

*Land east of College Lane,
Hurstpierpoint*

Planning Statement

THAKEHAM.COM

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Ref: TH-H119-PS-1



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1. Introduction

1.1. This Planning Statement ('Statement') has been prepared by Thakeham Homes Limited ('Thakeham') to support a full planning application at Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint ('the Site').

1.2. The Proposed Development is as follows:

'Erection of 100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works.'

1.3. The Site is approximately 5.4 ha in size and is located to the east of College Lane, west of Belmont Lane and north existing residential development along Wickham Hill (B2116), on the eastern edge of the village of Hurstpierpoint. The Site falls under the jurisdiction of Mid Sussex District Council ('MSDC') within Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Civil Parish, which is also a designated neighbourhood plan area.

1.4. This Statement describes the Site and surrounding area; summarises the relevant planning history for the Site; details the Proposed Development; and sets out the relevant planning policy framework which the planning application will be assessed against.

1.5. The following documents form part of this planning application. This Planning Statement (including Affordable Housing Statement) is to be read in conjunction with these plans and documents:

- Architectural Drawings, including:
 - Site Location Plan
 - Site Block Plan/Layout
 - House Type Plans
 - Street Scenes
- Design and Access Statement
- Planning Statement, incorporating:
 - Affordable Housing Statement
 - Mineral Infrastructure Statement
- Biodiversity Net Gain Plan & Metric
- Ecological Reports, including:
 - Ecological Assessment
 - Further Ecological Assessment
 - Ecological Verification
 - Ecological Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment, incorporating Foul Sewerage and Surface Water (Drainage) Assessment
- Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Planning Obligations Instruction Form
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Energy and Sustainability Statement
- Transport Assessment, incorporating Road Safety Audit and Designer's Response
- Framework Travel Plan
- Arboricultural Reports, including:
 - Tree Survey
 - Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement
 - Tree Protection Plan
- Air Quality Assessment
- Land Contamination: Desk Study Report

2. *Site and Surrounding Area*

- 2.1. This section provides a short description of the Site and surrounding area. Please refer to the submitted Design and Access Statement for further information on the Site and surrounding context.

The Site

- 2.2. The Site location is shown in Figure 1 and is approximately 5.4ha in size. It is located on the east side of College Lane, west of Belmont Lane and north of existing residential development along Wickham Hill (B211), on the eastern edge of the village of Hurstpierpoint. The Site is within the administrative area of Mid Sussex District Council ('MSDC').



Figure 1: Site Location

- 2.3. The Site comprises land currently used for grazing, with no associated structures or buildings. There is an existing field gate access to the west of the Site from College Lane, where vehicular access to the Site will be provided. The Site is well contained, with existing development located to the south and west of the Site with mature vegetation to the north and an existing significant landscape buffer to the east.
- 2.4. The topography of the Site gently rises north to south, with contours showing the land falling from a high point of c.52.5m AOD towards a low point of c.45m AOD in the northern part of the Site.

Surrounding Area

- 2.5. Hurstpierpoint is a 'Larger village' as defined in the Council's settlement hierarchy, with a good range of local amenities including a primary school, doctors' surgery and various services and amenities located along Hurstpierpoint High Street. In addition, nearby Hassocks also provides further services and amenities including Hassocks train station (approx. 25-minute walk currently), with existing footpaths providing pedestrian routes from the Site.
- 2.6. The town of Burgess Hill is located approximately 1.5km to the north-east of Hurstpierpoint. Burgess Hill is one of the three main towns in the district and is home to a wide range of services including retail,

hospitality, leisure and employment. Burgess Hill is easily accessible from Hurstpierpoint via road, cycle, bus and train via links from Hassocks train station.

- 2.7. It is considered that the Site itself is located in a sustainable location (close to existing public transport, services and facilities) and is situated within an established residential area on the edge of an existing settlement.
- 2.8. Please refer to the Design and Access Statement ('DAS') accompanying the application for further information on the Site and its surrounding context

3. *Planning Background*

Planning History

- 3.1. The Site has not been subject to any recent relevant (i.e. within the last five years) previous planning applications. However, has been subject to applications historically, detailed as follows.

12/03972/FUL	Land Parcel to the North of 31 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint	Detailed planning application for residential development of 93 dwellings, access roads, car parking facilities, footways, footpaths and associated infrastructure, plus change of use of hectares of land to informal open space with landscape planting and other works on land at College Lane Hurstpierpoint.	Refused; 11 March 2013
13/01250/FUL	Land Parcel to the North of 31 College Lane, Hurstpierpoint	Detailed planning application for residential development of 81 dwellings, access roads, car parking facilities, footways, footpaths and associated infrastructure, plus change of use of 4.3 hectares of land to informal open space with landscape planting and other works on land at College Lane Hurstpierpoint.	Called-in by Secretary of State, and refused; 4 September 2014

Pre-Application Engagement

- 3.2. Thakeham has positively engaged with MSDC throughout the evolution of the design of the Proposed Development. A pre-application meeting was held on 19 March 2026 to discuss early proposals, this included an initial site visit with a number of MSDC officers in attendance, including Senior Planning Officer – Andy Watt, Anna Kramarczyk – Urban Designer, Irene Fletcher – Tree Officer and Nicholas Hewer Royle – Principal Housing and Enabling Officer. A further meeting was then held with Mr Watt and Ms Kramarczyk on 21 May 2026 to discuss the evolving proposals. Meeting minutes were agreed following the meeting and a copy of the formal pre-application response, received 16 July 2026, is included under Appendix 1.
- 3.3. In summary, the pre-application response confirms that that MSDC is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as required by national policy, signposting proposals to the Council's approved Planning Position Statements, which are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The response sets out that '*Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable development sets out how the Council will continue to support growth in sustainable locations during the period until a new Local Plan is adopted.*' This response also goes on to confirm the sustainability of Hurstpierpoint as a settlement, emphasising that it benefits from a good range of services and facilities, highlighting that good pedestrian and cycling connectivity are important to encourage active travel and access to local services and facilities, including public transport options.

- 3.4. The pre-application response also confirms a number of policy requirements and considerations, a summary of urban design advice which was provided as part of the meetings held, alongside application validation requirements. This commentary has informed the planning application.

Mid Sussex District Council Site Assessment

- 3.5. On 15 May 2026, the Council published a number of updated Site Assessment Proformas to inform ongoing site selection work as part of the District Plan Review examination (MS-TP4). This then informed a 'Site Selection Conclusions by Settlement' document (Appendix 2), which suggest a number of further potential allocation sites, albeit with further in-combination testing required.

- 3.6. The Site was assessed under site ID: 19, and identified as one of the sites for further in-combination testing. The justification for this stating:

'The site is contiguous to the defined built-up area boundary of Hurstpierpoint to the west and south. The site is relatively well related to the eastern part of Hurstpierpoint and well contained by existing trees to the north, east and south.'

Information submitted shows a slight reduction in the number of homes proposed. Access is proposed from College Lane. The access point is opposite and Archaeological Notification Area and near to a Grade II listed building. The Illustrative plan provided by the promoter suggests that the development line is pushed back into the site.'

- 3.7. On 17 July 2026, the Council published the results of its in-combination testing of the additional 35 sites proposed for allocation (MS-TP5: In Combination Testing), as set out in the topic paper published on 15 May 2026. The in-combination testing was based on the total quantum of planned growth to understand the collective impact of development proposed within the District Plan on:

Transport – to assess the combined impact of development on the transport network

Infrastructure – to assess the combined impact of development on strategic infrastructure such as education, health and utilities

Sustainability - as required by legislation, the Council's Sustainability Appraisal was updated

Protected Sites (Habitats Regulations Assessment) – the development scenario has been assessed by the Council's Habitats Regulations Assessment consultant to establish impacts and potential mitigations on designated protected sites.

- 3.8. MS-TP5 confirmed that following review of the conclusions of the in-combination assessments, the Council is confident in the development scenario which includes the existing 24 allocations within the emerging District Plan review, alongside the additional 35 sites identified within the MS-TP4 Appendix 2, concluding in proposal of these additional site allocations (detailed at Table 5), with the inclusion and policy wording of these additional sites to be proposed within Main Modifications.
- 3.9. Of importance, the Site was included in the list of sites detailed within appendix 2 of M3-TP4, under Site ID:19. This was recently followed by publication of the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications for six-week consultation on 27 July 2026, of which the Site was included as a draft allocation for residential development under MM72.

