

EVIDENCE NOTE Application: DM/26/0073 **Site:** Land off West Hoathly Road, East Grinstead **Date:** 9/02/2026

1. Purpose of this Note

This Evidence Note provides a comprehensive review of all relevant Mid Sussex District Plan documents to determine whether *Land off West Hoathly Road* has ever been identified, assessed, or allocated for development at any stage of the District Plan Review process. It also clarifies the status of the emerging allocation DPA4 and the implications of the ongoing Examination for decision-making.

2. Documents and Regulation Stages Reviewed

A. Regulation 18 – Site Allocations DPD (Summary Report)

- East Grinstead allocations limited to SA18, SA19, SA20.
- No reference to West Hoathly Road.
- No omission-site listing relating to this location.

B. Regulation 19 – Site Allocations DPD (Sustainability Appraisal – NTS)

- No reference to West Hoathly Road.
- No assessment of any site in this location as a reasonable alternative or rejected option.

C. Adopted District Plan (2014–2031)

- No allocation or policy identifying this land for development.

D. Draft and Adopted Policies Maps

- No allocation shown on or near West Hoathly Road.
- East Grinstead inset map confirms only SA18–SA20.

E. SHELAA (as summarised in Reg 19 SA)

- No SHELAA site corresponding to this land.
- No evidence of the site being shortlisted or assessed.

F. Call for Sites / Early Evidence Base

- No published evidence of promotion as an allocation.
- Even if promoted, this would not constitute an allocation.

G. District Plan Review 2021–2039 (Regulation 19 Submission Draft)

- Includes a **new proposed allocation: DPA4 – Land off West Hoathly Road, East Grinstead** (first appearance).

- Not present in any earlier Reg 18 or Reg 19 Site Allocations documents.
- Plan is **not adopted** and carries **limited weight** under NPPF paragraph 48.

3. District Plan Review Examination – Inspector’s Statements and Weight

The Examination page confirms:

- The Inspector is examining the **soundness of the plan itself**, not the merits of individual omission sites or alternatives.
- The Inspector “**will not accept or consider**” representations on omission sites.
- Certain matters will be considered only at a “**high level**”, and detailed site-specific representations would be “**an inefficient use of examination time.**”
- The Examination is ongoing, with hearings, topic papers, and modifications still being produced.

Implication: DPA4 has **not** been tested, **not** been confirmed as sound, and **may** be modified or removed. It therefore carries **very limited weight**.

4. Prematurity

Granting permission for DM/26/0073 at this stage would be **premature** under NPPF paragraph 49. The emerging District Plan Review is still under Examination, and the Inspector has not yet tested the soundness of DPA4 or the wider spatial strategy.

Approving development now would:

- **Pre-determine** the outcome of the plan-making process
- **Undermine** the Examination
- **Endorse** a site that remains untested and unresolved
- **Limit** the Inspector’s ability to consider allocations objectively

This is precisely the type of situation NPPF paragraph 49 is designed to prevent.

5. Weight of the Emerging Plan

The Examination status significantly reduces the weight that can be afforded to DPA4:

- The plan is **not adopted**.
- The allocation is **untested**.
- The Inspector is **not considering omission sites**.
- Site-specific issues (including AONB impact) have **not** been examined.
- The plan is **subject to change**.

Under NPPF paragraph 48, DPA4 can attract only **very limited weight**, and certainly not enough to justify granting permission on an unallocated AONB site ahead of adoption.

6. Conclusion

Across all relevant documents **up to and including** the Site Allocations DPD (Reg 18 and Reg 19), there is **no evidence** that *Land off West Hoathly Road* was ever allocated or proposed for allocation.

The consultee's statement that the site "was an allocated site in the draft District Plan" is therefore **factually incorrect**.

While the emerging District Plan Review (2021–2039) includes a proposed allocation (DPA4), this is:

- **new,**
- **not adopted,**
- **not tested,**
- **not confirmed,** and
- **not relevant** to the consultee's claim.

The site must therefore be considered on its actual planning status: **an unallocated greenfield site within the High Weald AONB**, where the statutory duty to conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty applies.