, incorporate measures to minimise energy use through design and layout, explore opportunities for efficient energy supply and use of renewable sources of energy and maximise efficient use of resources.

Mid-Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 Regulation 19 Submission

The Mid-Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 is an emerging document that is presently undergoing examination by the independent Inspector. As the Plan is not adopted, the Policies contained therein are of some weight. Therefore, the following Policies are highlighted as they represent progressions from the adopted Local Plan and have a bearing on this case.

- Policy DPC3 – New Homes in the Countryside

Relevant sections of this Policy are reproduced below.

DPC3: New Homes in the Countryside

New homes in the countryside

New homes in the countryside, defined as areas outside the built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, will be permitted in specific circumstances, as set out below:

1. Accommodation is essential to enable the operation of an agricultural, forestry or similar rural enterprises requiring full time rural workers to live at, or near, their place of work;
2. In the case of new isolated homes in the countryside, where the design of the dwelling is of exceptional quality, is truly outstanding and would significantly enhance its immediate setting and is sensitive to the character of the local area;
3. Development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building;
4. The proposed development meets the requirements of

Policy DPH2: Sustainable Development – Outside the Built-Up Area;

5. The proposed development is not in conflict with Policy DPC1: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside; or
6. Affordable housing in accordance with Policy DPH10: Rural Exception Sites.

New 'granny annexes' that are physically separate to the dwelling are defined as a new home and are subject to the same requirements as above.

- DPH2 – Sustainable Development – Outside The Built-Up Area

This Policy is reproduced in full overleaf.

DPH2: Sustainable Development – Outside the Built-up Area

Outside defined built-up area boundaries, as defined on the Policies Map, the expansion of settlements will be supported where it meets identified local housing, employment and community needs and:

1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or Development Plan Document; or
2. Where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings the site is contiguous with an existing built-up area boundary, as defined on Policies Maps; and
3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy, as set out in Table 1.

The developer will need to satisfy the Council that:

4. The proposal does not represent an underdevelopment of the site with regard to Policy DPB1: Character and Design and Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD; or
5. A larger site is not brought forward in phases that individually meets the threshold but cumulatively does not.

Policy DPH6 – Self and Custom Build Housing

DPH6: Self and Custom Build Housing

The District Council believes that self and custom build housing has an important role to play in increasing housing choice in the district, consequently:

1. Proposals for self or custom build housing developments will be supported on suitable sites and subject to compliance with other relevant policies within the District Plan.
2. Provision of serviced plots for self or custom build housing will be encouraged on all new residential developments, subject to the level of demand for such housing, and the suitability of the development.
3. A minimum of 2% of the residential plots on housing sites comprising of 100 or more dwellings will need to be provided as serviced plots for self or custom build

- housing.
4. Serviced plots will need to have a water supply, foul and surface water drainage, telecommunications, and an electricity supply available at the plot boundary and legal access to a public highway.
 5. Affordable housing on self or custom build sites will need to be provided through an area of serviced land being made available at nil cost or through individual serviced plots being transferred at nil cost.
 6. A design code, prepared by the developer and agreed with the District Council, will need to be followed for each site and individual plot passports will also be required. The design code should be secured by a planning condition at the outline planning application stage.
 7. Each self or custom build plot will need to form a separate phase of the development in order to facilitate the timely submission of a reserved matters planning application by the intended occupant of each plot.
 8. Serviced plots will be marketed solely to households on the District Council's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register for a period of 6 months. If after the 6 months a plot has not been bought or reserved, it can be put on the open market as a self or custom build plot for a further 6 months. If a plot remains unsold after the period of 12 months, it must either remain on the market as a self or custom build plot or be offered to the District Council or an approved Registered Provider, before being built out by the developer as a market sale dwelling.
 9. Self or custom build plots must be made available at competitive prices, supported by an RICS valuation, which are fairly related to site/plot costs and agreed through the S106 agreement, in order to ensure their sale for such a purpose.

Communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans will be encouraged to identify suitable sites for self or custom build housing plots within their neighbourhood plan area.