Public Consultation

- 3.10. Public consultation has been carried out in advance of this planning application, which included a leaflet circulation, website, in-person public consultation event and a further focussed meeting for some neighbouring properties.
- 3.11. An invitation flyer was distributed to 343 residential and business addresses in the area surrounding the Site on Wednesday 11 March 2026 including information regarding the location of the Site, how to get involved with the public consultation event, links to the website and contact details, how to provide feedback, alongside a summary of the proposals. A consultation event then took place at a local coffee shop on 24 March 2026, with the consultation period running until 7 April 2026.
- 3.12. The application is accompanied by a Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI'), which outlines in further detail the consultant event, response and how any commentary has fed into the design evolution of the Proposed Development.

4. *The Proposed Development*

- 4.1. This section provides full details of the Proposed Development being sought as part of this application. Full planning permission is sought for:

'Erection of 100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works' ('the Proposed Development')

- 4.2. It is considered that the Proposed Development represents an excellent development opportunity within a sustainable location that could assist with meeting immediate local housing needs, including high-quality market and affordable housing.
- 4.3. Further details for the Proposed Development are set out below and in the DAS which supports the planning application.

Layout

- 4.4. The proposed Site Layout for the Site is shown below. This shows that the Proposed Development is set around a main spine road with a series of streets and private drives. Open Space has been incorporated into the Proposed Development with a significant area of public open space incorporated on the northern edge of the Site, providing amenity space, play space, and natural/semi-natural green space. A significant planted landscape buffer is retained on the eastern edge of the Site, providing a clear physical and visual buffer towards the countryside to the east, with a new pedestrian and cycle link throughout the Site, with an opportunity to connect to Belmont Lane where there is an existing bridleway.



Figure 2: Proposed Site Layout

- 4.5. The above layout has evolved following pre-application discussions with the Council and residents, seeking to redistribute the proposed open space to incorporate one meaningful principal area and ensure active frontages and connectivity throughout the Site. Development has been setback from potentially sensitive boundaries with neighbouring properties, and planting buffers have been implemented as necessary, following discussions, to provide visual mitigation. Design evolution is discussed in more detail within the submitted DAS which accompanies the application.

Residential Provision

- 4.6. The Proposed Development comprises a total of 100 new homes across a variety of one- and two-bedroom apartments and two-, three- and four-bedroom houses. 30 (30%) of the 100 new homes proposed are allocated as affordable homes, to provide a mixture of tenures including Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership.
- 4.7. The proposed housing mix is set out in the table below:

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
Market	6	22	20	22	70
Affordable	6	17	7		30
Total	12	39	27	22	100

Scale

- 4.8. The Proposed Development is predominately two storeys in height, with some single storey elements in the form of bungalows and garages, and some 2.5 storey and 3 storey in limited key areas, creating variety and visual interest in the proposed roofscape and streetscape. This scale of building is consistent with the scale and character of development within the locality of the Site.

Landscaping, Open Space and Amenity Space

- 4.9. The Proposed Development incorporates open space which has been designed as multi-functional green space, providing opportunities for play, general amenity, sustainable drainage and biodiversity. A focal area of open space is proposed on the northern section of the Proposed Development, with a green limb extending from this, south to contribute to the transition into the Site. The open space comprises a LEAP, amenity space and natural/semi natural greenspace to provide recreation opportunities and contributing to visual amenity throughout the Proposed Development.
- 4.10. There is an existing Public Right of Way (PRoW), in the form of Bridleway HAS-8C, which runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Site, leading to the wider public right of way network. As part of the Proposed Development, a pedestrian and cycle route is proposed to be delivered throughout the development, with the opportunity to connect to Belmont Lane in the southeast corner of the Site, where the existing Bridleway is located. This will provide opportunity for a more direct and sustainable route to the immediate footpath network, including links to Hassocks Station, reducing travel times for sustainable modes of transport. It is anticipated that this would reduce the walking time to Hassocks Station by approximately seven minutes, to approximately 18 minutes.

- 4.11. All houses are provided with their own private garden space and generous communal gardens are proposed to apartment buildings, this provision compliments the significant wider open space provision, accessible to all future residents.
- 4.12. More detail on the design of these areas and general landscape approach to the scheme is contained within the DAS and on the Landscape Strategy which supports the application for planning permission.

Ecology / Biodiversity

- 4.13. The Proposed Development will comply with the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and will deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value. This will be demonstrated through the statutory biodiversity metric and secured through the subsequent Biodiversity Gain Plan, with the detailed habitat proposals coordinated alongside the landscape strategy.

Highways and Transport

Site access

- 4.14. The proposed access takes the form of a simple crossover junction onto College Lane. The carriageway serving the Site would be a minimum 5.5m with a 2.0m wide footway, with a 3.0m pedestrian and cycle route proposed through the development, with the intention to connect to Belmont Lane in the southeast corner of the Site, where the existing Bridleway is located.

Car and Cycle Parking

- 4.15. The Proposed Development incorporates 189.5 allocated car parking spaces alongside 50 unallocated/visitor spaces and additional provision for the substation and pumping station. As required, any garages are proposed to be 3.0m x 6.0m and therefore contribute to 0.5 space.
- 4.16. Cycle parking is also proposed throughout the development in accordance with West Sussex County Council (WSCC) parking standards.

Off-Site works

- 4.17. Following discussion with WSCC as the highway's authority, the Proposed Development proposes to provide a 2m wide footway along the southern side of the access, which tapers to re-join the alignment of the existing footway provision of approximately 1.5m in width. Following pre-application discussions with WSCC it is also proposed to provide an additional footway build-out, north of the proposed site access, together with an uncontrolled crossing point along College Lane.
- 4.18. In addition to the above, and following a request as part of pre-application discussions with WSCC, a package of off-site infrastructure enhancements is proposed to be delivered to the existing bus stops along Wickham Hill, to include real-time passenger information and improved accessibility between the bus stops.
- 4.19. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of the planning application sets out further detail in respect of Highways and Transport.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.20. The Proposed Development incorporates sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), with the proposed Drainage Strategy adopting a SuDs management train approach throughout the Site. This incorporates surface control measures, conveyance features and attenuation storage, prior to controlled discharged. This is principally in the form of:
- Two interlinked attenuation basins in the northern open space proposals, with controlled discharge to the adjacent watercourse.
 - Permeable paving systems throughout the development
 - Filter drains, rain gardens and other SuDs measures where appropriate.
- 4.21. The Proposed Development diverts proposed buildings away from any areas of existing high or medium surface water flood risk, whilst also incorporating drainage features to manage existing surface water flood risk.
- 4.22. The Flood Risk Assessment submitted in support of the planning application sets out further detail in respect of flood risk and drainage.

Energy and Sustainability

- 4.23. The Proposed Development seeks to incorporate a number of measures to improve energy performance to all dwellings and encourage sustainable practices, including but not limited to a fabric-first approach, and air source heat pumps alongside additional opportunities to explore solar photovoltaic provisions where suitable/feasible.
- 4.24. The DAS and Energy and Sustainability Statement which accompanies this planning application provides further detail on Energy and Sustainability measures.

5. *Current Planning Policy Context*

- 5.1. This section summarises the planning policy documents relevant to the determination of this planning application.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.2. The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government ('MHCLG') published a revised National Planning Policy Framework in August 2026 (NPPF). The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of the planning application together with guidance set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).
- 5.3. The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development is pursued through three overarching and interdependent objectives:
- **Economic objective:** to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.
 - **Social objective:** to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible community facilities, public service infrastructure and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.
 - **Environmental objective:** to support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy; and to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, and minimising waste and pollution.
- 5.4. The NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the planning system. Under the August 2026 NPPF, the presumption is set out through Policies S3, S4 and S5, which replaces the former paragraph 11 approach contained in previous versions of the NPPF.
- 5.5. Policy S3 confirms that outside settlements, Policy S5 should be applied. Whereby Policy S5 states that '*only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements*' as listed in the policy. Where applicable, the Framework is clear that these types of development should be approved, '*unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, where assessed against the national decision making policies in this framework*'.
- 5.6. Out of the forms of development listed within Policy S5, S5(1)(j) sets out:

'Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:

i. Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure;'

5.7. Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) has a current evidenced unmet need for housing, currently demonstrated by their five-year supply of deliverable housing sites. Consequently Policy S5 of the NPPF is applicable for the purposes of determining this planning application, and the application should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the National Decision-Making Policies (NDMPs).

5.8. The NDMPs from the NPPF that are relevant to this application are outlined below:

- S3: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- S5: Development Outside Settlements (assuming the site lies outside a defined settlement boundary)
- HO7: Meeting the need for homes
- HO8: Providing affordable homes
- L3: Achieving appropriate densities
- DP3: Key principles for well-designed places
- TR3: locating development in sustainable locations
- TR4: Street design, access and parking
- TR6: Assessing transport impacts
- TR8: Public rights of way network
- HC3: Community facilities and public service infrastructure serving new development
- F4: Assessing flood risk for decision-making
- F5: The sequential test
- F8: Sustainable Drainage systems and watercourses
- N2: Improving the natural environment
- N3: Trees in new development
- HE4: Securing the conservation of heritage assets
- HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031)

5.9. The Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031) (the 'District Plan') was adopted by MSDC on 28 March 2018 and sets out the long-term spatial vision for the District and MSDCs approach to development up to 2031.

