

# **PLANNING STATEMENT**

## **Incorporating Draft HoT and Affordable Housing Statement**

**OUTLINE APPLICATION (APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING,  
LAYOUT AND SCALE RESERVED), FOR THE DEMOLITION  
OF EXISTING BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF UP TO 230  
DWELLINGS, A CARE HOME (USE CLASS C2) UP TO 70  
BEDS, AND COMMUNITY FACILITY, AND ASSOCIATED  
INFRASTRUCTURE INCLUDING NEW ACCESS POINTS OFF  
OF TURNERS HILL ROAD, WITH ASSOCIATED SPINE  
ROAD AND CAR AND CYCLE PARKING, TOGETHER WITH  
PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE, PLAY FACILITIES, UTILITIES  
INFRASTRUCTURE, SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE  
FEATURES, AND ASSOCIATED WORKS.**

**LAND WEST OF TURNERS HILL ROAD AND  
NORTH OF HUNTSLAND,  
INCLUDING LAND AT HURST FARM,  
CRAWLEY DOWN,  
WEST SUSSEX**

**February 2026**

**APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY  
JUDITH ASHTON ASSOCIATES  
ON BEHALF OF  
WATES DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED**

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## Exec Summary

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## Executive Summary

j) This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the outline planning application made by Wates Developments Limited for the development of Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, including land at Hurst Farm, Crawley Down, West Sussex (the 'Site').

ii) Outline planning permission was granted in September 2025 for a residential development on land north of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road so as to provide for 150 homes, a 70-bed care home, new public open space, footpath and cycle connections, and financial contributions towards local infrastructure and amenities. DM/25/0016 refers

iii) During the course of the determination of that application concern was expressed by local residents living in Wychwood Place about the fact the proposed means of access to that site was via Wychwood Place. This led the planning committee to impose an informative on the planning permission that required, when submitting the details of the Construction Management Plan to discharge condition 6, Wates investigate the possibility of obtaining construction access via Hurst Farm. As a result of this request, Wates has been exploring whether vehicular access for the development of the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland could be taken from Hurst Farm, and following this work acquired control of Hurst Farm to enable the vehicular access to the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland to be taken from this location. In doing so they have also explored the development potential of Hurst Farm itself given its identification as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan, the culmination of which is this application for a comprehensive development of both the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, and Hurst Farm, all being accessed from Hurst Farm, with only pedestrian, cycle and emergency access provided via Wychwood Place, which would in effect supersede that granted in September 2025 pursuant to DM/25/0016.

iv) The Land West of Turners Hill Road is identified as part of a wider allocation for development in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023 pursuant to Policy DPA9. The Land at Hurst Farm is also identified as a proposed allocation in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023 pursuant to Policy DPA10.

v) The planning application seeks consent for the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and development of the site to deliver up to 230 dwellings, a 70 bed care home and community facility, and associated infrastructure including a new access point off of Turners Hill Road with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features and associated works.

vi) The proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with Policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan, the only areas of variation being to reflect discussions with Worth Parish Council about the use of offsite contributions in lieu of the onsite provision of sports and community facilities, thus bolstering local facilities and removing any potential for conflict.

vii) Whilst the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan is still at examination, the submission of this application now helps to demonstrate deliverability and

bolster the councils five year housing land supply situation as set out in the submission draft local plan's trajectory, at a time when given recent changes to national government guidance the councils lack of a five year housing land supply under the adopted development plan leaves the council vulnerable to speculative applications for development in areas that have not been judged to be suitable through the allocation process.

viii) 30% of the proposed dwellings (69 homes) will be set aside as affordable housing to help meet the affordable housing requirements of the District. In addition, the unit mix will encompass a range of house types (terraced, semi-detached, detached and maisonettes) and sizes (1 and 2 bed flats and 2 – 5 bed houses), to meet local demand (both market and affordable).

ix) Circa 47%<sup>1</sup> of the site will be set aside as green infrastructure and includes different forms of public open space, including one Neighbourhood Area of Play, one Local Equipped Area of Play, and two Local Areas of Play, and a number of trails promoting play on the way.

x) It is acknowledged that the Site is located outside of the current urban area of Crawley Down as identified in the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan (2018). Whilst policy DP12 of the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan indicates that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty, it does permit development in 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, and it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan. Thus, it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with Policy DP12. That said, policy DP12 is in effect 'out of date' as the settlement boundary was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District as set out in Policy DP4 of the Mid Sussex District which was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012. The scale of the housing need as now identified by the new standard method and the NPPF 2024 is significantly higher than that advocated in the District Plan. As such and as the NPPF has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012, the approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted District Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024, and the weight to be attributed to policies DP4 and DP12 is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is bolstered by the fact part of the site already benefits from outline planning permission for the erection of up to 150 dwellings, a care home (Use Class C2) up to 70 beds, and associated infrastructure, ref DM/25/0016; and the fact the Council have confirmed they do not have a five year housing land supply.

xi) In the context of the above, the site is situated immediately adjacent to the urban area and identified as part of a proposed allocation site/ is an allocated site in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023.

xii) Given the above and as the application site is located adjacent to Crawley Down, one of the most sustainable settlements in the District, on one of the most

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<sup>1</sup> 7.02ha of the 14.99ha site i.e. 46.82 (47%) is green infrastructure

sustainable sited in that settlement, as it is neither within the South Downs National Park which constrains much of the district to the south, or the High Weald National Landscape which constrains much of the central portion of the district, it would in our opinion result in the delivery of sustainable development that would, we believe, accord with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF. As a result, it has been resolved to progress an application in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan Review.

xiii) Having regard to the above, we note that the proposed development generates a significant number of benefits. These include:

a) The delivery of new homes in an area where such homes are needed. Mid Sussex District Council does not have a five-year Housing Land Supply, and these homes will assist in meeting the shortfall.

b) The provision of affordable housing. The proposed development will provide 30% affordable housing, which will help address the affordable housing issues in the area, which are dire.

c) The provision of a 70 bed care home which will help address the accommodation needs of the elderly in the area,

d) The delivery of land for open space and recreational facilities that will be available not only for the future residents of the development but also for the existing residents of Crawley Down.

e) Additional employment provision during the construction period and when the care home is completed which will generate additional spending in the local area, thus assisting in the maintenance of the vitality and viability of local services.

f) Contributions to local services and facilities, such as health and education facilities, through a S106 agreement.

xiv) Furthermore:

a) The development will not have a detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of any neighbouring properties.

b) The development will not have a detrimental impact upon highway safety.

c) The development will improve public transport links between the site and the surrounding area and provide enhanced pedestrian and cycle links towards both Crawley Down and the surrounding area, including upgrades to the Public Rights of Way network.

d) The development will create and contribute towards an enhanced highways network within Crawley Down.

e) Adequate on-site parking would be provided to support the development.

f) The development will not increase flood risk on site or to third party land. Indeed, overall, the surface water drainage proposal will reduce the surface water runoff from the site, providing betterment.

g) The development will not have an unacceptable impact upon wildlife and ecology, rather it will provide for significant biodiversity net gains, in excess of the now mandatory 10%.

h) The development will not have an unacceptable impact upon existing landscape features.

xv) In terms of adverse effects, it is recognised that there would be localised effects on the landscape character of the site. However, the effects will be highly localised and will be focussed to those landscape and visual receptors immediately adjacent to, and within, Hurst Farm. In addition, the application site is not subject to any landscape designations, and the proposed development has been developed with stakeholders to ensure the development is respectful to local landscape and visual constraints. Furthermore, it also provides for a number

of beneficial effects such as an increase in landscape assets, and an improved local network of ecological and recreational spaces. On this basis and as the Council accepts that not all its housing requirement can be accommodated on brownfield sites, have already granted consent for the development of that part of the site that falls within fields 1 and 2, and have acknowledged that this site, as part of DPA9/ DPA10 is a potentially developable / deliverable site by virtue of its proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan, any localised landscape effects do not in our opinion weigh heavily against the grant of consent.

xvi) Similarly, the less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale), to the setting and significance of the Grade II Listed Westlands that lies to the north of the application site has to be weighed against the public benefits of the application, and a balanced judgement made by the decision maker. We believe there are clear social and economic benefits arising from the proposed development of up to 230 houses, including 69 affordable homes and 70 bed care home, on a part previously developed site. There would also be public benefits arising during the construction phase of the project and from the operational phase from additional spending in the local economy from the future residents. There will also be environmental benefits as a result of the biodiversity net gains. As a result, we believe the benefits arising from the development outweigh the less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale), to the setting and significance of the Grade II Westlands.

xvii) Likewise, whilst that there would be less than substantial harm at the low range of the scale to the setting and significance of the group of Non-Designated Heritage Assets at Huntslands, we believe the benefits arising from the development as set out above outweigh the less than substantial harm at the low range of the scale on these non-designated heritage assets

xviii) The impact on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land is limited in extent; and the nature of the works within the 15m buffer of the areas of Ancient Woodland have been designed so as not to impact on root protection areas or the water table negatively, thus avoiding any loss of Ancient Woodland habitat.

xix) Specifically, the limited harm identified does not outweigh the significant benefits that have been identified; and certainly, goes nowhere near the requirement to demonstrate significant and demonstrable harm as set out in the NPPF.

xx) As such, Wates consider that Mid Sussex District Council should support this application as it helps address the Councils five year Housing Land Supply deficit, whilst also reflecting the aims and objectives of the Submission Draft Local Plan, and grant planning consent subject to appropriate conditions and S106 obligations.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of an outline application (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved), for the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the erection of up to 230 dwellings, a 70 bed care home and community facility, and associated infrastructure including new access points off of Turners Hill Road, with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features, and associated works on land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, including land at Hurst Farm, Crawley Down, West Sussex .
- 1.2 The site area is some 14.99 ha and is shown edged red on the site location plans (drawing no: CD-NHS-RLP-01-).
- 1.3 Planning permission was granted in September 2025 for a residential development on land north of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road so as to provide for 150 homes, a 70-bed care home, new public open space, footpath and cycle connections, and financial contributions towards local infrastructure and amenities. DM/25/0016 refers. This application differs from that consented in the following way:
- a) Vehicular/pedestrian and cycle access point relocated to Hurst Farm (Field 8);
  - b) 70 bed care home relocated to Hurst Farm (Field 8);
  - c) Homes located in former care home area;
  - d) Alignment of road amended to accommodate new homes in care home area;
  - e) Shared private drive amended to accommodate additional unit(s);
  - f) Former primary access narrowed to form emergency, pedestrian and cycle link to Wychwood Place;
  - g) Removal of shared surface street to create a single development block;
  - h) Allotments increased in size.
- 1.4 Within the context of the above it should be noted that the parameters and development extents within Fields 1 and 2 largely remain the same as the consented scheme.
- 1.5 During the course of the determination of the application for the development of the land north of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road concern was expressed by local residents living in Wychwood Place about the fact the proposed means of access to that site was via Wychwood Place. This led the planning committee to impose an informative on the planning permission that required, when submitting the details of the Construction Management Plan to discharge condition 6, Wates investigate the possibility of obtaining construction access via Hurst Farm. As a result of this request Wates has been exploring whether vehicular access for the development of the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland could be taken from Hurst Farm, and following this work acquired control of Hurst Farm to enable the vehicular access to the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland to be taken from this location. In doing so they have also explored the development potential of Hurst Farm itself given its identification as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan, the culmination

of which is this application for a comprehensive development of both the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, and Hurst Farm, all being accessed from Hurst Farm, with only pedestrian, cycle and emergency access provided via Wychwood Place.

- 1.6 This statement seeks to comment upon how this application accords with the aims and objectives of national government guidance as set out in the NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance Notes; and the aims and objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022), and the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan (Jan 2016), as well as the aims and objectives of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2039 (December 2023) and Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex (December 2025) and Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025).
- 1.7 Whilst this statement sets out a range of planning considerations which should be taken into account in determining these applications, it should be read in conjunction with:
- The Design and Access Statement produced by Mosaic.
  - The Landscape and Visual Appraisal including Landscape Strategy produced by SLR.
  - The Arboricultural Implications Report produced by Simon Jones Associates.
  - The Ecological Appraisal, Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment produced by Aspect Ecology.
  - The Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment produced by RPS.
  - The Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan produced by iTransport.
  - The Flood Risk Assessment produced by Ramboll.
  - The Drainage Strategy produced by Ramboll.
  - The Utilities Assessment produced by Ramboll.
  - The Desk top Geo Technical Assessment produced by Geo-Environmental Services Limited
  - The Sustainability and Energy Statement – produced by Icini.
  - The Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources Report produced by Reading Agriculture.
  - The Lighting Impact Assessment produced by Nature Positive (an RSK company).
  - The Air Quality Assessment produced by RSK; and
  - The Statement of Community Involvement produced by Cratus
- 1.7 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) confirmed following an application for a screening opinion in October 2024 that whilst the then proposals for the development of the land north and south of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road for up to 400 residential dwellings with associated car parking, landscaping & community facilities including play areas and outdoor sports facilities; together with a community building, 50 bed (C2) care home and 13.41ha of countryside open space encompassing Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), comprised an infrastructure project falling within category 10b of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and exceeded the thresholds in column 2 of the table in the Schedule, for the reasons set out in their letter of 25th November 2024 an Environmental Impact Assessment was not required.

- 1.8 In their detailed letter of the 25th November 2024 MSDC also confirmed, in commenting upon the 'Characteristics of Development', that:
- (a) The site of the proposed development is on the edge of Crawley Down, which is categorised as a category 2 settlement in the District Plan (larger villages acting as local service centres, which serve the wider hinterland and benefit from a good range of services and facilities). There are no reasons why a well-designed scheme cannot come forward on the site, which would be appropriate to the character of the area. The size of the development would assimilate with the existing village and would not be an overly large addition to the village.*
- (b) The development will change the character of part the site itself from a greenfield site to a housing development. Part of the site adjoins the existing built up area of Crawley Down to the northeast. Whilst the character of the site would change, given the extensive amount of space for landscaping that is proposed, it is not considered that the proposal would have a significant urbanising effect on the wider locality.*
- (c) The proposal would use land that is currently laid to grass. The site does not contain important, high quality or scarce resources. The scheme will result in the consumption of water during the construction phase and subsequent occupation of the dwellings. There are no reasons to suggest that this would have significant environmental effects. There are no protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location. Whilst there are both protected species on the site and trees and hedgerows, the impacts on these can be mitigated and compensated for as part of the overall masterplan for the site, which will include a significant area of land for open space/landscaping. It will be a requirement for the scheme to provide a minimum 10% gain in biodiversity. As such, no significant effect is likely.*
- (d) The development would produce waste during the construction phase and then normal domestic refuse once the dwellings are occupied. No significant effect is likely from this.*
- (e) Pollutants will be released to air from exhaust emissions from the vehicles moving to, from and within the application site during construction and there will be exhaust emissions from vehicles belonging to future occupiers of the dwellings and those visiting the dwellings. There are no Air Quality Management Areas in the locality of the site and no significant effect is likely.*
- There will also be temporary noise impacts during the construction phase, possible dust emissions and possible pollution of the adjacent watercourse. However, these risks can be controlled by appropriate construction management procedures and no significant effects are likely. With regards to the operational phase, the proposed development would be subject to a Travel Plan to effect modal shift away from the private car. The new dwellings will also be required to provide EV charging points. With such mitigation in place there should be no significant cumulative effects in relation to air quality from this development.*
- (f) The risk of accidents during the construction phase can be managed through appropriate construction management procedures. No significant effect is likely*
- (g) The risks to water contamination can be managed through appropriate construction management procedures. There are no air quality*

*management areas in the immediate locality of the site and no significant effect is likely.'*

- 1.9 They also advised in terms of 'Location of Development' that
- '(a) The land is currently laid to grass. It is bounded by residential development to the northeast and is in close proximity to the village of Craley Down to the east. The land is not within a nationally designated landscape. As such whilst there will be a change on the site from a greenfield to a housing development, this would not have a significant urbanising effect given the close proximity of other urban development and the significant amount of land that would be given over to open space/landscaping within the development.*
- (b) The land and its surrounds are not subject to any national designation. There are no areas on or around the site which contain important high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project. The closest European designation is Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is located approximately 6.8km southeast of the site. With appropriate mitigation the proposal should not have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with this European Protected site. This will be subject to a Habitats Regulation Assessment when a planning application is submitted.*
- (c) i) there is a watercourse located in the southern parcel of the site, but no significant effect is likely on this watercourse.*
- ii) The site is not in a Coastal zone, so this is not applicable.*
- iii) The site is not a Mountain or Forest area, so this is not applicable.*
- iv) The site does not include a Nature Reserve or Park so this is not applicable.*
- v) The closest European site is the Ashdown Forest, referred to above.*
- vi) The site is not within an area that has failed to meet environmental quality standards in Union legislation.*
- vii) The site is adjacent to the village of Crawley Down. The proposed development would be of a scale and proportion that would be appropriate to the surrounding urban development in the locality and no significant effect is likely.*
- viii) The site is not within a landscape of historical or cultural significance. The location of demolished 19thC modern farm buildings is recorded on the site; representing an asset of no more than local archaeological importance. There is a generally low to moderate potential for other yet-to-be-discovered archaeological assets on the site. The impact of this can be suitably managed through planning conditions'.*
- 1.10 And in terms of the 'Types and characteristics of the potential impact' that:
- 'a) The impact of the development will be localised. During construction, the effect on the population will be limited to those that are close to the site and these construction impacts can be mitigated through a Construction Management Plan.*
- b) There should be no significant impacts as a result of the development on population and human health. The proposal for up to 400 dwellings and a care home on a site in close proximity to the village of Crawley Down would not result in a change to the size of the village that would have significant effects, with regards to the factors set out in section 4(2) of the Regulations.*
- The site is not nationally designated in relation to its ecological value or landscape value and no significant effect is likely in relation to biodiversity*

or landscape. There is a requirement for biodiversity enhancements through the planning process, with a minimum 10% gain in biodiversity being a requirement in legislation. The site does not contain scarce resources in relation to water, air and climate and there are no likely significant effects.

There are two heritage assets adjoining the site to the southeast (the listed buildings of Lemon Meadow and Yew Tree Cottage). The low rise nature of the proposed development and separation distance and boundary screening means that there should be no significant impact in EIA terms on these heritage assets.

c) The development will not lead to any transboundary effects.

d) The proposal is not a complex development. It is a normal residential development.

e) There are not likely to be significant effects from the development. During the construction phase there will be localised impacts, but these can be mitigated through a Construction Management Plan

f) Subject to a planning permission being granted, the development would need to commence within three years of the consent being granted. The scheme would take several years to build out, with the precise timings dependent on the developer and market conditions. Once constructed, the site would permanently change from a greenfield site to a residential development with surrounding open space/landscaping.

The frequency of different construction works will depend on the stage of works within the site. The scheme will result in irreversible impacts as the site will change from being a greenfield site to a housing development.

g) During the construction phase, the impact of the development with other schemes that could be approved in the locality could be mitigated through a Construction management Plan.

h) The scheme would need to obtain planning permission. There would be a requirement within the planning application for the development to provide infrastructure and/or make contributions towards infrastructure to mitigate the impact of the development (for example, contributions to provide infrastructure to serve the development, such as towards school places, library provision, leisure and play space facilities). There would also be a requirement to mitigate the impact on air quality, which can objectively be assessed and provided for by a damage cost calculation, with the monies generated going towards projects such as interventions to change behaviour, for example, cycle storage facilities, cycle route contributions, EV charging points. There would also be a requirement for a minimum 10% gain in biodiversity at the site.

All of these mitigations can be secured by way of planning conditions or through a section 106 legal agreement attached to the planning permission.'

#### 1.11 The EIA screening decision concluded:

'Whilst the area of the site is greater than 5 hectares, a significant proportion of the site would be landscaping rather than physical development. The number of units, together with the possible site allocation at Hurst Farm, would be significantly below the indicative threshold of 1,000 units in paragraph 57 of the PPG, which is provided as an example of a proposal that would have significant urbanising effects in a previously non-urbanised area.

Having regard to the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations, it is considered that the scale and nature of the development, both on its own and in combination with the proposed site allocation

*identified above at Hurst Farm (DPA10), the proposed development would not have significant effects on the environment within the meaning of the EIA Regulations. If site DPA10 was also to come forward, the scale of the combined development would be below the threshold identified in (iii) of paragraph 57 of the PPG guidance.*

*Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority directs that the development above for which planning permission is sought is not EIA development. Consequently, no Environmental Impact Assessment is required to be submitted with any subsequent planning application.'*

- 1.12 Whilst this application encompasses additional land at Hurst Farm and brings the total scale of development to 430 when the land south of Huntsland is included<sup>2</sup>, the additional housing, and larger care facility would not in our opinion lead to the development becoming EIA development requiring the submission of an EIA. We would however invite the council to undertake a screening opinion concurrently with the registration of this planning application.

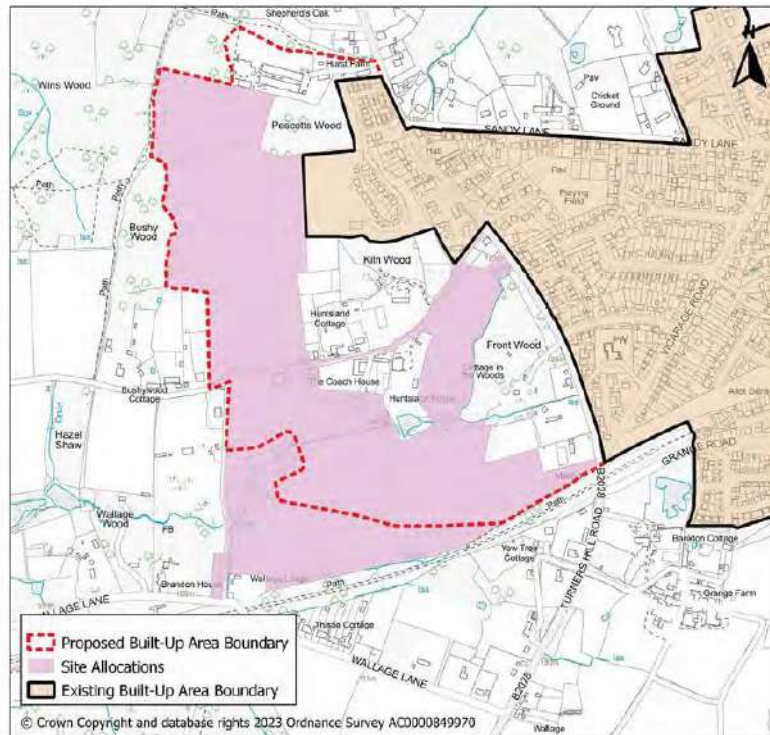
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<sup>2</sup> This land benefits from outline consent for 200 dwellings and associated infrastructure including new access points off of Turners Hill Road – DM/25/0014 refers.

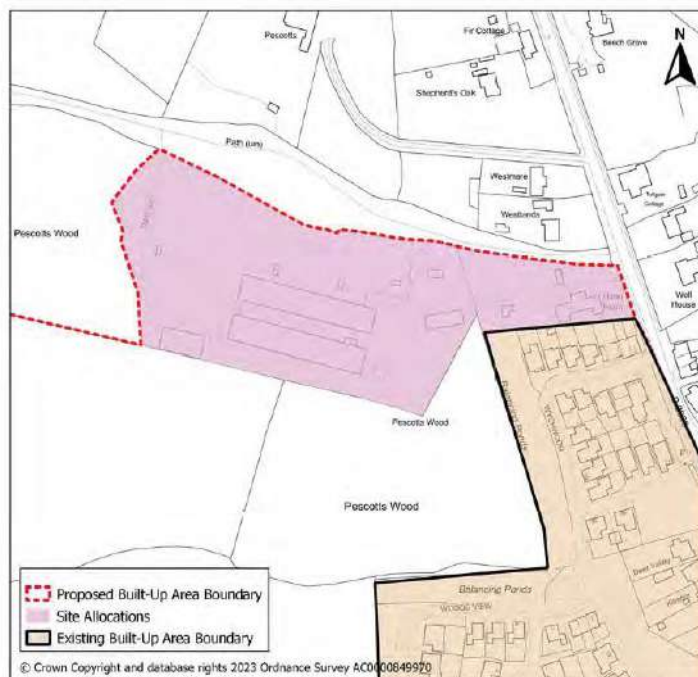
## 2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

### a) The Application Site

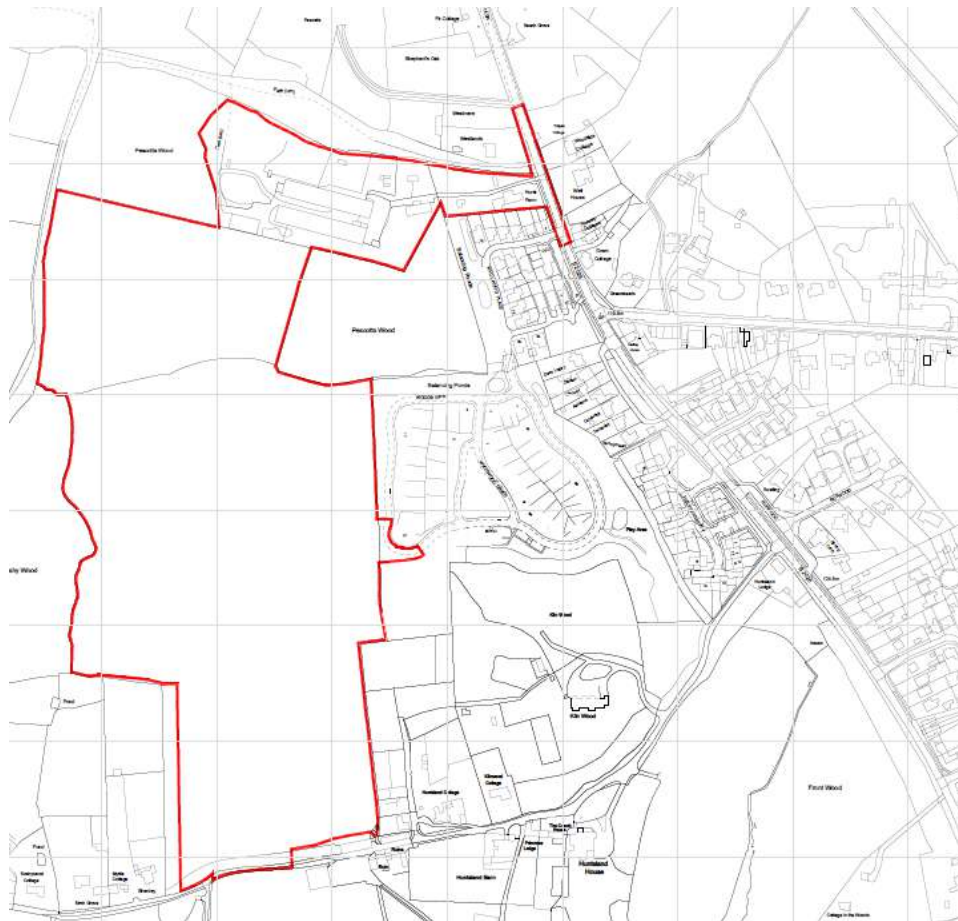
2.1 The application site immediately abuts the western boundary of Crawley Down as defined on the Adopted District Plan proposals map. It extending to 14.99ha and whilst not allocated in the adopted Development Plan, forms part of a wider area (DPA9 and DPA10) that is identified as a proposed allocation/s in the Submission Draft Local Plan (Dec 2023) which is now at examination, as set out in the plan below.



Plan 1 – DPA9 - Extract from MSDC Submission Local Plan Dec 2023



Plan 2 – DPA10 - Extract from MSDC Submission Local Plan Dec 2023



Plan 3 – Site Location Plan

2.2 As indicated on the plans above and below, the application site is situated west of Turners Hill Road, north of Huntsland and includes Hurst Farm, and encompasses the entirety of fields 1, 2 and 8 as identified in the plan below. Its characteristics are as follows:

- Much of the site is bound by established vegetation, including woodland and Ancient Woodland (Wins Wood, Bushy Wood and Prescotts Wood).
- Field access is provided via Huntsland (field 2) and through an existing access from Turners Hill Road (field 8).
- Wychwood Place, a recently built out development, lies to the east of field 2, as well as the grounds of Huntsland Cottage the boundaries of which are generally well vegetated with occasional gaps.
- Huntsland public right of way (33W) borders the south of Field 2 and provides access to Huntsland Barn, Primrose Lodge, the Coach House and Huntsland House and Turners Hill Road.
- A Public right of way (35W) and Grade II listed building 'Westlands' lies to the north of Field 8.
- As well as Wins Wood and Bushy Wood the grounds of Shenley also lie to the west of the site, the boundaries of which are generally well vegetated with occasional gaps.

2.3 The site itself comprises two fields (fields 1 and 2 on the plan below) which are gently undulating. As set out in the LVA, the southern field (f2) forms the higher reaches of a gentle ridge which drops away to the north, south and west; from 125m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) at its highest point to 115m AOD along the southern boundary with 33W/1, to 117m along the western boundary with Bushy Wood and to its lowest point of

110m AOD along the north western boundary with Wins Wood and Pescott Wood. Land at Hurst Farm lies at around 115m AOD. It slopes downward very gently from south to north, although much of this land appears level.

- 2.4 All three fields are of varied shape and size and bordered by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. In addition, footpath 35W run alongside the northern and western boundaries of the site and connects via 32W to Huntsland and thence Turners Hill Road, and via 34W with the Worth Way which connects Crawley Down with Crawley to the west and East Grinstead to the east.



#### b) The Surrounding Area

- 2.5 Given the sites location on the western edge of Crawley Down, the character of both the site and surrounding area is influenced by the settlement. In this respect the area to the east of the application site is predominantly residential in nature with properties comprising a variety of different house types, ages, and styles, but predominantly 2 or 2½ stories. The accompanying Design and Access Statement provides a detailed assessment of character of the local area.
- 2.6 As set out in the Transport Assessment (TA), Crawley Down includes a number of local facilities and services including retail stores, post office, restaurants, primary school, medical centre and dentist. The village is within easy walking and cycling distance of the Site. In addition, Crawley and East Grinstead are located circa 7km to the west/ 4km to the east of the site and offer a wider range of services and facilities.
- 2.9 The Site is not located within a Conservation Area or a National Landscape or Area of High Landscape Value.

### 3 The Site's Former Planning History

- 3.1 As set out above the land north of Huntsland, excluding Hurst Fram benefits from outline planning permission for: *'the erection of up to 150 dwellings, a care home (Use Class C2) up to 70 beds, and community facility, and associated infrastructure including new access points off of Wychwood with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features, and associated works'* which was granted on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025 - DM/25/0016 refers. A copy of the illustrative masterplan is set out below.