The above policy will be monitored and kept under review, having regard to any changes to evidence of demand.

Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan 2014 – 2031

Relevant Policies within the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan include:

- CDNP01 – Securing Sustainable Local Infra-structure

The Policy states that development will be permitted where the necessary social, physical and green infra-structure needed to support the development is in place or can be provided in a timely manner through funded contributions.

- CDNP05 – Control of New Developments

This Policy requires the scale, form and height of new development to fit unobtrusively with any surrounding buildings and the character of the area. Amenities, including daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents, should be safeguarded. Plot sizes should be proportionate to the scale of the dwelling and materials should be compatible with the local area.

Suitable access is required and the use of traditional boundary treatment is encouraged.

- CDNP08 – Prevention of Coalescence

It states that development outside of the village boundary will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it does not detract from the openness and character of the landscape.

It should not contribute to ribbon development along roadsides or reduce the gaps between the village and neighbouring settlements.

- CDNP09 – Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity

Development will be expected to enhance and protect wildlife. Existing trees should be protected and appropriate planting of native trees and hedges secured.

- CDNP10 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

New development should provide safe vehicular and pedestrian access with adequate visibility. It should have adequate sustainable transport links to the principal village facilities, including village centre, primary school, health centre and recreation facilities.

Evaluation

Housing Land Supply

Mid-Sussex District Council is currently experiencing a serious shortfall in its Five-Year Housing Land Supply. The most recent analysis of this Supply was undertaken by the Inspector on appeal reference number:

APP/D/3830/W/24/3350075 – Land at Scamps Hill, Lindfield, RH16 2GT.

A copy of the decision dated 2nd May 2025 forms **Appendix A** of this Statement.

Reproduced below are the Inspector's conclusions contained in Paragraph 96.

96. The Council suggest they have 3.38 years housing land supply, whereas the Appellant suggests it is 2.41 years¹⁰. The variation is due to the differences in anticipated delivery of various large sites. However, as both parties agreed to describe the shortfall as significant, the issue was not contested at the Inquiry.

Under appeal reference number: APP/D3830/W/25/3373757 – Land North of Felbridge Road, Felbridge RH19 2SJ, the self-build housing land supply at Mid-Sussex District Council was analysed. The decision forms **Appendix B** of this Statement. It dates from the 10th March 2026. Reproduced below are Paragraphs 14 – 21.

14. The Housing and Planning Act (2016)² prescribes a statutory duty for the Council to give enough permissions in respect of serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding arising in each base period. The PPG confirms that the level of demand is established by reference to the number of entries added to an authority's register during a base period and that at the end of each base period, relevant authorities have three years in which to permission an equivalent number of plots of land, which are suitable for self-build and custom housebuilding, as there are entries for that base period³.
15. In terms of the demand, the Mid Sussex Self-Build and Custom Housing Register, sets out the demand for serviced plots over base periods from its creation in 2015. As of the latest base period 10, the evidence shows that 16 households were on the register.
16. The Council sets out that since 2020 they have undertaken an annual review of the register and removed entries who no longer wished to remain or did not re-pay the registration fee, and therefore contend that the register should not be viewed as a cumulative list. The Council has also referred to a scheme in Lindfield, Mid Sussex where consent was granted for three self-build/custom housing plots and despite being marketed for 24 months, only one plot was sold on this basis.

However, this represents a singular scheme and does not represent the whole demand for such plots within the district.