5.10. The policies from the adopted District Plan that are relevant to this application are outlined below:

- DP4: Housing
- DP6: Settlement Hierarchy
- DP12: Protecting and Enhancement of the Countryside
- DP13: Preventing Coalescence
- DP20: Securing Infrastructure
- DP21: Transport
- DP26: Character and Design
- DP27: Dwelling Space Standards
- DP28: Accessibility
- DP29: Noise, Air and Light Pollution
- DP30: Housing Mix

- DP31: Affordable Housing
- DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets
- DP35: Conservation Areas
- DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
- DP38: Biodiversity
- DP39: Sustainable Design and Construction
- DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage
- DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment
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Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.11. The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (HSCNP) was 'made' by MSDC and the South Downs National Park Authority ('SDNPA') in March 2015.
- 5.12. Whilst the HSCNP forms part of the statutory development plan, its policies must be considered in the context of the NPPF and the national decision-making policies (NDMPs) now contained within it. Annex A of the NPPF explicitly states that *'development plan policies (or parts of those policies) which are materially inconsistent with national decision-making policies in this Framework should be given very limited weight.'* Therefore, where neighbourhood plan policies are inconsistent with, or have been overtaken by, subsequently adopted strategic policies or NDMPs, the latter should be afforded greater weight in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.13. It is therefore worth noting that whilst the HSCNP is part of the development plan, as the HSCNP was 'made' prior to the adoption of the District Plan or the new NPPF, where policies conflict, NDMPs and those adopted subsequently within the District Plan represent the prevailing policy relevant to the determination of this planning application.
- 5.14. The policies from the HSCNP that are relevant to this application are outlined below:
- Policy Countryside HurstC1: Conserving and Enhancing Character
 - Policy Countryside HurstC3: Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence
 - Policy Countryside Hurst C4: Conservation Areas
 - Policy Housing HurstH1: Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common New Housing Development
 - Policy Housing HurstH5: Development Principles
 - Policy Housing HurstH6: Housing Sites Infrastructure and Environmental Impact Assessment
 - Policy Housing HurstH7: Affordable Homes
 - Policy Housing HurstH8: Small Dwellings

Relevant MSDC Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) & guidance

- 5.15. MSDC also has a number of relevant SPDs, technical advice notes and guidance documents:
- Affordable Housing SPD (2018)
 - Design Guide SPD (2020)
- 5.16. Additionally, in December 2025 the Council approved two Planning Position Statements, designed to bridge the gap until an updated District Plan is adopted by the Council. Whilst they do not form part of the statutory planning framework and therefore do not carry the same weight as an adopted policy document, they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications:
- Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
 - Position Statement 2: Infrastructure

6. *Planning Policy Assessment*

- 6.1. This section demonstrates how the Proposed Development complies with relevant national and local planning policy.

Development Plan

- 6.2. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.3. For the purpose of this planning application, the principal development plan documents for MSDC comprise the District Plan 2014-2031, saved policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004), and the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan.

Emerging Planning Policy

- 6.4. MSDC is in the advanced stages of their new District Plan ('the emerging District Plan'). It is intended that the emerging District Plan will replace the current once adopted, covering a plan period of 2021-2039.
- 6.5. The District Plan Review was submitted for examination on 8 July 2024, however due to some complexities, a significant hiatus in the Local Plan examination occurred. At the end of 2025 the Planning Inspectorate confirmed that the examination would progress, with a new Inspector appointed and clear mandate for a 'fresh start' approach to the examination. Examination hearings took place earlier this year, with the Inspector's interim conclusions and action points published on 24 March 2026. Following this, and with a view to proactively increasing housing supply across the plan period, the Council published a post hearings update on 15 May 2026 providing a list of 35 sites where further in-combination testing was to be carried out with a view to further housing allocations, the results of which were published on 17 July 2026, confirming the proposal of all of the 35 sites for site allocation, with draft allocations to be formalised through main modifications. The Council has recently published its Schedule of Main Modifications for a 6-week consultation period from 27 July to 7 September 2026, with further a further four days of examination hearings scheduled in November 2026.
- 6.6. The emerging District Plan is continuing to progress through the plan-making process. Whilst it is recognised that the Plan has not yet been adopted and therefore attracts limited weight at the present time, weight may nonetheless be afforded to relevant emerging policies having regard to the stage reached in the preparation of the Plan, the extent of unresolved objections to those policies, and their consistency with national policy.
- 6.7. As the emerging District Plan examination is expected to progress over the coming months, for completeness, this Statement has also sought to respond to emerging policy where relevant.

Site Designations

- 6.8. Policy DP4 of the District Plan sets out the overall requirements for housing, incorporating a requirement of a minimum of 16,390 dwellings to be delivered over the plan period 2014-2031.
- 6.9. DP4 then sets out the intended spatial strategy for the MSDC, importantly outlining the settlement hierarchy and its role in determining the distribution of development, by identifying the most sustainable settlements in the district.

- 6.10. This Site is located on the edge of Hurstpierpoint, defined as a Category 2 settlement in the Council's Settlement Hierarchy, and is considered to be one of the most sustainable locations in the district, outside of the main towns of Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath. The settlement hierarchy indicates significant growth for Category 2 settlements, with a minimum requirement of 3,005 dwellings for these settlements over the plan period.
- 6.11. In addition to Policy DP4, whilst 'made' prior to adoption of the District Plan, the HCSNP sought to allocate a number of Sites for development in Hurstpierpoint, equating to 252 homes in total. It is however worth noting that whilst specific sites are allocated for housing, there is no definitive quantum of development attributed to the Neighbourhood Plan area outlined within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.12. The Site itself is located on the eastern edge of Hurstpierpoint, outside of the defined 'Built Up Area Boundary', albeit adjacent, and within a HSCNP 'Local Gap' policy area, as defined on the Policies Map. By virtue of its location outside of the 'Built Up Area Boundary' the Site is deemed to fall within a countryside location. Policy DM12 of the District Plan seeks to protect the countryside in recognition of its '*intrinsic character and beauty*', stating that new development will only be permitted where it is consistent with a specific development plan policy or is necessary for the purposes of agriculture. It is however acknowledged by the Council within their Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development ('PS1'; December 2025), that given the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing sites, this policy carries reduced weight in decision making. In addition, HSCNP Policy Countryside HurstC3 does not place a restriction on development within the Countryside or within Local Gaps defined, instead stating that '*Development will be permitted in the countryside provided that it does not individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and loss of separate identity of neighbouring settlements, and provided it does not conflict with other Countryside policies in this plan*'.
- 6.13. As detailed above, and in respect of emerging policy, the Council recently published its Schedule of Main Modifications for a six-week consultation period from 27 July to 7 September 2026. Within this, a number of additional site allocations were included to ensure sufficient housing supply within the district, over the plan period. Of these site allocations, the Site forms part of site allocation MM72, allocated for residential development.

Principle of Development

- 6.14. Annex D of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to identify and update annually '*a supply of specific deliverable sites. This should be sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing, assessed against their housing requirement in the development plan, or against their local housing need (calculated using the standard method) where the development plan housing requirement is more than five years old.*' As the District Plan and its strategic policies are more than five years old, the latter currently applies to the district, with the latest Standard Method figures setting a need of 1,358 dwellings per annum.
- 6.15. In an appeal decision dated May 2025 (Scamps Hill, Lindfield; Ref: 3350075) the inspector detailed that the Council had suggested a 3.38-year housing land supply, and whilst the appellant considered this to be closer in the region of 2.41 years, both parties described the shortfall as significant and on this basis the issue was not contested at the Inquiry. The position was subsequently reiterated in the Councils PS1 (December 2025), stating that '*it can no longer demonstrate a five-year housing land supply as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.*'

6.16. As set out above, the NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of the planning system through Policy S3, S4 and S5. As the Site is located outside a defined settlement boundary, the Proposed Development falls to be assessed against Policy S5, which sets out how the presumption in favour of sustainable development is to be applied to proposals outside settlements. Policy S5 states that *'only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements'* as listed in the policy. Where applicable, the Framework is clear that these types of development should be approved, *'unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, where assessed against the national decision making policies in this framework'*.

6.17. Out of the forms of development listed within Policy S5, S5(1)(j) sets out:

'Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test), and where the development would:

- i. Be physically well-related to an existing settlement (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure;'*

6.18. As above, MSDC cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, and the Site is physically well related to the settlement of Hurstpierpoint, surrounded by existing residential development on two sides. The Proposed Development is of a scale which is both reflective of the locality but also demonstrates effective use of land, as required by the NPPF.