- 3.2 We also note that an outline application (DM/18/0591) for demolition of existing buildings and erection of 45no. new dwellings with associated access on land at Hurst Farm was refused by notice dated 4<sup>th</sup> May 2018 on the basis that:
1. *The proposed development is located within the countryside area of development restraint, outside of the built up area of Crawley Down. It is not for a type of development which can be considered as an exception to the policy of restraint in the countryside and thus would be contrary to policy DP12 of the District Plan. The Council can demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land, there is no identified need for these units in this location and are not supported by other policies in the Plan.*

2. The development is considered to be in an unsustainable location in transport terms being remote from the nearest village and having poor walking and cycling accessibility to local shops, services and employment opportunities. Occupants would be heavily reliant on the use of a private car to gain access to local services. The development therefore conflicts with Policy DP21 of the District Plan and the aims of the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 14 and 17.

3. The proposal does not satisfy the requirements of Policies DP20 and DP31 of the District Plan in respect of infrastructure requirements, including affordable housing provision, to service the development as supplemented by the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Development and Infrastructure' dated February 2006.

4. It is considered that it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that the development would protect the ecology and biodiversity of the site, in particular protected species and Prescott Wood Ancient Woodland. The proposal therefore does not comply with Policy DP38 of the District Plan and paragraphs 109 and 118 of the NPPF.

5. The development would result in an unacceptable intensification of development within the setting of the Grade II listed Westlands. The development therefore conflicts with policy DP34 of the District Plan. Whilst the provision of up to 45 units is acknowledged, in light of the five year housing land supply these public benefits do not outweigh the less than substantial harm to the heritage assets that has been identified so, in accordance with para 134 of the NPPF planning permission should be refused.

- 3.3 This application seeks to address these reasons for refusal as far as they remain germane to the development of this site given the passage of time and changes in the planning policy situation. A copy of the proposed layout is set out below for information.



3.4 It is also noted that outline planning permission was granted for the erection of up to 200 dwellings, and associated infrastructure including new access points off of Turners Hill Road with associated spine roads and car and cycle parking; the provision of open space and associated play facilities; utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features, and

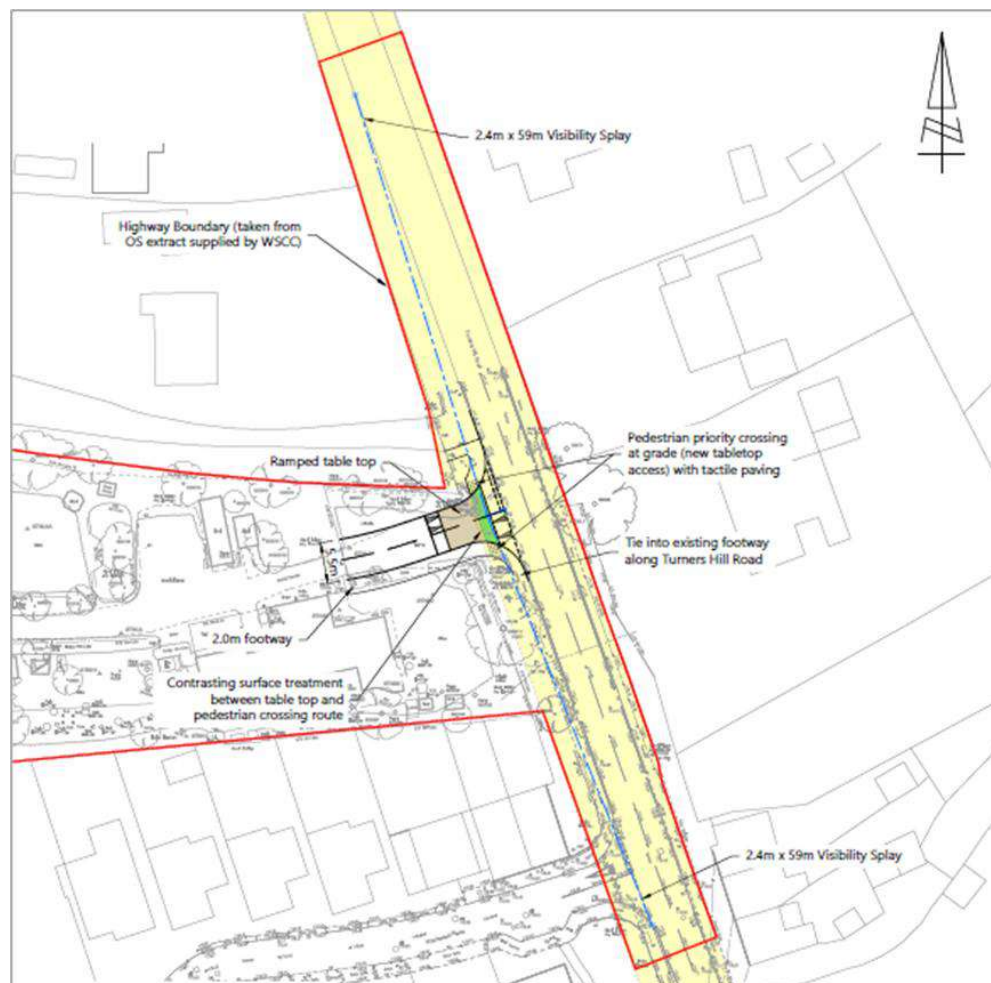
associated features, on land west of Turners Hill Road and south of Huntsland, Crawley Down, West Sussex on 5th September 2025 - DM/25/0014 refers. And that in March 2018 Wates developments secured outline planning permission at appeal for the development of either 30 or 44 dwellings on land West of Turners Hill Road. The 44 dwellings consent has subsequently gained reserved matters approval and been built out and now comprises the Wychwood Place site and abuts the eastern boundary of the application site. DM/15/3979 and DM/15/3614: Land West of Turners Hill Road, Crawley Down refers.

## 4 The Proposed Development

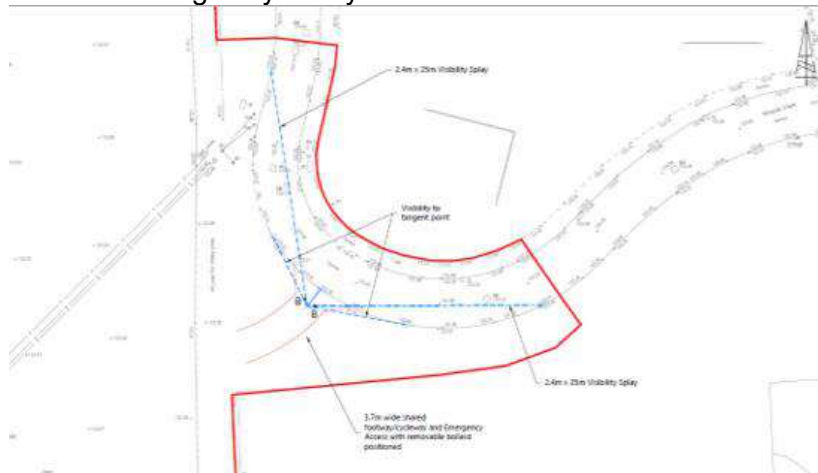
- 4.1 The application is an outline application for the demolition of the existing buildings on the site and the erection of up to 230 dwellings, a 70 bed care home and community facility, and associated infrastructure including a new access point off new access of Turners Hill Road with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features and associated works.
- 4.2 The detailed elements of the scheme comprise the main point of access onto Turners Hill Road. All other matters (appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale) are reserved.

### The Accessing Arrangements

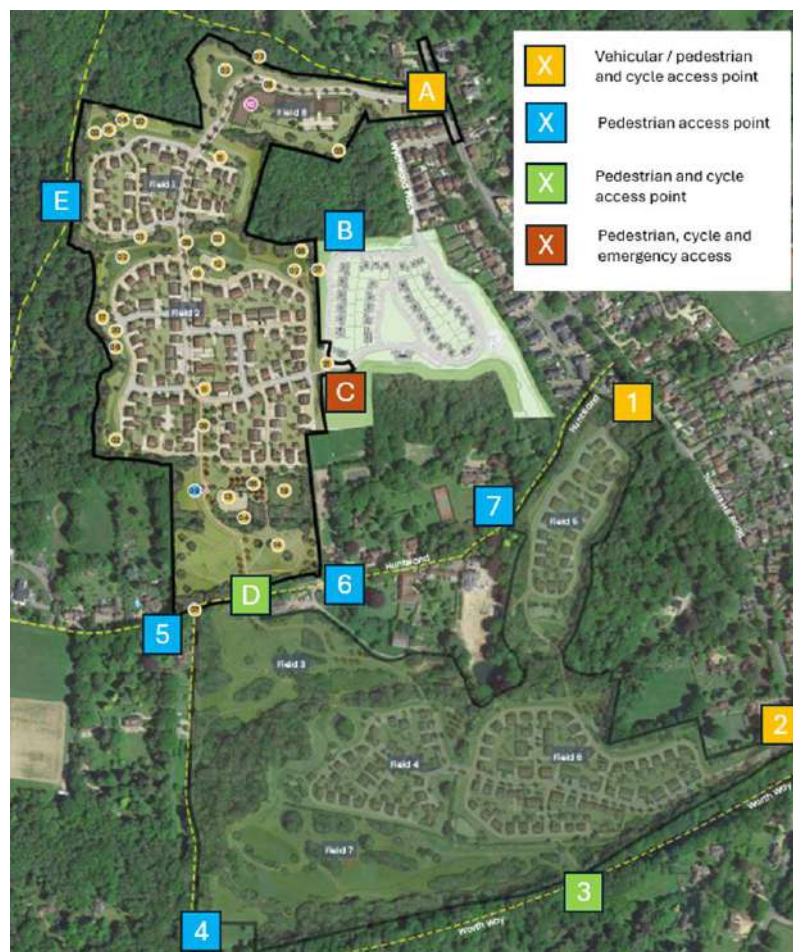
- 4.3 The Transport Assessment (TA) provides the details of the proposed access arrangements. In simple terms, the proposed development will be served by the existing access to Hurst Farm, located off the western side of the B2028 Turners Hill Road. As shown in the extract below, the site's access will be modified to form a give-way priority junction adjoining to an internal access road measuring 5.5-metres in width and 2.0-metre-wide footway along the southern side. A pedestrian priority crossing incorporating tactile paving will be provided to tie into existing footway infrastructure along the western side of the B2028 Turners Hill Road



- 4.4 In addition to the main site access, a shared pedestrian/cycleway and emergency access will be provided on the site's eastern side to connect with the carriageway of Wychwood Place.



- 4.5 Thus, the proposed development together with that to the south of Huntsland provides for multiple pedestrian and cycle connections into the application site and wider study area in accordance with Policies DPA9 and DPA10. The image below provides an overview of all the connections and Table 5.1 of the TA provides a summary of the type of connections which will be provided into both the northern and southern application sites of the development



### The Masterplan

- 4.6 As explained in the DAS's and section 6 of this statement the Masterplan for the proposed development is very much landscape led and seeks to respect the existing landscape features found on the site and create a softened transition between the proposed development and the wider landscape. A copy of the illustrative masterplan is set out below.



- 4.7 As set out in the Design and Access Statement the illustrative masterplan encompasses the following features:
- 230 new homes, 30% of which are proposed as affordable and 2% self build.
  - 70 Bed Care Home.
  - A Community gathering space/band stand area and St Leonard's lookout.
  - Accesses via Hurst Farm.
  - Pedestrian, cycle and emergency access only via Wychwood Place
  - Retention and enhancement of the existing public footpath AW33 along Huntsland.
  - A new pedestrian and cycle link north south, offering connectivity between the application site and the land south of Huntsland.
  - Countryside Open Space to the south, and directly accessible from, the existing public rights of way network, including Huntsland, containing woodland, recreation areas, children's play features and connected walking routes, as well as allotments – if a need is proven.

- A Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play, a Local Equipped Area of Play and two Local Areas of Play offering doorstep play provision.
- Native structure planting to reinforce the sense of enclosure along existing public rights of way both within, and adjacent to the site.
- The provision of landscape buffers, especially along the central ridge and immediately north of public footpath AW33 (Huntsland) and along the site's boundaries where adjacent to the existing settlement edge and individual dwellings.
- The provision of around 3.93 ha of of natural and semi-natural space to ensure retention, protection, and enhancement of existing (including ancient) woodland, trees, shrubs and hedgerows.
- Accommodation of sustainable drainage systems positively designed into the open spaces to support ecological and landscape quality and function.  
and
- Provision of amenity green space within the built-up area and to provide recreational facilities for all age groups.

- 4.10 In the context of the above the proposed development also provides for:
- A range of market house types and sizes with policy compliant parking provision and spacious private amenity areas compliant with the Local Plan.
  - 30% affordable housing (up to 69 dwellings) comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bed maisonettes and 2 and 3 bedroom houses. These will be designed tenure blind and distributed throughout the development in clusters of 15-20 units.
  - Opportunity for significant biodiversity net gain on site - with reports indicating up to 16% (+) gains in onsite hedgerows and 17% (+) in onsite habitats.

- 4.11 In land use terms the proposed development provides:

Land Use	HA	Average Density	Dwellings	% of site area
Residential Development Area <sup>3</sup>	7.72	29.8	230	51.48%
Primary vehicular, emergency, pedestrian and cycle access roads	0.03			0.19%
Existing road infrastructure	0.19			1.28%
Green infrastructure	7.02			46.82%
Access for properties associated with Huntsland	0.03			0.23%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14.99</b>			<b>100%</b>

### Scale and Massing

- 4.12 The DAS explains that based on the built and landscape context, the majority of the site can support buildings to be up to two and a half storeys (up to 11m to the ridgeline), which will pepper-potted throughout the scheme to help terminate views and provide visual interest. The remainder of the site will feature buildings up to two storeys. There is, as

<sup>3</sup> Approximately 0.66ha of 7.72ha residential area is set aside for the car home. Thus, only circa 6.36ha is set aside for the housing. 230 dwellings on an area of circa 6.36ha would generate a density of 36.16dph net

set out in the DAS, the potential to explore some single and one and a half storey buildings along the periphery of the masterplan

### The Housing Mix, Type and Tenure

- 4.13 As set out in section 6 of this statement, the proposed development provides for a range of house types and sizes including maisonette apartments, terraced, linked semi-detached, and detached dwellings. Whilst the final mix has yet to be determined, with the affordable provision to be negotiated with officers of MSDC, the illustrative layout has sought to have regard to the mix proposed in policy DPH7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan and the variances allowed for therein, as set out below.

	1 Bed/ 2 person	2 Bed / 4 person	3 Bed / 5 person	4 Bed (+) / 6 person
<b>Market Housing</b>	5 - 10%	20 - 25%	40 - 45%	25 - 30%
<b>Affordable Ownership</b>	10- 15%	50 – 55%	25 – 30%	5 – 10%
<b>Affordable Rent</b>	30- 35%	40 – 45%	15 – 20%	5 – 10%

- 4.14 Parking proposals for the scheme will be confirmed as part of future Reserved Matters Applications. These will adhere to WSCC's latest parking standards at the time of the Reserved Matters Applications, unless otherwise agreed.

### Open Space and Landscaping

- 4.15 Whilst a review of the form, layout and design of the development is set out in sections 6.3 and 6.4 of this statement and provided in greater detail in the DAS, the general principles adopted to the development are to maintain and strengthen the landscape features on the site and to ensure the proposed development integrates with rather than turns its back on the surrounding area. To this end, the proposed development includes a multilayered green infrastructure network, which delivers significant areas of amenity space<sup>4</sup>, as set out in the table below.

Typology of Open Space	Quantity Standard (ha per 1000 pop) <sup>5</sup>	Quantity Standard Required	Illustrative On Site Provision
Natural and Semi-Natural	0.0018 Ha/ 18sqm per person	0.994 Ha	3.93 Ha <sup>6</sup>
Amenity Green Space (including green corridors)	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.422 Ha	1.247 Ha
Parks and Gardens/ Countryside Open	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.422 Ha	1.47 Ha <sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The overall level of amenity space is equivalent to circa 47% of the total site area

<sup>5</sup> See table 3 of appendix 5 of Submission Draft Local Plan

NB Assumes an average occupancy rate of 2.4 per household so 230 dwellings = 552 residents

<sup>6</sup> Excludes 0.047ha for access roads and emergency link to Wychwood Place

<sup>7</sup> NB if allotments are not provided this will increase to 1.64ha (rounded)

Space			
Fixed play areas including LAP, LEAP and NEAP facilities	0.00025 Ha /2.5 sqm per person	0.138 Ha	0.16 Ha
Outdoor Sports	0.0016 Ha /16 sqm per person	0.576 Ha	Off Site Financial Contribution
Allotments (if required)	0.0003 ha/0.3sqm per person	0.166 Ha	0.166 Ha
TOTAL		2.182 Ha	7.02 Ha <sup>8</sup>

### The Design Approach

- 4.16 The DAS explains that to support the delivery of high quality environments at the RM design stages, a set of design instructions / principles to guide the design approach, supporting character and layout have been put forward. This starts with the parameter plans which look to address land use, density, building heights, access and movement, and landscape; and then goes on to consider the issue of liability, residential street 'character', and overarching urban design principles having regard to block structure, apartment design, tenure layout and design inclusivity, street trees, permeability, building design, the treatment of the public realm and parking. The DAS then looks at the three different character area proposed within the site – the Village Avenue, Village Lanes and Green Lanes, and sets out the design principles to be followed in each having regard to building typologies, building heights, building density, building lines, materials and colour, street design, boundary treatments and setbacks, the planting strategy and parking arrangements. The overall approach being to deliver a mix of new homes that are of an exemplar house design, which encompasses smart adaptable homes that are climate resilient and use sustainable materials; to enhance active travel options and encourage low carbon transport and infrastructure; to improve biodiversity, and address flood risk and surface water drainage.

### Public Consultation

- 4.17 The manner in which the proposed development has evolved is a result of extensive discussions on this and the previous application (DM/25/0016) with key stakeholders, including local residents, representative of the Worth Parish Council, the local ward members and officers of MSDC is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement. This summarises the position, including the level of public participation in the latest on line consultation that took place between 16<sup>th</sup> January and 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026.

<sup>8</sup> Including 0.047ha for access roads and emergency link to Wychwood Place / 6.98 without

## 5 Planning Policy

5.1 The planning policy framework relevant to the determination of this application comprises National Government Guidance (the NPPF 2024 and related Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and the aims and objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022), and the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan (Jan 2016), as well as the aims and objectives of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2040 (December 2023)). Each of these is examined below, together with the supplementary planning guidance issued by MSDC<sup>9</sup>.

### a) National Government Guidance – The National Planning Policy Framework

5.2 In December 2024, the Government issued the latest revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>10</sup>. Para 231 makes it clear that 'The policies in this Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication'. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

5.3 Paragraph 7 explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development comprises social, economic, and environmental considerations as outlined at paragraph 8.

5.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It makes it clear that:

*'Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development....*

*For decision-taking this means:*

*c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date<sup>11</sup>, granting permission unless:*

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<sup>9</sup> Whilst it is noted that the Development Plan for the application site comprises the following documents:

- The Saved policies from the Mid Sussex Local Plan (May 2004).
- The Saved policies from the Small Scale Housing Development Plan Document (April 2008).
- The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (March 2018).
- The Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022).
- The Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan (September 2016); and
- The West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2021)

none of the saved policies in the Mid Sussex Local Plan (May 2004) and the Small Scale Housing Development Plan Document (April 2008) are germane to this site.

Likewise, the application site does not fall within and area safeguarded in the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan

<sup>10</sup> Minor referencing updates were published in February 2025

<sup>11</sup> Footnote 8 makes it clear that: *'This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.'*

*i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance<sup>12</sup> 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.*

5.5 As set out in this statement we do not believe that MSDC can demonstrate a five year Housing Land Supply (HLS). Thus, if it is considered that the proposed development does not accord with the development plan, a point we return to in section 6, in accordance with NPPF footnote 8, NPPF paragraph 11(d) and the tilted balance is engaged, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

5.6 Section 5 of the NPPF is concerned with the supply of homes. Paragraph 61 makes it clear that:

*‘To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.’*

5.7 Paragraph 69 makes it clear that strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need can be met over the plan period. Paragraph 72 continues:

*‘Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment’*

5.8 Paragraphs 78, 79 and 80 go on to advise that:

*‘78. Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. 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 either the 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 in addition include a buffer moved forward from later in the plan period of:*

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<sup>12</sup> Footnote 7 makes it clear that:

*‘The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 189) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change’*

- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
- b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply<sup>13</sup>; or
- c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.’

5.9 Paragraph 79 goes on to explain that: ‘To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority’s housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply:

- a) where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;
- b) where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph 78 of this framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan;
- c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote 8 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

5.10 And Para 80 advises that ‘The Housing Delivery Test consequences set out above will apply the day following the annual publication of the Housing Delivery Test results, at which point they supersede previously published results. Until new Housing Delivery Test results are published, the previously published result should be used.’

5.11 Deliverable is defined in the NPPF as:

*‘To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:*

- a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).
- b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.’

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<sup>13</sup> Footnote 40 advises that this will be measured against the Housing Delivery Test, where this indicates that delivery was below 85% of the housing requirement.

- 5.12 In the context of the above para 49 of the NPPF makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:
- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
  - b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
  - c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 5.13 As set out above the application site falls outside of the current built up area boundary (BUAB) of Crawley Down as identified in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, and whilst policy DP12 seeks to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, stating that new development will only be permitted provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the district, and is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan, it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with Policy DP12. Furthermore, policy DP12 is in effect ‘out of date’ as the BUAB was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District across the period 2014 – 2031 as defined in policy DP4 of the Plan which was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016. The approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted District Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024. As a result, the weight to be attributed to policy DP12 is significantly reduced. and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is exacerbated by the Council’s lack of a five year Housing Land Supply. Furthermore, the site is identified as a proposed allocation in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2040 (December 2023).
- 5.14 Paragraph 49 goes on to advise that in the context of the Framework, and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development, that *‘arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:*
- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and*
  - b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.’*
- 5.15 The NPPF also places great importance upon the design of the built environment, with section 12 making it clear at para 131 that: *‘The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.’*

- 5.16 Para 135 continues:  
*'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*  
*a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*  
*b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*  
*c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*  
*d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*  
*e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*  
*f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.'*
- 5.17 Para 136 highlights the importance of trees and the contribution they make to the character and quality of urban areas. It states: *'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance'*
- 5.18 Para 139 continues:  
*'Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design<sup>14</sup>, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:*  
*a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or*  
*b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings'*
- 5.19 Section 11 of the NPPF highlights the need to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.20 In looking to achieve appropriate densities para 129 advises:  
*'Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:*  
*a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*

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<sup>14</sup> Contained in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.

- b) local market conditions and viability;*
- c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- e) the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.’*

- 5.21 The NPPF also looks to promote sustainable transport. It makes it clear that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. To this end para 115 states:  
*‘In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:*
- a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;*
  - b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;.... and*
  - d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach’*
- 5.22 In the context of the above paragraph 116 of the NPPF highlights the fact that:  
*‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.’*
- 5.23 As far as parking is concerned Paragraph 112 of the NPPF advises:  
*‘If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:*
- a) the accessibility of the development;*
  - b) the type, mix and use of development;*
  - c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
  - d) local car ownership levels; and*
  - e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.’*
- 5.24 The NPPF also looks to meet the challenge of climate change and flooding (section 14), and to conserve and enhance the natural environment (section 15). In this respect we note that para 164 looks to new developments to be planned in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change, and helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation, and design. We also note that whilst there are areas considered to be at a High risk from surface water flooding present in the north of the site around Hurst Farm, over 95% of the site is located in an area considered to be at a very low risk from surface water flooding, and

that no built development is located in areas considered to be at risk of flooding from surface water, in accordance with the aims and objectives of para 175. We further note that the site is not located within a national landscape so is not subject to para 190 of the NPPF.

- 5.25 In terms of protecting and enhancing biodiversity we note that paragraph 193 of the NPPF makes it clear that:

*'When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

*a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*

*b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*

*c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*

*d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.'*

- 5.26 The NPPF also looks to promote healthy and safe communities, with para 96 indicates that:

*'Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which*

*a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other....;*

*b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion....; and*

*c) enable and support healthy live through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs.....'*

- 5.27 Para 98 continues:

*'To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:*

*a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities..... and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;*

*b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;....*

*e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services*

- 5.28 Paragraph 39 makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities should *'approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'*
- 5.29 Para 103 also highlights the fact that: *'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.'*
- 5.30 We further note that the NPPF looks to promote pre application engagement and front loading (Paragraph's 40 - 47 refer), that in assessing and determining planning applications Paragraph 48 requires *'applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise'*, and para 56 highlights the fact that planning conditions *'should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects'*. Para 58 goes on to advise that planning obligations must: *'only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:*
- *necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
  - *directly related to the development; and*
  - *fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.'*
- 5.31 Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. Local Planning Authorities should approach development management decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to do so.
- 5.32 This statement will demonstrate how the requirements of the NPPF are to be met. In doing so we note the publication of the consultation draft NPPF on 16th December 2025. As this is however a consultation draft and as the approach advocated within it may well change through the consultation process, we have not sought to comment further on it in this statement. That said we note that the direction of travel is clear on matters such as housing delivery, sustainable development and the tilted balance in the absence of a five year housing land supply.

**b) The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031**

- 5.33 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 was adopted by MSDC in March 2018 and sets out the long-term spatial vision for the District and MSDCs approach to development up to 2031.
- 5.34 Policy DP4: Housing explains that during the period between 2014 and 2031, a minimum of 16,390 net additional dwellings will be provided in the plan area. It also advises that an average of 876 dpa will be delivered until 2023/24, with an average of 1,090 dpa thereafter (between 2024/25 and

2030/31), subject to there being no further harm to the integrity of European Habitat Sites in Ashdown Forest; and that the Council will commence a review of the District Plan in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023.

- 5.35 In the context of the above Policy DP4 that having regard to completions and housing commitments (including sites with planning permission, strategic development at Kings Way, Burgess Hill (DP8) and Pease Pottage (DP10) and allocations in made Neighbourhood Plans), the District Plan looks to allocate two strategic developments one north and north-west of Burgess Hill (3,500 dwellings) and one on land north of Clayton Mills, Hassocks (500 Dwellings), the residual being addressed through the Windfall Allowance (450 dwellings) and future Neighbourhood Plans and the Site Allocations document (2,439 dwellings).
- 5.36 DP5: Planning to Meet Future Housing Need goes on to explain that the Council will continue to work under the 'Duty-to-Cooperate' with all other neighbouring local authorities on an ongoing basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Housing Market Areas, prioritising the Northern West Sussex HMA as this is established as the primary HMA; and working jointly and proactively with the Gatwick Diamond and the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board to address unmet housing need in the sub region; so as to ensure that sites are considered and planned for in a timely manner and will be tested through a robust plan-making process, as part of a review of the Plan starting in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023.
- 5.37 Policy DP6 sets out the settlement hierarchy and in doing so indicates that: The growth of settlements will be supported where this meets identified local housing, employment and community needs. Outside defined built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where:
1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings; and
  2. The site is contiguous with an existing built up area of the settlement; and
  3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy.
- 5.38 In addition, Policy DP6 indicates that the developer will need to satisfy the Council that:
- The proposal does not represent an underdevelopment of the site with regard to Policy DP26: Character and Design; or
  - A large site is not brought forward in phases that individually meet the threshold but cumulatively does not.
- 5.39 Crawley Down is identified as a Category 2 settlement i.e. a larger village acting as a Local Service Centre providing key services in the rural area of Mid Sussex. These settlements are said to serve the wider hinterland and benefit from a good range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and access to public transport.

- 5.40 The table on p37 of the district plan indicates that the Minimum Residual housing requirement in Crawley Down from 2017 onwards (accounting for commitments and completions) is 49 dwellings.
- 5.41 DP12 looks to Protect and Enhance the Countryside, in doing so it advises that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty; and that development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of BUAB on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:
- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
  - it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.42 Policy DP12 also indicates that Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals; and that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.
- 5.43 Furthermore, policy DP12 advises that the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.
- 5.44 Policy DP13 looks to prevent coalescence, whilst policy DP15 advises on those circumstances where new Homes will be appropriate in the Countryside. DP17 explains that in order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects. To this end residential development within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA, leading to a net increase in dwellings will be required to contribute to mitigation through:
- 1) The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the minimum level of 8Ha per 1,000 net increase in population; or a financial contribution to SANGs elsewhere; or the provision of bespoke mitigation; and
  - 2) A financial contribution to the Ashdown Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy.
- 5.45 Policy DP13 also indicates that large schemes proposed adjacent or close to the boundary of the 7km zone of influence may require mitigation for the SPA; and that where bespoke mitigation is provided, these measures will need to be in place before occupation of development and must be managed and maintained in perpetuity. The effectiveness of such mitigation will, policy DP13 indicates, need to be demonstrated prior to approval of the development; and bespoke mitigation will need to be discussed and agreed by the District Council as the competent authority following advice from Natural England.

- 5.46 Policy DP20 explains that the Council will expect developers to provide for, or contribute towards, the infrastructure and mitigation measures made necessary by their development proposals through:
- appropriate on-site mitigation and infrastructure provision;
  - the use of planning obligations (s106 legal agreements and unilateral undertakings);
  - the Community Infrastructure Levy, when it is in place.
- 5.47 Policy DP21 requires development to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026, Transport Securing Infrastructure. Policy DP22 indicates that rights of way, Sustrans national cycle routes and recreational routes will be protected by ensuring development does not result in the loss of or does not adversely affect a right of way or other recreational routes unless a new route is provided which is of at least an equivalent value and which does not sever important routes; and at the same time looks to promote access to the countryside.
- 5.48 Policy DP24 indicates that development that provides new and/or enhanced leisure and cultural activities and facilities, including allotments, in accordance with the strategic aims of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy for Mid Sussex will be supported; and that the on-site provision of new leisure and cultural facilities, including the provision of play areas and equipment will be required for all new residential developments, where appropriate in scale and impact, including making land available for this purpose; and that planning conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to secure such facilities.
- 5.49 Policy DP25 advises that the provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities will be supported.
- 5.50 Policy DP26 in addressing Character and Design indicates that:  
All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:
- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;
  - contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;
  - creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;
  - protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;
  - protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;
  - does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);

- creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;
  - incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;
  - positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;
  - take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;
  - optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.
- 5.51 Policy DP29 looks to address the issue of Noise, Air and Light Pollution; policy DP30, Housing Mix, and policy DP31, Affordable Housing (which is set at 30% for all residential developments providing 11 dwellings or more).
- 5.52 Policy DP34 requires developments to protect listed buildings and their settings, and to conserve other heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 5.53 Policy DP37 explains that the District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting; and that ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected. It goes on to advise that:
- 'Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.*
- Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.*
- Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:*
- *incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and*
  - *prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and*
  - *where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and*
  - *has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and*
  - *takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and*
  - *does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets.*
- .....
- Development should be positioned as far as possible from ancient woodland with a minimum buffer of 15 metres maintained between ancient woodland and the development boundary'*
- 5.54 Policy DP38 advises that:
- 'Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:*

- *Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*
- *Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and*
- *Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and*
- *Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and*
- *Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas.'*

- 5.55 Policy DP38 also advises that designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks; valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution; and that geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites.
- 5.56 Policy DP40 requires all development proposals to improve the sustainability of development and where appropriate and feasible according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures:
- *Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation;*
  - *Explore opportunities for efficient energy supply through the use of communal heating networks where viable and feasible;*
  - *Use renewable sources of energy;*
  - *Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation;*
  - *Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day in accordance with Policy DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment;*
  - *Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer term resilience'*
- 5.57 Policy DP41 indicates that development proposals will need to follow a sequential risk-based approach, ensure development is safe across its lifetime and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and that

Sustainable Drainage Systems should be implemented in all new developments of 10 dwellings or more, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate, to avoid any increase in flood risk and protect surface and ground water quality; and that the arrangements for the long term maintenance and management of SuDS should also be identified. It also advises that SuDS should be sensitively designed and located to promote improved biodiversity, an enhanced landscape and good quality spaces that improve public amenities in the area, where possible; and that the preferred hierarchy of managing surface water drainage from any development is:

1. Infiltration Measures
2. Attenuation and discharge to watercourses; and if these cannot be met,
3. Discharge to surface water only sewers.

