



Land adjacent to Glynde Station, BN8 6SS – New Dwellinghouse  
Written Design Statement – May 2022

Site

The application site is located within the Sussex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – part of the South Downs National Park and within the Glynde Conservation Area.

The site itself is a Brownfield site which was the former station yard and sits immediately adjacent to the north side of the railway tracks at the west end of Glynde Station. The site includes an access track (which is also a right of way) which connects Glynde Station carpark at the east and the electricity substation situated at the west end of the site.

The site, whilst having high levels of public visibility from most directions, is nevertheless a place where several contrasting conditions meet: To the immediate north there is open grassland stretching to Glynde Reach (the waterway) and beyond to the village playing fields, with Mount Caburn in the distance. To the immediate south of the site is the eastbound station platform and train track.



Fig 1 – Site Location

The east end of the site borders with Glynde Station carpark, which shares its use with Airworks Paragliding School (which occupies some of the old station buildings) and a steel fabrication workshop which currently occupies the three-storey Grade II Listed building known as 'The Mill' to the immediate north east of the site. Both the station building and Mill are characterful, if very different buildings, and are referred to as such in the Conservation Area Appraisal. The white-rendered, most westerly building of the station building range ('Station House') is the old Railway Masters house and is currently a single family dwelling, whose garden backs on to the site.

The west end of the site retains a more industrial feel, with the utilitarian substation compound contained within a heavy duty security perimeter fence. The site itself has a recent history of disuse, fly-tipping and deterioration, which this application seeks in part to address.

### Proposals and Use

Being a largely redundant brownfield plot, but nevertheless arguably within the developed curtilage of the village (there are buildings on three sides of the site), it is proposed to construct a family home on the site. The design aims to achieve a traditional style building which responds to the four distinctly varied environments as described above and which responds to the sensitivities of the larger national park, the village and to its varied neighbours. It is also proposed to construct a building of the very best environmental and sustainable credentials, with a fraction of the energy consumption normally required by current building regulations – to Passivhaus principles.

### Planning Policy and Advice

This application is a resubmission of an earlier application (reference number SDNP/20/05164/FUL) that was withdrawn in 2021. The current application improves upon the earlier application – with a smaller (two bedroom) dwelling proposed, and with a more traditional design that respects other buildings in the vicinity.

In addition, an earlier iteration of the scheme was submitted in a request for pre-application advice in 2016. Written comments were received at the time from Lewes District Council officer Steve Howe (his letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2016 – Ref: SDNP/16/01957/PRE), who recommended that if a residential building were to be considered for the site, it would need to be of modest size and low key in an unobtrusive way. He also advised that a contemporary structure may be appropriate in this location and that the tidying up of the site and the enhancement of the setting of the neighbouring listed building would be an important consideration.

The impact on setting is clearly critical in this location and for this reason an in-depth visual impact study by way of a series of detailed photomontages has been carried out to assess the impact of the building on the many different views into the site (see below)

### Scale and Layout.

The footprint of the proposed two bedroom dwelling has been designed to achieve the following key attributes:

- 1) Straddles the existing access track and allows space for the re-routing of the track closer to the south boundary of the site to maintain the vehicular right of way to the westerly substation compound.
- 2) Focuses the building away from the railway tracks and instead towards the north west - providing external recreational space at the north side of the house. Garden walls along the south side of the garden area will give privacy and critical acoustic attenuation between the gardens and railway lines.
- 3) Keeps the new building as close as practically possible to the cluster of buildings to which it relates to minimise the projection of the development beyond the indicative building line at the edge of the village.

The form has been developed to achieve the following:

- 1) A single storey pitched roof design with rooms in the roof to make a building of an equivalent height to the adjacent station buildings and to be subservient to the Listed Mill building.
- 2) A traditional form & material pallet to soften the appearance of the house and to visually 'embed' the house into the rolling landscape and the traditional vernacular appearance of the surrounding buildings.

### Design and Materials

The local vernacular is quite unique with the distinctive hillside terraces of Trevor Gardens and the Malthouse Cottages being local landmarks identifiable from some distance. Besides these large, repeating forms, the Conservation Area is distinctly varied, the village boasting attractive, individual historic buildings in a variety of styles and eras. Nevertheless, the overall tone of the village seems to be defined by an overall majority of grey, knapped flint walls, often with muted highlights of red, Sussex brick.