6.19. Consequently, as required by NPPF Policy S5, planning permission should be granted unless the benefits are substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the NDMPs of the NPPF.

MSDC Planning Positions Statement(s)

6.20. As outlined above, in December 2025 the Council approved two Planning Position Statements. Whilst they do not form part of the statutory planning framework and therefore do not carry the same weight as the policy documents within the development plan, they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and are intended to bridge the gap to proactively support the provision of development and enhance housing supply until an emerging District Plan is adopted. The Planning Position Statements comprise Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PS1), and Position Statement 2: Infrastructure.

6.21. PS1 sets out MSDC'S approach to delivering sustainable development in the absence of a new District plan setting out that it will:

- Continue to support allocated sites for housing
- Support development sites identified for allocation in the Submission Draft District Plan (the 'Councils Preferred Sites' as detailed within Section 5 of PS1, provided they:
 - deliver the site-specific principles set out in Appendix C; and
 - infrastructure requirements set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and
 - are in general conformity within the Development Principles set out in Section 6 of PS1

6.22. The Site is not allocated within an existing development plan document, however the Council published its Schedule of Main Modifications to the emerging District Plan on 27 July 2026, including the Site as a residential site allocation detailed under MM72.

6.23. Additionally, PS1 also acknowledges that ‘for sites not currently allocated, or were not proposed for allocation in the Submission Draft District Plan, **the Council will positively consider sites** that: (my emphasis)

- *align with the vision and objectives of the adopted District Plan (2018) protecting the natural beauty and special characteristics of the High Weald National Landscape and directing growth to the most sustainable settlements; and*
- *accord with the settlement hierarchy set out in the adopted District Plan policy DP6: Settlement hierarchy, be delivering development that is appropriate to the scale and function of the settlement it relates to; and*
- *demonstrate that it meets local housing needs; and does not prejudice (individually or cumulatively) comprehensive long-term development and/or the deliver of allocated or ‘preferred’ sites; and*
- *are in general conformity with the Development Principles set out in Section 6 of this Position Statement’*

6.24. In response the above, the Site is not situated within proximity of the High Weald National Landscape and is adjacent to one of the most sustainable Category 2 settlements, as detailed in the Councils Settlement Hierarchy set out in Policy DP6 of the District Plan. The scale and density of the Proposed Development is sensitive to its location, whilst providing the ability to make a significant positive contribution to housing delivery, without prejudicing the comprehensive long term development of any allocated or ‘preferred’ sites, as defined within PS1. An assessment of how the Proposed Development responds to the Development Principles is set out below, demonstrating general conformity with the principles set out, as appropriate.

Principle 1: Sustainability

- Climate Change – the application is supported by an Energy and Sustainability Statement detailing relevant measures to improve emissions utilising the energy hierarchy, respond to climate change, and achieve sustainable water consumption.
- Flood risk and sustainable drainage – the application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, incorporating sustainable drainage solutions.
- Health and wellbeing – the Proposed Development incorporates a number of measures to facilitate healthy lifestyles, including walking and cycling routes, public open space and play space.

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 1.

Principle 2: Natural Environment

- Biodiversity and nature recovery – The Proposed Development will comply with statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements and will deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value, wildlife enhancements are also proposed to provide additional opportunities for wildlife including bird nesting features, bat roosting features and invertebrate habitat features. The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment.
- Green Infrastructure – the Proposed Development incorporates on-site green and blue infrastructure.
- Pollution – the Proposed Development is not anticipated to cause or be adversely affected by pollution or hazards.

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 2.

Principle 3: Countryside

- Protected Landscapes - The Site is not within a National Landscape, nor is within physical or visual proximity.

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 3.

Principle 4: Built Environment

- The Proposed Development is of high quality, responding to local vernacular and prioritising sustainability, having regard to the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD and incorporating opportunities to encourage active travel to local services and travel connections.
- The application is supported by a Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment which assesses the impact of the Proposed Development on heritage assets within proximity of the Site.

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 4.

Principle 5: Transport

- The application is supported by a Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan, detailing relevant detail and requirements including proposed bus stop enhancements and EV charging proposals.

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 5.

Principle 6: Economy

- Employment – the Proposed Development does not involve the loss of employment land or premises.
- Rural Economy and Tourism – the Proposed Development will not result in the loss of existing tourism accommodation or attractions.
- Retail – The Site is not within a Town and Village Centre Boundary or Primary Shopping Area.

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 6.

Principle 7: Housing

- The Proposed Development incorporates 27 new affordable homes, equating to 30% as required by planning policy.
- The Proposed Development incorporates a mix of homes which responds the Councils Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the affordable housing mix and tenure split has been agreed with the Councils Principal Housing Enabling Officer in advance of submission of the application.
- Principle 7 requires all new residential development to be wheelchair accessible and adaptable (category 2), which reflects emerging policy at the time that PS1 was published. Policy direction has however changed in respect of such provision, with published intended main modifications to the emerging District Plan requiring a minimum of 40% M4(2) provision. The Proposed Development incorporates 40% M4(2) provision in accordance with this policy direction.
- As part of pre-application discussions, it was confirmed that M4(3) provision would not be sought for affordable housing on the Site, and for the reasons set out later in this statement market M4(3) provision is not proposed on the Site, the Councils proposed policy wording included in the Schedule of Main Modifications allows flexibility on such provision, subject to agreement.

The Proposed Development is therefore considered to be in general conformity with Development Principle 7.

Principle 8: Infrastructure

- Any necessary infrastructure requirements and/or financial contributions will be secured through Section 106 agreement

The Proposed Development is considered to conform with Development Principle 6.

- 6.25. The above assessment should be read in conjunction with the Councils PS1 and the relevant Development Principles outlined. As demonstrated above the Proposed Development is in general conformity with the Development Principles and their associated requirements, on this basis and as indicated PS1 the Council should consider the Proposed Development in a positive manner. Additionally, and in the context of the Council's recent publication of their Schedule of Main Modifications, including the Site as part of allocation MM72 for residential development, we would suggest that the principle of development on the Site has been established.
- 6.26. Regardless, and in light of the Council's shortfall in housing land supply, Policy S5 of the NPPF is applicable and planning permission should be granted unless any adverse effects from the Proposed Development is considered to substantially outweigh the benefits. A full suite of supporting documents has been submitted alongside this planning application to demonstrate how the benefits of the Proposed Development outweigh any harm. Consequently, in accordance with Policy S5 of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted.

Residential Provision

Affordable Housing

- 6.27. NPPF Policy HO8 requires development proposals to meet or exceed development plan requirements for affordable housing, with provision to be made on site unless specific conditions are met.
- 6.28. Policy DP31 of the District Plan sets out requirements for Affordable Housing, further supported by the Councils Affordable Housing SPD. DP31 seeks 30% affordable housing provision on schemes of the scale of the Proposed Development, requiring that affordable housing units will be integrated with market housing, and sets a guideline that the preferred tenure split for proposals will be 75% affordable rented and 25% shared ownership, unless evidence supports an alternative mix.
- 6.29. HSCNP Policy Housing Hurst H7 broadly aligns with the requirement of DP31 requiring 30% affordable homes, including 'generally not more than 25% of affordable homes being of shared ownership'.
- 6.30. Emerging Policy DPH8 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) sets out similar principles to DP31, seeking 30% on-site affordable housing required to meet floor area standards as set out in the policy. It also sets out the requirement for affordable housing units to be fully integrated into the scheme layout in clusters of no more than 10.
- 6.31. Of the Proposed Development, 30 out of the 100 dwellings proposed will be affordable, equating to 30% provision. The proposed tenure split and mix of the proposed affordable dwellings is set out as follows:

<i>Dwelling Type</i>	<i>Affordable Rent</i>	<i>Shared Ownership</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>1-bedroom apartment</i>	6	-	6
<i>2-bedroom apartment</i>	6	-	6
<i>2-bedroom house</i>	6	5	11
<i>3-bedroom house</i>	4	3	7
<i>Total</i>	22	8	30

6.32. As evidenced in this submission, the affordable dwellings have been distributed into three smaller clusters and designed to be indistinguishable to market dwellings.

6.33. All the affordable homes will meet required space standards whilst 22 (73%) of the proposed affordable homes are designed to meet Part M4(2) standards for Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings. The Proposed Development is considered to fully accord with the requirements of DP31, the Affordable Housing SPD, HSCNP Policy Hurstpierpoint Hurst H7, emerging policy DPH8, and consequently NPPF Policy HO8.

Housing Mix

6.34. NPPF Policy HO7 sets out that substantial weight should be given to the benefits of providing homes which will contribute towards meeting the evidenced accommodation needs of a community.