5.58 Policy DP42 requires new development proposals to be in accordance with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, and accord with the findings of the Gatwick Sub Region Water Cycle Study with respect to water quality, water supply and wastewater treatment and consequently the optional requirement under Building Regulations – Part G applies to all new residential development in the district; such that development must meet the following water consumption standards:

- Residential units should meet a water consumption standard of 110 litres per person per day (including external water use);
- Non-residential buildings should meet the equivalent of a ‘Good’ standard, as a minimum, with regard to the BREEAM water consumption targets for the development type.

5.59 As set out in section 6 of this statement, we believe the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 to be out of date as the housing requirement was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District across the period 2014 – 2031 as defined in policy DP4 of the Plan which was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016. This reflected the approach promoted in the NPPF 2012, which has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012 and is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024. As a result, the weight to be attributed to those policies of the Adopted Development Plan that relate to the scale and location of housing is in our opinion limited<sup>15</sup>. That said this

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<sup>15</sup> Whilst we note that para 232 of the NPPF in commenting upon the implementation of the NPPF makes it clear that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the Framework and that *‘Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)’*. It also makes it clear that *‘Where a local planning authority can demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) and where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing is more than 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years, policies should not be regarded as out-of-date on the basis that the most up to date local housing need figure (calculated using the standard method set out in planning practice guidance) is greater than the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, for a period of five years from the date of the plan’s adoption’* the converse is in our opinion true where a LPA, such as MSDC, can not demonstrate a 5 year HLS.

statement will demonstrate how the requirements of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 have been met – where relevant.

### **c) The Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022)**

- 5.60 The site allocations DPD looks to allocate employment and housing sites pursuant to the requirements of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018. Seven employment sites delivering 17.45ha of employment land and twenty two housing sites delivering some 1,704 homes are allocated in the Site Allocations DPD, one of which, Land North of Burleigh Lane (SA22) (50 dwellings) is located in Crawley Down.
- 5.61 Policy SA10 of the Site Allocations DPD indicates that with completions to date, Total Housing Commitments (including sites with planning permission and allocations in made Neighbourhood Plans), windfalls and the proposed allocations there will be an over-supply within the District Plan period 2014 – 2031 of some 907 dwellings, circa 5% of the minimum requirement.
- 5.62 The Site Allocations DPD also includes additional policies covering the following areas:
- SA34: Existing Employment Sites
  - SA35: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements
  - SA36: Wivelsfield Railway Station
  - SA37: Burgess Hill/ Haywards Heath Cycle Network
  - SA38: Air Quality
  - SA39: Specialist Accommodation for Older People and Care Homes
- 5.63 We note that SA35 refers to A264 Corridor upgrades at Cophorne Hotel Junction, that policy SA38 indicates that development should minimise any air quality impacts, including cumulative impacts from committed developments, both during the construction process and lifetime of the completed development, either through a redesign of the development proposal or where this is not possible or sufficient, through appropriate mitigation; and that SA39 advises that there is an identified need for specialist accommodation for older people, and that proposals for specialist accommodation for older people and care homes will be supported where the site is outside the Built-Up Area, it is contiguous with the Built-Up Area Boundary as defined on the Policies Map and the development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy (policy DP4).
- 5.64 This statement looks to address the requirements of the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD were relevant, having regard to our position on the weight to be attributed to it given the fact it is predicted on Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which we believe to be out of date.

### **d) The Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan 2016**

- 5.65 The Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan (CDNP) was ‘made’ on the 28th January 2016. It covers the period 2014 to 2031 and sets out a clear vision for the future of Crawley Down:
- ‘A thriving and attractive village community set in unspoilt and accessible countryside that provides an excellent quality of life for residents, visitors, and those who work in, or travel through, the area’*

- 5.66 To this end the Plan sets out 11 policies which it states will, together with the NPPF and the Local Plan, ensure that new development in the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Area will be sustainable and in accordance with the vision. These policies include:  
 Policies Promoting a Healthy Community;  
 Policies Promoting the Design and Delivery of High Quality Homes;  
 Policy Promoting a Prosperous Rural Economy;  
 Policies Promoting the Natural Environment;  
 Policy Promoting Sustainable Transport; and  
 A special Policy to reflect the areas proximity of Ashdown Forest
- 5.67 Having review these policies and having regard to our comments in section 6 below about the wight to be attributed to the neighbourhood plan given its age and the basis upon which it was made, the following are considered relevant to the determination of this application.  
 Policy CDNP01: Securing Sustainable Local Infrastructure  
 Policy CDNP05: Control of New Developments  
 Policy CDNP06: Sustainable Drainage Systems  
 Policy CDNP08: Prevention of Coalescence  
 Policy CDNP09: Protect and Enhance Biodiversity  
 Policy CDNP10: Promoting Sustainable Transport  
 Policy CDNP11: Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA)
- 5.68 Whilst this statement addresses policies CDNP01 and CDNP05. These state:  
*'Policy CDNP01: Development will be permitted where the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development is in place, or can be provided in a timely manner through developer funded contributions*  
*Policy CDNP05: Subject to the other policies of this Neighbourhood Plan; Within the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan Area, planning permission will be granted for residential development subject to the following criteria:*  
*a) The scale height and form fit unobtrusively with the surrounding buildings and the character of the area or street scene and where appropriate, special regard should be had to sustaining and enhancing the setting and features of heritage assets and the Areas of Townscape Character.*  
*b) Individual developments will not comprise more than 30 dwellings in total, with a maximum density of 25 per Ha and spacing between buildings to reflect the character of the area.*  
*c) Amenities such as access, noise, privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.*  
*d) The individual plot sizes are proportionate to the scale of the dwelling.*  
*e) Open green spaces are provided in accordance with the Local Plan standard provisions. Where practical open spaces should provide linkage/connection to elements of the local footpath network.*  
*f) Construction materials are compatible with the materials of the general area and are locally sourced where practical.'*
- 5.69 The LVA addresses policy 08. This states: *'Development outside the village boundary will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:*  
*a. It does not detract significantly from the openness and character of the landscape.*

- b. It does not contribute to 'ribbon development' along the roads or paths linking the village to neighbouring settlements of Copthorne, Felbridge, Turners Hill and Crawley.*
- c. It does not significantly reduce the gaps between the village and neighbouring settlements of Copthorne, Felbridge, Turners Hill and Crawley.'*

- 5.70 The Ecological Appraisal, together with Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment and BNG calculation address policies CDNP09 and 11. These state: *'Proposals for new residential, employment and retail development will be expected to protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife. In particular planning applications for these proposals will be assessed against the following criteria: a. The safeguarding or protection of designated sites, protected species, ancient or species rich hedgerows, shaws, grasslands and woodlands;*
- b. The provision of appropriate buffer zones around designated sites or features and/or the implementation of appropriate mitigation features.*
  - c. The safeguarding and preservation of ecological networks*
  - d. The protection of trees of arboricultural or amenity value*
  - e. The appropriate planting of new native trees and hedges'*

*CDNP11: In order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new residential development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects.*

*Within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA, residential development leading to a net increase in dwellings will be required to contribute to mitigation through:*

*1) The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the minimum level of 8Ha per 1,000 net increase in population; or a financial contribution to SANGs elsewhere; or the provision of bespoke mitigation; and*

*2) A financial contribution to the Ashdown Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy.*

*Large schemes proposed adjacent or close to the boundary of the 7km zone of influence may require mitigation.*

*Such proposals for development will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Where bespoke mitigation is provided, these measures will need to be in place before occupation of development and must be managed and maintained in perpetuity. The effectiveness of such mitigation will need to be demonstrated prior to approval of the development. Bespoke mitigation will need to be discussed and agreed by the District Council as the competent authority following advice from Natural England.'*

- 5.71 The TA addresses policy CDNP10, which states that: *'Development that does not conflict with other Policies will be permitted provided that it promotes sustainable transport within the Neighbourhood Area by:*
- a) Providing safely located vehicular and pedestrian access with adequate visibility.*
  - b) Demonstrating that adequate sustainable transport links to the principal village facilities including the village centre, the primary school, Health Centre and recreation open space already exist or will be provided.*

- c) *Identifying and undertaking appropriate measures, such as highway improvements, to address any transport infrastructure inadequacies.*
- d) *Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or inappropriate traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards local transport schemes.*
- e) *Development proposals for new developments should include secure cycle storage and ideally storage for children's buggies and mobility scooters where appropriate.*
- f) *Development proposals would maintain or enhance the existing public footpaths, rights of way, bridle paths and twittens.*
- g) *A full transport assessment is provided using current data and identified issues addressed developments of more than 50 houses'*

5.72 And the FRA addresses policy CDNP06. This states: *'Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they include sustainable drainage systems designed to manage the risk of surface water flooding within their boundaries, and that they will not increase flood risk elsewhere in the Parish. Examples of sustainable drainage systems include permeable driveways and parking areas, water harvesting and storage features (rain/grey), green roofs and soakaways. The preferred hierarchy of managing surface water drainage from any development is:*

- 1) *infiltration measures;*
- 2) *attenuation and discharge to watercourses;*
- 3) *discharge to surface water only sewers.*

*Such measures should protect the amenity and security of other properties and should not adversely affect the water table and associated aquifers or ancient woodland. Arrangements for the maintenance of drainage systems shall be required as a condition of planning permissions and these arrangements shall include details of who will manage and fund the maintenance for the lifetime of the development."*

5.73 We also note that the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan encompasses 5 'proposals' which look to address the key issues identified during the community consultation on the NP. These are:  
 Proposal 01 : Protection for Assets of Community Value  
 Proposal 02 : Traffic Management and Sustainable Transport  
 Proposal 03 : Enhancement of Green Infrastructure  
 Proposal 04 : Primary Education for Village Children  
 Proposal 05 : Affordable Housing for Local Needs

5.74 Whilst Proposals 1 and 4 are not directly related to this application, Proposals 2, 3 and 5 are and are addressed in the TA, LVA and this statement respectively. They advise:

*Proposal 02 'The Parish Council will promote proposals for improvements, including:*

- a) *To manage traffic speeds on the B2028 Turners Hill Rd;*
- b) *To manage traffic speeds within the village, including, but not limited to, Burleigh Way, Sandy Lane, Vicarage Road/Hophurst Lane, Hazel Way, and Grange Road.*
- c) *To improve the junction at Sandy Lane and B2028 Turners Hill Rd*
- d) *To improve the junction at Grange Rd and B2028 Turners Hill Rd*
- e) *To improve the junction at Vicarage Rd and B2028 Turners Hill Rd*

- f) *To improve and expand public, private and voluntary transport services to Crawley, Gatwick, East Grinstead, out of town shopping centres, local hospitals and other medical centres.*
- g) *To protect and improve car parking at the village centre'*

*Proposal 03: 'The Parish Council proposes the implementation over the plan period of a green infrastructure strategy that will deliver a combination of new and improved assets as follows, to be secured through the development and improvement of land and support to village organisations:*

- a) *Additional varied sports facilities*
  - b) *Natural open spaces*
  - c) *Informal recreational areas*
  - d) *Street tree planting*
  - e) *Sites of interest for nature conservation*
  - f) *Further Allotments or community gardens*
  - g) *Additional Play areas*
  - h) *The management of all new assets will be integrated with those currently existing in the ownership of the Parish Council.*
- The use of site-specific management arrangements will be discouraged.'*

*Proposal 05: This proposal recognises the need to identify and work with partners to deliver affordable housing for local needs as identified in the 2014 Housing Survey.*

- 5.75 This statement looks to address the requirements of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan where relevant, having regard to our position on the weight to be attributed to it given the fact it is predicated on Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which we believe to be out of date.

**e) The Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2021 – 2039 (Dec 2023)**

- 5.76 The Mid Sussex District Council is currently in the process of reviewing and updating the District Plan. The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 was submitted for independent examination on the 8th July 2024, and the first stage of the examination took place between 22<sup>nd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.
- 5.77 The plans vision remains the same as that of the adopted plan i.e. to create *"A thriving, attractive and resilient District, which is a highly sustainable and desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our District and the quality of life for all, now and in the future."*
- 5.78 This the plan looks to do through its three priority themes of protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; protecting economic vitality; and ensuring social cohesion, safe and healthy communities. These three themes are supported by 15 strategic objectives which help guide the strategy and policies within the Plan. The spatial strategy thus looks to protect the natural landscape, make effective use of land, promote the growth of existing sustainable settlements where it continues

to be sustainable to do so, and to identify opportunities for the extension of existing settlements to improve their sustainability.

- 5.79 In the context of the above, having identified the Local Housing Need (LHN), and identified completions to date, proposed windfalls and the current sources of supply, (existing allocations and permission), the submission draft plan indicates at policy DPH1 that there is a need to allocate sites to accommodate 6,687<sup>16</sup> dwellings if the plan is to meet its LHN in full and have an oversupply to provide for resilience/ address the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities.
- 5.80 Given the local housing need, the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy, the plan, having regard to the findings of the Urban Capacity Study, Housing Land Availability Assessment, Settlement Sustainability Review Study, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Strategic Transport Study, the Site Selection Process, and Sustainability Appraisal looks to allocate 3 sustainable communities (on land west of Burgess Hill, at Crabbet Park and at Sayers Common) along with 17 smaller housing sites, including the land west of Turners Hill Road. (Policy DPA9) and land at Hurst Farm (DPA10) to meet its LHN<sup>17</sup>.
- 5.81 Policy DPA9 indicates that the land west of Turners Hill Road will provide for 350 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:
- Community building
  - Allotments
  - 50 bed (C2) care home
  - Play area
  - Other outdoor provision
  - Outdoor sports
  - Informal outdoor space
- 5.82 It also requires the developers of the site to make financial contributions towards the provision of:
- Sustainable Transport
  - Education
  - Library
  - Local Community Infrastructure
  - Emergency services
  - Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures
  - Health
- 5.83 And to make provision for the following off site:
- Sustainable transport measures
  - Highway works
  - Sewerage network upgrades
- 5.84 In addition, policy DPA9 also contains the following policy requirements:
1. Assess the areas of archaeological interest – Crest of Sandstone Ridge and the stream running through the High Weald that has a potential pre-historic bank.

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<sup>16</sup> The sustainable communities (DPSC1 – 7) and other housing sites (DPA1-17) between then are according to policy DPH1 due to deliver 5,243 and 1,444 dwellings respectively.

<sup>17</sup> Policy DPH1 refers

2. Follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk and mitigate impacts through integration of SUDS to deliver biodiversity/environmental improvements and flood resilience.
  3. Address any impacts associated with Ancient Woodland (on and adjacent to the site) including Front Wood, Wallage Wood, Wallage Lodge Shaw, Bushy Wood, Pescotts Wood (east and west parcels), which will be excluded from development.
  4. Provide a woodland buffer to existing vegetation along the southern boundary and set development back from the Worth Way to mitigate potential visual impact to the route and help enhance its setting.
  5. Provide a 5m landscape buffer to existing hedgerows.
  6. Integrate and enhance the existing PRoWs within the site and retain the character of PRoWs that border the site.
  7. Provide suitable pedestrian and cycle connections to Crawley Down, including via the Worth Way.
  8. Integrate development with the site to the north (DPA10) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.
  9. Provide suitable access to Turners Hill Road to each of the three areas of the site. The northern access is to be via Wychwood Place and the middle access and route through site is to be separate from Huntsland which will remain a no through road and public right of way.
  10. Avoid development in the most sensitive areas, including the central ridge.
  11. Provide a country park in southern part of site and along western boundary linking the north and south parts of the site. It meets the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.
  12. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.
- 5.85 Policy DPA10 indicates that the land at Hurst Farm will provide for 37 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:
- Natural, semi-natural and amenity green space
- 5.86 It also requires the developers of the site to make financial contributions towards the provision of:
- Sustainable Transport
  - Education
  - Library
  - Community buildings
  - Local Community Infrastructure
  - Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures
  - Health
  - Play area
  - Other outdoor provision
  - Outdoor sports
  - Parks and Gardens
- 5.87 In addition, policy DPA10 also contains the following policy requirements:
1. Mitigation measures will be required to protect the setting and form of parts of the site that fall within and adjacent to sensitive landscape areas.
  2. Address any impacts associated with ancient woodland along the western and southeastern edges of the site.

3. Integrate development with the site to the south (DPA9) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.
  4. Informed by a Heritage Statement, provide layout and design which preserves the setting of Grade II listed building 'Westlands'.
  5. Provide suitable vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Turners Hill Road.
  6. Investigate, assess and address any land contamination issues arising from former uses of the site or from uses, or former uses, of land in proximity to the site.
  7. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.
- 5.88 This statement along with the other statements submitted in support of this application look to demonstrate how policies DPA9 and DPA10 are addressed.
- 5.89 In addition to the above we also note that policy DPS1 looks to address the matter of climate change through a series of proposals looking to reduce carbon emissions, maximise carbon sequestration and promote climate change adaptation and mitigation. Policy DPS2 looks to promote sustainable design and construction via proposals to promote carbon zero development, adopting the energy hierarchy when addressing energy use, addressing embodied carbon and looking at measures to prevent overheating, address water resources and water efficiency and minimising waste. And policies DPS4 and DPS6 looks to address the issue of flood risk and sustainable drainage, and support health and wellbeing respectively. The Sustainability and Energy Statement, and FRA and Drainage Statement look to address these policies.
- 5.90 Likewise, we note that Policy DPN1 looks to protect Biodiversity, and Geodiversity and promote Nature Recovery, whilst policy DPN2 addresses the issue of Biodiversity Net Gain. That policy DPN3 looks to protect existing and support the provision of Green and Blue Infrastructure, whilst policy DPN4 addresses the protection of Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows, what is appropriate within buffer zones and the Councils' requirements when assessing proposals for new tree, woodland and hedgerow planting. Policy DPN6 comments upon Pollution prevention, policy DPN7 on how to address Noise Impacts and policy DPN8: on Light Impacts and Dark Skies. Policies DPN9 and DPN10, addressing Air Quality and Land Stability and Contaminated Land respectively. The Ecological Appraisal and associated BNG report and Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment, together with the AIR, LVA and Geotech report look to address these policies.
- 5.91 Policies DPC2 and DPC6 address the issue of Coalescence, and development within the 7KM zone of the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC. Policy DPB1 goes on to address the issue of the character and design of new development. In doing so it highlights the need to understand the context, how to address the layout, streets and spaces, how to establish the structure, high quality building design, residential amenity, and 20 - minute neighbourhoods. The LVA, Shadow Habitat Regulations Assessment, and DAS look to address these policies.

- 5.92 Policies DPT1, DPT 2, DPT 3 and DPT 4 look to address the issue of Placemaking and Connectivity, the protection and enhancement of rights of way and other recreational routes, the promotion of active and sustainable travel, and parking and electric vehicle Charging Infrastructure respectively and are addressed in the DAS and TA.
- 5.93 Whilst, as set out above, policy DPH1 sets the minimum housing need, policy DPH4 establishes the Council's approach to older persons housing and specialist accommodation and reiterates the fact the wider site is identified as suitable to accommodate older persons accommodation. DPH6 goes on to establish the need for all sites of 100 (+) dwellings to make provision for self and custom build housing, and policy DPH7 explains the Council's approach to housing mix for market and affordable dwellings. Policy DPH8 goes on to explain that all residential and mixed use sites site will be required to provide 30% affordable housing, that these should be in clusters of no more than 10 units, the tenure split, the minimum floor area to be provided and 4% should be M4(3) compliant. Whilst not relevant to this application as it is in outline only, we also note that policy DPH11 addresses dwelling space standards and policy DPH12 Accessibility requirements. This statement, together with the DAS look to address these policies.
- 5.94 Finally, we note that chapter 17 of the Submission Local Plan addresses infrastructure, with policy DPI1 commenting on infrastructure provision, policy DPI2 on planning obligations, policy DPI4 on communications infrastructure, policy DPI5 on open space, sport and recreational facilities, policy DPI6 on community and cultural facilities and local services, policy DPI7 on water and wastewater infrastructure and policy DPI8 on viability. This statement, together with the LVA and FRA/ DS look to address these policies.
- 5.95 Whilst we accept that the weight to be attributed to the submission local plan is limited as it has still to be independently examined, this statement will demonstrate how the policy approach promoted in Submission Local Plan has been met – where relevant.

**g) Relevant MSDC Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) & guidance**

- 5.96 MSDC has a number of relevant SPDs, technical advice notes and guidance documents, including:  
 Affordable Housing SPD (July 2018)  
 Design Guide SPD (Nov 2020)  
 Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD as updated (Oct 2019)  
 West Sussex LLFA Policy for the Management of Surface Water (2018)  
 West Sussex County Council Guidance on Parking at New Developments (September 2020) and car parking demand calculator.
- 5.97 This statement, together with the DAS, FRA and TA will demonstrate how this application looks to address the requirements of these documents – where relevant.

## h) Other Material Considerations

### MSDC Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (April 2023)

- 5.98 The Councils Housing Land Supply statement for the position as at 1st April 2023, as updated October 2023 suggests, on the Councils' own evidence that at the time they had 5.04 yrs supply (a surplus of just 47 dwellings).
- 5.99 The updated statement of common ground on housing land supply signed by the Council on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 for the Scamps Hill appeal<sup>18</sup> acknowledges that as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 the Council only had 3.38 yrs worth of supply, a deficit of 2,304 dwellings against the 5 year requirement. They also acknowledge that the housing land supply deficit is significant and that the tilted balance contained in para 11 of the NPPF was thus engaged. This position is reiterated in para 2.11 of the December 2025 Position Statement 1 on Delivering Sustainable Development.
- 5.100 This statement comments upon the implications of the five year housing land supply situation in section 6 below.

### MSDC - Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

- 5.101 In December 2025 MSDC adopted 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' as a non-statutory document. Its purpose is to provide developers and other stakeholders guidance on how the Council will consider speculative planning applications in the light of their being unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply<sup>19</sup>. Whilst it is noted that the Position Statement does not replace the policies of the adopted Development Plan Documents, and that nor is it a Development Plan Document carrying the same legal weight; it has been approved by the Council and forms a material consideration in the determination of planning applications which are not subject to allocations within the adopted development plan. To this end it confirms that *'The Council's overarching approach for delivering sustainable development is:*
- *To continue to support sites that have been allocated for housing (within the adopted District Plan, Site Allocations DPD, saved policies from the Local Plan 2004 and Small Scale Housing DPD, and Neighbourhood Plans).*
  - *To support development on **sites identified for allocation in the Submission Draft District Plan** (the 'Councils Preferred Sites' – see section 5) that:*
    - o deliver the site-specific principles set out in Appendix C; and*
    - o the infrastructure requirements set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and*
    - o are in general conformity with the Development Principles set out in Section 6 of this Position Statement'* My emphasis
- 5.102 The Position Statement goes on to advise that:

<sup>18</sup> Appeal ref APP/D3830/W/24/3350075, MSDC ref DM/24/0446 – land off Scamps Hill Lindfield

<sup>19</sup> Para 2.11 of Position Statement 1 says: *'As the Council can no longer demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, NPPF paragraph 11d, footnote 8 indicates that policies that affect the supply of housing may be considered out of date. This reduces the weight that may be given to such policies and engages the 'tilted balance' in decision making. Appendix A sets out the weight that the Council applies to its adopted policies.'*

*'The Submission Draft District Plan proposed sufficient housing sites to meet the housing need for the district until 2039. The Council considers it has a robust site selection process which has led to these sites being chosen and they have been tested through Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Viability and Transport modelling. ....*

*The sites have been subject to consultation with infrastructure providers, town and parish Councils and local communities. The consultation feedback has shaped the policy and infrastructure requirements to be delivered alongside new homes. Many of the site-specific policy requirements were the subject of discussion and agreement with site promoters/developers during the preparation of the Plan. The Council recognises that there remain objections to these sites and that they haven't been tested through independent examination. However, when making its decision to approve the Submission Draft District Plan for public Examination, the Council was satisfied that the proposed site allocations represented the most sustainable pattern of development for the district.*

*Therefore, the Council continues to support the delivery of the housing sites and the sustainable communities identified for development in the Submission Draft District Plan and continues to work with site promoters/developers to bring them forward as soon as practically possible. ....*

*The Council will expect planning applications on the preferred sites to be in general conformity with:*

- Site-specific development principles set out in Appendix C*
- Decision Making Principles set out in Section 6*
- Site specific infrastructure requirements set out the Infrastructure Delivery Plan*
- Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (for items not covered by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan)'*

5.103 The land west of Turners Hill Road, and north of Huntsland is thus identified in appendix C of the Position Statement as part of a Preferred Site that falls within SHELAA site 688, which has an overall indicative capacity for 350 dwellings and should address the following key Principles:

'1. Set development back from the Worth Way to mitigate potential visual impact to the route and help enhance its setting.

2. Provide suitable pedestrian and cycle connections to Crawley Down, including via the Worth Way.

3. Integrate development with the site to the north (SHELAA site 743) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.

4. Provide suitable access to Turners Hill Road to each of the three areas of the site. The northern access is to be via Wychwood Place and the middle access and route through site is to be separate from Huntsland which will remain a no through road and public right of way.

5. Avoid development in the most sensitive areas, including the central ridge.

6. Provide a countryside open space in southern part of site and along western boundary linking the north and south parts of the site.

7. Provide a 50 bed care home to contribute to overall identified need.

8. Provision of local community infrastructure including community allotments and allotments.

- 5.104 The land at Hurst Fram is also identified in appendix C of the Position Statement as a Preferred Site that falls within SHELAA site 743, and has an indicative capacity for 37 dwellings and should address the following key Principles:
1. Avoid any direct or indirect impacts associated with ancient woodland along the western and southeastern edges of the site, including Pescotts Wood East and Pescotts Wood West.
  2. Integrate development with the adjacent site to the south (SHELAA site 688) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.
  3. Provide suitable vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Turners Hill Road.
- 5.105 The Position Statement also identifies a set of principles which are important to the Council in determining planning applications, which encompass:
- **Principle 1:** Sustainability
  - **Principle 2:** Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
  - **Principle 3:** Countryside
  - **Principle 4:** Built Environment
  - **Principle 5:** Transport
  - **Principle 6:** Economy
  - **Principle 7:** Housing
  - **Principle 8:** Infrastructure
- 5.106 This statement and the other supporting statements that accompany this application look to address these principles as far as they are relevant to this application.

#### MSDC - Position Statement 2: Infrastructure

- 5.107 Also, in December 2025, MSDC adopted a position statement on Infrastructure provision as a non-statutory document. Its purpose is to provide developers and other stakeholders with information on how developer contributions will be calculated and secured from new development.

## **6 Planning Appraisal**

### **6.1 The Issues**

- 6.1.1 This outline application provides for the development of the land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, including land at Hurst Farm, Crawley Down, West Sussex so as to accommodate the erection of up to 230 dwellings, a 70 bed care home and community facility, and associated infrastructure including a new access point off of Turners Hill Road with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features and associated works.
- 6.1.2 All matters bar access are reserved for future determination. The principal point of access is via a new priority junction on to Turners Hill Road, replacing that currently serving Hurst Farm.
- 6.1.3 Having regard to the aims and objectives of national and local government guidance, and having regard to the sites planning history, we consider that the key issues to be considered in determining this application are:
- the principle of development in terms of the aims and objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), and the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan (January 2016); as well as the aims and objectives of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (December 2023), the housing land supply situation in Mid Sussex, the affordable housing needs of the District, the site's suitability for development, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and the applicant's ability to start to deliver the site within the next 5 years;
  - the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development on the area.
  - the effect of the proposed development on existing landscape features.
  - the impact of the proposed development on areas of ecological interest/protected species.
  - the impact of the form, layout, and design of the proposed development on the amenities of adjacent residents.
  - the sites' ability to accommodate this level of development, the nature of the residential accommodation and the level of affordable provision.
  - the effect of the proposed development in transportation and highway terms.
  - the sites suitability for development in terms of flood risk and foul water drainage.
  - the impact of the proposed development on the cultural heritage of the site and surrounding area.
  - the impact of the proposed development in terms of the loss of agricultural land; and
  - the effect of the proposed development in terms of energy consumption, lighting, amenity space, contamination and remediation, the capacity of service providers and impact on local infrastructure.

### **6.2 The Principle of Development**

- 6.2.1 MSDC have in their December 2025 Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex) acknowledged at para 2.11 that

they do not have a five year housing land supply. Whilst this is not quantified, we note that the Updated Statement of Common Ground on Housing Land Supply for the Scamps Hill appeal, which is dated 18th December 2024, accepted that as at 1st April 2024 the Council only had 3.38yrs housing land supply.

6.2.2 The Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, forms part of a wider allocation for development in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023 pursuant to Policy DPA9. Whilst the land at Hurst Farm is allocated for development in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023 pursuant to Policy DPA10. The proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with Policies DPA9 and DPA10, the only areas of variation being to reflect discussions with Worth Parish Council about the use of offsite contributions in lieu of the onsite provision of sports and community facilities, thus bolstering local facilities and removing any potential for conflict. In addition, the site is identified in the Council's Position Statement of December 2025 on Delivering Sustainable Development as a preferred site for development.

6.2.3 Whilst the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan is still at examination, so of limited weight, and the Council's Position Statement on Delivering Sustainable Development is defined therein as being a 'material consideration' in the decision making process, the submission of this application now helps to demonstrate deliverability and bolster the council's five year housing land supply situation as set out in the Submission Draft Local Plan's trajectory, at a time when given recent changes to national government guidance, the council's lack of a five year housing land supply under the adopted development plan leaves them vulnerable to speculative applications for development in areas that have not been judged to be suitable through the allocation process. In addition, it reflects the aims and objectives of the Council's Position Statement on Delivering Sustainable Development, and in the case of the land at West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland already benefits from an extant permission for 150 dwellings and a 50 bed care home and associated facilities.