17. In any case, the legislation and PPG is clear in the statutory requirement to meet the demand arising from each base period. As such, I have had regard to whether sufficient permissions have been granted to meet the demand arising from the relevant base periods.
18. In relation to supply, I have been provided with two lists⁴ of purported self-build or custom housebuilding consents granted by the Council. In both cases, I have not been provided with a methodology or criteria which demonstrates how the Council determined the permissions counted as a consent for a self-build or custom housebuilding plot.
19. The list dated 02 August 2023 has been analysed by the appellant on the basis of whether self-build or custom housebuilding is referred to in the description of development and whether there is a condition or planning obligation securing the plots as self-build or custom housing. This is broadly in line with the approach set out in the PPG⁵ for methods which could be used to identify whether a permission is for self-build or custom housebuilding.
20. This analysis shows that only two permissions for a total of two plots met one of the appellant's criteria⁶ and were therefore suitable self-build or custom housebuilding plots, falling significantly short of the statutory duty. I have no reason to come to a different conclusion on this analysis, particularly as it has not been demonstrated by the Council its methodology or criteria in which it recorded each of the permissions within its purported supply. Whilst this analysis does not include the most recent base periods, it demonstrates that the Council had not met its duty to grant sufficient plots on the data analysed and contests how the Council has recorded such permissions.
21. It therefore follows that based on the evidence before me, on the balance of probabilities, the Council is not meeting its statutory requirements in relation to providing sufficient self-build and custom housing plots. As insufficient permissions have been granted by the Council to meet demand in accordance with the statutory duty, this is a material consideration in favour of granting permission.

These recent appeal decisions confirm both a significant shortage in the Five-Year Housing Land Supply and a shortage in the supply of self-build plots. Consequently, it is appropriate for the decision maker to consider a granting of planning consent for residential development on un-allocated sites outside the built-up area, where these are sustainably situated.

Sustainability Issues

Relevant Policies

Mid-Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031

DP12 and DP21

Mid-Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 Regulation 19 Submission

DPC3 and DPH2

Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan 2014 – 2031

CDNP01 and CDNP10

In locational terms, the application site is considered highly sustainable. It is located, not in open countryside, but within a tight cluster of residential development comprising Down Park and its immediate environs.

Historically, the application site was part of the kitchen garden serving the Victorian mansion and it contained a number of glasshouses along with boiler and log store. It is now part of the garden curtilage to Down Park Place, the property built within the walled garden of the original mansion. As such, it constitutes previously developed land and not open countryside.

There is an extant consent for a significant ancillary domestic building on the footprint of the proposed dwelling, and, in fact, the footings are already constructed.

This proposal simply seeks to use the envelop and footprint of the approved building to provide a two-bed single storey dwelling for the applicant's retirement. An increase in built form outside of the built-up area would therefore not result and there would be no harm to the character or appearance of the wider rural area.

Whilst outside the built-up area to Crawley Down, the site is located within convenient walking and cycling distance of the village centre. Crawley Down is a village which offers a wide range of services and facilities and comprises a self-contained community. It can meet the day-to-day needs of the occupants of the proposed dwelling and is only a 15-minute walk from the site. There is a footway along the west side of the Turners Hill Road.

Additionally, there are bus stops close to the entrance to the site off Turners Hill Road which serve Metro Bus Route 291. The route runs between Tunbridge Wells and Crawley and takes in settlements such as East Grinstead, Crawley Down and Copthorne. It has an hourly service in both directions, starting in the early morning and running into the late evening.

Residents of the new dwelling would have easy access to a regular public bus service giving access to three major conurbations and a number of intervening settlements.

The ease of access into Crawley Down by foot or cycle and the availability of a regular bus service make this a sustainable location in transport terms. Whilst lying a short distance to the north of Crawley Down, the site is not in open countryside but forms an established enclave of residential properties with association to the former Down Park House. This itself has been split into multiple residential units and the stables associated with it is now in commercial use.

Historically, the application site has contained a number of built forms and the extant permission for a significant ancillary domestic building is important as it means that this development will not increase built form outside the built-up area.

Emerging policy in the MSDC 2021 – 2039 is of particular relevance as it gives clear indication of further flexibility being introduced into planning policy to allow sustainable residential development outside of any defined built-up area.

Policy **DPC3** allows the permitting of residential dwellings in the countryside where the design is of exceptional quality and/or where it meets the requirements of Policy **DPH2**. It is contended that the design of this dwelling is of an exceptional standard.

Design & Construction

Relevant Policies

MSDP 2014- 2031

DP26 and DP39

CDNP 2014 – 2031

CDNP05

A high quality, contemporary design is proposed. It has substantial visual interest as demonstrated by the submitted CGI renders. This proposed single storey dwelling avoids suburban bungalow cliches. Whilst a rectangular footprint is proposed matching that of the approved garage/gym building, the property would have significant visual interest and would contribute positively to the environs of Down Park.