6.35. Policy DP30 of the District Plan sets out an expectation for housing development to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development (including affordable housing) that reflects current and future local housing needs. It also seeks an appropriate mix to meet the needs of the current and future needs of different groups in the community including older people and vulnerable groups, suggesting this could include the provision of bungalows and other forms of suitable accommodation.

6.36. HSCNP Policy Housing HurstH8 sets out the development proposals which meet the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan and provides small homes with ground floor accommodation will be supported.

6.37. Emerging Policy DPH7 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) will require development to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes that reflect current and local housing needs. This includes an indication of housing mix split required by the Councils 2024 SHMA:

	<i>1-bedroom</i>	<i>2-bedroom</i>	<i>3-bedroom</i>	<i>4+bedroom</i>
<i>Market Housing</i>	0-10%	20-25%	40-45%	30-35%
<i>Affordable Home Ownership</i>	10-15%	50-55%	25-30%	5-10%
<i>Affordable Rented</i>	30-35%	40-45%	15-20%	5-10%

Proposed Affordable Housing Mix

6.38. As set out above, the proposed affordable housing mix for the Proposed Development is detailed as follows:

<i>Dwelling type</i>	<i>Affordable Rent Mix</i>	<i>Shared Ownership Mix</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>1 bedroom</i>	6 (27%)	0 (0%)	6 (20%)
<i>2 bedroom</i>	12 (55%)	5 (62%)	17 (57%)
<i>3 bedroom</i>	4 (18%)	3 (38%)	7 (23%)
<i>Total</i>	22	8	30

6.39. The above mix has been evolved following pre-application discussions with Nicholas Hewer Royle (Principal Housing Enabling Officer), broadly aligning with the ranges set out emerging Policy DPH7 with subtle deviances to allow for dwelling numbers and rounding. The proposed affordable housing mix therefore accords with the requirements of DP30, DP31, the Affordable Housing SPD, and emerging Policy DPH7.

Proposed Market Unit Mix

6.40. The proposed market housing mix for the Proposed Development is detailed as follows:

<i>Dwelling type</i>	<i>Proposed Mix (No.)</i>	<i>Proposed Mix (%)</i>
<i>1 bedroom</i>	6	9%
<i>2 bedroom</i>	22	31%
<i>3 bedroom</i>	20	29%
<i>4 bedroom</i>	22	31%
<i>Total</i>	70	100%

6.41. As demonstrated, the proposed market mix broadly accords with the ranges set out within emerging Policy DPH7, informed by the Councils SHMA 2024, with a slight shift towards greater provision of two-bedroom homes to reflect local market demand for two-bedroom bungalows. Seven of the proposed dwellings are proposed to be two-bedroom bungalows, as supported by HSCNP Policy Housing Hurst8. The market mix is therefore considered to accord with the requirements of DP30, Policy Housing Hurst 8 and emerging policy DPH7.

6.42. This results in an overall proposed housing mix as follows:

<i>Dwelling type</i>	<i>Proposed Mix (No.)</i>	<i>Proposed Mix (%)</i>
<i>1 bedroom</i>	12	12%
<i>2 bedroom</i>	39	39%
<i>3 bedroom</i>	27	27%
<i>4 bedroom</i>	22	22%
<i>Total</i>	100	100%

Self and Custom Build Housing

- 6.43. The adopted District Plan does not include a specific policy requirement for self-build or custom dwellings. It is however noted that Policy DPH6 of the emerging District Plan Review requires that 'a minimum of 2% of the residential plots on housing sites comprising of 100 or more dwellings, capped at 5 serviced plots, will need to be provided as serviced plots for self or custom build housing, unless otherwise agreed with the Council' (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications).
- 6.44. MSDCs 2024 SHMA Update remains silent of self and custom build housing, whilst the 2021 SHMA discussed an element of need, but fails to quantify this to inform any future requirements. MSDCs published analysis of Self & Custom Build Register of Interest as at 30 October 2024 indicates just 23 households on the register, with a clear steer in term of preferred areas to settlements such as Haywards Heath, Cuckfield, Lindfield and East Grinstead, followed by areas such as Crawley Down, Burgess Hill, Bolney and Ardingly.
- 6.45. Whilst the emerging policy direction is acknowledged, on analysis of the register, we would suggest that the Councils emerging strategic site allocations would provide the ability to meet this current need alone, importantly in more suitable locations and the preferred areas identified. In turn, this enables the Proposed Development to be approached in much more efficient manner, ensuring the efficient use of land and providing the ability to reflect local market conditions and provide provision such as bungalows to suit varying needs, as supported by NPPF Policy L3.

Accessible Dwellings

- 6.46. Policy DP28 of the District Plan expects developments of five or more dwellings to make provision for 20% dwellings to meet Category 2 – accessible and adaptable dwellings under Building Regulations – Approved Document M Requirement M4(2).
- 6.47. As detailed above, HSCNP Policy Housing Hurst H8 seeks to support provision of small homes with ground floor accommodation designed for people with access and movement difficulties.
- 6.48. Emerging Policy DPH12 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications), sets out the intended policy direction for accessibility in new developments. It sets out an expectation that a minimum of 40% of dwellings will be required to meet M4(2), 5% of market homes to meet M4(3), dependant on the suitability of the site and need at the time, and 4% of affordable homes to meet M4(3), on all suitable schemes, unless otherwise agreed with the Council.
- 6.49. The Proposed Development seeks to accommodate 40% of dwellings to meet M4(2) standards, exceeding the requirements of Policy DP28, further supported by HSCNP Policy Housing Hurst H8.
- 6.50. In respect of emerging policy, the Proposed Development incorporates 40% M4(2) provision aligning with emerging policy direction. No dwellings are proposed to meet M4(3) standards following conversations with the Principal Housing Enabling Officer, Nicholas Hewer Royle, who confirmed that the Council would not seek such provision in relation to the affordable housing proposed on the Site as part of pre-application discussions.
- 6.51. As set out above, emerging policy DPH12 seeks 5% of market units to meet M4(3) standards, dependent on the suitability of the site and the need at that time, or unless agreed with the Council. There is no current Hurstpierpoint-specific evidence base which identifies a need for wheelchair adaptable units, and whilst the Mid Sussex SHMA (2021 and 2024 update) does detail an expected increase in older population across the District, leaning towards a need for accessible dwellings, this doesn't definitively quantify the requirement/need in any detail in terms of M4(2)/M4(3) requirements, and could indicate provision of more

suitable house types such as bungalow provision and ground floor apartments, of which the Proposed Development seeks to incorporate a number of these homes. Additionally, as M4(3) dwellings are targeted specifically to wheelchair users, it is worth highlighting that as a market product purchasers do not generally require full wheelchair compliance for properties at the point of purchase, and quite often this is a need that arises over time. The delivery of such units presents significant practical challenges and unlike affordable housing, there is no mechanism to allocate such units to households with a defined need, resulting in a high risk that they are occupied as general market housing and fail to meet their intended purpose. Given that M4(2) standards already provide a robust level of accessibility and adaptability, providing the ability for such units to be adapted for varying future needs, including varying disabilities, the 40% M4(2) provision the Proposed Development seeks to incorporate provides more flexibility. We would therefore suggest that the inclusion of M4(3) units within the market element would represent an inefficient and unjustified use of resources, and therefore in the absence of a clearly evidenced and deliverable local need, departure from this requirement is justified as detailed within the policy wording. It is therefore considered that the Proposed Development accords with the requirements of emerging Policy DPH12.

Dwelling Space Standards

- 6.52. District Plan Policy DP27 requires minimum nationally described space standards for internal floor space and storage space to be applied to all new residential development, other than in exceptional circumstances where clear evidence will need to be provided to show that the internal form or special features prevent some of the requirements being met.
- 6.53. Emerging Policy DPH11 seeks to carry forward the requirements of DP27, again seeking all proposed residential dwellings to meet these standards, other than in exceptional circumstance.
- 6.54. The Proposed Development seeks a flexible approach to this policy, whilst some dwellings are designed to meet NDSS requirements, including all of the affordable dwellings, there are some instances where the development does not align with the NDSS requirements. Thakeham feels there is a number of complexities in applying such policies in a blanket manner, particularly in relation to the affordability context of the area. The Proposed Development therefore does seek to depart from the requirements of DP27 and emerging Policy DPH11 in relation to market housing, albeit with suitable justification demonstrating exceptional circumstances in terms of market context. A flexible approach is supported and justified in the NPPF by policies HO1(2), HO7 and PM13.