6.2.4 It is on this premise that we have made this application

**a) Policies DP4 and DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031**

6.2.5 The application site is located outside of the current urban area of Crawley Down as identified in the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan and policy DP12 of the adopted District Plan seeks to protect the distinctiveness character and quality of the countryside stating that development will only be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, where it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

6.2.6 Whilst it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with policy DP12, policy DP12 is in effect 'out of date'

given the housing land supply situation, and the fact the settlement boundary was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District as set out in policy DP4 of the Adopted District Plan which looked to deliver an average of 876 dpa until 2023/24 an average of 1,090 dpa until 2030/31, and was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012.

- 6.2.7 Para 10 of the NPPF makes it clear that *‘So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development’*. Paragraph 11 then makes it clear that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that for decision-taking this means:

*‘c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*d) 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.’*

- 6.2.8 Footnote 8 makes it clear that ‘out of date’ includes: for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where:

*‘the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.’*

- 6.2.9 The Council have openly admitted in the recent Scamps Hill appeal and para 2.11 of the December 2025 Position Statement 1 on Delivering Sustainable Development that they do not have a five year housing land supply.

- 6.2.10 Given the above it is necessary to consider the housing land supply situation as well as the age and the premise behind the policies that go to the heart of housing delivery in the Adopted Development Plan i.e. policies DP4 and DP12.

i) The Housing Land Supply Situation

- 6.2.11 Para 78 of the NPPF makes it clear that local planning authorities are now required to *‘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 in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:*

*a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or*

*b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery<sup>40</sup> of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply.....*

6.2.12 As the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which set the housing target in policy DP4 was adopted in 2018 it is over 5 years old, and whilst the Site Allocations DPD which seeks to enact the requirements of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 was only adopted in 2022 we would submit that as a ‘daughter’ document it is the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which para 78 relates to. As para 78 makes it clear that 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 and the Council have openly acknowledged they do not have a five year housing land supply, the fact the application site is located outside of the current urban area of Crawley Down where policy DP12 applies whilst a material consideration, is of limited weight given the fact MSDC cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. This we note is a position that MSDC have themselves acknowledged in recent committee reports – such as that relating to the former application for the development of the land north of Huntsland in Crawley Down which was reports to committee in June 2025 (DM/25/0014) and land at Foxhole Farm Bolney which was reported to committee in October 2025 (DM/25/1129 refers).

6.2.13 Given the above, paragraph 11 (d) of the NPPF (December 2024) is engaged for the purposes of decision making, to which we return below.

ii) The Weight to be attached to the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031

6.2.14 Para 232 of the NPPF is clear in that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF, the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given.

6.2.15 In the context of the above we note that policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 indicates that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty and that 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, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
  - it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan
- The planning boundaries in the plan having been defined by the housing requirements set out in policy DP4.

6.2.16 In considering the weight to be attributed to policies DP4 and DP12, we note that these policies were prepared in a policy and housing need

context that is now out-of-date (see Paragraphs 6.2.6 and 6.2.12 above) such that the urban areas identified in the Mid Sussex District Plan are also out-of-date. As a result, the weight to be attributed to spatial policies DP4 and DP12 is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is exacerbated by the Council's lack of a five year housing land supply.

6.2.17 In the context of the above we note that MSDC in their Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (December 2025), look to comment on the weight to be given to the policies within the Adopted Development Plan in appendix A, and in terms of policies DP4 and DP12 conclude:

**JAA Table 6.1- Status of Policies DP4 and DP12 of the Adopted Local Plan**

Policy	Conformity with NPPF (2024)	Local evidence and conclusion	Conclusion
DP4: Housing	Housing requirement not calculated using standard method. Plan is over five years old. Para 78 requires use of local housing need, using standard method. Policy relates to the supply of housing and as such can be considered out of date, having regard to the NPPF, para 11(d) and footnote 7 and 8.	Standard Method figure to be used. The policy has limited weight in decision.	
DP12: Protection and enhancement of Countryside	This policy seeks to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty. It has regard to the NPPF, para 187. While the policy does seek to restrict certain forms of development, it is not considered that this policy directly relates to the supply of housing. However, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year supply of housing.	This policy has moderate weight in decision making.	

6.2.18 The fact that MSDC accept that policy DP4 is '*mostly or fully out of date and should be given lesser weight in planning decisions*' and that policy DP12 has undergone '*Some change to the interpretation of policy, additional guidance which alters weight to be given in planning decisions*' is we believe telling, albeit we acknowledge that the fact these policies are out of date does not mean that they must be disregarded in the planning assessment. However, any breach of these policies should in our opinion be afforded reduced (limited) weight in the planning balance.

#### **b) The Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan**

6.2.19 The CDNP does not look to allocate housing sites. Rather policy CDNP04.2 sets out those criteria against which infill housing schemes should be assessed and policy sets out those criteria that seek to control new developments, including the maximum number of dwellings to be permitted (30) and densities (25dph). As a result of the above and given the age of the CDNP (Made Jan 2016) para 14 of the NPPF does not

apply and the weight to be attributed to it is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is exacerbated by the District Council's lack of a five year housing land supply. That said we accept that the fact that these policies are out of date does not mean that they must be disregarded in the planning assessment. However, any breach of these policies would be afforded reduced (limited) weight in the planning balance. Again, we note that MSDC in their Position Statement of December 2025 on Delivering Sustainable Development, in appendix B look to comment on the status of made Neighbourhood Plans, and as far as the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan is concerned state:

**JAA Table 6.2 – Status of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan**

Plan Area	Date of adoption	Housing Allocations	Status – does para 14 apply?
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	28.01.16	No	No - over 5 years old

**c) The Submission Draft Local Plan December 2023**

6.2.20 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 was submitted for independent examination on the 8th July 2024.

6.2.21 Having identified the Local Housing Need, and identified completions to date, proposed windfalls and the current sources of supply, (existing allocations and permission), the submission draft plan indicates that there is a need to allocate sites to accommodate 6,687 dwellings if the plan is to meet its Local Housing Need in full and have an oversupply to provide for resilience/ address the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities.

6.2.22 As a result of its housing need and having regard to the findings of the Urban Capacity Study, Housing Land Availability Assessment, Settlement Sustainability Review Study, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Strategic Transport Study, the Site Selection Process, and Sustainability Appraisal the plan looks to allocate 3 sustainable communities (on land west of Burgess Hill, at Crabbet Park and south of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common) along with 17 smaller housing sites, including the land west of Turners Hill Road, and the land at Hurst Farm.

6.2.23 Policy DPA9 indicates that the land west of Turners Hill Road, which includes part of the application site, will provide for 350 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:

- Community building
- Allotments
- 50 bed (C2) care home
- Play area
- Other outdoor provision
- Outdoor sports
- Informal outdoor space

6.2.24 It also requires the developers of the site to make financial contributions towards the provision of:

- Sustainable Transport
- Education

- Library
- Local Community Infrastructure
- Emergency services
- Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures
- Health

6.2.25 And to make provision for the following off site:

- Sustainable transport measures
- Highway works
- Sewerage network upgrades

6.2.26 In addition, policy DPA9 also contains the following policy requirements:

1. Assess the areas of archaeological interest – Crest of Sandstone Ridge and the stream running through the High Weald that has a potential pre-historic bank.
2. Follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk and mitigate impacts through integration of SUDS to deliver biodiversity/environmental improvements and flood resilience.
3. Address any impacts associated with Ancient Woodland (on and adjacent to the site) including Front Wood, Wallage Wood, Wallage Lodge Shaw, Bushy Wood, Pescotts Wood (east and west parcels), which will be excluded from development.
4. Provide a woodland buffer to existing vegetation along the southern boundary and set development back from the Worth Way to mitigate potential visual impact to the route and help enhance its setting.
5. Provide a 5m landscape buffer to existing hedgerows.
6. Integrate and enhance the existing PRoWs within the site and retain the character of PRoWs that border the site.
7. Provide suitable pedestrian and cycle connections to Crawley Down, including via the Worth Way.
8. Integrate development with the site to the north (DPA10) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.
9. Provide suitable access to Turners Hill Road to each of the three areas of the site. The northern access is to be via Wychwood Place and the middle access and route through site is to be separate from Huntsland which will remain a no through road and public right of way.
10. Avoid development in the most sensitive areas, including the central ridge.
11. Provide a country park in southern part of site and along western boundary linking the north and south parts of the site.
12. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.

6.2.27 We also note that Appendix 6 of the Councils Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper July 2024 (Trajectory of Proposed District Plan Allocations) actually shows the DPA9 delivering in 2027/28 i.e. the next five years.

5.108 In addition, Policy DPA10 indicates that the land at Hurst Farm, which also includes part of the application site will provide for 37 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:

- Natural, semi-natural and amenity green space

- 5.109 It also requires the developers of the site to make financial contributions towards the provision of:
- Sustainable Transport
  - Education
  - Library
  - Community buildings
  - Local Community Infrastructure
  - Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures
  - Health
  - Play area
  - Other outdoor provision
  - Outdoor sports
  - Parks and Gardens
- 5.110 In addition, policy DPA10 also contains the following policy requirements:
1. Mitigation measures will be required to protect the setting and form of parts of the site that fall within and adjacent to sensitive landscape areas.
  2. Address any impacts associated with ancient woodland along the western and southeastern edges of the site.
  3. Integrate development with the site to the south (DPA9) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.
  4. Informed by a Heritage Statement, provide layout and design which preserves the setting of Grade II listed building 'Westlands'.
  5. Provide suitable vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Turners Hill Road.
  6. Investigate, assess and address any land contamination issues arising from former uses of the site or from uses, or former uses, of land in proximity to the site.
  7. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.
- 6.2.28 Para 49 of the NPPF makes it clear that:
- 'Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:*
- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
  - b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
  - c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).'*
- 6.2.29 Para 50 continues:
- 'However, in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:*
- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and*

*b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.'*

- 6.2.30 Having regard to the above, whilst the application site is a proposed allocation in the Submission Local Plan it is not so substantial/ its cumulative effect would not be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to the submission local plan. The application site is in effect a small, self-contained part of the wider policy DPA9 site, and the policy DPA10 site located on the edge of the urban area that is not fettered by any land use designations and is capable of delivering a sustainable development that helps address the Councils five year housing land supply deficit and accommodates the requirements of the Submission Local Plan without creating an undesirable precedent / being premature to the adoption of the Local Plan. This has in addition been acknowledged by the council when they granted planning permission in September 2025 for a residential development on land north of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road so as to provide for 150 homes, a 70-bed care home, new public open space, footpath and cycle connections, and financial contributions towards local infrastructure and amenities. DM/25/0016 refers
- 6.2.31 The NPPF is clear that applications can only be refused on grounds of prematurity in limited circumstances. The proposed development at up to 230 dwellings and a 70 bed care home is not for a significant quantum of development and is not reliant on any other allocations to come forward itself. Furthermore, the Council have through their evidence base and recent approval of DM/25/00016 deemed the site a sustainable one, suitable for development. As a result the proposed development cannot be said to equate to development that has such a significant cumulative impact that it would undermine the plan making process.
- 6.2.32 The grant of planning permission here would not therefore result in an undesirable precedent being set. Whilst every application should be assessed on its own individual merits, the fact is that the circumstances here are quite unique to this site. The site forms part of a wider area identified as a potentially allocation in the Submission Local Plan, and part of it already benefits from an extant planning permission for 150 homes and a 70-bed care home, and as such is already seen as helping to meet the Council's Local Housing Need. Furthermore, the 'Delivering Sustainable Development' Position Statement adopted by the Council in December 2025 reiterates the council's support for this site as a suitable location for sustainable growth. It's well contained in landscape terms, and its well connected to Crawley Down, a highly sustainable settlement.
- 6.2.33 The documents submitted in support of this application look to demonstrate how the proposed development accords with policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Submission Draft Local Plan. A summary position is set out in **appendix 1**.

**d) Affordable Housing Need**

- 6.2.34 The Strategic Housing Assessment (SHA) Oct 2024 produced to support the Submission Draft Local Plan indicates an estimated annual need for 383 rented affordable homes and 311 affordable home ownership homes

in Mid Sussex District. Together this equates to circa 64% of the annual Local Housing Need as advocated in the Submission Draft Local Plan<sup>20</sup> and circa 51% of the Local Housing Need proposed under the new standard method set out in the Dec 2024 NPPF<sup>21</sup> Even if one takes into account the fact the Council are proposing an affordable housing policy requirement of 30%, its clear that as not all sites provide affordable housing, the Submission Local Plan will not address the districts affordable housing needs. In order to meet 100% of the affordable requirement the plan would need to deliver a minimum of 1,735dpa<sup>22</sup> over the plan period i.e. 1½ time more than that currently planned for, and circa 30% more than the Local Housing Need calculated under the new standard methodology.

6.2.35 In the context of the above we note that according to table 11 of MSDC Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) (April 2022 – May 2032) (published Dec 2023) the Council have, over the past 9 years only delivered 1,878 affordable homes<sup>23</sup>. An average of 208 affordable completions per annum, significantly less than the annual need.

6.2.36 The above would suggest that not only is the affordable housing need acute, but it remains high, with completions falling woefully short of the requirement set out in the SHA.

6.2.37 The above is exacerbated by the ONS affordability ratios published in March 2025. The ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 1997 to 2024 indicates that the ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings in MSDC has increased significantly over the past 10 years from 9.71 to 11.35<sup>24</sup>.

**JAA table 1 – Extracts from ONS median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings across West Sussex - 1997 to 2024**

Authority	2012	2014	2016	2018	2020	2022	2024
Crawley	6.57	7.24	8.10	9.09	8.21	8.97	7.93
Horsham	10.46	12.11	13.09	13.87	12.57	13.25	11.68
Mid Sussex	9.71	11.38	12.61	12.68	12.48	13.11	11.35
Lewes	9.06	9.46	10.03	9.88	11.38	12.37	12.09
Wealden	10.07	11.71	11.45	11.82	11.66	13.42	11.62

6.2.38 The affordability situation in MSDC is thus worsening year on year, and significantly greater than the average for England (7.71), and the South East (9.61).

<sup>20</sup>  $694/1090 \times 100 = 63.67\%$

<sup>21</sup>  $694/1356 \times 100 = 51.18\%$

<sup>22</sup>  $100/40 \times 694 = 1,735$

<sup>23</sup>

Table 7: Affordable Housing Completions

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Cumulative Total
<b>Affordable Housing Completions</b>	221	113	168	97	102	214	245	349	369	1,878

<sup>24</sup> ONS House price to workplace-based earnings ratio – March 2024 – table 5c

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>

- 6.2.39 As set out below, the proposed development will provide for up to 69 affordable dwellings. This is a highly significant material consideration and should carry substantial weight in the context of the NPPF.
- 6.2.40 As this is an outline application the affordable housing mix and tenure split has yet to be agreed with the Council's housing department. That said, it would, as set out in the DAS, comprise a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments and 2, 3 and 4 bed houses, providing affordable or social rent and affordable home ownership. These dwellings will be secured through a S106 Agreement, and as the DAS demonstrates will be designed to be tenure blind and distributed throughout the development in clusters of 15 – 25 dwellings.
- 6.2.41 On the basis of the above the proposed development of the application site would actively assist in addressing the affordable housing requirements of the Council in a real and valuable way. Furthermore, as set out in section 6.18 of this statement it is Wates intention that the nomination rights for the affordable housing units are such that the affordable units are in the first instance made available to people in housing need with appropriate connections to Crawley Down. Thereafter the nomination rights will, if necessary, cascade down to those in need in the neighbouring parishes and then those in need in the rest of the District.

**e) The housing needs of the elderly**

- 6.2.42 The 2024 Mid Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) indicates that the district is likely to see a significant increase in those aged 65 and over to 2038; and that the provision of suitable accommodation, including type and tenure, capable of supporting an older population and range of disabilities, is therefore important in delivering sustainable, mixed and balanced communities. The Submission Draft Local Plan goes on to indicate that *'very few sites have been submitted to the call for sites for specialist accommodation that are in sustainable locations that deliver the spatial strategy of the Plan'*. That said the Submission Draft Local Plan encompasses at policy DPH4 a number of sites that are allocated to meet the needs for older persons' housing. This includes the land west of Turners Hill Road, as well as the three sustainable communities proposed at Burgess Hill, Sayers Common and Crabbet Park, and the proposed developments at Byanda, Hassock and Hyde Lodge, London Road, Handcross (DPA18 and 19 refer).
- 6.2.43 As set out below, the proposed development will provide for a 70 bed care home, which is larger than that required by policy DPA9 to ensure it meets the market providers' requirements. As a result, the proposed development would actively assist in addressing the housing requirements of the elderly in a real and valuable way, which is a highly significant material consideration and should carry substantial weight in the context of the NPPF.

**f) Land at Turners Hill Road, Crawley Down - A Sustainable Location for New Development**

- 6.2.44 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF advises that these objectives should be delivered through the

preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the Framework; *'they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged'* it continues: *'Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.'* Having regard to the advice in the NPPF it should be noted that: -

i) The Economic Role

6.2.45 The application site is not located within a National Park, a National Landscape or area of Area of High Landscape Value, nor is it located within a conservation area, or proposing development within flood zones 2 and 3. Rather it is situated close to Crawley Down (see below), in an area unfettered by any policy designations.

6.2.46 The application site would thus constitute the right type of land, in the right place at the right time to support growth. In addition, the proposed development would result in the creation of both construction jobs and additional indirect and induced construction-related jobs during the build period. The Socio-Economic Benefits infographic prepared by Icini and enclosed at **appendix 2** provides an overview of the socio-economic benefits that could be delivered from the development. This includes:

a) Construction Phase:

£46m Construction Value  
 120 Direct Jobs (per annum)  
 40 Indirect / Induced Jobs (per annum)  
 £92m Total Gross Value Added (over build period)  
 Apprenticeships, Training and Local Supply Chain Opportunities  
 and  
 S106 contributions towards social infrastructure

b) Operational Phase

£6.6m Total Residential Spend (per annum)  
 £2.3m First Occupation Expenditure  
 251 Economically Active Residents  
 £553k Council Tax (per annum)  
 Stamp Duty Land Tax  
 72 direct jobs and 39 indirect jobs  
 9m Total Economic Output  
 £1.8m Employee Wages (per annum)

c) Wider Benefits including:

- Significant contribution towards meeting housing needs and economic growth (particularly affordable housing), which best serves the needs of the local community
- Supporting health and wellbeing by increasing accessibility to care and responding to an ageing population, enabling people to age within their existing community

6.2.47 Given the above it is considered that the proposed development satisfies the economic dimension of sustainable development.

ii) Social Role

- 6.2.48 The provision of up to 230 new dwellings and a 70 bed care home will make a contribution to the Districts housing land supply and will help meet the identified need, particularly in respect of affordable homes (up to 69 dwellings) and the elderly (via a 70 bed care home), in a significant way. In addition, the range of house types proposed will help to meet the needs of present and future generations.
- 6.2.49 The proposed development, in providing circa 7ha of land to be used for formal as well as informal recreational areas, children's play areas, allotments (if required) and community orchards, will actively help address the recreational needs of the area.
- 6.2.50 In addition to the above, the proposed development also provides an opportunity to expand/consolidate/introduce new services and infrastructure, through S106 contributions towards transport improvements, library services, community facilities etc.
- 6.2.51 In accordance with para 8 of the NPPF the application site will be accessible to local services that reflect the community's needs and will support the existing and future communities' health, social and cultural well-being. The NPPF seeks to promote a strong vibrant and healthy community by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports its health, social and cultural wellbeing. It can be considered that the proposed development satisfies the social dimension of sustainable development.

iii) Environmental Role

- 6.2.52 The proposed development is on land that is free from any national environmental designations, i.e. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Park..
- 6.2.53 In the context of the above it is acknowledged that there is an overriding need to ensure that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is recognised, and that development should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built, and historic environment.
- 6.2.54 In accordance with para 8 of the NPPF the proposed development provides an opportunity to enhance and actively increase the biodiversity on the site. As set out in the LVA and AIR, the proposed development has been designed to ensure the majority of the existing landscape features are retained and incorporated within the development; and where existing features are lost, their loss will be mitigated by substantial new tree planting, reinforcing the site's landscape character. In addition, as set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment the large swaths of informal open space, and community orchard, along with the proposed SuDS features and ecological enhancement works will ensure BNG in excess of 15%, whilst the Shadow HRA has concluded that, in view of the fact the wider study area, south of Huntsland falls partly within the 7km zone of the Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC and in light of the designations' conservation objectives, following the implementation of mitigation measures (in the form of alternative greenspace provision and contributions to SAMM), the

proposed development would have no effect on the integrity of the Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC either alone or in-combination with other plans and project.

- 6.2.55 In addition, the proposed development will look to make the most efficient use of the site, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Energy Statement explains how significant improvements above Building Regulations are proposed in this instance to reduce energy demand and CO2 emissions thus helping to address the council's climate emergency.
- 6.2.56 Given the above it is considered that the proposed development satisfies the environmental dimension of sustainable development.
- 6.2.57 It is also noteworthy that the application site is located immediately adjacent to the built confines of Crawley Down and is identified as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan, and part of the site already benefits from an extant permission for 150 dwellings and a 70 bed care home, which demonstrates that MSDC recognise that the site is situated in a sustainable location for development, thus satisfying relevant national and local policy on this matter.
- 6.2.58 As set out in the Transport Assessment, the application site is located within reasonable walking and cycling distance of a range of facilities in Crawley Down. In addition, there is access to existing bus stops within easy walking distance that provide regular services to Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill, Three Bridges, and Crawley, as well as East Grinstead, Lingfield and Tunbridge Wells; and easy access to Three Bridges, Crawley, and East Grinstead train station which provides regular services to East Croydon, Clapham Junction and London as well as Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and Brighton.
- 6.2.59 Table 4.2 of the TA provides a summary of the local facilities, amenities, educational and employment opportunities accessible within a comfortable or reasonable walking and cycling distance of the site.
- 6.2.60 Given the above we consider the application site is ideally situated to accommodate further growth in a sustainable manner as defined by para 8 of the NPPF.
- 6.2.61 Thus, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and consideration needs to be given to the application in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF i.e. it should only be refused if any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development, when assessed against the NPPF as a whole, or specific NPPF policies indicate development should be restricted.

**g) A summary of the Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits Generated by the Proposed Development**

- 6.2.62 We believe there are a number of material planning benefits generated by the proposed development, as set out below:

**Table 6.5 – Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits Generated by the Proposed Development**

	<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Type</b>
1	Provision of up to 230 market dwellings	Social/Economic
2	Provision of up to 69 affordable dwellings (30%)	Social
3	Provision of a 70 bed care home.	Social
4	An appropriate dwelling mix.	Social
5	Provision of 0.16ha of formal play space together with potential for allotments	Social/Environmental
6	Provision of circa 7ha of publicly accessible incidental open space/ amenity space/ natural and sei natural space	Social/Environmental
7	Developing in a highly sustainable location	Social/Environmental/ Economic
8	Avoiding designated landscapes such as the High Weald National Landscape and South Downs National Park	Environmental
9	Landscape enhancement with new tree and hedgerow planting	Environmental
10	Avoiding impacts on protected areas/ species & ecological enhancements resulting in a BNG of 15% (+)	Environmental
11	Improved pedestrian, and cycle links between the site and the wider area	Environmental
12	Enhanced bus services between the site and the wider area	Economic/ Environmental and Social
13	Contributions towards off site highway works	Economic/ Environmental and Social
14	Managed positive surface water drainage strategy	Environmental
15	Provision of energy efficient homes exceeding current policy requirements	Environmental
16	In accordance with spatial strategy of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan – especially policies DPA9 and DPA10	Social/Economic/Environmental
17	In accordance with Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Dec 2025)	Social/Economic/Environmental
18	Short-term economic benefits from construction	Economic
19	Long-term economic benefits from new residents spending in the local area, employment in the care home, S106 contributions, New Homes Bonus and Council Tax revenues	Economic/ Social

6.2.63 Cumulatively the proposed development will deliver and provide significant benefits which demand very substantial weight.

**i) Deliverability**

6.2.64 There are, as will be set out later in this statement, no impediments to development on this site. Furthermore, despite the scale of development proposed on this site, there are no significant advanced infrastructure requirements. On this basis and as the site is already under contract to

the applicants, it is anticipated the development of this site will start as soon as is practically possible after the grant of planning permission.

6.2.65 To this end it should be noted that if consent is granted locally in summer 2026 first occupations of the proposed dwellings would be expected in winter 2028, and the development could be completed by the winter of 2033, dependent on market conditions.

6.2.66 Given the above we consider a realistic trajectory to be as follows:

26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	Total
0	5	50	50	50	50	25	230

6.2.67 The above reflects the position promoted by the Council in Appendix 6 of the Council's Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper July 2024 (Trajectory of Proposed District Plan Allocations) produced in support of the Submission Local Plan, which shows the application site delivering in the next five years.

6.2.68 The site is available for development, is suitable for development, and can start to deliver new homes for local residents within the next 5 years. The development of this site would in our opinion meet the tests of deliverability set out in the NPPF and would contribute towards the overall housing land supply.

**j) Conclusions on the Issue of the Principle of Development update**

6.2.69 The development of the application site for residential purposes would not, given the need to provide for additional housing land in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, prejudice the aims and objectives of Policies DP4 and DP12 of the District Plan. As set out above the weight to be attributed to these policies is now limited in the light of the five year housing land supply situation. Furthermore, in the light of the fact that the Council cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply, paragraph 11d of the NPPF is engaged and the tilted balance applies.

6.2.70 The application site is located on the edge of Crawley Down, which is defined in the Settlement Hierarchy Review as a category 2 settlement, as a rural service centre i.e. a Local Service Centres providing key services and serving the wider hinterland and benefit from a good range of services and facilities, including employment opportunities and access to public transport.

6.2.71 The proposed development complies with the aims and objectives of policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Submission Draft Local Plan and the recently adopted Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Dec 2025). In addition, part of the site already benefits from an extant consent for 150 dwellings and a 70 bed care home.

6.2.72 In determining this application, the Council should do what the government encourages where there is a 5 year housing land supply deficit - look at sustainable sites and apply the tilted balance. In doing so and approving this application they would be facilitating delivery in

accordance with the Councils Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper July 2024 produced in support of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

- 6.2.73 In this context, the benefits of the proposed development are, as set out in this statement, substantial and far outweigh the limited harm the development may cause.
- 6.2.74 The development proposals meet the three overarching objectives of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Prospective occupiers would help to support the range of local facilities and services in Crawley Down including public transport and would contribute to the vitality of the locality and social cohesion. The development itself would also provide short term construction jobs, as well as longer term employment within the care home – economic benefits. There would also be benefits from S106 contributions, and the new Homes Bonus, that should be acknowledged in the planning balance.
- 6.2.75 As well as being an acceptable ‘sustainable’ location, the development would provide a relevant and valuable contribution to the Council’s five year housing land supply.
- 6.2.76 The sites suitability for development and the associated principle of the site’s development is thus established and there is no justifiable reason to oppose the release of this site.

### **6.3 The Nature of the Residential Accommodation**

#### **i The Unit Mix**

- 6.3.1 The proposed development provides for up to 230 dwellings and would encompass a mix of 1 and 2 bed maisonettes and 2, 3 and 4 and 5 bed houses; 30% of which would be affordable and 2% would be self and custom build plots. Thus, the proposed development looks to provide for a range of different house types, sizes and tenures, including a 70 bed care home, so as to reflect the character of the area, the aims and objectives of policies DP30 and DP31 of the Adopted District Plan and policies DPH6, DPH7 and DPH8 of the Submission Draft Local Plan
- 6.3.2 In the context of the above we note that policy CDNP05 of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan advises that larger developments (6 dwellings or more) should provide a mix of dwelling sizes (market and affordable) that fall within the following ranges:  
 Market Housing At least 75% 2-3 bedroom houses and up to 25% other sizes  
 Affordable Housing At least 80% 2-3 bedroom houses and Up to 20% other sizes<sup>13</sup>
- 6.3.3 As the above does not reflect the position advocated in the latest SHMA (2024) which promotes a more varied mix within both market and affordable housing to reflect market demand and affordability issues, as set out below, the proposed development has sought to address the requirements of the more up to date SHMA and Submission Draft Local Plan rather than the Neighbourhood Plan.

	1 Bed/ 2 person	2 Bed / 4 person	3 Bed / 5 person	4 Bed (+) / 6 person
<b>Market Housing</b>	0 - 10%	20 - 25%	40 - 45%	30 - 35%
<b>Affordable Ownership</b>	10- 15%	50 – 55%	25 – 30%	5 – 10%
<b>Affordable Rent</b>	30- 35%	40 – 45%	15 – 20%	5 – 10%

6.3.4 Furthermore, as set out in the DAS, the affordable housing units will be designed to be tenure blind and will be distributed throughout the proposed development.

6.3.5 In addition, all houses will be designed to be M4(2) compliant, and 4% of the affordable dwellings will be designed to be M4(3)(2)(b), with 5% of the market dwellings designed to be M4(3)(2)(a) compliant in accordance with policy DPH12 of the Submission Draft Local Plan. The proposed development also looks to deliver 2% self-build.

## ii The Density of Development

6.3.6 The proposed development will result in the provision of 230 dwellings on a site of circa 14.99ha i.e. a density of 15.3dph. As however 7.02ha is set aside for green infrastructure, and 0.25ha encompasses highway land/highways, the net residential area is only circa 7.72ha. As part of this encompasses the care home (0.66ha), only circa 6.36ha is set aside for the housing the 230 dwellings on an area of circa 6.36ha would generate a density of 36.16dph net. Whilst neither the Adopted District Plan nor Submission Draft Local Plan contain policies related to the density of new development, other than in conservation areas, the above reflects the desire in the NPPF to optimise the use of land whilst preserving the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and also reflects the net density achieved on the land to the south of Huntsland (DM/25/0014)

## 6.4 The Form, Layout and Design of Development

6.4.1 The form, layout and design of the proposed development has, as set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) been predicated on a detailed understanding of the whole of the site and its surroundings and adherence to the draft site allocation policies DPA9 and DPA10. This has led to an appreciation of the site wide constraints, which as summarised in the DAS include:

- i. The sites topography and its ridgeline features.
- ii. The various hedgerows, trees and woodland that lie within and adjacent to the site, including the areas of Ancient Woodland and its associated buffer zones, and the veteran trees and their buffer zones.
- iii. The surrounding highway network and proposed means of access to the site and adjacent land.
- iv. The location of the formal PRoW that abut the site.
- v. The important existing ecological features present including areas of grassland, hedgerows, and woodland.
- vi. The wildlife that exists on site/ in eth surrounding area including roosting, forging and commuting Bats, Grass Snakes, Badgers, Great Crested Newt, and Birds

- vii. Visually sensitive areas and viewing corridors into and out of the site.
- viii. The setting of local heritage assets.
- ix. Areas of surface water flood risk.
- x. Existing low voltage overhead lines.
- xi. The location and orientation of adjacent properties

6.4.2 The DAS explains the design evolution having regard to the above and the design policy approach advocated in the Adopted Development Plan as well as supporting Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan. To this end it reviews the sites connectivity and undertakes a detailed character assessment of Crawley Down to establish its historic evolution, what makes the area unique, and how this can be reflected in the design proposals for the application site. This assessment concludes that the following lessons are key for the design and planning of the application site:

- *Respect for Historical and Architectural Context:*  
Crawley Down's architectural style is a blend of Victorian, Edwardian, and mid-20th-century housing. The traditional design, evident in buildings such as those along Bowers Place and the large manor houses like The Grange, gives the village a sense of historical depth. Land west of Turners Hill Road should complement these existing architectural styles by considering the scale, materials, and façade treatments, ensuring new homes sit comfortably within the existing village fabric.
- *Maintaining Village Scale and Density:*  
Crawley Down's village character is defined by its organic, low-density layout. Land west of Turners Hill Road should aim to reflect this informal settlement pattern, avoiding overly dense or urban-style housing layouts that could disrupt the village's intimate and rural feel. The use of varied plot sizes, irregular street patterns, and green buffers will help maintain the village's charm.
- *Integration with the Landscape:*  
The pastoral quality of Crawley Down's surroundings, with its rolling fields, woodlands, and hedgerows, is central to the village's identity. Land west of Turners Hill Road and north of Huntsland should enhance this relationship with the countryside by preserving natural features such as existing hedgerows and mature trees, creating green corridors, and ensuring views of the surrounding landscape are maintained. Landscaping should blend new planting with the existing environment, using native species where possible.
- *Sustainable and Sensitive Growth:*  
As a growing village, it is crucial that new developments balance the need for housing with sustainability. In Crawley Down, the Worth Way linear park serves as an important wildlife corridor and recreational space. Lessons from this green infrastructure suggest that Land west of Turners Hill Road and north of Huntsland should integrate sustainable travel options, such as footpaths and cycle routes, and protect local biodiversity by providing habitats that connect with surrounding wildlife networks.

