

Former Site Office, Crabbet Park

**Planning Statement (inc.
Sustainability Statement)**

HY/AB/34606

April 2025



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of Peacock 5 Ltd ("the Applicant"), to accompany a planning application for the demolition of an existing building (Site Office associated with Crabbets Park Equestrian Centre) and erection of a new dwelling at Crabbet Park, Turners Hill Road, Worth RH10 4SW.
- 1.1.2 The full description of the development is as follows:
- "The demolition of the existing site office and construction of a single dwelling and associated works."*
- 1.1.3 This Planning Statement provides an overview of the application site, planning history and development proposals. It identifies the relevant planning policies in the Statutory Development Plan that are applicable to this proposal. It then sets out the planning considerations which are regarded as material to the determination of the application.
- 1.1.4 The report concludes that the proposal is sustainably located, appropriate in planning terms and accordingly considers that planning permission be granted.

1.2 ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

- 1.2.1 The following documents form part of the planning application submission.

DOCUMENT	AUTHOR
ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTS	
Application Form	DHA Planning
Planning Statement	DHA Planning
REPORTS	
Noise Survey and Assessment	Paceconsult
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	arbtech
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment	arbtech
Tree Survey Schedule and Tree Constraints Plan	Arb Consultancy Ltd
Heritage Impact Assessment	HCUK Group
DRAWINGS	
038-002-PL00-Proposed Block Plan	
038-003-PL00-Existing Site Plan	
038-005-PL00-Proposed Site Plan	
038-010-PL00-Existing Plans and Elevations	
038-020-PL00-Proposed Plans	
038-030-PL00-Proposed Front and Rear Elevations	

DOCUMENT

AUTHOR

038-031-PL00-Proposed Side Elevations

2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

2.1 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1 This site located entirely within the authority of Mid Sussex (West Sussex), situated on the edge of Crawley, directly to the east of the M23 motorway.
- 2.1.2 The 0.08 ha site is set within the grounds of an existing equestrian centre, Crabbet Park. It is located directly to the east of the M23, 3km east of Crawley Town Centre, and 5km south east of London Gatwick Airport. The site is accessed off a shared road to the north of Turners Hill Road and west of Old Hollow.
- 2.1.3 The existing site office sits to the East of the central courtyard and is constructed of a timber frame structure, timber weatherboarding and casement windows, clay tile roof, and is elevated on brick piers and staddle stones. It has been vacant since approximately 2015. Its former use was as a site office associated with the wider equestrian use.
- 2.1.4 The building is not listed, nor is it located within a conservation area.
- 2.1.1 The site is surrounded by a number of buildings in various commercial and residential uses. To the south lies Nuffield Gym and Holiday Inn complex. To the north is a residential block of flats with associated gardens and to the east and west the equestrian buildings associated with Crabbet Park.
- 2.1.2 Part of Crabbet Park remains in equestrian use but the quality of the buildings is deteriorating and many of the buildings as a result remain vacant. The wider complex is subject to development proposals for holiday lets which is due to be submitted in due course.



FIGURE 1: AERIAL SHOWING THE SITE LOCATION

2.2 ACCESS

- 2.2.1 The site's primary vehicular access is to the south of the site from a well-established priority junction off of Turners Hill Road. This forms a private access which serves the site and the surrounding mixed-use neighbouring properties.

2.3 POLICY DESIGNATIONS AND SITE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Heritage

- 2.3.1 There are three designated assets within the vicinity of the site, these comprise of:
- Tennis Court and Orangery at Crabbet Park (Grade II* Listed – 1025536),
 - Pear Tree House, Crabbet Park (Grade II Listed – 1182646) and,
 - Crabbet Park (Grade II* Listed – 1025535).

Flood Risk/Drainage

- 2.3.2 The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning shows the entire site to be located within Flood Zone 1, which means that the site is at low risk of flooding from nearby rivers and the sea. Additionally the site has a very low chance of surface water flooding.