The immediate site is a little more varied materially, with the neighbouring Mill and station in a natural slate roof. The Mill's walls are clad predominantly in slate. The station building is in two-tone brick and the neighbouring 'Station House' rendered and painted white.

The proposed house will be predominantly finished in knapped flint, with the car port clad in locally sourced sweet chestnut cladding - naturally weathered. The house will sit on a low plinth of Sussex brick.

The design style of the proposed dwelling, with its traditional form and building materials, will sit well into the backdrop of the village when viewed from both close by & from a distance. The use of slate to finish the roof structure will also allow the building to blend into its immediate environment as can be seen from the following photomontages:



*Fig. 2 View of site from station car park. 'The Mill' is to the right, with 'Station House' to the left and the proposed dwelling house at the centre.*



*Fig. 3 View of site from station overpass. The proposed dwelling-house is shown montaged in at the background.*



*Fig. 4 View of the proposed building from west end of the site*



*Fig. 5 View of the proposed building from the north side of Glynde Reach, looking southwards. The terraces of Trevor Gardens are also visible at the skyline.*

### Privacy and overlooking

The proposed dwelling will not cause loss of privacy nor overlooking problems to any neighbouring properties. For the proposed dwelling there is no risk of loss of privacy from the North and the proposed house has been designed to negate any overlooking from the station platform to the South.

### Trees

The existing trees on site have been assessed by Arboriculturists from PJC Consultancy Ltd. The large sycamore adjacent to the single storey portion of the adjacent Mill will be retained, as well as, possibly others at the west end of the site. However, the majority – all with relatively little assessed value - will be removed to enable the development, with new trees to be formally replanted to repopulate the landscape and re-green the site – albeit with key views to the north and north west left clear.

### Flood Risk

A flood risk assessment has been carried out by Monson Engineering, who conclude that a slightly elevated floor level should be implemented to mitigate the risk of low level flooding in future. The floor level has therefore been raised by an average of 400mm above the existing ground level. All other recommended measures (such as, for example, the positioning of electrical points at elevated levels) will also be implemented.

### Ecology

The site has been assessed by Ecologists from PJC Consultancy Ltd and has been generally found to be at low risk of sustaining significant or protected fauna. However, the recommendations for the gentle and considered clearance of the site (at specific times) as well as provision of bird and bat boxes to the new dwelling will be implemented.

### Sustainability and Transport

It is proposed to construct the building to the Passivhaus standard of energy efficiency – the most advanced recognised standard for sustainability and internal comfort - giving an annual energy consumption of 15KWhrs per sq/m floorspace (roughly 10-15% of the energy consumption of current Building Regulations requirements). In addition, PV solar panels are proposed to the South roof slope to generate electricity for the new dwelling with any excess electricity fed back into the main grid network. Electric car chargers are to be provided to enable the charging of electric cars.

Convenient separation of rubbish to maximise recycling of waste materials will be included to both the interior of the house and to external refuse collection points.

The adjacent Glynde station provides convenient rail links to all the south coast towns, London and beyond. A village general store and bus service are within easy walking distance and the site is close to the new off road Cycle/walking route linking Lewes to Polegate along the A27. The opportunity to develop redundant sites this close to key public transport links is rare and the advantages of the adjacent railway station to the potential sustainability of the house are real and should not be understated.

### Drainage

The drainage will be sustainable in that no surface water will be taken off site to mains sewers and all will be put back into the landscape on the site itself. There is sufficient area on the site to position soakaways at a sufficient distance from the proposed buildings.

### Parking

Provision of formal parking on the site has been provided - as marked on the site plans. Additional overflow parking may be provided by pull-ins at the west end of the site. As mentioned above under 'Sustainability', charging points are proposed to be fitted for the use of electric vehicles.

### Right of way across the site

The right of way will continue to be afforded to the owners of the substation compound and appropriate cornering radii have been maintained in the re-routing of the access track. The new walls along the south side of the new gardens will minimise the intrusion of noise and disruption caused by vehicular use of the track (see Fig 4 above).

### Conclusion

The proposals will provide an exceptionally high quality, truly sustainable dwelling, that will utilise an otherwise under-used strip of brownfield land. The house will have minimal impact on the character of the village and will add architectural interest and enhance the currently run-down site and the many environments to which it relates.