- *Community-Centred Design:*  
*Crawley Down's sense of community is bolstered by its village centre, green spaces, and local facilities such as the Haven Sports field. Land west of Turners Hill Road should encourage community interaction by including well designed public spaces, local amenities, and community facilities. Integrating these features within easy walking distances and ensuring they are accessible to all residents so as to foster a strong, cohesive community spirit.'*

6.4.3 The DAS character assessment concludes that: *'By learning from Crawley Down's historical development and relationship with the surrounding landscape, any new design for the land west of Turners Hill Road can enhance the village's character, promote sustainability, and contribute positively to its ongoing evolution'*

6.4.4 Having established the site constraints, undertaken the character assessment and noted the issues arising from public consultation and discussions with key stakeholders including statutory providers, the Parish Council and officers of the District Council through the pre application process; the DAS sets out a vision for the site: *'A thoughtfully designed extension to Crawley Down that integrates seamlessly with the village and its surrounding landscape.'* This the DAS explains will provide an inclusive and sustainable community based on the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods and reinforce Crawley Down's village character by featuring a network of connected neighbourhoods set within a spectacular pastoral setting, framed by woodland and offering views of the surrounding countryside. It also advises that the study area vision seeks to reflect Crawley Down's organic settlement pattern and semi-rural charm by blending traditional and contemporary architectural styles, adhering to prevailing densities with informal street patterns, and preserving key natural features. To this end the masterplan aims to deliver high-quality homes that integrate seamlessly with the village's built fabric and surrounding countryside, while prioritising sustainable living and fostering a sense of community through the provision of new spaces, including St Leonards Lookout on the land to the north of Huntsland.

6.4.5 The key themes to delivering this are seen to be:

1. Reflecting Crawley Down's architectural character
2. Maintaining a rural village scale and layout
3. Integration with the landscape
4. Supporting sustainability and active lifestyles
5. Fostering community and a sense of place

6.4.6 These key themes are explored further through design principles which are considered to be the key organising principles for the comprehensive masterplanning of the study area. These include:

- 1 Retaining and enhancing existing landscape features to help form a green infrastructure network
- 2 Maintaining public rights of way within green landscape corridors
- 3 Creating landscape buffers to mitigate views
- 4 Creating a significant amount of countryside open space
- 5 Creating a comprehensive green infrastructure network
- 6 Creating a network of safe and attractive streets

- 7 Creating a comprehensive network of footpaths and cycle routes, including a trim trail
  - 8 Creating a new community heart
- 6.4.7 Having established the key themes and design principles the DAS arrives at an illustrative (comprehensive) masterplan for the whole of the study area, before focusing in on the application site – see section 4 above.
- 6.4.8 Thereafter the DAS explains that to support the delivery of high quality environments at the reserved matters stages, a set of design instructions / principles to guide the design approach, supporting character and layout have been put forward. This starts with the parameter plans which look to address land use, density, building heights, access and movement, and landscape; and then through the DAS goes on to consider the issue of liability, residential street ‘character’, and overarching urban design principles having regard to block structure, apartment design, tenure layout and design inclusivity, street trees, permeability, building design, the treatment of the public realm and parking. The DAS then looks at the three different character area proposed within the site – the Village Avenue, Village Lanes and Green Lanes, and sets out the design principles to be followed in each having regard to building typologies, building heights, building density, building lines, materials and colour, street design, boundary treatments and setbacks, the planting strategy and parking arrangements. The overall approach being to deliver a mix of new homes that are of an exemplar house design, which encompasses smart adaptable homes that are climate resilient and use sustainable materials; to enhance active travel options and encourage low carbon transport and infrastructure; to improve biodiversity, and address flood risk and surface water drainage.
- 6.4.9 Overall the DAS demonstrates that the development of the Land west of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, including Hurst Farm, can be accommodated on the site in a way which delivers a high quality development respectful of Crawley Downs character and landscape setting, whilst also promoting sustainability.
- 6.4.10 Given the above the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of policy DP26 of the Adopted District Plan, the MSDC Design Guide SPD, Policy CDNP05 (where still relevant) of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and policy DPB1 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## **6.5 Landscape and Amenity Space**

- 6.5.1 The proposed development looks to deliver significant areas of amenity space, which as set out below will exceed that required by the Councils Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD (October 2019) and the updated requirements set out at appendix 5 of the Submission Draft Local Plan (December 2023) and Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025).

Typology of Open Space	Quantity Standard (ha per 1000 pop) <sup>25</sup>	Quantity Standard Required	Illustrative On Site Provision
Natural and Semi-Natural	0.0018 Ha / 18sqm per person	0.994 Ha	3.93 Ha <sup>26</sup>
Amenity Green Space (including green corridors)	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.422 Ha	1.247 Ha
Parks and Gardens/ Countryside Open Space	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.422 Ha	1.47 Ha <sup>27</sup>
Fixed play areas including LAP, LEAP and NEAP facilities	0.00025 Ha / 2.5 sqm per person	0.138 Ha	0.16 Ha
Outdoor Sports	0.0016 Ha / 16 sqm per person	0.576 Ha	Off Site Financial Contribution
Allotments (if required)	0.0003 ha / 0.3sqm per person	0.166 Ha	0.166 Ha
TOTAL		2.182 Ha	7.02 Ha <sup>28</sup>

6.5.2 Overall, the land set aside for formal and informal recreational open space, encompasses circa 47% of the overall site area and is over 200% more than the policy requirement. It has the ability to provide for the following types of play:

- Inclusive / Accessible Play;
- Adventurous Play;
- Sensory Play;
- Imaginative Play; and
- Social Play.

6.5.3 In addition to the above, the proposed development provides for private amenity space for each of the proposed new houses which is comparable to that found elsewhere within the locality, and the proposed maisonettes /apartments will all benefit from their own private balconies / ground floor terraces thus creating their own private amenity space.

6.5.4 The proposed arrangements for the maintenance and management of the areas of amenity space would be addressed by a Landscape & Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) that can be a condition of any planning consent, and through the draft Heads of Terms of the S106. The outline strategy is that a Management Company will be responsible for the management of the common areas beyond the ownership boundaries of individual properties; this will be funded via a Commuted Maintenance Sum, financed by an annual maintenance charge on each residential property.

<sup>25</sup> See table 3 of appendix 5 of Submission Draft Local Plan

NB Assumes an average occupancy rate of 2.4 per household so 230 dwellings = 552 residents

<sup>26</sup> Excludes 0.047ha for access roads and emergency link to Wychwood Place

<sup>27</sup> NB if allotments are not provided this will increase to 1.64ha (rounded)

<sup>28</sup> Including 0.047ha for access roads and emergency link to Wychwood Place / 6.98 without

- 6.5.5 Allied to the proposed landscape and open space strategy are the proposed enhancement of the PRoW that abut the site and the introduction of new routes which will enhance local residents access to the site and surrounding area.
- 6.5.6 Given the above we believe the proposed development would provide future residents with more than sufficient amenity space to meet their needs and therefore accords with the aims and objectives of policies the Councils Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD (October 2019) and the updated requirements set out at appendix 5 of the Submission Draft Local Plan (December 2023) and Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025).
- 6.5.7 In the context of the above whilst policy DPS9 also suggests the site provides outdoor sports provision, it acknowledges that this is subject to further discussions regarding the overall provision within the settlement, as referenced in the IDP; and as set out in section 4 above it is proposed to provide for contributions towards improving existing facilities within Crawley Down rather than look to introduce new competing facilities on site. The nature, extent and location of the proposed facilities has yet to be agreed, but given the terms of the extant consent for the land north of Huntsland could, as set out in section 6.18 below, include
- New Cricket Pavilion on Sandy Lane with facilities for ladies teams.
  - The enhancement of the facilities at the King George V Recreation Ground.
  - Improvement to the Haven Centre and its sports facilities.

## **6.6 The Potential Landscape and Visual Effects of the Proposed Development on the Area**

- 6.6.1 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) prepared by SLR is based upon a desk top assessment of all relevant character assessments, maps and policies, several site assessments carried out since May 2019, including during both the winter and summer months between March and December 2024, and January 2026, and a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) which has assisted in determining the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. In this context the LVIA explains that the proposed masterplan has been prepared with regular guidance and input from SLR on landscape and visual matters, and the assessment assumes that the baseline for the site includes the consented development DM/25/0014 and DM/25/0016. It does not however take into account the fact Hurst Farm is a draft allocation for residential development (other than considering the Council's own assessment of its capacity to accommodate change). Thus, the LVA represents a worst-case scenario.
- 6.6.2 In terms of its planning policy context the LVA explains that the site is not located within any national, landscape or landscape-related designations; rather it falls within the countryside west of Crawley Down, and is not allocated for development within the current Local Plan but forms part of a wider area allocated as a housing site within the Submission Draft Local Plan under draft policies DPA9 and DPA10. It goes on to note that mature vegetation (including ancient woodland and mature hedgerows), the undulating topography of the site and public rights of way associated with

its countryside setting have informed the wording of these draft allocations; that the southern part of the site, North of Huntsland (excluding Hurst Farm) has the benefit of planning permission, as does land to the south of Huntsland, and that Wychwood Place presents a recent extension of the settlement edge of Crawley Down, abuts the site's north-eastern boundary and forms part of the existing baseline.

- 6.6.3 The LVA goes on to advise that public footpaths run adjacent to the site's northern, north western and (partly within) its southern boundaries, which connect to the surrounding PRow network; and that a long distance route and Country Park (Worth Way) is located approximately 200m to the south of the site. The LVA also notes that there are areas of Ancient Woodland adjacent to the site boundaries., and that Westlands a Grade II Listed building overlooks the site's northern boundary to the north of Hurst Farm.
- 6.6.4 The LVA also advises that the High Weald National Landscape is located approximately 1.7km to the south and south-west of the site; and that whilst views to the site are possible from the ridge forming the National Landscape's northern boundary, there is no visibility to the site (or the proposed development) from within the designated landscape itself. The LVA also advises that the site would not affect physical or ecological connections to this National Landscape and that the site does not form part of the setting of this National Landscape.
- 6.6.5 In terms of landscape designations, the LVA explains that at a national level the site has been classified as forming part of NCA 122, High Weald; and that both West Sussex County Council and Mid Sussex District Council also identify the site as being within the High Weald – the largest of the character areas extending across the district. The LVA also explains that Mid-Sussex District Council have carried out a Landscape Capacity Study for the district and that this has identified the site as falling within the Crawley Down Northern Fringes – an area with a medium capacity for change. It also highlights the fact that in allocating the site in the Submission Draft Local Plan the Council have identified the key landscape sensitivities (which align with the findings of the Capacity Study) within its draft policy wording. The LVA also advises that the relevant land management guidelines for the High Weald have been adhered to when progressing the proposal alongside the draft policy for site allocations DPA9 and DPA10.
- 6.6.6 In addition to the above the LVA acknowledges that the Mid Sussex District Council (Regulation 19) Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (November 2023) considers fields 1 and 2 under IDs 688 and Hurst Farm (fields 8) under site ID 743; and that in referring to landscape as "local landscape character; protected and notable landscapes and key local landscape features", the SA identifies landscape as a potential constraint to site 688 but a neutral planning constraint to site 743. To this end the LVA observes that the SA notes that the range of measures to reduce or mitigate adverse impacts on the rural landscape at site 688 has been updated since the Regulation 18 Plan to include "*provide woodland buffer to existing vegetation along southern boundary and set development back from the Worth Way to mitigate potential visual impact to the route and help enhance its setting*", "*a 5m landscape buffer to existing hedgerows*" and "*Provision of a county park in southern part of site and along western boundary linking to the north and south parts of the site*"; and

acknowledges that *“These measures, along with careful design and layout, may help to mitigate adverse effects to some extent, overall, a negligible impact on the landscape character would be expected (SA Objective 8), an improvement from the minor negative impact in the Regulation 18 SA”*. These issues have been addressed in the submitted schemes to the north and south of Huntsland which are now consented.

- 6.6.7 The LVA also observes that with regards to site 688, under Policy Option DPA9 the SA makes the following commentary: *“The policy now seeks to integrate development with the site to the north (DPA10) such as through design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections, green infrastructure and ecological corridors which would now have a minor positive impact for biodiversity and landscape.”* And that with regards to site 743, under Policy Option DPA10 the SA when considering landscape impact, states: *“The site is relatively small-scale and enclosed by trees, with some existing development on site. Although there may be a change in the landscape character to some extent due to the proposed development, by providing a suitable buffer for the surrounding ancient woodland it is anticipated that adverse impacts on the landscape character could be reduced, with a negligible impact overall for landscape (SA Objective 8).”* And when considering impacts on ancient woodland in relation to site 743 the SA states *“Considering the existing development on site, and the adjacent residential areas, it is likely that the proposed introduction of 37 dwellings would not introduce a significant adverse effect on the ancient woodland. A negligible impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 7) would be expected”*.
- 6.6.8 Having regard to the above the LVA advises that an assessment of the sites landscape value has concluded that the application site and its immediate setting is of Community value. It is not thus a ‘valued landscape’ in the sense of paragraph 187(a) of the NPPF. Notwithstanding this the overall judgement, the LVA highlights the fact that there are elements of the site which have slightly higher value, notably the woodland edges which reinforce the sense of enclosure.
- 6.6.9 The LVA goes on to advise that the assessment of landscape effects (which considers the proposed change which includes the proposals for Hurst Farm, in addition to any changes to the scheme consented under DM/25/0016), concludes that the highest level of landscape effect will be moderate and that this will be focused to Hurst Farm. The LVA explains that the proposals would remove the discordant, poorly managed features associated with the previous use but would increase the traffic and movement associated with the previous farm shop, and that the replacement of the existing built form and increase of traffic and movement associated with the change of use will change the character of this part of the site and will affect the still, simple landscape associated with its current use.
- 6.6.10 These effects the LVA concludes will be negative at year 1. That said the LVA points out that the existing mature boundaries already provide a sense of enclosure in the landscape, and that the proposed Green Infrastructure allows for the enhancement of the boundaries and woodland edges and for the introduction of additional native planting between the development parcels. Thus, in the long term the LVA concludes there will be a positive effect on the woodland and woodland

edges and on trees and hedgerows across the site, thereby reinforcing the medium scale enclosed landscape. The LVA goes on to explain that the residual effects on the overall landscape character of Hurst Farm will be neutral as the changes will be consistent with the characteristics of the local landscape associated with the partly previously developed land adjacent to the settlement edge of Crawley Down.

- 6.6.11 In the context of the above it is, the LVA highlights, important to note that this assessment assumes the baseline for Hurst Farm is its existing condition; the fact that this part of the site is a draft allocation for residential development in the emerging Local Plan has not been factored into either the sensitivity of landscape receptors or the magnitude of landscape effects. This appraisal therefore represents a worst-case assessment of potential medium to long term landscape effects.
- 6.6.12 The LVA also concludes that all other effects on landscape receptors would be moderate/ minor at most; that the direction of residual effects on the overall character of the landscape will be neutral as the changes will be consistent with the consented scheme and the characteristics of the local landscape associated with the partly previously developed land adjacent to the settlement edge of Crawley Down; that there will be no changes to the consented scheme which would result in additional landscape effects to those assessed in the previous submission; and that there would be no landscape effects on the High Weald National Landscape.
- 6.6.13 In terms of visual impacts, the LVA explains that the visual assessment considers all of the visual receptor groups that have potential to obtain views of the proposed development, including those that are not publicly accessible, albeit for these views no representative photography was obtained. The LVA goes on to advise that 18 viewpoint locations were visited and photographed to represent the range of views and receptors likely to be affected by the proposed development.
- 6.6.14 Within the context of the above the LVA advises that the highest level of visual effect would be major/ moderate and experienced by receptors who currently have direct views towards the built form within Hurst Farm and includes walkers at footpath 35W, residents at #1 to #15 Wychwood Place and future residents along the north facing edge of the consented scheme. In all of these cases the visual effects would, the LVA advises, reduce to moderate and negative by Year 15 as the proposed native planting within the buffers to the retained hedgerows and woodland edges would mature to soften views of the proposed dwellings.
- 6.6.15 The LVA also indicates that the replacement of the existing built form at Hurst Farm would be visually contained by the existing woodland to its boundaries which would be enhanced through additional native planting; and that effects associated with the enhanced access from Turners Hill Road would be no greater than Moderate and that this would be for a short stretch of Turners Hill Road as pedestrians and motorists pass the entrance. To this end the LVA indicates that the illustrative proposals have sought to improve the road frontage into Turners Hill Road through the removal of redundant boundary treatments, signage and hardstanding to ensure that the nature of the effects are neutral in the long term.

- 6.6.16 Within the context of the above the LVA explains that as with the landscape appraisal, the assessment assumes the baseline for Hurst Farm is its existing condition. The fact that this part of the site is a draft allocation for residential development in the emerging Local Plan has not been factored into the assessment of visual effects. The appraisal therefore represents a worst-case assessment of potential visual effects in this part of the site.
- 6.6.17 The LVA goes on to advise that from further afield, views of the proposed development would be predominantly screened by the combination of the landscape's well-established vegetation and undulating landform and the consented development south of Hurst Farm. There would be no visual effects experienced from either the High Weald National or any other designated landscape.
- 6.6.18 In terms of coalescence the LVA concludes that the landscape and visual appraisal demonstrates that the proposals will retain the undulating wooded character of the landscape which separates, and defines, the settlements; and that there will be limited visual effects which would reduce the sense of separation between the built up areas. It goes on to advise that when travelling between the built up areas the sense of leaving one place and arriving at another will not be affected by the proposed development, such that overall, the proposed development will not contribute to the coalescence of the settlements listed in policy CDNP 08 and has the ability to accord with policy DPC2 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.
- 6.6.19 The LVA concludes:
1. *This Landscape and Visual Appraisal identifies potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development on both the application site itself and its wider context.*
  2. *The baseline takes account of the consents for land to the north and south of Huntsland (planning refs DM/25/0016 and DM/25/0014) for a total of 350 homes, a care home and associated infrastructure and open space.*
  3. *The effects have been assessed taking account of the proposed change. This includes the proposals for Hurst Farm alongside any proposed amendments to the consented scheme to the north of Huntsland (DM/25/0016).*
  4. *The appraisal concludes that the landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed change will be highly localised and will be focussed to those landscape and visual receptors immediately adjacent to, and within, Hurst Farm. The existing mature boundaries already provide a sense of enclosure in the landscape. The proposed Green Infrastructure allows for the enhancement of the boundaries and woodland edges and for the introduction of additional native planting between the development parcels. In the long term the woodland and woodland edges will be enhanced and there will be an increase of trees and hedgerows across the site.*
  5. *Within the consented parts of the site the provision of buffers to existing valued landscape features and the introduction of the Countryside Open Space will continue to ensure that the new housing will be successfully integrated into the countryside and that any landscape and visual effects above moderate will be reduced in the long term.*

6. *Landscape features which are valued by the local community and by Mid Sussex District Council (through their own Landscape Capacity Study and draft allocation wording) will be respected and celebrated through the provision of new public open space areas which will offer a range of benefits to existing and future residents and allow for a greater appreciation of, and access to, the countryside which forms the village's setting.*

*The scheme proposals have the ability to respond to the objectives of the 2024 NPPF and policies within the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan, Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan and Submission Draft (Regulation 19) of the emerging Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039, in particular DPC1: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside'*

6.6.20 Given the above, the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of policies DP12, 13, 16, and 22 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy CDNP08 and Proposal 03 of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and policies DPN3, DPC1, DPC2 and DPC4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## **6.7 The Effect of the Proposed Development on Trees and Hedgerows**

6.7.1 The Arboricultural Implications Report (AIR) prepared by Simon Jones Associates describes the tree surveys undertaken on the application site in accordance with the requirements of BS 5837:2012: Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations.

6.7.2 It indicates that there are a total of 210 individual trees, fifteen groups of trees, five hedges/hedgerows and four areas of woodland growing within or adjacent to the study area. The surveyed trees and tree groups are shown on the Tree Survey Schedule (TSS) and Tree Protection plan (TPP) at appendix 2 of the SJA trees report.

6.7.3 Of the 210 individual trees, there are two category 'A' trees (nos. 84 and 4720) and sixty-two category 'B' specimens. The remaining 132 trees are assessed as category 'C' trees, being either of low quality, very limited merit, only low landscape benefits, no material cultural or conservation value, or only limited or short-term potential; or young trees with trunk diameters below 150mm; or a combination of these. There being fourteen category 'U' trees i.e. trees that are in such a condition they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for more than 10 years. Of the 24 groups of trees, hedges, hedgerows and woodlands, three have been assessed as category 'A' (W8 – W10), one as category 'B' (W1), and the remaining 20 as category 'C'.

6.7.4 In addition to the above the AIR advises that a number of individual trees and groups of trees within or adjacent to the application site are trees of "landscape, historic or wildlife importance." Including

- The on and off-site ancient woodlands Pescotts Wood, Wins Wood and Bushy Wood (W8, W9 and W10) growing along the northeast, north and west boundaries of the site; and
- The large individual oak and beech trees (nos. 2, 84, 2743, 2745, 4093, 4101, 4629, 4720 and 6000) growing within the tree belts and ancient woodland along the west, north and north eastern boundaries.

- 6.7.5 The AIR also explains that none of the trees within the site are covered by a TPO, and that there are no veteran trees within or directly adjacent to the application site boundary.
- 6.7.6 The AIR goes on to indicate that 36 individual trees, are to be removed, to accommodate the proposed development. None of these are veterans, category A trees or subject to a TPO. Of the trees to be removed one is a category B Oak tree (T32). As set out in the AIR T32 is located at the site entrance, and in order to gain access from Turners Hill Road, as required by policy DPA10, and also retain the 15m buffer to the ancient woodland to the south, the routing of the access meant there was no option but to lose this tree. As set out in the AIR this tree does not make a significant or important contribution to the character of the site or local area, and is considered of low-landscape value. It is located 90m west from Turners Hill, where it is screened by retained trees along the boundary, obscuring it in views from this road. It is also largely screened in views from the public right of way to the north by intervening vegetation. As such the AIR concludes that the removal of this individual would not have a significant or detrimental impact on the character of the site or local area and would mean the access road avoids any impacts to the ancient woodland buffer of 'Pescotts Wood' thereby remaining compliant with the NPPF.
- 6.7.7 The AIR also advises that thirty of the trees to be removed are category C trees i.e. trees either of low quality, low value, or short-term potential, such that the AIR concludes that their removal will have no significant impact on the character or appearance of the area. In addition, five category U trees are to be removed, the AIR indicating that there unsuitable for retention, irrespective of the proposed development, in that they cannot realistically be retained for longer than 10 years.
- 6.7.8 In addition to the above, the AIR advises that two groups of trees and one hedge (G7, G10 and H1) are to be fully removed as part of the proposals. Whilst six groups and one hedge (G1 – G3, G5, G53 – G54 and H2) are to be partially removed.
- 6.7.9 The AIR also explains that a new pedestrian link encroach within the buffer zone of Wins Wood will not have any detrimental impact on the woodland as it will be located outside the RPAs of individual trees and whilst the exact details of the footpath are subject to confirmation at the reserved matters stage, it is expected to comprise a lightly loaded porous surface, constructed entirely above the existing soil level and will incorporate a cellular confinement system to minimise potential soil compaction. As such, it will not result in any significant alteration or adverse impacts to the woodland or to the semi-natural habitat of the buffer zone.
- 6.7.10 Given the above the AIR concludes that overall, there will be no loss or deterioration of the adjacent ancient woodland.
- 6.7.11 The AIR also explains that the proposed development incorporates considerable replacement tree planting which will mitigate the proposed removals, improve the age class balance of the trees on site, enhance the local landscape, and re-establish a framework for the ongoing and long term wooded character of the site. As a result of the above the AIR concludes that taking account of the numbers, sizes and locations of the

trees to be retained, including those that are off-site, the felling of the trees and groups identified for removal will represent no alteration to the main arboricultural features of the site and have very limited impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the site and local landscape.

6.7.12 The AIR also confirms that although the proposals are in outline only, the illustrative masterplan suggests that one tree and one group are likely to require pruning as part of the development. This will be confirmed at the reserved matters stage once detailed design is known. The AIR also confirms that whilst the proposed hard surfacing and drainage as shown on the illustrative masterplan encroach within the Root Protection Areas of 13 individual trees to be retained, the incursions into the RPAs Areas are minor to moderate, and subject to review at the reserved matters stage, and to the implementation of the measures recommended on the Tree Protection Plan, no significant or long-term damage to their root systems or rooting environments will occur. In addition, none of the proposed dwellings or private gardens are likely to be shaded by retained trees to the extent that this will interfere with their reasonable use or enjoyment by incoming occupiers, which might otherwise lead to pressure on the Local Planning Authority to permit felling or severe pruning that it could not reasonably resist.

6.7.13 Overall, the AIR concludes that:

- *As the proposals will retain all the trees that make an important or significant contribution to the character of the local landscape, the site's arboricultural attractiveness, history, landscape character and setting will be maintained, thereby complying with Paragraph 135 (c) of the National Planning Policy Framework.*
- *Whilst some trees are to be removed, there is no duty in planning policy to retain all existing trees in all circumstances. Paragraph 136 of the NPPF states (italics added for emphasis): "**Planning policies and decisions should ensure... that existing trees are retained wherever possible**"; and thereby recognises circumstances in which it might not be possible to retain every tree. Accordingly, the proposed removal of trees does not mean that this application must thereby be refused; and does not mean it conflicts with this paragraph of the NPPF.*
- *As the proposals will not result in the loss or deterioration of any ancient woodland or any ancient or veteran trees, they comply with paragraph 193 (c) of the NPPF.*
- *As the proposed development will not result in the removal of trees which are of landscape, historic or wildlife importance, it complies with Policy DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Council Local Plan.*
- *As the proposals exclude primary development within the buffers of the ancient woodland, and addressing any impacts upon the ancient woodland or its buffer, whilst integrating both Hurst Farm and the wider field sites to the south, providing pedestrian and cycle connections between them, it complies with the policies of both site allocations DPA9 and DPA10 of the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan.*
- *As it adheres to the recommendations of BS5837, respecting trees, woodlands, ancient and veteran trees and hedgerows, affording them appropriate protection, the proposals adhere to Policy DPN4 of the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan.*

- *As the proposed development safeguards ancient woodlands and will not result in the removal of trees of arboricultural or amenity value, it complies with Policy CDNP09 of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031.*
- *On the basis of our assessment, we conclude that the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of low magnitude, as defined according to the categories set out in Table 1 of this report.'*

## **6.8 The Effects of the Proposed Development on the Areas of Ecological Interest/Protected Species**

- 6.8.1 Aspect Ecology has carried out an Ecological Appraisal of the proposed development, based on the results of a desktop study, Phase 1 habitat survey and detailed protected species surveys in respect of roosting, foraging and commuting Bats, Badger, Dormouse, Wate Vole and Otter, Reptiles, Amphibians Birds and Invertebrates.
- 6.8.2 The Ecological Appraisal indicates that there are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations present within or adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory designation is Turner's Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located approximately 1.7km to the south, and designated for its geological importance. The next nearest statutory nature conservation designation is Hedgecourt SSSI, which is located approximately 2.5km to the north-east and designated as an important wetland site.
- 6.8.3 The nearest non-statutory designation to the survey area is Worth Way Country Park cycle route, which is directly adjacent to the southern boundary of the survey area, formed by a disused railway line and designated for its nature conservation interest, although parts of the Worth Way are designated as Local Wildlife Site (LWS) approximately 1.2km to the east, supporting woodland, scrub and open grassland habitats of importance as semi-natural habitat and a wildlife corridor within an urban environment; and that the nearest non-statutory nature conservation designation to the survey area is Lobbs Wood and Furnace Pond LWS, which is located approximately 0.7km north-east of the site.
- 6.8.4 As all these areas are well separated from the survey area and given the nature and scale of the proposals, the Ecological Appraisal concludes that they are unlikely to be affected by the proposed development.
- 6.8.5 The Ecological Appraisal also indicates that the survey area lies within 6.8km of the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA), designated for its wet and dry heaths that support wide assemblages of rare and notable species including nationally important numbers of breeding Nightjar and Dartford Warbler. A separate Report to Inform a Habitats Regulations Assessment advises that a screening exercise has been undertaken to identify whether the proposed development could result in a likely significant effect on European designations, both alone and in-combination with other plans and projects (Stage 1). The screening exercise has concluded that in the absence of mitigation, potential for a likely significant effect is predicted in relation to recreational disturbance at Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC. Therefore, an Appropriate Assessment is required. It goes on to advise that the Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2) has concluded that, in view of

the designations' conservation objectives, following the implementation of mitigation measures (in the form of alternative greenspace provision and contributions to SAMM), the proposed development would have no effect on the integrity of the surrounding European designations either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.