Environmental and Spatial Designations

- 2.3.3 The proposed development site is located to the east of Crawley Town Centre, in an area characterised by both rural landscape and built development. The key landscape features within the site are found along the boundaries in the form of trees and hedgerows.
- 2.3.4 The site is not within the South Downs National Park, or its setting, nor is it covered by the High Weald National Landscape or the Metropolitan Green Belt.

2.4 PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.4.1 A review of MSDC's public access system revealed there is no recent planning history for the site. However, there is one recent application within proximity to the site:

REFERENCE	PROPOSAL	DECISION
DM/23/3221	Replacement Dwelling	Approved 22/02/24

2.4.2 Planning permission was granted by MSDC in relation to the replacement dwelling who considered the proposal acceptable on the following grounds:

- The application was assessed against the policies in the development plan, and it aligns with the guidelines outlined in DP15 of the District Plan, which supports replacement dwellings in the countryside.
- The proposed replacement dwelling has a design and scale that is considered sensitive to the character of the area. It is designed to enhance the quality of the built landscape, particularly because it will replace an existing building that is in very poor condition.
- The development was evaluated in terms of its impact on heritage assets. It was found that the proposal would preserve the setting of the Grade II listed buildings to the north of the site, ensuring no adverse impact on their historical value.
- The proposal provides sufficient parking, and it is considered that the replacement dwelling would not give rise to any likely significant impacts on existing residential amenities.

2.4.3 The site is currently under construction.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1.1 The full description of the development is as follows:

"The demolition of the existing site office and construction of a single dwelling and associated works."

3.1.2 The current unit has been vacant for around 10 years, and is in poor condition. Planning permission is sought to demolish this building and replace it with a single two-bed dwelling.

3.1.3 The Applicant is keen to ensure the dwelling is replaced to a high standard and in a way that it aesthetically represents the history of the site.

3.1.4 The layout largely replicates the footprint of the existing building, albeit extends out on the south western park of the building.

3.1.5 The layout has evolved through a careful review of the site's opportunities and constraints, following early advice from specialist consultants on heritage, landscape, ecology and others. The most pertinent of these includes:

- Rebuilding the granary. This would 'restore' the oldest part of the building and provide a legible link to the past use of the site and its wider estate.
- The granary would comprise of more traditional materials, including painted timber cladding and heritage aluminium windows.
- Proposed grass and hedgerow native species mix within the site's surroundings.

3.1.6 The dwelling will be accessed via the existing track which serves Crabbet Park. A small area is proposed to the west of the dwelling to provide two car parking spaces, constructed from hoggin road surface. This is in line the parking standards set out within the Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan.

3.1.7 Secure storage for bicycles is provided for in the garden. A bin store is provided in the same manner and will be incorporated within the existing bin collection strategy for the wider Crabbet Park Site.

3.1.8 The existing unit is connected into the mains sewer system. The proposed replacement dwelling will utilise this existing connection. Should any repair works be required, these will be consulted with the Water Authority and undertaken at the same time.

3.1.9 Subject to ground conditions investigation, Surface water will be diverted into newly designed and installed soakaways. These will be designed in detail by a Civil Engineer as part of the technical design package. Should the ground conditions not allow for a simple soakaway design, a fully incorporated SuDS scheme will be developed and implemented instead.

4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 OVERVIEW

- 4.1.1 Under the provisions of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan in force unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.1.2 In this case, the adopted Development Plan of most relevance to this site comprises:
- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (2018)
 - Saved policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004)
 - Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (2022)
 - Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan (2021).
- 4.1.3 In addition to these Development Plans, other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) ('NPPF'), the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan Review, and the various supplementary planning documents, guidance and technical notes adopted at the local level.
- 4.1.4 There are number of 'saved' policies set out in the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004). However, these policies are not relevant to the application site and so are not discussed any further. The site is not allocated in the Mid Sussex Small Scale Housing Allocations DPD, therefore there are no relevant policies, and this document is also not discussed further.

4.2 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mid Sussex District Plan (2018)

- 4.2.1 The Mid Sussex District Plan was adopted on 28th March 2018 and sets out the spatial strategy and accompanying development policies for new development in Mid Sussex within the period between 2014 and 2031. The following policies are of relevance to this site.