Design

General Design Policies

- 6.55. Policy DP3 of the NPPF sets out key principles for achieving well-designed and beautiful places. seeking to ensure that proposals respond to their context, to integrate and enhance their surroundings. DP3(2) goes on to set out a number of principles that development proposals should reflect relevant aspects of:
- a. *Liveability: support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities, which will function well over the lifetime of the development, by incorporating a range of uses and tenures, employing features which promote social interaction, and which are robust, durable and easy to look after;*

The Proposed Development incorporates a wide range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures to support a health mixed, vibrant integrates community that will sit cohesively within the context of the existing community.

- b. Climate: contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and the transition to net zero by using building layouts, building orientation, massing, landscaping and materials which conserve energy and other resources, and which minimise risks from the impacts of climate change including overheating;*

The Proposed Development has given careful consideration to climate change mitigation and adaptation, as detailed in the Energy and Sustainability Statement which supports the planning application.

- c. Nature: incorporate and/or connect to a network of high quality, accessible, multifunctional green infrastructure to provide opportunities for recreation and healthy living, strengthen habitats, improve climate change resilience and improve air and water quality. This should include maintaining and enhancing tree cover and incorporating sustainable drainage systems in accordance with policies N3 and F8;*

The Proposed Development incorporates a network of formal and informal recreational spaces providing recreational opportunities for all future residents, including the incorporation of blue and green infrastructure.

- d. Movement: provide transport infrastructure and choices which support the design vision for the site, provide good connections to the wider settlement (or those nearby), and prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport;*

The Proposed Development incorporates inclusive pedestrian and cycle routes through the development, with opportunities to link into the wider network.

- e. Built Form: use the pattern of buildings to define the arrangement of streets, squares and other spaces, promote compact forms of development to optimise the site's potential, distinguish between public and private areas, create focal points and, where appropriate, enhance views into and out of the scheme;*

Careful consideration has been given to the design ethos for the site, seeking to ensure street legibility to make clear differentials between public and private areas. The proposals have evolved through proactive pre-application discussions with MSDCs Urban Design Officer.

- f. Public Space: include spaces that are safe, secure, inclusive, and accessible for all ages and abilities, including for groups such as women and girls; and which facilitate and encourage social interaction, play and healthy lifestyles (for example by providing high quality, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, a variety of recreational spaces and places to meet, integrating lighting and making building entrances and windows face onto streets and other public spaces to provide natural surveillance); and*

Public areas have been designed to ensure natural surveillance and places remain safe, secure and inclusive.

- g. Identity: create visually attractive, distinctive and characterful development to establish or maintain a strong sense of place and pride, including through the use of a coherent palette of materials, design features and planting.*

The Proposed Development seeks to respond positively to the local vernacular, adopting a materials palette that work cohesively with its surrounds whilst creating a sense of place through distinct design quality.

6.56. District Plan Policy DP26 seeks to secure high-quality design in all new developments, it sets out a number of criteria that applicants are required to demonstrate:

- *Is of a high-quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and green space.*

The Proposed Development is of high-quality design incorporating significant landscaping and green space, including inclusion of blue infrastructure and play space.

- *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;*

The Proposed Development clearly defines public and private realm, with active frontages implements to facing streets and public open spaces. This is discussed in greater detail within the submitted DAS

- *Creates a sense of place while address the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;*

The Proposed Development has been designed to respond to the local site context and site constraints. It is landscape-led and incorporates significant new landscaping to enable the development to integrate into the existing built environment. The proposed dwellings have been designed to be in keeping with the local area with the scale, massing and proportions replicating the context of the local vernacular.

- *Protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;*

The Site does not comprise existing public open space and the Proposed Development seeks to retain trees of value wherever practicable.

- *Protects valued townscape and the separate identity of towns and villages;*

The Proposed development is not considered to impact the townscape of Hurstpierpoint or its separate identity.

- *Does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking into account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight, sunlight and noise, air and light pollution;*

Throughout the design progression of the Proposed Development, significant consideration has been given to existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings. Development is set back from sensitive boundaries, incorporating additional planting and buffering where possible to minimise any visual impact on privacy and outlook. All proposed dwellings have been designed to ensure a high level of privacy and are oriented to maximise the benefit of daylight/sunlight where possible.

- *Creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;*

The Proposed Development is well served by pedestrian footways, which are further supported by a 3m pedestrian cycle route which serves the site from the northwest access point throughout the Site, intending to connect to Belmont Lane in the southeast corner, where there is an existing paved bridleway.

- *Incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;*

Parking provision has been sensitively designed within the Proposed Development to limit street parking that dominates the street environment.

- *Positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;*

The Proposed Development has been designed with a Fabric-First approach through thermally efficient, easily controlled, well designed and oriented buildings. As demonstrated in the Energy and Sustainability Statement submitted as part of this application,

- *Take the opportunity to encourage community integration by creating layout with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre;*

The Proposed Development provides one significant public open space, incorporating play space and walking routes, to encourage and focus community integration across the development.

- *Optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development*

The Proposed Development has been designed to ensure that it makes efficient use of land, whilst also providing high-quality public open space to meet the needs existing and future residents. Open space within the Site has been designed to be functional with a proposed focal multi-functional green space, providing opportunities for play through provision of the LEAP, general amenity, sustainable drainage and new green infrastructure.

6.57. In addition to the relevant design policies of the NPPF, and District Plan, the HSCNP sets out several aspirations and requirements in respect of design elements.

6.58. WSCNP Policy Housing HurstH1 sets out that housing development will be supported in areas which:

- Enhance the existing settlement pattern of the village;*
- In Hurstpierpoint, can also provide significant areas of parkland adjacent to the built zones, to be owned and managed by the local community*

The Proposed development sensitively responds to the existing settlement pattern of the village, not seeking to extend development beyond the parameters set by existing development to the South along Wickham Hill or to the west. An existing significant landscape buffer has been implemented on the eastern boundary of the Site, creating a clear defensible boundary to the east. As set out above, the Proposed Development incorporates significant open space within the scheme, creating recreation opportunities for existing and future residents.

6.59. WSCNP Policy Housing HurstH5 requires house designs, layouts and densities to respond to village character, with reference to the Village Design Statement (2004). The Proposed Development responds to local character, proposing a suitable layout, density and form which responds to local character, whilst ensuring identified need for a variety of housing types and sizes is met.

6.60. WSCNP Policy Housing HurstH6 then goes onto to seek to support new housing developments which meet the policies of the neighbourhood plan and meet a number of criteria as set out.

- The provision of a satisfactory access point or points to the site for motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians;*

The Proposed development incorporates a single vehicular access point from College Lane, incorporating pedestrian and cycles access which links to a pedestrian cycle route throughout the development, providing permeability throughout the site and access to the existing local network.

- b) The preparation and submission of an up to date Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to include the consideration of the cumulative impact of traffic and the provision of any necessary off-site transport improvements;*

The application is supported by a Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan.

- c) The provision of a comprehensive package of highway and footpath improvements, for vehicular, pedestrian and cycling uses, serving the local area;*

The Transport Assessment identifies and outlines any necessary improvements; these have been informed through pre-application discussions with WSCC and the Highways Authority.

- d) The retention and protection of significant landscape features within the site and along the site boundaries;*

Significant landscape features are limited to the periphery of the Site, consequently mature quality trees and vegetation are proposed to be retained where practicable.

- e) An ecological survey to be carried out and appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures to be undertaken;*

The application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment, outlining required ecological mitigation and a number of ecological enhancement measures.

- f) The provision of adequate surface water and foul water drainage capacity;*

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, with incorporated surface water and foul drainage strategies.

- g) The provision of, or financial contributions towards, community facilities and the provision of public open space;*

Any necessary financial contributions will be secured through Section 106 agreement.

- h) The provision of parkland areas, to be owned and managed by the local community.*

The Proposed Development incorporates significant public open space, including play space for the use of existing and future residents.

6.61. The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD was adopted in November 2020 and seeks to build on the policy framework outlined within District Plan Policy DP26, intended to inform and guide the quality of design for all development across the district. The DAS which has been produced to support the Proposed Development details how the design has responded to the various relevant principles.

6.62. Emerging Policy DPB1 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) requires proposals to have regard to the Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD, and a number of principles as set out within the policy. It is acknowledged that this policy wording remains in flux in response to comments from the

Inspector during the examination, however regard has been given to emerging policy DPB1 and its principles throughout the design of The Proposed Development, this is further demonstrated within the Design and Access Statement which accompanies the planning application.

Open Space and Play Space

- 6.63. Mid Sussex revoked their Development Infrastructure and Contributions SPD, effective from 22 July 2025. The Council has therefore confirmed that for applications from 11 December 2025, the Council Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (PS2) will be used to calculate all local Section 106 contributions. PS2 sets out various infrastructure requirements, and the thresholds for when development is expected to trigger such requirements.
- 6.64. In respect of Open Space and Play space, PS2 suggests that for development at the scale of the Proposed Development onsite provision is expected for Amenity Green Space, Natural and semi-natural space and Equipped/designated play area. The quantity guidelines as outline in PS2 have been incorporated into scheme design, incorporating a Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) alongside Amenity Green Space and Natural and semi-natural space, significantly exceeding the quantity guidelines.