From the front, the elevation would be articulated with a central gable element cutting through the eaves. This feature would emphasise the modernity of the design and create significant visual interest to the main elevation.

Removal of external gutters and rainwater goods serves to further emphasise the modern credentials of the building.

It is a high quality, well considered design which would meet the relevant design policies within the Development Plan.

The massing and bulk of the proposed dwelling follows that established by the approval granted by the ancillary domestic building approved under DM/24/2646.

Its modest massing and bulk would ensure a successful assimilation into the immediate environment of Down Park.

It would be of a subsidiary scale to the main Victorian mansion and the recently completed replacement dwelling at Down Park Place.

Its contemporary design would complement the contemporary architecture of both Down Park Place and Smoke Tree House, the recently extended northern portion of Down Park.

The limited massing and bulk of the new dwelling would ensure that it would not form a prominent or obtrusive feature within the wider context and would not be open to medium or longer distance views from surrounding countryside. This limited massing and bulk would protect visual amenity and avoid any harm to any immediately neighbouring property.

The new dwelling has been designed to achieve the highest energy efficiency rating and to provide a significant element of on-site energy generation.

The sustainability credentials of the building are set out more in detail in the Sustainability Appraisal which accompanies this application.

An electric vehicle charging point is proposed and cabling for a high-speed internet connection has already been laid to the Turners Hill Road as part of the replacement dwelling project at Down Park Place. The new dwelling would have access to this cabling.

The dwelling will be designed to meet a maximum water consumption of 110 litres per day per person. This will be aided through the installation of the proposed grey water recycling facility and the use of restricted flow taps and showers and water efficient washing and dish washing machines.

Access & Parking

Policies:

- CDNP05 – Control of New Developments
- CDNP10 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

Development Plan policy requires new developments to have a safe and convenient access and to provide adequate off-street parking. Both these points are met by this proposal.

The crossover onto Turners Hill Road, that serves Down Park, has good visibility in both directions. The road is straight at this juncture and lies within a 40mph speed limit.

Estimated visibility splays are 2.4 metres x 90 metres in both directions. Photographs overleaf demonstrate these available splays at a distance of 2.4 metres back from the public highway.



***Figure 9 – North visibility
splay onto Turners Hill Road***



***Figure 10 – South visibility
splay onto Turners Hill Road***

The access road to Down Park is partly owned by the applicant and partly by a third party. The road is of sufficient width to accommodate the additional traffic associated with the one dwelling here proposed. It is a road that serves a limited number of properties and is not heavily trafficked.

Adequate off-street parking is available on the site and secure cycle parking can be provided. Cycle parking can be secured by an appropriate planning condition.

Conclusion

The following facts lend strong support to this proposal:

- ✚ A substantial shortfall in the Five-Year Housing Land Supply for MSDC and a proven shortfall in the availability of self-build plots.
- ✚ The position of the site, in a sustainable location, a modest walking distance to the centre of Crawley Down village. A settlement that contains a wide range of services and facilities.
- ✚ Good access to public transport. The Metro Bus Route 291 having stops a short distance from the entrance drive. The Route offers regular hourly bus services running between Tunbridge Wells and Crawley.
- ✚ The site's sensitive positioning within the Down Park environs. This limits impact on the countryside and rural amenities with a development representing a sensitive piece of infilling on previously developed land.
- ✚ An extant permission for an ancillary domestic building on the site, having the same siting, massing and bulk as the proposed dwelling. Thus ensuring no increase in built form over and above what is already approved.
- ✚ No harmful impact on the residential amenities of surrounding properties.
- ✚ Development within the domestic curtilage of Down Park Place on a site that has historically contained significant buildings when the site was part of the kitchen gardens to the Victorian mansion.
- ✚ No loss of important landscape features, including hedges or trees, and agreed replacement planting to meet BNG requirements. Such landscaping to include substantial areas of scrub planting and hazel coppice. This being a very natural and appropriate planting schedule.