POLICY	POLICY NAME
DP6	Settlement Hierarchy
DP12	Protection and Enhancements of Countryside
DP15	New Homes in the Countryside
DP26	Character and Design
DP27	Dwelling Space Standards
DP28	Accessibility

POLICY	POLICY NAME
DP34	Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
DP38	Biodiversity
DP39	Sustainable Design and Construction

Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2031

- 4.2.2 The Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' (adopted) in September 2021. This does not include site allocations.
- 4.2.3 The Site is located within the "Agricultural Belt" character area (Policy CNP9) which notes that development should be high quality which takes account of immediate locality. Other relevant policies include CNP15: Car Parking.

4.3 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

- 4.3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. A revised NPPF was published in December 2024 and is a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 4.3.2 **Paragraph 7** asserts that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 4.3.3 **Paragraph 8** states that to help achieve sustainable development, it means that the planning system has three overarching objectives as follows:
- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

4.3.4 **Paragraph 11** states that plans and decision making should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision making this means:

- approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

Mid Sussex District Plan Review

4.3.5 MSDC is in the process of preparing a revised District Plan which is currently at Examination. This Plan has some weight in the consideration of this application. Of relevant to this application includes policies:

- DPS2 – Sustainable Design and Construction
- DPN2- Biodiversity Net Gain
- DPC3- New Homes in the Countryside
- DPB1 – Character and Design
- DPB2- Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
- DSPC3- Land at Crabbet Park

4.4 MID SUSSEX HOUSING SUPPLY

4.4.1 Paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, as set out in adopted strategic policies. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should include the requisite buffer of 5% or 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply.

- 4.4.2 The District's 5YHLS has recently been confirmed in the "Updated Statement of Common Ground on Housing Land Supply at 1st April 2024" agreed between Mid Sussex and Gladman Developments Ltd in the determination of the appeal relating to application reference DM/24/0446, dated 18th December 2024. A6:

"Both parties agree that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5YHLS as it is required to under paragraph 78 of the Framework. Against the local housing need of 1,356 dwellings (calculated by the December 2024 revised Standard Method) and a 5% buffer (as now required by the updated Framework), the Council's deliverable supply of 4,815 dwellings equates to 3.38 years..."

- 4.4.3 The Council cannot, therefore, demonstrate a five year supply of housing and accordingly, the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in para 11 d) of the NPPF applies. This means planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

5 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 INTRODUCTION

- 5.1.1 This section considers the proposed development against the provision of the policies contained within the statutory development plan, and other material considerations as outlined in Section 4.

5.2 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 5.2.1 The Site is located in the countryside, outside of a defined settlement as identified through MSDP Policy DP6, MSDP Policy DP15, and emerging Policy DPC3, which relate to 'New Homes in the Countryside' apply. The proposed development will result in the demolition of an existing rural enterprise building (former site office associated with the equestrian centre). Policy DP15 and emerging Policy DCP3 makes clear that the reuse and adaptation of rural buildings for residential use in the countryside will be permitted where it is not a recently constructed agricultural building which has not been or has been little used for its original purpose and:

- the re-use would secure the future of a heritage asset; or
- the re-use would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting and the quality of the rural and landscape character of the area is maintained.

- 5.2.2 Whilst it is not proposed to retain the existing building; structurally it is unsound, the proposed development seeks to sensitively replicate the design of the current structure, particularly in light of the granary element which is considered to provide a heritage interest. Accordingly, in line with the second element, the new use would lead to an enhancement of the immediate setting and not only maintain but enhance the quality of the rural and landscape character of the area. The Site is within an established commercial area, surrounded by commercial and residential uses. Accordingly, it does not read as "countryside" in the immediate vicinity. As such, the development complies with the broad provisions of Policy DP15, and the provisions of Policy DP12 by ensuring the continued protection and enhancement of the countryside.

- 5.2.3 It is also noted that the land to the north, south and east is identified in the emerging Plan for strategic growth, to provide a new settlement at Crabbet Park to provide in the region of 2,000 dwellings. The application Site is therefore on the edge of this proposed new settlement, and in line with emerging Policy DPH2, would form a contiguous extension to this new settlement in a sustainable location.