Heritage and Archaeology

- 6.65. Policy HE4-HE10 of the NPPF sets out NDMP requirements in respect of conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Policy HE4 sets out that development proposals should *'avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets'*
- 6.66. Policy HE5 then goes on to discuss how the effect of heritage assets should be assessed, before HE6 sets parameters on how this should inform decision making, stating at HE6(4) that 'where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against the public benefits resulting from the proposal.'
- 6.67. The policy provisions of the NPPF are further supported by DP34 and DP35 of the District Plan, WSCNP Policy Countryside HurstC4, DPB2 and DPB3 of the emerging District Plan.
- 6.68. The Site is not located within a Conservation Area, but does sit within proximity of Grade II listed Wickham Farmhouse, northwest of the Site access with the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area beyond, also to the northwest of the Site. The planning application is supported by an Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (HEBDA) which should be read in conjunction with this Statement.
- 6.69. The HEBDA confirms that the Proposed Development has included a number of embedded design responses to ensure the Proposed Development is visually recessive including careful consideration of building heights, concluding that whilst the Proposed Development would inevitably result in some harm to the setting of the nearby Grade II listed building and Conservation Area, by virtue of the development of the Site, this is considered to fall within the remit of lower levels of harm (not substantial). On balance, and in the context of change in the area surrounding the listed buildings, particularly in relation the draft allocations on the Site and neighbouring sites, it is considered that the substantial public benefits of the Proposed Development significantly outweigh this low-level of harm.

Landscaping and Landscape Visual Impact

- 6.70. The Site is not located in the Green Belt, a Protected Landscape as defined in the NPPF, or within an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and is therefore not constrained by any landscape designation.

- 6.71. District Plan Policy DP12 seeks to protect and enhance the Countryside, whilst Policy DP13 seeks to support development which does not harm the separate identity and amenity of settlements. In addition, and of relevance, emerging District Plan policies DPC1 and DPC2 set out similar expectations.
- 6.72. The WSCNP defines an area of Local Gap to the north and east of the Settlement, encapsulating the Site, albeit it is noted that the policy area extends significantly beyond the confines of the Site. The Proposed Development should therefore be considered within this context, as development of the Site, in consideration of its particular merits in terms of existing boundary treatments and adjacent built form, is not considered to individually or cumulatively result in coalescence.
- 6.73. The planning application is supported by a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which discusses matters of Landscape Visual Impact and matters such as coalescence in greater detail and should be read alongside this Statement. The LVIA confirms that *'The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise landscape and visual harm through a best-practice, landscape-led approach... no significant effects are predicted on the wider landscape character, the setting of the South Downs National Park, the separation of existing settlements, or public visual receptors at the residual stage.'*
- 6.74. This planning application is further informed by a Landscape Strategy, setting out key landscape design principles which enable the development to integrate into the existing built environment. The landscape proposals incorporate drainage features, SuDS, new native planting and tree planting, in accordance with NPPF policy N3.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 6.75. NPPF Policy N2 sets out how development should improve the Natural Environment, including but not limited to retention of existing trees and hedgerows and the use of nature-based solutions to secure multiple benefits such as biodiversity enhancements and sustainable drainage solutions.
- 6.76. District Plan Policy DP38 sets out the Council's objectives for protecting and enhancing biodiversity.
- 6.77. Emerging District Plan Policy DPN1 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) sets out expectations for biodiversity, geodiversity and nature recovery, whilst DPN2 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) sets out Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements in response to national legislation.
- 6.78. The planning application is supported by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) and other supporting reports which evaluate the effects of the Proposed Development in terms of ecological impact, and demonstrates how the Proposed Development responds to relevant legislation alongside national and local policy requirements.
- 6.79. The submitted BNG Plan confirms a positive increase as a result of the Proposed Development, with a net increase in excess of the 10% according with the requirements of national legislation and planning policy.

Arboriculture

- 6.80. District Plan Policy DP37 sets out protections for trees, woodland and hedgerows ensuring the development incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows, and such trees are located appropriately within the development, preventing damage to root systems and allowing future growth and ensuring opportunities for new planting are accommodated to enhance green infrastructure.

- 6.81. Emerging District Plan Policy DPN4 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) also seeks to protect trees, woodland and hedgerows in similar context to DP37, however further supports the provision of suitable tree planting, including incorporation of street trees and urban greening.
- 6.82. As demonstrated in the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), mature trees are generally limited to the site boundaries, and therefore proposed tree removals have been kept to a minimum and certainly do not affect trees of significant value, whilst landscaping proposals show a significant amount of planting including provision for street trees.

Sustainability and Renewable Energy

- 6.83. NPPF Policies CC2 and CC3 set out expectations on how development proposals should respond to climate change, including a number of design measures to encourage sustainable transport practices and ensure drainage measures can adapt to potential impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development.
- 6.84. District Plan Policy DP39 states that all development proposed must seek to improve the sustainability of development, detailing a number of measures which should be incorporated where feasible.
- 6.85. Emerging District Plan Policies DPS1 and DPS2 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications), set out a number of principles for development in response to climate change and reducing carbon emissions, including energy efficient design, encouraging active travel, maximising carbon sequestration, be designed to reduce overheating and adopt sustainable water consumption measures.
- 6.86. The Proposed Development has been designed with a Fabric-First approach through thermally efficient, easily controlled, well designed and oriented buildings, with implementation of renewable sources of energy. An Energy and Sustainability Statement is submitted as part of this application detailing how the Proposed Development meets relevant building regulation and policy requirements.
- 6.87. Additionally, District Plan Policy DP39 and DP42 also requires all new dwellings to achieve water consumption of no more than 110 litres per person per day. In accordance with this policy, the submitted Energy and Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the Proposed Development will deliver water consumption of no more than 110 litres per person per day through a combination of measures such as reduced-flow taps and showers, dual flush toilets, moderately sized baths and provision of water butts for each home.

Transportation and Access

- 6.88. The NPPF sets out various requirements for transport at Policies TR3-TR8, including seeking to direct development towards sustainable locations and adopting principles to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 6.89. District Plan Policy DP21 requires development to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026, in response requiring that decisions on development proposals take account of whether:
- *The scheme is sustainably located to minimise the need for travel noting there might be circumstances where development need to be located in the countryside, such as rural economic uses;*

The Proposed Development is located on the edge of one of the most sustainable villages in the district, as set out in the Council's settlement hierarchy.

- *Appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to private car, such as provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking cycling and public transport, including suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking, have been explored and taken up;*

The Proposed Development incorporates safe and accessible pedestrian and cycle routes through the development and provides opportunities to link into the local network. It is also within proximity of local bus stops and Hassocks Station, providing key public transport links. Secure and safe cycle parking facilities are proposed to be available for all dwellings in accordance with WSCC requirements.

- *The scheme is designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, including roads widths and size of garages;*

The Proposed Development is designed to adoptable standards.

- *The scheme provides adequate car parking for the proposed development taking into account the accessibility of the development, the type, mix and use of the development and the availability and opportunities for public transport; and with relevant Neighbourhood Plan where applicable.;*

Parking provision is provided in accordance with WSCC requirements, with EV charging to be made available to all dwellings in accordance with building regulation requirements.

- *Development which generates significant amounts of movement is supported by a Transport Assessment/Statement and a Travel Plan that is effective and demonstrable deliverable including setting out how schemes will be funded;*
- *The scheme provides appropriate mitigation to support new development on the local and strategic road network, including the transport network outside of the district, secured where necessary through appropriate legal agreements*
- *The scheme avoids severe additional traffic congestion, individually or cumulatively, taking account of any proposed mitigation;*
- *The scheme protects the safety of road users and pedestrians; and*
- *The scheme does not harm the special qualities of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald AONB [now National Landscape]*

This application is supported by a Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan, which assesses impact on the road network, identifying any required mitigation. This Statement should be read alongside the Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan.

6.90. Emerging District Plan policies DPT1, DPT3 and DTP4 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) seek to build on the existing parameters of adopted policy DP21 with a greater onus on encouraging active travel. As detailed above, the Proposed Development proposes a new pedestrian/cycle route through the Site, improving permeability and encouraging the use of sustainable transport methods for access to local services and facilities.