- 6.8.6 The Ecological Appraisal goes on to advise that the Phase 1 habitat survey area is dominated by modified grassland not forming an important ecological feature; and that the features of ecological importance include Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, other lowland mixed deciduous woodland, native hedgerows and lines of trees and offsite ponds.
- 6.8.7 As set out in the Ecological Appraisal there is no loss of Ancient Woodland under the proposals, with all areas of ASNW present within and adjacent to the application boundary being safeguarded through the provision of ancient woodland buffers. Furthermore, whilst residential development is proposed adjacent to the Ancient Woodlands W9 and W10 (Wins Wood and Pescotts Wood), a minimum 15m buffer will be maintained between built development and the woodland edge (in accordance with Policy DP37 under the Adopted District Plan and emerging policy DPN4), and where practical, housing areas will be designed to face out onto these buffers, providing visual surveillance and avoiding gardens backing onto habitat, preventing issues such as informal garden extensions and flytipping. As set out in the Ecological Appraisal this will be further reinforced by the provision of a hard edge to the built development where practical, in the form of roads or footpaths; with additional planting provided within the buffers to strengthen the woodland edge, and the use of thorny species such as Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Holly to discourage informal access to the woodland. This will, as set out in the Ecological Appraisal, be reinforced where necessary with fencing and signage.
- 6.8.8 As with the AIR, the Ecological Appraisal explains that the drainage strategy has been designed to have specific regard to the Ancient Woodlands, with drainage features designed to maintain greenfield runoff rates and good water quality to avoid hydrological effects on the woodlands; and that whilst a footpath is proposed within the buffer to provide access to an existing public right of way (PROW: 35W) this will be located outside of root protection areas of individual trees and will be constructed above existing soil level using a cellular confinement system to minimise soil compaction.
- 6.8.9 The Ecological Appraisal also advises that the majority of other woodlands are unaffected by the proposals, with all except W8 (which runs either side of Huntsland) being located outside of the application boundary itself; and that the cycle and pedestrian link proposed through woodland W8 has been routed in such a way as to minimise the loss of larger trees, whilst impacts on adjacent trees and woodland soils will be minimised through use of permeable surfacing. Accordingly, Ecological Appraisal concludes that the only minor losses of W8 will occur.
- 6.8.11 The Ecological Appraisal also indicates that a small section of W15 will also be lost to accommodate drainage proposals although this is dominated by outgrown Willows; and that the partial losses of W16 and W17 will also occur, although these do not form a priority habitat

woodland type. To this end the Ecological Appraisal highlights the fact that new woodland planting will be provided as part of the landscaping scheme to compensate for any woodland losses.

- 6.8.11 The Ecological Appraisal confirms that no Veteran trees are located within the application site boundary itself and accordingly none will be unaffected under the proposals.
- 6.8.12 Finally the Ecological Appraisal explains that hedgerows and lines of trees are mostly located at the application boundary, such that they are fully retained under the proposals. The only hedgerow loss is along hedgerows H8a and H10 where breaks are to be provided for road access, and in the northern part of the site due to the access road being located further north to avoid the Ancient Woodland buffer, affecting sections of hedgerows H12, H13 and H15. The Ecological Appraisal also notes that new hedgerow planting will be provided under the landscaping scheme to compensate for any hedgerow losses.
- 6.8.13 The Ecological Appraisal goes on to advise that habitats within the survey area are suitable to support protected and notable fauna including roosting, foraging and commuting bats, Badger, Hedgehog, Great Crested Newt, Grass Snake and birds. The bat assemblage is noted to be of district importances, with individual species, Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle considered to form ecologically important features at the local level. As set out in the Ecological Appraisal buildings that support bat activity will be demolished under licence with appropriate safeguarding measures, whilst trees with roosting potential are mostly retained and where they may be required to be removed appropriate safeguards are recommended. Similarly, the main features of importance for commuting bats are to be maintained, whilst habitat creation and enhancement within the proposed countryside open space should increase the value of these areas for bats; and a sensitive lighting scheme will be implemented to ensure that these areas remain suitable for more light sensitive bat species.
- 6.8.14 Whilst survey results and an evaluation in respect of Badger are set out in a Confidential Appendix to the Ecological Appraisal, the Ecological Appraisal advises that no Badger setts or other confirmed evidence of this species was recorded within or adjacent to the application boundary itself. Accordingly, this species is not considered to form a constraint to the proposals. Nonetheless, precautionary safeguarding measures are proposed. The Ecological Appraisal also advises that habitat losses arising from the proposals are not considered likely to have significant effects on Badgers using the wider area.
- 6.8.15 Turning to Great Crested Newts (GCN's), the Ecological Appraisal advises that based on a review of OS mapping and survey work, 13 ponds were identified for survey within 250m of the survey area. Eight of these ponds were subject to eDNA surveys during June 2024 to confirm presence or absence of GCN, three of the remaining 'ponds' were recorded as dry and no access was granted to the remaining two ponds. Two of the ponds, P2 and P5, recorded a positive result from the eDNA testing, indicating presence of GCN. The results were negative from the remaining ponds. The Ecological Appraisal goes on to explain that as ponds P2 and P5 are located more than 250m from the application boundary itself, Great

Crested Newts are unlikely to be affected by the proposals, and that as such, no specific mitigation is required in relation to this species, although it is recommended that a watching brief is maintained in the unlikely event individuals are present.

6.8.16 The Ecological Appraisal also advises that whilst the reptiles surveys identified a low population of Grass Snakes within the wider survey area, on land south of Huntsland, no Grass Snakes were recorded within the fields north of Huntsland. Within survey area B (Hurst Fram), a peak count of one Slow-worm and two Grass Snake was recorded, with the majority of reptiles found in the grassland boundary adjacent to building B16 and mixed scrub MS9. The Ecological Appraisal indicates that a peak count of two adult grass Snake and one Slow-worm are both considered to represent low populations under the standard guidance; and that as such, it is considered that the population of reptiles supported by the study area is of importance at the local level only. The Ecological Appraisal also advises that as the establishment of more diverse grassland and scrub mosaics within the area of open space takes place as part of these proposals, and new wetland areas are created as part of the drainage scheme the development itself is likely to benefit this species. That said the Ecological Appraisal advises that as areas where low numbers of reptiles have been recorded will be affected by construction works, this will pose a potential risk of injury or disturbance to reptile species; albeit on the basis of the survey results and the low reptile populations recorded, it is considered that these species can be appropriately safeguarded by a habitat manipulation exercise.

6.8.17 The Ecological Appraisal also advises that:

- No evidence of Dormouse was recorded during the Phase 1 survey work.
- No evidence of Water Vole was recorded during the Phase 1 survey work.
- No evidence of Otter was recorded during the Phase 1 survey work.
- A total of 38 species of bird were recorded within survey area a during the breeding bird surveys, of which 26 were considered to be breeding. The remaining 12 species were recorded either flying over, breeding in adjacent habitats, or were represented only by non-breeding individuals. Based on the survey results, the Ecological Appraisal concludes that survey area A supports a reasonably diverse assemblage of breeding birds that is entirely typical of the woodland habitats that are present. It also confirms that the vast majority of breeding activity is associated with the woodland, and there is almost no breeding activity in the open fields, with no declining farmland species present. Thus, the Ecological Appraisal suggest that a similar assemblage is expected within survey area B. On this basis, the Ecological Appraisal concludes that whilst the survey area is considered to support a reasonably diverse bird assemblage, the species are only of local level importance, and largely associated with the woodland areas, with almost no breeding activity in the open fields that would be directly impacted under the proposals, such that the bird assemblage is unlikely to be significantly impacted by the proposed development.
- No evidence of any protected, rare or notable invertebrate species was recorded within the survey area

6.8.18 As set out above, a number of mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the risk of harm to protected species, with compensatory measures proposed, where appropriate. In addition, ecological enhancements are also proposed, including new tree and hedgerow planting, the introduction of wildflower grassland and flowering lawn meadows, new scrub planting, the introduction of wetland features, the management and enhancement of the existing woodland, and the introduction of bat boxes, bird boxes, habitat piles and refugia, and bee bricks and insect boxes in order to maintain the conservation status of local populations.

6.8.19 Overall the Ecological Appraisal concludes that:  
*'proposals have sought to minimise impacts and subject to the implementation of appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures, the proposals will not result in significant harm to biodiversity.'*

6.8.20 The separate Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment having measured the habitats that currently exist on site and that proposed indicates that the data from the baseline habitat survey work and the proposed habitat enhancement and creation works indicates that the development will result in a circa 17% net gain in habitats units, and a circa 16% net gain in hedgerow units.

*Table 4.4. Anticipated change in biodiversity*

	Change in Units	% Change	Trading Rules Satisfied?
Onsite Habitats	+7.67	+17.25%	Yes
Onsite Hedgerows and tree lines	+0.91	+16.40%	Yes
Onsite Watercourses	N/A – No watercourses present		

6.8.21 Having regard to the above it is clear that the development proposals will realise significant qualitative enhancements to on-site habitats, providing a mechanism whereby the nature conservation value of the application site can be significantly enhanced in the long term. With reference to faunal species, the recommendations set out within the Ecological Appraisal will fully mitigate potential impacts and will realise significant enhancements to the range of protected and notable species recorded on site or considered to have potential to colonise in future years. This will ensure the Favourable Conservation Status of on-site species is retained and enhanced, ensuring betterment relative to the current situation.

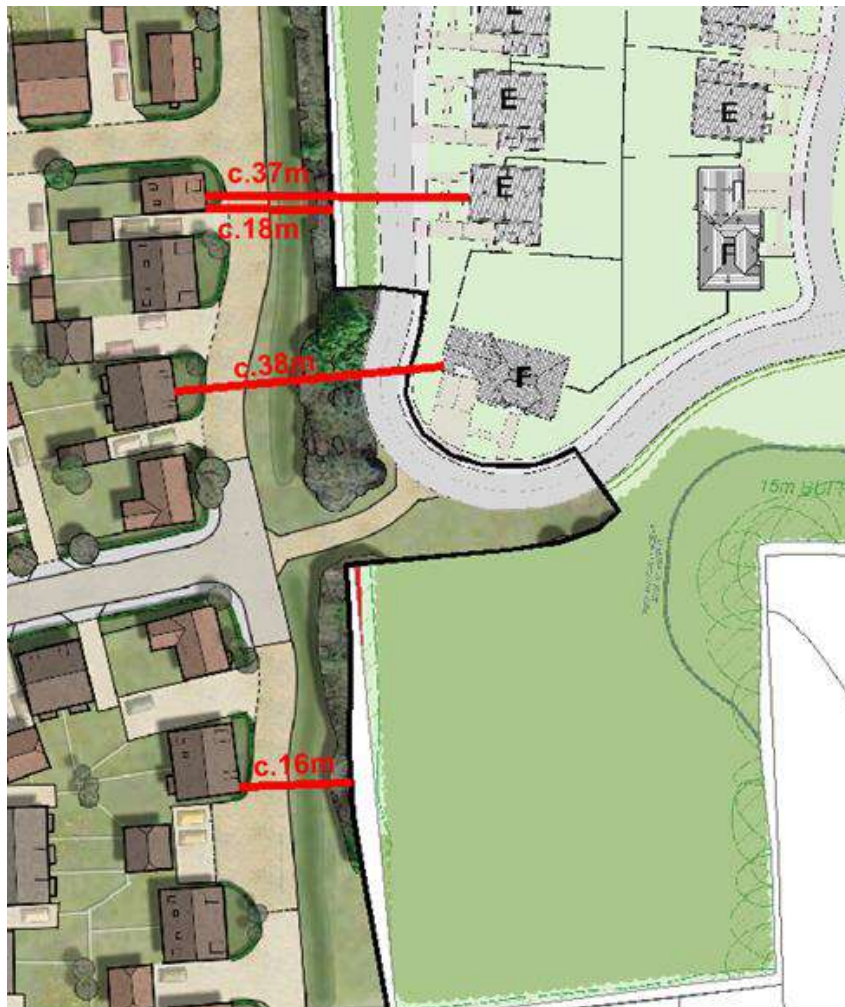
6.8.22 On this basis, the development proposals accord with all legislation and planning policy of relevance to ecology and nature conservation and indeed should be viewed as an opportunity to secure significant ecological enhancements at a wider level.

6.8.23 On the basis of the above, the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of policies DP17, 37 and 38 of the Adopted District Plan, Policies CDNP09 and 11 of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and policies DPN1, DPN2, DPN3 and DPN4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## 6.9 The Impact of the Proposed Development on the Privacy and Amenity of Adjacent Residents

6.9.1 The proposed development has, as set out in the DAS, been designed to ensure that the proposed development does not adversely impact upon the privacy and amenity of the existing residents located in properties adjacent to the site.

6.9.2 In the context of the above, it is fair to say that most of the properties that abut the site are situated quite some distance from the site boundaries and separated by intervening vegetation, such that any impacts will be minimal. To this end we note, as set out below, that the properties proposed along the eastern side of fields 1 and 2 in the illustrative layout are at the narrowest point some 18m from the site boundary and 37m from the nearest properties in Wychwood Place, such that there will not in our opinion be any adverse impact on the privacy and amenity of the occupants of these properties. This relationship being comparable to that approved pursuant to DM/25/0016.



6.9.3 Similarly when looking at the relationship of the proposed development within the northern part of the site, on Hurst Farm, and the Westlands, we note that the proposed development shown on the illustrative layout is at its narrowest point some 20m from the mutual boundary with Westlands, and a minimum of 32m from the flank elevation of Westlands, such that

there will not in our opinion be any adverse impact on the privacy and amenity of the occupants of Westlands.



6.9.4 Whilst we also acknowledge that during the construction phase, the proposed development will have an impact upon the amenities of local residents in terms of general noise and disturbance, we can confirm that the applicant is prepared to agree to a condition that prevents any development being carried out except between the hours of 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 1pm on Saturdays, with no construction work taking place on site on Sundays and Public Holidays, and to submit a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prior to any development commencing.

6.9.5 On the basis of the above we do not consider that the effects of the proposed development during the construction period or when completed will be adversely detrimental to the privacy and amenity of those living in the surrounding area, and as such consider that the proposed development would accord with the aims and objectives of policy DP26 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy CDNP05 (c) of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and policy DPB1 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## 6.10 The Effects of the Proposed Development in Transportation and Highway Terms

6.10.1 The application is accompanied by a detailed Transport Assessment (TA). The TA advises that the NPPF identifies four key transport tests for development, and thereafter assesses the development proposal against these tests:

a) Will sustainable transport modes be prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, type of development and location?

6.10.2 The TA explains that the principle that the application site provides a sustainable location for development has been established by way of its

allocation pursuant to policies DPA9 and DPA10, and the planning permission on a major part of it for 150 homes, a care home, community facility and associated infrastructure (DM/25/0016).

- 6.10.3 The TA goes on to advise that the site is well located with many existing connections to Crawley Down, with Turners Hill Road, Sandy Lane and Vicarage Road all featuring continuous footways adjacent to at least one side of the carriageway; and that there are signalised crossings in place on Turners Hill Road, connecting the site to these continuous footways.
- 6.10.4 The TA also explains that the site features a number of PRowS, with 33W / 32W Footpath route, known as 'Huntsland', running east-west immediately to the south of the application site and Footpath 35W running along to the site's northern and western boundaries, connecting with 33W to the south west of the site.
- 6.10.5 In addition to the above the TA advises that the majority of the roads in the vicinity of the site are residential in nature, wide with non-continuous traffic, and feature 30mph speed limits, such that they will be seen as cyclable by many; and that the Worth Way bridleway to the south also acts as a traffic free cycle route connecting East Grinstead, Crawley Down and Crawley.
- 6.10.6 The TA also indicates that the nearest bus stops are located on the B2028 Turners Hill Road adjacent to and opposite the Wychwood Place junction, approximately 600m from the application site; and that further bus stops located in the south of the village. These provide good services towards key destinations; whilst the closest rail station to the site is Three Bridges, approximately 5km to the west, providing connections to London, Horsham, Haywards Heath, Brighton and Gatwick Airport.
- 6.10.7 The TA also highlights the fact that a comprehensive sustainable transport strategy has been prepared for the proposed development; and that this includes the provision of an on site car club, internal cycle connections, and improvements to the local bus stops. The TA also explains that further off-site improvements, including surface improvements to rights of way; and new dropped kerb /tactile paving crossings associated with the permitted development site south of Huntsland will also come forward. The TA also explains that the sustainable transport strategy also includes material improvements to local bus services and measures associated with the Framework Travel Plan (see below); and that collectively, these provide an extensive package of improvements that will provide genuine opportunities to prioritise sustainable transport.

b) Will safe and suitable access be provided?

- 6.10.8 The TA explains that the design of the site's access into Hurst Farm, which takes the form of a priority give-way junction off the western side of the B2028 Turners Hill Road, accords with design standards; that the design of the site's proposed access has been subject to and takes on board the feedback of an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA); and that the single recommendation from the Stage 1 RSA has been incorporated into the design of the site's proposed access.
- 6.10.9 The TA also explains that the proposal differs from the previous outline planning application which sought to gain access via an extension of

Wychwood Place because of the fact the intensifying of Wychwood Place had been the subject of local concern which through this application, Wates are seeking to address.

6.10.10 In addition, the TA advises that multiple additional pedestrian / cycle routes are proposed, connecting to a network of pedestrian / cycle routes surrounding the site and into the permitted development to the south.

c) Will the design be acceptable?

6.10.11 As set out in the TA the reserved matters application(s) will demonstrate that the site can come forward in accordance with design guidance on car parking, cycle parking, electric vehicle charging, street geometry and servicing.

d) Will there be a 'severe' traffic impact

6.10.12 As set out in the TA a detailed Traffic Impact Assessment has been carried out in respect of the local highway network. The scope of this Traffic Impact Assessment has been agreed with West Sussex County Council, and the modelling undertaken has been based upon the delivery of 230 homes and a 70-bed care home and an agreed list of committed developments, including the 200 homes consented on the land south of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road. The results are the TA advises, consistent with the modelling in the Mid Sussex Transport Study (MSTS), which forms part of the Submission Draft Local Plan evidence base. As explained in the TA, the models show that whilst some junctions are sensitive to additional traffic, the development proposals will not result in a magnitude of impact that breaches the very high 'severe' bar set by the NPPF. It is agreed that traffic impacts arising from development will not be 'severe'.

6.10.13 Having regard to the above the TA concludes:

• *The proposal prioritises sustainable transport. The principle of developing the site has been established by the site's proposed allocation for residential development in the District Plan and previous permission for 150 homes. An extensive package of off-site highways works aimed at improving access by active and public transport, has been developed and agreed with WSCC.*

• *Safe and suitable access will be provided through the upgrade of an existing access serving Hurst Farm to a simple priority junction. The design accords with design standards, and has been subject to a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. The principle of achieving access via Hurst Farm has been agreed in principle with WSCC.*

• *Future RM applications will ensure that the residential-led proposals will come forward in accordance with national and local design standards.*

• *The MSTS includes modelling which has found the local highway network to be capable of accommodating development traffic. Notwithstanding this, a further assessment of the local highway network has been undertaken and does not identify any impacts that would breach the high bar set by the 'severe' test. The traffic analysis has been*

*shared and agreed with WSCC prior to submission of the planning application*

*The development proposal is acceptable in highways and transport terms'*

6.10.14 Given the above it is considered that based on the findings of the TA and in the context of the guidelines within para. 115 of the NPPF, that there are no residual cumulative impacts in terms of highway safety or the operational capacity of the surrounding road network and therefore planning permission should not be withheld on transport grounds. The proposed development effectively accords with the aims and objectives of policies DP21 and DP22 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy CDNP05 (h and k), CDNP10 and Proposal 02 of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and policies DPT1, DPT2, DPT 3 and DPT 4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

#### The Framework Travel Plan

6.10.15 The Framework Travel Plan (FTP) explains that a TP is a term used to promote sustainable lifestyles amongst new residents. The primary aims of the FTP are as follows:

- To reduce the number of single occupancy car journeys to the site so as to reduce the traffic impact of development and the effect on the environment, in line with the objectives of NPPF.
- To promote and improve the accessibility of the site by non-car modes of transport and thereby encourage the use of other travel modes.

6.10.16 It goes on to explain that is anticipated that the FTP will result in benefits for residents of the site and the wider community in the vicinity of the development by promoting sustainable transport.

6.10.17 To this end the FTP will aim to achieve at least a 10% reduction in trips by single occupancy vehicles over the 5 year monitoring period following completion of the development, in line with WSCC guidance, through a variety of measures including:

- Improvements to the existing 272 bus service operated by Metrobus in the vicinity of the Development to fund and introduce for 2.5-years:
  - (a) a return journey to and from Crawley on Saturday evenings and
  - (b) a service operating every two hours between Crawley and Brighton on Sundays.
- Provision of car club vehicle and associated three years free membership for the first occupier of each dwelling.
- Improved transport infrastructure.
- Provision of vouchers for discounted travel by bus or cycle / cycling equipment purchase.
- Trip minimisation and containment

6.10.18 This is to be complimented by a series of on-site measures, such as a site layout that will prioritise pedestrians and cyclists by providing traffic calming and limiting vehicle speeds, as well as enhanced pedestrian and / or cycle connects to the existing infrastructure and Public Rights of Way network; and off site measures such as bus stop improvements for the nearest bus stops along the B2028 Turners Hill Road (north of

Wychwood Place), and off site highway improvements. In addition, soft measures such as those that promote walking and cycling, public transport, home deliveries, car sharing schemes, HomeRun, EV charging, travel vouchers and welcome packs are to be promoted.

6.10.19 As set out in the FTP, a TP coordinator will be appointed prior to first occupation to draw up the initial FTP measures and thereafter manage the day to day delivery of the FTP measures. The monitoring and review of the FTP will be undertaken over a 5-year period, with a TRICS Standard Assessment Methodology survey undertaken in years 1, 3 and 5. The initial surveys will trigger a review of the initial targets set out in the FTP and confirm whether they are realistic. Should the travel plan targets not be met, the TPC will identify suitable improvements and actions to get the travel plan back on track, as well as place greater attention on the measures that are achieving success.

## **6.11 Site Suitability for Residential Development in Terms of Flood Risk**

6.11.1 The application is accompanied by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). This explains that in terms of the Fluvial/Tidal flood risk the site is located in Flood Zone 1, and as such there is a low risk from fluvial/tidal flooding. The FRA also advises that whilst there are areas considered to have a high annual chance of surface water flooding present in the north of the site, at Hurst Farm, these areas represent less than 1% of the total site area; with over 95% of the site located in an area considered to have a very low annual chance of surface water flooding. In addition to the above the FRA indicates that whilst a review of baseline site conditions indicates a moderate groundwater flood risk at the site, upon review of the proposed layout and the proposed surface water drainage strategy, the overall risk to the proposed development is considered to be low.

6.11.2 Given the site's location in Flood Zone 1 the FRA advises that the site is considered to have passed the Sequential Test and that an Exception Test is therefore not required.

6.11.3 Tuning to the impacts of the proposed development the FRA acknowledges that the increase in impermeable area resulting from the proposed development over existing permeable surfaces will increase the surface water discharge generated at the site. In managing this risk, the FRA explains that a surface water drainage strategy has been prepared and is presented in the Drainage Strategy report. The Drainage Strategy report advises that the proposed surface water drainage strategy consists of a connecting network of swales, surface water attenuation areas, and gravity driven surface water sewers where necessary, that have been located adjacent to the northern, eastern, and western boundaries of Fields 1 and 2; with runoff from Field 1 proposed to discharge to an existing watercourse that was observed flowing away toward the west in the northwest corner of the site. Runoff from Field 2 is proposed to discharge to an existing watercourse located on the boundary between Fields 1 and 2, which was also observed to be flowing away toward the west. A similar strategy is proposed within Field 8/Hurst Farm, with runoff from Field 8 proposed to discharge to an existing watercourse that was observed flowing approximately east to west adjacent to the site's northern boundary. A copy of the Drainage Layout Plans are reproduced below.

6.11.4 As set out in the FRA the surface water attenuation areas and swales have been sized to accommodate additional surface water runoff under a 1 in 100 flooding event with a 40% increase in flows to account for the potential impacts of climate change. The proposed swales and surface water sewer connections (where required) being strategically located to direct surface water runoff toward lower lying areas where the proposed surface water attenuation areas will collect and store additional runoff from the Proposed Development.



- 6.11.4 Within the context of the above the Drainage Strategy report advises that discharge rates out of the attenuation features will be limited to 19.8 L/s for Field 1, 41.6 L/s for Field 2, and 19.3 L/s for Field 8/Hurst Farm, which represents a considerable reduction in the peak flows presently emanating from the site, such that the drainage strategy will be an improvement upon the current situation with regard to surface water management and flood risk.
- 6.11.5 In addition to the above the FRA advises that it is proposed to engineer site levels, where possible, so that external areas fall away from building entrances; and that should this not be feasible, linear interceptor drains are proposed to be located at all building entrances towards which there is a positive gradient for surface water to flow.
- 6.11.6 Overall the FRA concludes that subject to the inclusion of the proposed mitigation measures, and adherence to the proposed surface water drainage strategy, it is expected that flood risk at the site can be managed in a safe and sustainable manner.
- 6.11.7 Given the above the development can be satisfactorily drained in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and aims and objectives of Policy DP41 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy CDNP06 of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and Policy DPS4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## **6.12 Foul Water Drainage**

- 6.12.1 The Drainage Strategy report explains that the intended foul strategy for the site proposes to connect the majority of the site into the existing 225 mm diameter Thames Water gravity sewer located approximately 50 – 100m south of the site on the land south of Huntsland; and that the proposed development in Fields 1 and 2 is proposed to connect into a foul pumping station, located in the northwest of Field 1. This pumping station would deliver flows into the existing Thames sewer via a proposed rising main that would cross Fields 1 and 2 before delivering foul flows into a proposed gravity connection at approximately the topographical high point in the southern part of Field 2. This gravity connection would then connect directly into the existing Thames sewer which is outside the site but within client land.
- 6.12.2 The Drainage Strategy report goes on to explain that for the development proposed in Field 8/Hurst Farm, foul water is proposed to connect via gravity into the proposed foul water network for Field 1, from where it would connect into the proposed foul pumping station in the northwest corner of Field 1, to be directed into the existing Thames sewer as per the foul drainage for development proposed in Fields 1 and 2.
- 6.12.3 As set out in the Drainage Strategy report, Thames Water have confirmed capacity in the sewer network for the strategy proposed above and a letter of confirmation is presented in Appendix D of the Drainage Strategy report.
- 6.12.4 Given the above the development can be satisfactorily drained in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and the aims and

objectives of Policy DP42 of the Adopted District Plan, and Policy DPI7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

### **6.13 The potential effects of the proposed development upon the Historic Environment**

- 6.13.1 The Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment (CHDBA) produced by RPS draws together the available archaeological, historic, topographic, and land-use information in order to clarify the heritage significance and archaeological potential of the study site.
- 6.13.2 In terms of Archaeological assets the CHDBA indicates that no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Battlefield sites or Historic Wreck sites lie within the study site or its vicinity and none would be impacted by the proposed development. In terms of relevant local designations, the CHDBA indicates that the study site is not located in an Archaeological Notification Area, as defined by West Sussex County Council, and that the data available for the desk-based assessment shows no clear evidence of a particular focus of archaeological activity within the study site, or that any extant embankments can be identified as Prehistoric in origin, as suggested in the draft policy requirements of allocation DPA9 in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local plan 2021-2039.
- 6.13.3 Based on current evidence the CHDBA indicates that a low to moderate archaeological potential can be assigned to the study site for Iron Age and Roman remains, and a generally low potential for all other past periods of human activity. It also advises that there is a localised raised potential for modern farm outbuilding remains shown on 19th century mapping at the northern and southern extents of the site.
- 6.13.4 Given the above the CHDBA advises that it would appear that any archaeological remains within the study site boundary would, in the context of the Secretary of State's non-statutory criteria for Scheduled Monuments (DCMS2013), most likely be of overall low/local importance. As a result, the CHDBA concludes that the development proposals are considered unlikely to have such a widespread or significant negative archaeological impact that would result in unacceptable harm to the archaeological resource of the site; and that the potential impact of development could be appropriately mitigated through a programme of archaeological investigation and recording undertaken in advance of construction, if so required by the Local Planning Authority.
- 6.13.5 In terms of Built Heritage assets the CHDBA indicates that the study site does not contain any designated or non-designated built heritage assets. However, due to proximity to the site, four Grade II listed buildings within the vicinity were assessed for any potential effects of the future development of the site on their settings or significance. This included Heatherwood South and Heatherwood West (Formerly Oaklawn) (NHLE Ref: 1393329); East Cottage Farthings (NHLE Ref: 1025533); and Leigh Wood (NHLE Ref: 1182619), located beyond the east boundary of the site and Westlands (NHLE ref: 1284416) located beyond the site's northern boundary line. The CHDBA also assesses the group of non-designated built heritage assets at Huntsland given their proximity to the southern boundary line, and confirms that other built heritage assets were able to

be scoped out from further analysis as their associations, settings or significance were not reliant upon the site or because they remain well removed and/or are screened from it, so that there is a lack of intervisibility. These included the Grade II listed Lemon Meadow and Yew Tree Cottage.

- 6.13.6 The CHDBA goes on to advise that there is no intervisibility between the study site and Heatherwood South/Heatherwood West, East Cottage/Farthings or Leigh Wood; they are all either distanced or separated by substantial vegetation and/or built development. As a result, it concludes that the proposed development would result in negligible changes to their wider setting; there will be no loss of any existing opportunity to understand or appreciate their significance and no changes will be evidenced to the intrinsic architectural and historic interest of their built fabric. Thus, the CHDBA concludes that *'Overall, there would be a neutral effect to their setting and significance'*.
- 6.13.7 Turning to the Grade II Westlands the CHDBA advises that Westlands is located in close proximity to the site entrance, separated from it by a Public Right of Way; and that although historically the site formed part of the property's wider rural setting, this has significantly altered due to the part clearance of Pescotts Wood and the construction of the modern Hurst Farm Complex, as well as the approval of the outline application for 150 dwellings and a 70 bed care home on the two fields that lie north of Huntsland (DM/25/0016 refers). On this basis and given the fact there is currently little intervisibility between Westlands and the surviving rural land within its wider setting the CHDBA concludes that the site is assessed as making a minor positive contribution to its setting and significance as indicative of the former farmhouse's historical rural setting.
- 6.13.8 The CHDBA notes that the Land at Hurst Farm has been allocated in the Local Plan for residential development utilising the same access road, and that outline planning permission has already been granted for the rest of the site pursuant to DM/25/0016. Furthermore, it notes that MSDC's response to Action Point AP-007 (November 2024) found that there would be less than substantial harm to Westlands. On this basis, and as the application site is currently screened from Westlands by thick, intervening vegetation, which is to be retained and supplemented, the CHDBA concludes that there are / will be no direct views between the site and Westlands. The CHDBA goes on to advise that it is only possible to experience the significance of this built heritage asset from Turners Hill Road and from the public footpath that runs to its south; there is no experience of its significance from the site. As a result, the CHDBA concludes that there will be less than substantial harm to the setting and significance of Westlands, at the low range of that scale due to the proposed development.
- 6.13.9 Turning to the Non-Designated Built Heritage Assets of Huntslands, the CHDBA advises that Huntslands is a hotel and wedding venue set within extensive gardens/grounds with significant vegetation and has hard standing for private car parking/garages. The wider setting of the Huntslands group comprises Crawley Down Village (to the east) and an expansive rural setting to the south and west. The CHDBA goes on to advise that whilst historically, the surviving rural setting located around Huntsland and the former farmstead would have made a strong positive

contribution to their significance; the function of Huntsland has altered, as has the function of the former farmstead buildings and the surrounding rural area. To this end the CHDBA highlights the fact the area to the south of the Huntslands group has outline planning permission for 200 dwellings and the area to the west has outline planning permission for 150 dwellings and a 70 bed care home, both of which will alter the extended setting of this group of non-designated built heritage assets still further. The CHDBA also highlights the fact that whilst there is some variable intervisibility with Huntslands from various points within the wider area; only a few of these views allow its significance to be appreciated. Its wider rural setting has thus been assessed as making a positive contribution to its setting and significance. The CHDBA goes on to advise that the farm buildings maintain extremely limited intervisibility with their wider rural setting, and that taking into account the outline planning permissions to the south and west of this group, their wider setting is assessed as making a minor positive contribution only to their setting and significance as indicative of their former historical setting.