- 5.2.4 Whilst the proposed development is not a replacement dwelling, we do note that in line with Policy DP15, highway, access and parking requirements can be met (see below), and the proposed development will enhance the quality of the natural and built environment.

- 5.2.5 In our view, the proposed development broadly aligns with the provisions of the development plan. It will replace a redundant rural enterprise business with a

residential use that will provide an opportunity to improve the heritage and quality of design in this rural location.

- 5.2.6 Notwithstanding this, we note that given MSDC does not have a five year supply of housing. The consequence of not being able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply of deliverable housing sites is that the development boundaries from the adopted local plan and related restrictions on development in the countryside must be acknowledged as out-of-date.
- 5.2.7 The NPPF states that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' must be applied which means granting permission for new development unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas of assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits the presumption in favour of development kicks.
- 5.2.8 Adverse impacts include situations where a development would conflict with a Neighbourhood Plan adopted within the 5 years prior to the decision where it contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement. The Copthorne Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' (adopted) in September 2021 but does not protect the parish from this presumption as it did not include any site allocations.
- 5.2.9 The presumption in favour of sustainable development effectively reduces the weight that can be attached to policies restricting development on land not allocated for development, and on those sites which do not strictly comply with the adopted District Plan, so long the adverse impacts of allowing development on such sites would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 5.2.10 The "tilted balance" is so called because an application should not be refused simply because there are adverse impacts of a scheme to be weighed up against any benefits as part of a normal balancing exercise; the use of the phrase "significantly and demonstrably" means that to outweigh the benefits, any harm would need to be both significant and be clearly evidenced. As we evidence in this section below, there are no issues arising in terms of potential design, heritage or ecology matters which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of introducing a high quality building on this site, and delivering a residential dwelling.

5.3 DESIGN AND LAYOUT

- 5.3.1 The site plan submitted within this application demonstrates how the development will be arranged on site to ensure that it is appropriate to its heritage and respects key existing landscape features.
- 5.3.1 Policy DP26: Character and Design indicates that all development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, are required to be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. It is stated that all applicants will be required to be of High-quality design with appropriate landscaping and greenspace.

- 5.3.2 The existing building will be dismantled in its entirety given that it is currently structurally unsound. In order to retain as much of the character of the granary as possible the proposed development will use the existing staddle stones and replicate the appearance of the building in its exact location.
- 5.3.3 The proposal is for the former granary to form the kitchen to a new two bedroom unit, with the main majority of accommodation within a new timber clad cottage that is heavily influenced in design by the newly rebuilt Stables Cottage. This will produce an L-shaped building, with the granary clearly separated on its west elevation through the use of a glazed link with steps up to the kitchen/diner.
- 5.3.4 In reorientating the building there are several advantages:
- (i) it allows for the separation of the granary so that it can be restored back to its original small, square footprint, while being put to use and thus ensuring its long term maintenance and location
 - (ii) it provides a visual framing to the view looking south onto the Coronation Stables, which are highly symmetrical.
 - (iii) It provides a visual buffer in view looking southeast toward the modern leisure centre, covering more of its very close and obvious west elevation.
 - (iv) It represents a nod to the pre-1936 arrangement of courtyard buildings facing Stables Cottage.
- 5.3.5 The granary would comprise of more traditional materials, including painted timber cladding, heritage aluminium windows and the use of the existing saddle stones.
- 5.3.6 The design of the building represents a significant enhancement over the current structure, whilst respecting and enhancing the heritage elements. It complies with the provisions of Policy DP26.

5.4 HERITAGE

- 5.4.1 Policy DP34 states that development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment. The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District.
- 5.4.2 As previously noted, the existing building is structurally unsound and is unsafe to retain. A replacement building is therefore required which has been designed to sensitively reflect the heritage value of the existing building.
- 5.4.3 This concludes that the like for like replacement of the building in terms of its external appearance will result in a more architecturally successful outcome than the existing arrangement and will better reveal the historical interest of the

granary. On balance, in accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF the proposal is assessed as preserving its heritage values.