- 6.13.10 Given the above the CHDBA advises that as there is no/ limited intervisibility between the site with this group of non-designated built heritage assets, the site is assessed as making a negligible positive contribution to the setting and significance of the group of non-designated built heritage assets.
- 6.13.11 The CHDBA goes on to advise that as the existing vegetative screening to the south of F2/ along Huntsland proximate to the PRoW will be retained and the southern part of this field is proposed as green infrastructure, divided by native structure planting, and as the prospective walker on Huntsland would be positioned at a lower level than the field (that rises to the north) there would be little appreciation of the proposed development that would be located beyond the ridge of this field. As a result, CHDBA concludes that the significance of the Huntsland group would still be able to be appreciated and it would continue to contribute to the character and quality of the local area. Thus, taking into account the cumulative impact of the outline planning permission to the south and west of Huntslands, in conjunction with the above facts, the CHDBA concludes that the level of harm to the non-designated Huntslands grouping due to the proposed development is less than substantial at the low range of that scale.
- 6.13.12 The CHDBA concludes that the proposed development is considered to accord with the provisions of Section 66(1) of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act; there being *'no built heritage or archaeological constraints that would preclude the suitability of the site for residential development, associated infrastructure and access'*.
- 6.13.13 Given the above proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of objectives of the NPPF and aims and objectives of policy DP34 of the Adopted District Plan, policy CDNP05 (a) of the Crawley Neighbourhood Plan, and policy DPB2 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## 6.14 Lighting

- 6.14.1 A Lighting Assessment has been prepared to evaluate the potential effects of lighting associated with the proposed development. It reviews the existing / baseline artificial lighting levels in the area of the development and the predicted effects of new artificial lighting installed as part of the proposed scheme on the existing potentially sensitive receptors (e.g. residential properties and wildlife) present in the locality. It confirms that the site is mostly unlit with only lighting associated with the existing buildings present, No other sources of artificial light were present, and no light spill into the site was observed from adjacent properties or street lighting.
- 6.14.2 In the absence of a detailed lighting design for the development, the lighting assessment adopts broad assumptions on the likely lighting design and locations of luminaires. In doing so it assumes the indicative design uses lighting with 0% upward light to minimise Sky Glow and promote a Dark Skies policy, that a column height of 5m is used and that the general recommendations for the detailed lighting scheme will provide for:
- The use of controlled light distribution, optimised optics, and considered luminaire positioning.
  - Modern LED luminaires to minimise the obtrusive light spill and be as energy efficient as possible.
  - Lighting throughout the site is designed to minimise horizontal spill of light to hedgerows.
  - Dimmed and reactive lighting will be used where appropriate.
  - Lighting will be directed away from the site boundaries.
  - Lighting will be designed in accordance with ILP Guidance Notes for Reduction of Obtrusive Light and CIE 126 (1997) Guidelines for Minimising Sky Glow.
- 6.14.3 The Lighting Assessment also assumes the indicative lighting design includes column mounted luminaires selected to have no upward light as well as sharp cut off characteristics, the lighting has been selected to provide adequate illumination of footpaths and roads without polluting the site boundary and also reducing upward light to minimise Sky Glow, that smart controls will be used including time clocks and photocells. It also highlights the fact that for the purpose of the assessment all lighting was assumed to be on to show the worst-case effect.
- 6.14.4 On the basis of the above the Lighting Assessment advises that there will only be a relatively small increase predicted in illuminance across the site with a maximum increase of 0.68 Lux from 0.06 to 0.74 at measuring position 21, which is located within the western part of field 2, near to the boundary with Shenley. This the Lighting Assessment advises will not cause significant light spillage beyond the developed area with all receptor locations recording predicted levels below 1 lux.
- 6.14.5 The Lighting Assessment concludes that the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the area surrounding the site; and that although light spill from the site will increase in some locations the impact of the new development will be negligible in these locations.

6.14.6 Given the above, the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and the aims and objectives of policy DP29 of the Adopted District Plan, and policy DPN8 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## **6.15 Renewable Energy**

6.15.1 A Sustainability and Energy Statement has been produced to provide an overview as to how the development of the land west of Turners Hill Road and north of Huntsland, including Hurst Farm, Crawley Down can contribute to sustainable development in the context of design and construction considerations. It explains that sustainability has a core consideration of the design process and has been incorporated into the project from the outset. To this end, energy and water efficiency have been maximised, whilst the production of waste and pollution is to be minimised, thus ensuring the impact of the proposals on its immediate surroundings and the environment as a whole is minimised.

6.15.2 The Sustainability and Energy Statement goes on to explain that there are two key elements proposed for the approach to the scheme's sustainability proposals:

- The overall development has been assessed using the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, as well as the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan, and the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 (Regulation 19; with Main Modifications), to demonstrate that the proposed dwellings will maximise resource efficiency, minimise the generation of waste and impacts on biodiversity, and ensure the risk of flooding on-site is mitigated during both construction and in operation, to provide dwellings that meet the recommended standards for well-being of future occupants; and
- The carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions reduction strategy for the proposals is based on the energy hierarchy to provide a rigorous methodology, which aims to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the development as far as possible. This is intended to be achieved through the employment of highly efficient building fabric components to reduce energy demand, and the potential inclusion of renewable and low carbon energy technologies to deliver further carbon dioxide emissions reductions. It is anticipated that the proposed carbon dioxide emissions reduction strategy will facilitate significant carbon dioxide emissions savings compared to the Part L:2021 baseline, aiming to significantly exceed the current requirements of Mid Sussex District Council and to align with the draft policies set out within the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 (Regulation 19; with Main Modifications).

6.15.3 The Sustainability and Energy Statement demonstrate that based on this strategy, the proposed development will;

- make efficient use of land;
- promote the use of sustainable and active modes of transport;
- reduce the risk of flooding on-site and in the surrounding area;
- minimise internal water consumption to 85 litres per person per day;
- incorporate low-impact materials, according to the BRE Green Guide to Specification;

- minimise waste production during construction and maximise the proportion of waste to be diverted from landfill;
- mitigate the risk of overheating;
- incorporate measures to improve site biodiversity, including biodiverse planting;
- minimise energy demand through the specification of low U-values, low air permeability and low thermal bridging to reduce heat loss;
- be fossil fuel free, utilising electric-only systems, such as air source heat pumps (ASHPs) to serve the space and water heating demands of the proposed dwellings and non-domestic buildings, in addition to the cooling demands of the non-domestic buildings, where relevant;
- utilise renewable technology, such as rooftop photovoltaic panels, to provide renewable electricity; and
- achieve a significant reduction in CO2 emissions for the proposed dwellings, following the Energy Hierarchy methodology.

6.15.4 Given the above the Sustainability and Energy Statement concludes that: *'Overall, the proposals for the scheme are in line with the principles of sustainable development as well as the policy requirements of the NPPF and Mid Sussex District Council and will provide a development that promotes these principles in operation'*.

6.15.5 Having regard to the above the proposed development reflects the aims and objective of the NPPF and the aims and objectives of policy DP39 of the Adopted District Plan, and policy DPS2 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## **6.16 Agricultural Land**

6.16.1 An Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources report has been undertaken of the site. When set against the site area, it is noted that just 1.02ha of built development comprises Grade 1 land, 1.65ha of built development comprises Grade 2 land, and 3.84ha of built development as identified on the plan below comprises Grade 3a land, thus overall 6.51ha of built development encompasses best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a). Whilst at circa 43% of the overall site area<sup>29</sup> this is quite significant, the Council has indicated that in meeting their housing need, it is likely that greenfield sites (which would include agricultural land) will have to be developed we do not believe that this site should be afforded the same level of protection in planning policy terms as BMVAL. To this end we also note that the majority of the site already benefits from planning permission for residential development, including that encompassing the grade 1 and grade 2 land, and the scale of loss overall at circa 12.2ha is significantly less than the 20ha threshold that would require consultations with Natural England when considering mineral working or waste disposal<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup>  $6.51/14.99 \times 100 = 43.42\%$

<sup>30</sup> See Natural England Technical Information Note TIN049



6.16.3 Having regard to the above the proposed development does not in our opinion conflict with the aims and objectives of para 187 (b) of the NPPF or the aims and objective of policies DP12 and DP38 of the Adopted District Plan, and policies DPN1 and DPC1 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

## 6.17 Other Material Considerations

### Contamination and Remediation

6.17.1 A Phase I Site Appraisal (desk study) has been undertaken. The objective of the risk assessment was to evaluate plausible pollutant linkages with respect to the proposed development, adjacent land uses, and the wider environment, in the context of planning, immediate liabilities under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and risks posed to Controlled Waters under the Water Resources Act 1991.

6.17.2 A Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) and Conceptual Site Model (CSM) was developed from the information gathered. It advises that as part of the desk study process Geo-Environmental Services Limited have identified several plausible pollutant linkages that exist in relation to the proposed

development of the site; albeit the preliminary risk rating for the majority of pollution linkages have been classified as low or very low. As a result, the potential pollutant linkages established within the desk study are not considered to prevent development on the site but could require remediation or the employment of risk mitigation measures to reduce the risks to key receptors.

- 6.17.3 Given the above the desk study advises that in order to progress the assessment in line with the NPPF, to provide further characterisation of the site and refinement of the PRA and CSM, intrusive investigation and associated testing should be undertaken to confirm the findings of the desk study report and to provide a robust risk assessment for the site and proposed development. This would include geochemical and geotechnical investigation, to include analysis of soil samples for the range of potential contaminants identified within the desk study. It also advises that confirmatory ground gas monitoring will also be required.
- 6.17.4 The Preliminary Geotechnical Assessment Summary goes on to advise that with reference to British Geological Survey (BGS) mapping, the underlying geology is anticipated to comprise the Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation, albeit there remains the possibility that there may be areas of reworked, disturbed or Made Ground on the site. As a result, the desk study indicates that it is possible that conventional strip or pad foundations could be suitable for the proposed development where natural ground is encountered at shallow depth, although this would be dependent on the groundwater depth. It also advises that where foundations are required in any areas of Made Ground or infilled ground, which may be present to depth beneath areas of the site, a deeper or piled foundation solution may be required; and that localised deepening of foundations may be required in the vicinity of trees and piled foundations may be required in proximity to trees (subject to tree type and ground conditions). In line with a SuDS approach, the desk study also indicates that storm water should be discharged to the ground wherever possible; and that although the permeability of the Tunbridge Wells Sand is likely to be low the potential for shallow soakaways should be confirmed by soakage testing.
- 6.17.5 At this stage and based on the findings of the desk study and preliminary risk assessment, the desk study recommends the following scope of works is for the intrusive investigation on the site.
- Intrusive investigation works should be carried out in order to clarify the geotechnical and geoenvironmental issues pertaining to redevelopment of the site.
  - Full scale soakage testing in accordance with BRE Digest 360.
  - Soil sampling and analysis should be undertaken to inform subsequent geotechnical and geo-environmental risk assessment.
  - Laboratory analysis, on soil samples recovered from the exploratory holes for a range of geotechnical parameters to support foundation design.
  - Laboratory analysis on soil samples recovered from the exploratory holes, for an analytical suite to include the potential contaminants identified within the desk study and encountered during any intrusive investigation. The suite should include commonly occurring metals, non-metals, asbestos, TPH, and PAH.

- Ground gas and groundwater monitoring of the site to determine the ground gas regime.
- Groundwater monitoring over a winter period may be required to inform the emerging drainage strategy for the site. A winter period is typically defined as early October/November to the end of the following March or early April.

6.17.6 The desk study also advises that it may be necessary to undertake remediation/risk mitigation measures on site to break pollutant linkages and thus protect key receptors such as human health, controlled waters, built environment, soft landscaping and the like; but that the requirement and extent of any such remediation cannot be determined until such time as an intrusive investigation and associated testing has been completed.

6.17.7 Given the findings of the Phase I Desk Studies, a suitable worded condition requiring further investigation prior to development commencing is thought to be prudent.

6.17.8 Having regard to the above, the proposed development does not in our opinion conflict with the aims and objectives of the NPPF or the aims and objective of policies DPN1 and DPN10 of the Submission Draft Local Plan

ii) Utilities and Services Appraisal

6.17.8 The Utilities Assessment prepared by RSK assess the existing utilities infrastructure in and around the site, determine if the proposed development can be accommodated with the existing infrastructure, identifies utility strategies, and produces technical documentation based on the utility companies' records and documents to support the planning application.

6.17.9 The Utilities Assessment thus reviews the electricity supply in consultation with UK Power Networks, the potable water supply with South East Water, the foul water drainage and surface water drainage situation with Thames Water, and telecommunications with BT Openreach. It being Assumed no gas will be supplied to this site

6.17.10 Having assessed the various utilities services in and around the proposed development site, and provided cost estimations, where received, for work that will need to be carried out to ensure the site will have the necessary connections/ provide for the necessary diversion of the existing HV overhead lines that cross the site; the Utilities Assessment concludes that there are suitable utilities services in the surrounding area to service the proposed development/ these can be addressed through the introduction of a new water main plus branch connections, the installation of 1 new primary substation and 3 new secondary substations, and new HV cables on site and new foul and surface water pumping stations.

6.17.11 Having regard to the above, the proposed development does not in our opinion conflict with the aims and objectives of the NPPF or the aims and objectives of policy DP20 of the Adopted District Plan, and policies DPI1 and DPI7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan

## 6.18 Infrastructure Provision

6.18.1 As set out in the draft Heads of Terms for the Section 106 Agreement, a planning obligations list has been prepared in the light of Policy DP20 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, Policy CDNP01 of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan January 2016, MSDC Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025), and policy DPI2 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2021 – 2039 (Dec 2023). The substance of the draft Heads of Terms also reflects initial advice received from officers at Mid Sussex District Council and the comments received from Worth Parish Council, Natural England and WSCC Highways during pre-application discussions, along with the approach adopted in the approval of planning application DM/25/0016.

6.18.2 The draft planning obligations set out below will only be included in the Section 106 Agreement to the extent justifiable in planning policy terms, in particular paragraph 58 of the NPPF and regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. This will be established following further discussions with officers. This draft assumes that the site will not be subject to Community Infrastructure Levy or any other similar charge. If this is not the case the applicant reserves the right to withdraw or amend any of the planning obligations listed below:

- The provision of up to 69 affordable units<sup>31</sup> (30%) – to be 75% social and affordable rent and 25% affordable ownership products.
- The nomination rights for the affordable housing units will be such that the affordable units will in the first instance be made available to people in housing need with an appropriate connection to Crawley Down/ Worth Parish. Thereafter the nomination rights will, if necessary, cascade down to those in need in the neighbouring parishes in Mid Sussex.
- A minimum of 4% of the affordable units to be identified as M4(3) (2) (b) dwellings.
- All dwellings to meet M4(2) standards.
- 2% of all dwellings will be set aside for Self Build.
- The provision of a 70 bed (C2) Care Home.
- The provision of up to a minimum of 6ha of formal and informal recreational open space across the site as a whole including 1x Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play, 1 x Local Equipped Areas of Play and 2 x Local Areas or 'Play on the Way' which together equate to 0.16ha.
- Contributions towards improvements to/ provision of new sports and leisure facilities in Crawley Down, which could include, but are not limited to:

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<sup>31</sup> Assuming 230 dwellings are accommodated on site – if not then 30% of the number of dwellings that are accommodated on the site.

- New Cricket Pavilion on Sandy Lane with facilities for ladies teams.
- The enhancement of the facilities at the King George V Recreation Ground.
- Improvement to the Haven Centre and its sports facilities.
- Contributions towards improvements to/ provision of community facilities in Crawley Down, which could include, but are not limited to:
  - New Cricket Pavilion on Sandy Lane with facilities for ladies teams.
  - The enhancement of the facilities at the King George V Recreation Ground.
  - Improvement to the Haven Centre and its sports facilities.
- Contributions to support and enhance existing bus accessibility, including but not limited to:
  - Bus stop improvements including bus shelters, raised kerbs and seating.
  - Increased service frequency on service 272 on Saturday evenings and Sundays, noting that there is currently no service at these times.
- The provision of one car club vehicle for three years, with three years free membership for new residents of the site.
- The implementation of a Travel Plan to encourage use of sustainable transport modes.
- Either the provision on site of allotments or a contribution towards the enhancement of the existing off site facilities in Crawley Down.
- A contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM).
- Contributions towards nursery, primary, secondary and sixth form educational facilities within Crawley Down / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Library Services within Crawley Down / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Youth services within Crawley Down / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Community Learning within Crawley Down / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Social Care within Crawley Down / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Waste and Recycling facilities.
- Contributions towards the Local Primary Care Trust for use at the Crawley Down Health Centre or within 5km of the site

6.18.3 We believe the draft HoT of the S106 look to secure the mitigation that is necessary to satisfactorily meet the additional infrastructure impacts and needs that would be generated by the development as set out in Policy DP20 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, MSDC Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025), Policy CDNP01 of the Crawley Down Neighbourhood Plan January 2016 and policy DPI2 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2021 – 2039 (Dec 2023).

## **7 The Planning Balance**

- 7.1 Given the detailed information provided with this application we believe that the planning balance rests firmly in favour of granting planning permission, particularly in the light of the engagement of the 'tilted balance'.
- 7.2 In the context of the above, we note that the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018, in policy DP4 looks to meet a minimum District housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031; and that policy DP4 explains how this will be achieved through a combination of completions, extant permissions and proposed allocations.
- 7.3 The application site was not allocated during the adoption of the Mid Sussex District and thus remains outside the urban area of Crawley Down as identified on the Proposals Map and does not fall within one of the 'exceptions' criteria listed in policy DP12 for new dwellings in the 'countryside'. However as set out above these policies are out of date in as much as they were adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012. As the NPPF has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012 the approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted Development Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024. As a result, the weight to be attributed to policies DP4 and DP12 is significantly reduced. and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is exacerbated by the fact the Council openly admit they do not have a five year housing land supply.
- 7.4 Before commenting upon the tilted balance it should also be noted that not only is the site situated immediately adjacent to the urban area boundary of Crawley Down, one of the most sustainable settlements in the District, on a site that is unfettered by any landscape or ecology designations; but has been identified as forming part of the proposed allocation pursuant to policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Submission Draft Local Plan (December 2023), and has consent over all but field F8 (Hurst Fram) for 150 dwellings and a 70 bed care home pursuant to DM/25/0016. As set out within this statement the proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with the aims and objectives of policies DPA9 And DPA10 of the Submission Draft Local Plan, the form and quantum of development proposed being appropriate for the context of the site; with, as set out in para 1.3, few changes from that which has been consented, bar the proposed accessing arrangements and location of the care home, such that it would create a high quality development on the edge of the existing built up boundary of Crawley Down.
- 7.5 Given the lack of a 5 year supply and the fact large swaths of the District between Crawley Down and Hayward Heath are constrained by the High Weald National Landscape, and land to the south of Burgess Hill and Hassocks falls within the South Downs National Park, the proposed development provides an ideal opportunity to accommodate the housing needs of the District on what is a relatively unconstrained site, thus addressing the housing land supply deficit in a policy compliant manner.

- 7.6 Furthermore, the proposed development provides for 30% affordable housing, which accords with the adopted and emerging policy requirement.
- 7.7 The site also enjoys good access to local services and facilities and has good access to public transport that would enable future residents to access services and facilities by means other than the private car. In addition, it will contribute towards new / enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre, new and improved bus links to the wider area, and off site highway improvements; the scale of development proposed reflecting that accepted by the Council as being suitable for the site in policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.
- 7.8 The site is not designated for its landscape value, or any landscape related attributes, and whilst views to the site are possible from the ridge forming the National Landscape's northern boundary (some 1.7km to the south and south-west of the site), there is no visibility to the site (or the proposed development) from within the designated landscape itself; such that the site cannot be said to fall within "an area of high landscape sensitivity".
- 7.9 In the context of the above, whilst it is recognised that there would be localised effects on the landscape character of the site, these would exist with the development of any site. However, the effects will be highly localised and will be focussed to those landscape and visual receptors immediately adjacent to, and within, Hurst Farm. Furthermore, not only is the application site free from any landscape designations, but the proposed development has been developed with stakeholders to ensure the development is respectful to local landscape and visual constraints. In addition, it provides for a number of beneficial effects such as an increase in landscape assets and an improved local network of ecological and recreational spaces. On this basis and as the Council accepts that not all its housing requirement can be accommodated on brownfield sites and have sought to identify this site as part of a wider strategic allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan, any localised landscape effects do not in our opinion weigh heavily against the grant of consent. Indeed, having regard to the LVA, it is considered that the proposed development sits sympathetically within the wider landscape, having minimal effects on surrounding landscape and visual receptors. Thus, it respects the aims and objectives of para 187 of the NPPF and footnote 7 of para 11 in terms of the tilted balance.
- 7.10 Whilst the proposed development would result in the permanent loss of 1.3ha of Grade 1 BMVAL, 3.4ha of Grade 2 BMVAL, and 7.5ha of Grade 3a BMVAL, as the Council has indicated that in meeting their housing need, it is likely that greenfield sites (which would include agricultural land) will have to be developed we do not believe that this site should be afforded the same level of protection in planning policy terms as BMVAL. To this end we also note that the scale of loss is significantly less than the 20ha threshold that would require consultations with Natural England when considering mineral working or waste disposal, and that which falls within fields 1 and 2, which includes all the grade 1 and 2 land already benefits from outline planning permission for residential development pursuant to DM/25/0016.

- 7.11 Similarly, whilst proposed swales associated with the SuDS strategy, and a new pedestrian link encroach within the ancient woodland and buffer zone of Wins Wood these will not have any detrimental impact on the woodland as the swale will maintain the semi-natural habitat of the buffer and is situated outside the RPAs of trees within the woodland such that none of the potentially harmful effects the buffer is designed to avoid will occur, and the scheme will comply with current UK planning and development guidance on ancient woodland; and that the footpath will be located outside the RPAs of individual trees and whilst the exact details of the footpath are subject to confirmation at the reserved matters stage, it is expected to comprise a lightly loaded porous surface, constructed entirely above the existing soil level and will incorporate a cellular confinement system to minimise potential soil compaction. As such, it will not result in any significant alteration or adverse impacts to the woodland or to the semi-natural habitat of the buffer zone.
- 7.12 The site does not contain any known nationally or locally built designated heritage assets. Whilst four listed buildings lie within the vicinity of the application site, the Cultural Heritage Desk Based Assessment indicates that there will be a neutral effect on the setting and significance of three of these listed buildings, and less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale), to the setting and significance of the Grade II Westlands that lies to the north of the application site. In weighing this harm against the public benefits of the application, there are in our opinion clear social and economic benefits arising from the proposed development of up to 230 houses, including 69 affordable homes and 70 bed care home, on a part previously developed site. There would also be public benefits arising during the construction phase of the project and from the operational phase from additional spending in the local economy from the future residents. There will also be environmental benefits as a result of the biodiversity net gain. As a result, we believe the benefits arising from the development outweigh the less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale), to the setting and significance of the Grade II Westlands.
- 7.13 Likewise, whilst the CHDBA concludes that there would be less than substantial harm at the low range of the scale to the setting and significance of the group of Non-Designated Heritage Assets at Huntslands, we believe the benefits arising from the development as set out above outweigh the less than substantial harm at the low range of the scale on these non-designated heritage assets
- 7.14 Not only has the proposed development looked to minimise ecological impacts, but maximise benefits, with the development predicted to deliver in excess of 15% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- 7.15 In addition, the proposed development is also wholly in Flood Zone 1 and will encompass a surface water drainage strategy that limits discharge rates to the QMED greenfield runoff rate, thereby considerably reducing the peak flows presently emanating from the site area. The strategy will therefore improve upon the current situation with regard to surface water management and flood risk.
- 7.16 Given the above it is considered that the site is acceptable in principle for residential development.

- 7.17 In addition, as set out in section 6 of this statement the proposed development would meet the three overarching objectives of sustainable development as described in paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Prospective occupiers would help to support the range of local facilities and services in Crawley Down, including public transport, and would contribute to the vitality of the locality and social cohesion. The development itself would also provide short term construction jobs and longer term employment at the care home – economic benefits. There would also be benefits from S106 contributions to local services and facilities such as education and health facilities, sports and leisure facilities, community learning, youth services, social care and library services. The proposed development would also generate New Homes Bonus. All of the above should be acknowledged in the planning balance.
- 7.18 The weight to be given to those policies restricting development in this area in the District Plan should be limited given the basis upon which they were conceived and the housing land supply situation. Furthermore, whilst the weight that can be given to the Submission Draft Local Plan is limited, it should nonetheless be noted that the proposed development has been identified as encompassing two proposed allocation sites in the Submission Draft Local Plan and that the proposed development looks to comply with the aims and objectives of the Submission Draft Local Plan, as well as the recently adopted Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Dec 2025). There are in addition, other material considerations which also weigh heavily in favour of the development such as the housing need, and the fact that the Council is unable to substantiate a five year supply of deliverable housing land. The proposal would assist in the provision of housing and help meet the affordable housing and elderly needs of the area. These are highly significant material considerations and carry substantial weight in the context of the NPPF. The proposals also provide circa 7ha of public open space which is also a highly significant material consideration which carries substantial weight in the context of the NPPF.
- 7.19 The proposed development is considered to represent sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and the Submission Draft Local Plan. The limited harm identified does not outweigh the significant benefits that have been identified. It certainly goes nowhere near the requirement to demonstrate significant and demonstrable harm.
- 7.20 As a result of the above we consider the proposed development is ideally situated to accommodate further growth in a sustainable manner as defined by para 8 of the NPPF.
- 7.21 The overall planning balance, encompassing the various benefits and limited disbenefits and the weight that should be afforded to them is set out in the table below:

**JAA Table 7.1 – The Planning Balance**

	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Benefit/ Harm</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1	Provision of up to 230 market dwellings	Benefit	Very Substantial
2	Provision of up to 69 affordable dwellings (30%)	Benefit	Very Substantial
3	An appropriate dwelling mix	Benefit	Moderate
4	Provision of a 70 bed care home	Benefit	Very Substantial
5	Provision of 0.16ha of formal play space together with potential for allotments	Benefit	Moderate
6	Provision of circa 7ha of publicly accessible incidental open space/ amenity space/ natural and semi natural space	Benefit	Substantial
7	Developing in a highly sustainable location	Benefit	Moderate
8	In accordance with spatial strategy of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan – especially policies DPA9 and DPA10	Benefit	Moderate
9	In accordance with Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Dec 2025)	Benefit	Moderate
10	Avoiding designated landscapes such as the High Weald National Landscape and South Downs National Park	Benefit	Substantial
11	Landscape enhancements with new tree and hedgerow planting	Benefit	Moderate
12	Avoiding impacts on protected areas/ species & Ecological enhancements resulting in a BNG of 15% (+)	Benefit	Moderate
13	Improved pedestrian and cycle links between the site and the wider area	Benefit	Moderate
14	Enhanced bus services between the site and the wider area	Benefit	Moderate
15	Contributions towards offsite highway works	Benefit	Substantial
16	Managed positive surface water drainage strategy	Benefit	Substantial
17	Provision of energy efficient homes exceeding current policy requirements	Benefit	Moderate
18	Short-term economic benefits from construction and employment spending	Benefit	Moderate
19	Long-term economic benefits from new residents spending in the local area, S106 and New Homes Bonus and Council Tax revenues	Benefit	Moderate
20	Localised Impact on landscape character of area	Harm	Very Limited
21	Localised impact on views experienced by walkers on footpath 35W and residents at Woods View.	Harm	Very Limited
22	The loss of 12.2ha of BMVAL	Harm	Very Limited
23	Minor Works within 15m buffer of Ancient woodland	Harm	Very Limited
24	Impact on Designated Heritage Assets – the Grade II Listed Westlands	Harm	Less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale).
25	Impact on Non-Designated Heritage Assets – Huntslands	Harm	Less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale).

7.21 Having regard to the above and paragraph 11 of the NPPF we consider the planning balance to be in favour of development and that planning permission should be granted accordingly.

## 8.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1 This application provides for the development of the land West of Turners Hill Road and north of Huntsland, including Hurst Fram, Crawley Down, West Sussex so as to accommodate the erection of up to 230 dwellings, a 70 bed care home and community facility, and associated infrastructure including a new access point off of Turners Hill Road with associated spine road and car and cycle parking, together with provision of open space, play facilities, utilities infrastructure, surface water drainage features and associated works.
- 8.2 All matters bar access are reserved for future determination. The proposed access is to be accommodated via a new priority junction on to Turners Hill Road, replacing that currently serving Hurst Farm.
- 8.3 This application looks to supersede that granted in September 2025 for a residential development on land north of Huntsland and west of Turners Hill Road so as to provide for 150 homes, a 70-bed care home, new public open space, footpath and cycle connections, and financial contributions towards local infrastructure and amenities. DM/25/0016 refers.
- 8.4 During the course of the determination of that application concern was expressed by local residents living in Wychwood Place about the fact the proposed means of access to the site was via Wychwood Place. This led the planning committee to impose an informative on the planning permission that required, when submitting the details of the Construction Management Plan to discharge condition 6, Wates investigate the possibility of obtaining construction.
- 8.5 As a result of this request, Wates has been exploring whether vehicular access for the development of the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland could be taken from Hurst Farm, and following this work acquired control of Hurst Farm to enable the vehicular access to the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland to be taken from this location. In doing so they have also explored the development potential of Hurst Farm itself given its identification as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan, the culmination of which is this application for a comprehensive development of both the Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, and Hurst Farm, all being accessed from Hurst Farm, with only pedestrian, cycle and emergency access provided via Wychwood Place.
- 8.6 Whilst the starting point for the determination of this application is the Adopted Development Plan, wherein the application site is located outside, but adjacent to, the urban area of Crawley Down as defined in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), the age of the adopted plan, housing land supply situation, spatial strategy advocated in the emerging local plan and the sites planning history.
- 8.7 Within the context of the above, Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan looks to restrict development outside the urban area to that falling within certain criteria. Whilst it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with policy DP12, policy DP12 is in our opinion out of date in as much as the confines of the urban areas were defined against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing

Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012. As the NPPF has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012, the approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted Development Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2021. Furthermore, the Council do not have a five year Housing Land Supply (housing land supply<sup>32</sup>). As a result, the weight to be attributed to policy DP12 is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. This means there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, i.e. that planning permission should be granted unless the adverse effects of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

- 8.8 Given the lack of a five year housing land supply, the Council needs to find alternative (new) sites to meet the shortfall. The only way this can be achieved is by revisiting the planning strategy set out in the Adopted Development Plan and finding new sites in appropriate locations.
- 8.9 In the context of the above we note that the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2039 (December 2023)) in reviewing the development needs of the District resolved to identify the application site as forming part of the strategic development area proposed West of Turners Hill Road pursuant to Policy DPA9, and that at Hurst Farm (DPA10). As set out within this statement the proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with Policies DPA9 and DPA10. The only areas of variation being to reflect discussions with Worth Parish Council about the use of offsite contributions in lieu of the onsite provision of sports and community facilities, thus bolstering local facilities and removing any potential for conflict.
- 8.10 The form and quantum of development proposed is appropriate for its context and would create a high quality development on the edge of the existing urban boundary of Crawley Down.
- 8.11 The proposed development would help meet the Districts housing needs in what is a highly sustainable location, on the edge of Crawley Down, at a time when the Council have a five year housing land supply deficit. Not only would the proposed development comply with the criteria set out in policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan, but facilitate a number of economic, social, and environmental benefits. As such, whilst it is recognised that there would be localised effects on the landscape character of the site these do not in our opinion weigh heavily against the grant of consent.
- 8.12 Likewise, the impact on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land is limited in extent; and the nature of the works within the 15m buffer of the areas of Ancient Woodland have been designed so as not to impact on root protection areas or the water table negatively, thus avoiding any loss of Ancient Woodland habitat.
- 8.13 Similarly, the impact on the setting and significance of the Grade II designated heritage asset of Westland's is recorded as less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale), as is the impact on the

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<sup>32</sup> Please refer to para 5.96/ 5.97 re the implications of the proposed changes to the NPPF

setting and significance of the group of Non-Designated Heritage Assets at Huntslands and is not considered to be unacceptable when considered in the planning balance.