- 5.4.4 Further, the HIA concludes that will be no harm caused to any of the three listed buildings, Crabbet Park House, Pear Tree Cottage or the Tennis Court/Orangery and paragraphs 214-215 of the NPPF are not engaged by the proposal.
- 5.4.5 Accordingly, the proposed development is in accord with Policy DP34 and emerging Policy DPb2.

5.5 ECOLOGY AND TREES

- 5.5.1 An Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment has been prepared by arbtech to demonstrate compliance with MSDC Policy 38. This accompanies the planning application.
- 5.5.2 The Ecological Assessment confirms that the existing building has potential for bats to roost, and accordingly recommends further surveys. These will be undertaken between the appropriate survey season (May to August) and any mitigation can be secured accordingly i.e. bat license secured to demolish the buildings. Alongside, there is a recognition that building works could disrupt bird nesting and the report identifies the appropriate mitigation.
- 5.5.3 No impacts are anticipated in terms of badgers, riparian animals, dormice, great crested newts or reptiles. However, precautionary working methods are proposed and this can be secured through a condition.
- 5.5.4 The ecological value of the Site is fully understood, and appropriate mitigation identified. Accordingly, the proposed development adheres to Policy DP38.
- 5.5.5 A BNG assessment accompanies the application. This confirms the proposed development does not achieve the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain. The residual loss and 10% net gain will be provided either elsewhere at Crabbet Park or via an off-site habitat bank.

5.6 NOISE

- 5.6.1 A Noise assessment has been prepared which accompanies this application. This recognises that the site is affected by aircraft, traffic and noise emission from the adjacent gym, and identifies appropriate mitigation to be incorporated within the design to ensure future residents of the site are protected from the existing ambient noise. If mitigation measure are included the specified internal noise levels, future residents of the proposed development will be protected from the dominant noise sources. Mitigation measures should include the use of appropriate glazing coupled with trickle ventilation.
- 5.6.2 Accordingly, the development is in line with the provisions Policy DP29.

5.7 SUSTAINABILITY

- 5.7.1 The proposed development provides an opportunity to provide a new dwelling which performs to a high environmental standard now expected of homes.
- 5.7.2 The new dwelling will need to meet the minimum standards set out in Part L of the Building Regulations but will in fact aim to surpass these, and the scheme will accord with the provisions of Policy DP39.
- 5.7.3 The first step in reducing the energy consumption and therefore environmental impact of the dwelling is to first consider the fabric itself. High levels of insulation will be proposed to minimise the flow of heat to and from the inside of the dwelling.
- 5.7.4 The next key thing to consider is the air tightness of the replacement building. The fabric will be designed to incorporate a continuous vapour control layer which in turn will maximise the air tightness and improve thermal efficiency.
- 5.7.5 Where possible, material will be sourced locally and selected from the Green Specification Guide. Timber will also be acquired from sustainably managed sources.
- 5.7.6 Hard landscaping will allow water to percolate naturally into the ground, whilst rainwater from the building will be diverted to soakaways to manage the flow of surface water from the site.
- 5.7.7 It is also important that systems in the dwelling reduce the consumption of water. To this end the fittings will typically meet Part G of the Building Regulations for items as follows:
- Flow restrictors and aeration taps
 - Low-flow, aerated showers
 - Dual flush WC's
- 5.7.8 Photovoltaic panels are to be installed on the roof, providing a renewable source of electricity which will further increase the proposal's sustainability.

6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning on behalf of Peacock 5 Ltd ("the Applicant"), to accompany a planning application for the demolition of an existing building (Site Office) and erection of a new dwelling at Crabbet Park.
- 6.1.2 It has been concluded that the presumption in favour of sustainable development currently applies by virtue of a lack of five-year housing land supply Mid Sussex Districts. In such circumstances the National Planning Policy Framework states that planning permission must be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed, or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
- 6.1.3 As noted above, the proposed development is fully acceptable in terms of design, heritage and ecological issues. It will restore an active use to this part of the site, and incorporate elements of the former building's design to reflect the heritage value of this building.