- 8.14 Indeed, the limited harm identified does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, as would be required to be demonstrated pursuant to para 11(d) (ii) of the NPPF if looking to refuse this development. Nor, having regard to para 11(d) (i) are there any policies that look to protect areas or assets of particular importance that provide a clear reason for refusing the proposed development. Rather, the balance is firmly in favour of the proposed development and permission should be granted without delay.
- 8.15 Aside from the principle of development, we have also sought to address a number of other issues which are in our opinion material to the determination of this application. These include the nature of the residential accommodation and overall scale of development including the level of affordable provision; the form, layout and design of the proposed development; the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development; the effect of the proposed development on existing landscape features; the impact of the proposed development on areas of ecological interest/protected species; the impact of the proposed development on the privacy and amenity of adjacent residents; the effect of the proposed development in transportation and highway terms; the sites suitability for development in terms of flood risk and foul water drainage; the potential impact of the proposed development upon the cultural heritage of the site and surrounding area; and the effect of the proposed development on energy consumption, lighting, amenity space provision, contamination and remediation, the capacity of the service providers and impact on local infrastructure.
- 8.16 Having regard to the above, and given the aims and objectives of national and local planning policies we would submit that: -
- a. The proposed development will contribute to the Council's five year housing land supply requirements/ housing need.
  - b. The proposed development will contribute to the Council's affordable housing requirements – overall it will provide up to 69 affordable units (30% of the units to be provided on site (assuming 230 dwellings are bought forward)), in accordance with the requirements set out in both the adopted and Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan.
  - c. The unit mix reflects the aims and objectives of the development plan, with the scheme providing a range of house types (terraced, semi-detached, detached and apartments) and sizes (1 and 2 bed flats and 2 – 5 bed houses), to meet local demand (both market and affordable). The affordable units being evenly distributed across the site.
  - d. The proposed 70 bed care home will contribute towards the Council's growing need for accommodation for the elderly.
  - e. The proposed development will contribute to the Council's recreational needs, with circa 7ha of publicly accessible / incidental open space/ amenity space being provided across the development as a whole, which is circa 47% of the site area and 200% more than the policy requirement.

- f. The proposed development will contribute to the public realm, providing formal recreation opportunities, such as the proposed NEAP, LEAP and LAPs, as well as flexible play space, connected via a series of footpath networks; these features together with the introduction of an effective management regime, the creation and conservation of wildlife habitat and natural corridors, and provision of SuDS will contribute to local amenity.
- g. The illustrative layout looks to respect the existing landscape, topographical, drainage and ecological features found on the site/site boundaries, to respect the setting of nearby heritage assets and respect the privacy and amenity of adjacent residents.
- h. At a density of circa 15.3dph gross/ 36.16dph net the proposed development seeks to make the most effective use of the application site without detracting from the character and appearance of the area.
- i. The scale and nature of the proposed development is proportionate to the size of Crawley Down and the level of day to day services found in the village and respects the spatial strategy advocated in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan.
- j. The landscape and visual effects would be localised and would not significantly affect sensitive landscape and visual receptors further from the site.
- k. None of the main arboricultural features of the site are to be removed. No ancient, veteran, category A trees or trees subject to TPO's need to be removed to accommodate the proposals. Of the 36 individual trees to be removed to accommodate the proposed development, only one is a category B tree. As this tree is screened largely screen from view by retained trees, its removal will not have a significant or detrimental impact on the character of the site or local area. Thirty of the trees to be removed are category C specimens, i.e. young, semi-mature or of small ultimate size: or of low quality, low value, or short-term potential, and the other five are category U trees i.e. trees in such a condition that they cannot realistically be retained as living trees in the context of the current land use for longer than 10 years. As a result, the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of negligible magnitude. Furthermore, as the proposed development will provide the opportunity to plant more trees/hedgerows on the site through the landscape strategy plan, it will actively enhance the landscape character of the site and surrounding area.
- l. Following detailed ecological survey work, it has been found that the site and surrounding study area is home to roosting, foraging and commuting Bats, Reptiles (Grass Snakes and Slow Worms) and breeding birds and hedgehogs. As a result, the proposed development has been designed to avoid impacts on as many ecologically sensitive areas as possible, and accommodate a number of ecological mitigation and enhancement works, all of which will ensure the protection of these species and provide biodiversity net gains in excess of 15% for onsite hedgerows and onsite habitats.
- m. The proposed development provides for a significant amount of publicly accessible amenity space that will form an integral part of the development, with all residents having access to an appropriate level of private/communal amenity space. Overall, circa 47% of the site will be publicly accessible green space.

- n. The application site is located in a highly sustainable location, that is within walking distance of day to day services and facilities, and able to maximise the use of public transport, cycling and walking.
- o. The proposed accessing arrangements have been designed to accommodate all types of predicted traffic movements. The internal road network provides for a hierarchy of different streets, all of which have been designed to ensure the car does not dominate.
- p. The proposed development looks to provide for a series of new / enhanced pedestrian and cycle links that would improve access to/ from the site to the village centre/ the surrounding area.
- q. The level of traffic generation associated with the proposed development would not, with the proposed mitigation works, result in an unacceptable traffic impact on the local highway network.
- r. The level of car and cycle parking provision will accord with WSCC standards and is appropriate for this location given the site's proximity to Crawley Down and its associated facilities, including public transport facilities.
- s. A Framework Travel Plan has been provided to demonstrate how the developer intends to try and reduce the use of the private motor car.
- t. The FRA and Drainage Strategy submitted with this application demonstrates that the proposed development is wholly in Flood Zone 1 and can encompass a surface water drainage strategy that can accommodate up to and including the 1% AP storm event with an appropriate allowance for climate change (of 40%), without any onsite flooding or increasing the extent of any offsite flood risk. Indeed, as set out in the FRA the proposed surface water drainage strategy will improve upon the current situation with regard to surface water management and flood risk.
- u. The Cultural Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (CHDBA) advises that a review of the available evidence has shown that a low to moderate archaeological potential can be assigned to the study site for Iron Age and Roman remains, and a generally low potential for all other past periods of human activity. It also advises that there is a localised raised potential for modern farm outbuilding remains shown on 19th century mapping at the northeast and southern extents of the site. As a result, the CHDBA concludes that the development proposals are considered unlikely to have a widespread or significant negative archaeological impact that would result in unacceptable harm to the archaeological resource of the site; and that the potential impact of development could be appropriately mitigated through a programme of archaeological investigation and recordings undertaken in advance of construction, if so required by the Local Planning Authority.
- v. The CHDBA advises that the Study Site does not contain any designated or non-designated built heritage assets; and that whilst four listed buildings lie within the vicinity of the application site, there will be a neutral effect on the setting and significance of three of these listed buildings, and less than substantial harm (at the low range of that scale), to the setting and significance of the Grade II Westlands that lies to the north of the application site. Likewise, the CHDBA advises that there would be less than substantial harm at the low range of the scale to the setting and significance of the group of Non-Designated Heritage Assets at

Huntslands. Having regard to paras 215 and 216 of the NPPF, the benefits arising from the development would in our opinion outweigh the less than substantial harm identified.

- w. The Sustainability and Energy Statement indicates that the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions reduction strategy for the proposals is based on the energy hierarchy to provide a rigorous methodology, which aims to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the development as far as possible. This is intended to be achieved through the employment of highly efficient building fabric components to reduce energy demand, and the potential inclusion of renewable and low carbon energy technologies such as air source heat pumps to serve the space and water heating demands of the proposed dwellings and deliver further carbon dioxide emissions reductions. It is anticipated that the proposed carbon dioxide emissions reduction strategy will facilitate significant carbon dioxide emissions savings compared to the Part L:2021 baseline, aiming to significantly exceed the current requirements of Mid Sussex District Council and to align with the draft policies set out within the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (Dec 2023).
  - x. The proposed development will meet its infrastructure needs via a S106 Agreement, as long as the contributions sought are fairly and reasonable related to the scale of development proposed, such that there will be no adverse impact on day to day services.
  - y. The proposed development generates significant economic, social and environmental benefits.
- 8.17 The application site is highly sustainable. Development on this site is capable of being assimilated with the wider area without detriment to the character of the area, or amenities of local residents. The landscape strategy, drainage strategy and ecological strategy will all enhance the sites' nature conservation value.
- 8.18 On the basis of the above we believe the case for granting planning permission to be compelling, and that consent should be granted without delay. We trust that planning permission will be granted accordingly.

# **Planning Statement**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Policy DPSC7 Assessment**

Appendix a – JAA Planning Statement

A Review of compliance with Policies DPA9 and DPA10 of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan 2021 - 2039

Policy DPA9	Compliance
<p><i>The land west of Turners Hill Road will provide for 350 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community building</i></li> <li>• <i>Allotments</i></li> <li>• <i>50 bed (C2) care home</i></li> <li>• <i>Play area</i></li> <li>• <i>Other outdoor provision</i></li> <li>• <i>Outdoor sports<sup>1</sup></i></li> <li>• <i>Informal outdoor space</i></li> </ul>	<p>The proposed development is for 230 dwellings and a 70 bed care home on land to the north of Huntsland, including land at Hurst Farm – see below. Together with the consent for 200 dwellings on land to the south of Huntsland (DM/25/0014 refers) and the land at Hurst Farm, the proposed development will provide for 430 dwellings, which is 43 (11.2%) more than the 387 advocated by policies DPA9 (350) and DPA10 (37), and looks to make the most of these sites whilst preserving the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area</p> <p>In addition, the proposed developments provide for:</p> <p>A significant number of <b>Play Areas</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Neighbourhood Area of Play</li> <li>• One Local Equipped Area of Play</li> <li>• Two Local Areas of Play, and</li> <li>• A number of trails promoting play on the way.</li> </ul> <p>A significant amount of <b>informal outdoor space</b> including 1.67ha of Countryside Open Space, 1.23ha of Amenity Green Space, and 2.53ha of Natural and Semi-Natural Space</p> <p>The opportunity to deliver some <b>allotments</b> if a need is identified.</p> <p>It has been agreed with both the District and Parish Councils that rather than provide a <b>Community Building</b> contributions are made in accordance with the IDP as follows:</p>

<sup>1</sup> Subject to further discussion regarding overall provision within settlement, refer to IDP for most up to date position

Policy DPA9	Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution towards expansion/ enhancement of outdoor sports.</li> <li>• A separate contribution towards the enhancement of other outdoor provision, which could be utilised for the King George V Recreation Ground</li> <li>• Improvement to the existing community building (The Haven Centre)</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above the proposed development encompasses the St Leonards Lookout, a community gathering and viewing space featuring a bandstand, picnic area, children's play area, and community orchards.</p> <p>As per the IDP rather than provide for <b>Outdoor Sports</b> facilities on site, it has been agreed with MSDC and the Parish Council that a financial contribution will be made towards outdoor sports provision at the Haven Centre.</p>
<p><i>Financial contributions towards the provision of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Transport</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Local Community Infrastructure</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures</li> <li>• Health</li> </ul>	<p>As set out in the draft HoT in chapter 6.18 of the Planning Statement the proposed development will make financial contributions towards the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable Transport</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Local Community Infrastructure</li> <li>• Emergency services</li> <li>• Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures; and</li> <li>• Health</li> </ul> <p>As long as they are fairly and reasonably related to the proposed development.</p>

Policy DPA9	Compliance
	<p>The nature of the Sustainable Transport Contribution is set out in the Transport Assessment</p> <p>The nature of the contributions to Local Community Infrastructure are set out above.</p> <p>And the nature of the contributions to Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC mitigation measures are set out in the Ecological Appraisal and Report to inform a Habitat Regulation Assessment</p>
<p><i>And to make provision for the following off site:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable transport measures</li> <li>• Highway works</li> <li>• Sewerage network upgrades</li> </ul>	<p>The Transport Assessment explains the proposed off site sustainable transport measures and proposed off site highway works. And the Drainage Statement explains the sewerage network upgrades.</p>
<p><i>In addition, policy DP9 also contains the following policy requirements:</i></p>	
<p><i>1. Assess the areas of archaeological interest – Crest of Sandstone Ridge and the stream running through the High Weald that has a potential pre-historic bank.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Heritage Assessment whilst localised low banking is visible at field boundaries, without intrusive investigation their date and origin is currently unknown.</p> <p>No obvious potential pre-historic bank has thus been identified on site, and the site is considered to have a low archaeological potential for prehistoric evidence.</p>
<p><i>2. Follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk and mitigate impacts through integration of SUDS to deliver biodiversity/environmental improvements and flood resilience</i></p>	<p>As set out on both the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy the proposed development does follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk and mitigate impacts through integration of SUDS to deliver biodiversity/environmental improvements and flood resilience. Indeed, as set out in the FRA not only is no built development proposed in areas deemed to be at risk of flooding, but discharge rates for the proposed surface water drainage strategy will be limited</p>

Policy DPA9	Compliance
	<p>to the 1 in 1 year greenfield runoff rate, thereby considerably reducing the peak flows presently emanating from the site. The strategy will therefore improve upon the current situation with regard to surface water management and flood risk</p>
<p><i>3. Address any impacts associated with Ancient Woodland (on and adjacent to the site) including Front Wood, Wallage Wood, Wallage Lodge Shaw, Bushy Wood, Pescotts Wood (east and west parcels), which will be excluded from development.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Ecological Appraisal there is no loss of Ancient Woodland under the proposals, with all areas of ASNW present adjacent to the application boundary being safeguarded through the provision of ancient woodland buffers.</p> <p>Where residential development is proposed adjacent to Winns Wood / Pescotts Wood West / Bushy Wood (W9) and Pescotts Wood East (W10), a minimum 15m buffer will be maintained between built development and the woodland edge.</p> <p>In addition, where practical, housing areas will be designed to face out onto these buffers, providing visual surveillance and avoiding gardens backing onto habitat, preventing issues such as informal garden extensions and fly tipping. This will be further reinforced by provision of a hard edge to the built development where practical, in the form of roads or footpaths. This is currently shown within the illustrative masterplan.</p> <p>Additional planting will be provided within the buffers to strengthen the woodland edge, with the use of thorny species such as Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Holly to discourage informal access to the woodland. This will be reinforced where necessary with fencing and signage.</p> <p>As also set out in the Ecological Appraisals the drainage strategy will have specific regard to the Ancient Woodlands, with drainage features designed to maintain greenfield runoff rates and good water quality to avoid hydrological effects on the woodlands.</p>

Policy DPA9	Compliance
<p><i>4. Provide a woodland buffer to existing vegetation along the southern boundary and set development back from the Worth Way to mitigate potential visual impact to the route and help enhance its setting.</i></p>	<p>This has been addressed in the planning permission for the land to the south of Huntsland – DM/25/0014 refers.</p>
<p><i>5. Provide a 5m landscape buffer to existing hedgerows.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the LVA and AIR the proposed development does provide a 5m landscape buffer to existing hedgerows.</p>
<p><i>6. Integrate and enhance the existing PRowS within the site and retain the character of PRowS that border the site</i></p>	<p>Footpath 33W, known as Huntsland, abuts the southern boundary of the application site and runs from east to west, providing a connection in the east to Turners Hill Road and a signal controlled crossing of the road and in the west to footpaths 32W westwards and 34W southwards.</p> <p>In accordance with criterion 6, these connections will be retained in their present form.</p> <p>To integrate the footpaths with the site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A connection will be provided to the western boundary of the site, enabling access to footpath 35W to the west.</li> <li>2. A north-south cycle route will connect Worth Way south of the site (passing through the consented DM/25/0014 site to the south) and the far north of the application site (i.e. Hurst Farm), crossing, and enabling pedestrian access to, Huntsland from the north and south.</li> <li>3. The paths will be sensitively designed so as to preserve the rural feel of the rights of way.</li> </ol> <p>The sense of enclosure from adjacent woodland edges, hedgerows and trees belts will be reinforced through new native structure planting both within the Countryside Open Space and within the Natural and Semi-Natural Space. Thus, enhancing the existing</p>

Policy DPA9	Compliance
	<p>PRoWs within the site and retaining the character of PRoWs that border the site.</p>
<p><i>7. Provide suitable pedestrian and cycle connections to Crawley Down, including via the Worth Way.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Transport Assessment the proposed development provides for a pedestrian and cycle connections to Crawley Down, including via the Worth Way.</p> <p>The pedestrian and cycling connections include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A 3m north-south cycling route through the site between Hurst Farm in the north to Huntsland, and then south via the consented DM/25/0014 to the Worth Way. With DM/25/0014 providing for an improved surface treatment of Worth Way between the site access onto the Worth Way bridleway and Old Station Close in the village centre.</li> <li>2. A network of cycling routes within the application sites. In association with the S106 for consented development DM/25/0014, crossing improvements at minor arms on Turners Hill Road and Vicarage Lane, together with a new Toucan crossing south of the southernmost access to the consented development site, facilitating access on foot and by cycle into the sit.</li> </ol> <p>The cycle network and off-site improvements accord with criterion 7 and has been discussed and agreed in principle with the highway authority.</p>
<p><i>8. Integrate development with the site to the north (DPA10) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors</i></p>	<p>The newly proposed development inherently joins the two allocations as a single development site and the masterplan has therefore been specifically designed to be integrated with DPA10 to the north and to provide vehicular, pedestrian and cycling connections between DPA9 and DPA10 along with green infrastructure and ecological corridors.</p>

Policy DPA9	Compliance
<p><i>9. Provide suitable access to Turners Hill Road to each of the three areas of the site. The northern access is to be via Wychwood Place and the middle access and route through site is to be separate from Huntsland which will remain a no through road and public right of way.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Transport Assessment the proposed development does not look to provide the vehicular access, other than in emergencies via Wychwood Place given the concerns expressed by local residents during the determination of DM/25/0016. Instead, all vehicle access will be north via Hurst Farm.</p> <p>The consented development south of Huntsland will be south of but separate from Huntsland which will remain a no through road and public right of way, in accordance with criterion 9, and via a southern point of access opposite Vicarage Road.</p> <p>The proposed access arrangements have been discussed and developed in consultation with WSCC and are therefore agreed in principle, and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are agreed as being the appropriate form of junction design.</li> <li>2. Fully accord with design standards.</li> <li>3. Provide appropriately for pedestrians and cyclists.</li> <li>4. Provide appropriate visibility for prevailing vehicle speeds.</li> <li>5. Take on board the comments of a road safety auditor.</li> <li>6. Forecast to operate with ample spare capacity.</li> </ol>
<p><i>10. Avoid development in the most sensitive areas, including the central ridge.</i></p>	<p>As is clear from the Illustrative Masterplan, Design and Access Statement and Landscape strategy plans the proposed development does avoid development in the most sensitive areas, including the south facing central ridge.</p> <p>Countryside Open Space is provided in this area to contribute to, and connect to, the wider Countryside Open Space to the south of Huntsland, consented under DM/25/0014.</p>
<p><i>11. Provide a country park in southern part of site and along western boundary linking the north and south parts of the site.</i></p>	<p>This has been addressed in the planning permission for the land to the south of Huntsland – DM/25/0014 refers.</p>

Policy DPA9	Compliance
<p>12. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.</p>	<p>The proposed development does, as summarised in the Planning statement and expanded upon in the supporting statement meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.</p>

Policy DPA10	Compliance
<p>1. Mitigation measures will be required to protect the setting and form of parts of the site that fall within and adjacent to sensitive landscape areas.</p>	<p>The proposals allow for the removal of any redundant built form or structures along the site's northern boundary and replacement with additional native planting to the site boundaries and within the Green Infrastructure between the residential and care home parcels.</p> <p>The improved boundaries will enhance the existing visual screening offered by the existing vegetation within and beyond the site and will contribute to reducing the perception of built development from PRoW 35W/1 and Westlands.</p> <p>Native structure planting within the Green Infrastructure will enhance the wooded and enclosed character of the site and will reduce any impacts on the landscape immediately to the north and west of the site.</p> <p>The illustrative proposals for the entrance from Turners Hill Road allow for an improved street frontage in views towards Westlands.</p> <p>Appropriate buffers are provided to all woodland edges with a minimum of 15m for areas of Ancient Woodland.</p>
<p>2. Address any impacts associated with ancient woodland along the western and southeastern edges of the site.</p>	<p>As set out in the Ecological Appraisal there is no loss of Ancient Woodland under the proposals, with all areas of ASNW present adjacent to the application boundary being safeguarded through the provision of ancient woodland buffers.</p>

Policy DPA10	Compliance
	<p>Where residential development is proposed adjacent to Winns Wood / Pescotts Wood West / Bushy Wood (W9) and Pescotts Wood East (W10), a minimum 15m buffer will be maintained between built development and the woodland edge.</p> <p>In addition, where practical, housing areas will be designed to face out onto these buffers, providing visual surveillance and avoiding gardens backing onto habitat, preventing issues such as informal garden extensions and fly tipping. This will be further reinforced by provision of a hard edge to the built development where practical, in the form of roads or footpaths. This is currently shown within the illustrative masterplan.</p> <p>Additional planting will be provided within the buffers to strengthen the woodland edge, with the use of thorny species such as Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Holly to discourage informal access to the woodland. This will be reinforced where necessary with fencing and signage.</p> <p>As also set out in the Ecological Appraisals the drainage strategy will have specific regard to the Ancient Woodlands, with drainage features designed to maintain greenfield runoff rates and good water quality to avoid hydrological effects on the woodlands.</p>
<p>3. Integrate development with the site to the south (DPA9) such as through the design of the site layout and by providing pedestrian and cycling connections between the developments, green infrastructure and ecological corridors.</p>	<p>The proposed development inherently joins sites DPA9 and DPA10 as a single site has therefore been specifically designed to be integrated with DPA9 to the south and to provide vehicular, pedestrian and cycling connections between DPA9 and DPA10 along with green infrastructure and ecological corridors.</p>

Policy DPA10	Compliance
<p>4. Informed by a Heritage Statement, provide layout and design which preserves the setting of Grade II listed building 'Westlands'.</p>	<p>A Heritage Statement has been submitted with the application and confirms that there will be less than substantial harm to all relevant built heritage assets.</p> <p>In respect of Westlands, the Site makes a minor positive contribution to its setting and significance as indicative of its historical rural setting. The proximity of the proposed access from Turners Hill Road to Westlands was considered as part of this assessment.</p> <p>The Site is currently screened from the property by thick, intervening vegetation and there are no direct views between the Site and Westlands.</p> <p>It is only possible to experience the significance of this built heritage asset from Turners Hill Road and from the public footpath that runs to its south; there is no experience of its significance from the Site.</p> <p>It is concluded that there will be less than substantial harm to the setting and significance of Westlands, at the low range of that scale due to the proposed development.</p> <p>The low levels of harm assessed would be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal as per Paragraph 215 of the NPPF.</p>
<p>5. Provide suitable vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from Turners Hill Road.</p>	<p>As set out in the Transport Assessment the proposed development looks to provide vehicular access out to Turners Hill Road via a new priority junction.</p> <p>The proposed access arrangements have been discussed and developed in consultation with WSCC and are therefore agreed in principle, and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Are agreed as being the appropriate form of junction design.</li> <li>2. Fully accord with design standards.</li> </ol>

Policy DPA10	Compliance
	<p>3. Provide appropriately for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>4. Provide appropriate visibility for prevailing vehicle speeds.</p> <p>5. Take on board the comments of a road safety auditor.</p> <p>6. Forecast to operate with ample spare capacity.</p> <p>In addition to this main access, given the link to DPA9 to the south and the integration of the land north of Huntsland an emergency, pedestrian and cycle link is also proposed via Wychwood Place.</p>
<p>6. Investigate, assess and address any land contamination issues arising from former uses of the site or from uses, or former uses, of land in proximity to the site.</p>	<p>A Geotech report has been submitted with the application and confirms that potential land contamination arising from former uses of the site and surrounding land has been fully investigated and assessed through a detailed desk study, site walkover and intrusive ground investigation.</p> <p>The site has historically been used for agricultural purposes, including poultry farming, with a number of former farm buildings, hardstanding's and storage areas present. The ground conditions comprise topsoil and areas of Made Ground overlying the Upper Tunbridge Wells Sand Formation.</p> <p>The Made Ground reflects historic farm-related activities and contains variable reworked materials typical of such uses.</p> <p>Groundwater was recorded at shallow depth during monitoring, and ground gas monitoring identified no significant gas risk to the proposed development.</p> <p>A comprehensive geo-environmental risk assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact of any contamination on future users, controlled waters and the wider environment.</p>

Policy DPA10	Compliance
	<p>The majority of soil samples were found to be below relevant assessment criteria and are considered suitable for the proposed use.</p> <p>Localised contamination was identified within limited areas of Made Ground. These issues will be appropriately addressed through the removal and disposal of affected materials and the provision of clean cover systems in landscaped areas where required.</p> <p>With the implementation of these mitigation measures and a discovery strategy during construction, the site is considered suitable for the proposed development, with no unacceptable risk to human health, groundwater or neighbouring land uses, thereby fully satisfying the requirements of Policy DPA10.</p>
7. Meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.	The proposed development does, as summarised in the Planning statement and expanded upon in the supporting statement meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies

# **Planning Statement**

## **Appendix B**

### **Socio – Economic Benefits Infographic**

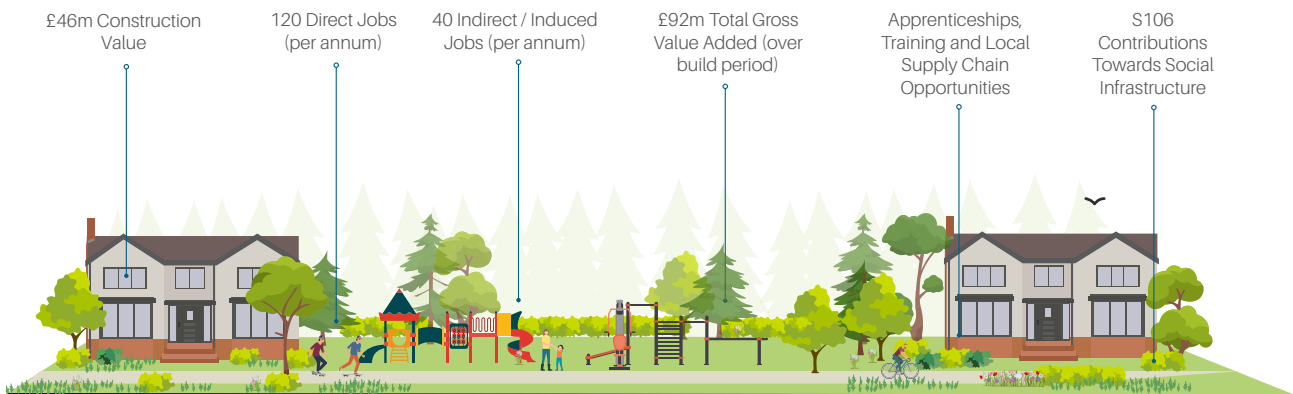
# Socio-Economic Benefits of Development at Land West of Turners Hill Road and North of Huntsland, including land at Hurst Farm



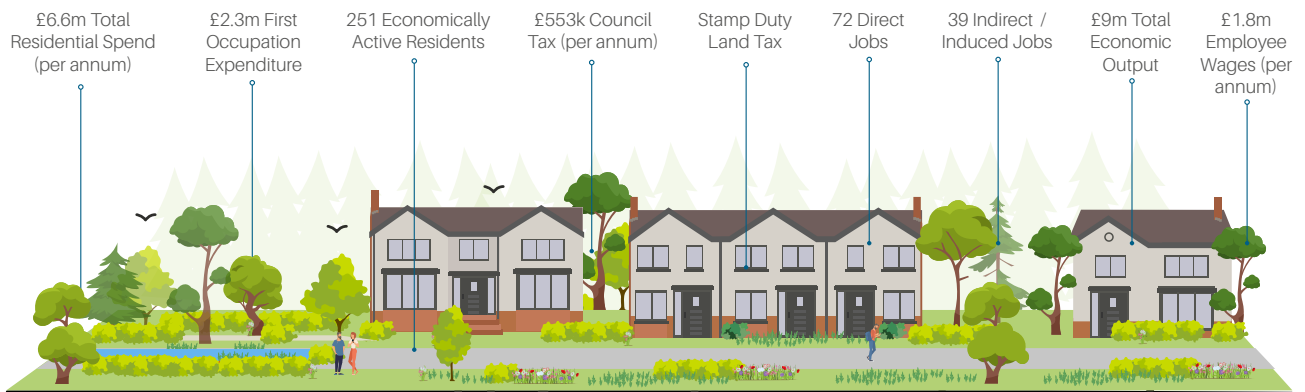
This infographic provides an overview of the socio-economic benefits that could be delivered from the development of land at Crawley Down (north of Huntlands and including Hurst Farm). The proposal includes a new sustainable development of 230 homes and a 70-bed care home, which will make a significant contribution towards meeting a range of housing needs including family, care and 30% affordable housing. It includes new open space and play facilities. Active travel opportunities will encourage healthy lifestyles.

Overall, the delivery of housing will provide significant benefits for the local economy during the construction period and further benefits for the community once occupied, which are captured and summarised here (n.b. figures are approximate and rounded).

## Construction Phase



## Operational Phase



## Wider Benefits