6.91. As demonstrated in the accompanying Transport Assessment, an assessment of the trip generation and traffic impact of the Proposed Development has ascertained that there will not be a severe material impact

on the local highway network, its capacity, or the safety of other motorised or non-motorised road users. The Proposed Development is therefore considered to be acceptable on highway grounds.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.92. Policy F4 and F5 of the NPPF set out relevant NDMP policy requirements for the Site, requiring development proposals to be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment and aiming to steer development towards areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Policy F8 seeks to ensure that sustainable drainage systems are suitably designed to reflect National Standards.
- 6.93. District Plan Policy DP41 sets out relevant Flood Risk and Drainage policy requirements, setting out that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) should be implemented in all new developments over 10 dwellings, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate, to prevent any increase in flood risk and protect surface and ground water quality. DP41 also sets out that SuDs should be sensitively design and located to promote biodiversity, and enhance landscape and good quality spaces that improve public amenities in the area, where possible, setting out a preferred hierarchy of managing surface water.
- 6.94. Emerging District Plan Policy DPS4 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications) seeks to align local policy with national policy and guidance.
- 6.95. The Site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding from rivers and the sea. The Flood Risk Assessment which supports the planning application concludes that the Proposed Development is not at significant risk from fluvial, tidal, groundwater, sewer or reservoir flooding. While limited areas of localised surface water ponding are identified adjacent to the northern boundary and across a small section of the proposed access, all proposed dwellings are located outside areas of existing surface water flood risk and the proposed SuDS strategy will assist in mitigating this flood risk ensuring flood risk is not increased elsewhere.
- 6.96. As demonstrated above, the Site is located in Flood Zone 1 and suitable SUDS have been incorporated into Proposed Development thereby meeting the requirements of Policies F4, F5, F8, DP41 and emerging policy DPS4.

Noise, Air and Light Pollution

- 6.97. Policy DP29 sets out a number of requirements in terms of noise, air and light pollution to seek to protect valued landscapes and support sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive. In respect of Noise, the Site is not located within proximity of existing development generating high levels of noise, nor would the Proposed Development result in high levels of noise.
- 6.98. In terms of light pollution, the Proposed Development does not seek to implement street lighting to minimise impact on local amenity and ensure nature conservation.
- 6.99. The Site is not located within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), nor is it within proximity of development which generates air pollution. Additionally, the application is supported by an Air Quality Assessment, with the assessment concluding that the Proposed Development is not expected to adversely impact local air quality or to introduce new receptors into an area of poor air quality.
- 6.100. In respect of the above, due regard has also been had to emerging policies DPN7, DPN8 and DPN9 (as amended by the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications), resulting in the same conclusions detailed above for the Proposed Development.

Minerals and Waste

- 6.101. The Site is not within a defined Mineral Safeguarding Area, albeit does fall within a 250m buffer for a Soft Sand Mineral Safeguarding Area, as defined in the relevant maps of the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan July 2018 (as amended) (JMLP). The Site is also located within a Soft Sand Resource Consultation Area, as defined in the West Sussex Minerals and Waste Safeguarding guidance, the consultation area aligns with the Safeguarding Area and associated buffer discussed above. It is not within proximity of any existing minerals infrastructure.
- 6.102. Policy M9 and M10 of the JMLP sets out the requirements for safeguarding minerals and relevant minerals infrastructure. As above, the Site itself is not within the defined Minerals Safeguarded Area, albeit does fall within and associated 250m buffer to a safeguarding area. The Soft Sand Mineral Safeguarding Area and its associated buffer covers a vast area, stretching across the County. In the context of the site itself, the defined Safeguarding Area sits south of the Site, conflicting with the existing built development of Hurstpierpoint and land beyond. Given this context, minerals extraction is unlikely to be considered practicable or feasible on or within the vicinity of the Site. Development of the Site is therefore not considered to conflict with the requirements of Policy M9 or M10 of the JMLP.
- 6.103. The Site is not on or within proximity a permitted or allocated Waste Site or associated consultation area.

Securing Infrastructure

- 6.104. NPPF Policy HC3 sets out that development proposals should provide for new or improved community facilities and public service infrastructure which are necessary for the development to be acceptable in planning terms, either through direct provision or financial contributions.
- 6.105. District Plan Policy DP20 sets out expectations for developers to 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)
- 6.106. This is further supported by the Council's PS2 which details expected infrastructure requirements for new developments, it is expected that where necessary financial contributions and works will be captured within a Section 106 agreement as necessary.

7. Summary And Conclusion

- 7.1. This application for planning permission represents a high-quality residential development that will deliver sustainable homes, open space, and new landscaping with a net-biodiversity gain in excess of 10%. Importantly, in the context of a significant shortfall in deliverable housing land in the District, the Proposed Development will make a meaningful contribution towards addressing local housing needs, including delivery of much-needed affordable homes.
- 7.2. The Proposed Development will;
- Make a significant contribution to much needed housing delivery in the district and wider area;
 - Create a high-quality sustainable residential development including open space and play space for the wider community;
 - Provide electric vehicle charging points for each dwelling;
 - Deliver a new ecological habitat, providing a biodiversity net-gain on-site in excess of 10%;
 - Deliver multi-functional green space across the site, providing opportunities for play, general amenity, sustainable drainage, and biodiversity;
 - Deliver 30% affordable housing, 30 new homes;
 - Deliver a suitable mix of housing, to meet local needs including bungalows; and
 - Provide high-quality residential amenity for future occupiers, including a range of dwelling types for downsizers and First Homes.
- 7.3. At present, Mid Sussex District Council cannot demonstrate five years of deliverable housing land and consequently as required by national policy, Paragraph S5 of the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is to be applied, meaning that planning permission should be granted unless the benefits of the Proposed Development are **substantially** outweighed by any adverse impacts.
- 7.4. Additionally, and as detailed in this Statement, the recent publication of the Council's Schedule of Main Modifications, seeks to include the Site as part of Housing Allocation MM72, establishing the principle of development of the Site for residential development.
- 7.5. As demonstrated in this Planning Statement and the supporting documentation, with NPPF Policy S5 applied, it is considered that the limited adverse impacts arising would not substantially outweigh the considerable benefits arising from the Proposed Development, further supported by the context of its draft allocation for residential development. Therefore, the Proposed Development is considered to accord with the requirements of the NPPF and the Local Development Plan, and planning permission should be granted without delay.

Appendix 1: Pre-application Advice – 17 July 2026

From: [Andy Watt](#)
To: [Sarah Fawdry](#)
Subject: Pre-application Planning Advice
Date: 16 July 2026 18:01:48

Dear Ms Fawdry

References: DM/26/0288 and DM/26/1212

Proposal: 75 residential dwellings

Location: Land Parcel North of 31 College Lane Hurstpierpoint West Sussex

Thank you for your first enquiry (DM/26/0288) received on 4 February and for meeting me on site and in our offices on 19 March. Attendees were as follows:

Andy Watt (Senior Planning Officer, MSDC)
Anna Kramarczyk (Urban Designer, MSDC)
Irene Fletcher (Tree Officer, MSDC)
Nicholas Royle (Principal Housing Enabling Officer, MSDC)
Sarah Fawdry (Senior Planning Manager, Thakeham Homes Ltd)
Ben Youll (Development Surveyor, Thakeham Homes Ltd)

Thank you also for your second enquiry (DM/26/1212) to discuss urban design details by way of a virtual meeting on Teams on 21 May. This was attended by Anna Kramarczyk, myself, you, Anthony Henriques and Amy Sharp (Thakeham Homes). Thank you also for confirming payment earlier this week and please accept my apologies for the delay in following this up in writing.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND CONSTRAINTS

The site consists of an L-shaped parcel of land on the eastern side of College Lane in Hurstpierpoint, albeit the northern portion has been shown in the Vision Statement not be built upon and is shown as being in Thakeham's control with the potential to be gifted for future use of the local community. There is a good boundary screen of trees to the east (Belmont Lane) and intermittent tree cover on the other boundaries, of which the southern and most of the western boundary is to residential properties and/or their gardens. Land levels rise from north to south by around 6m, the lowest point being the pond in the centre-east of the site.

In policy terms, the site is located within the countryside (but contiguous with the built-up area to the south and west) and within the setting of the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area. It is within the setting of a Grade II listed building (Wickham Farmhouse). It is designated as a Great Crested Newt – Impact Risk Zone (Red).

A Public Right of Way (PROW HAS/8C/3) runs alongside the eastern boundary. The site lies within an area at risk of surface water and inland watercourse flooding. The site is also within a Minerals Geology Safeguarding Zone. The site also lies wholly within a Local Gap between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks/Burgess Hill, as defined in the Neighbourhood Plan.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Of most relevance is a joint appeal against the refusal of planning permission:

12/03972/FUL – AP/13/0033 (93 units)

13/01250/FUL – AP/14/0002 (81 units)

The appeal was dismissed in September 2014 due to the Local Gap policy, hence not environmentally sustainable, but the Inspector noted benefits as:

- Delivery of open market and affordable houses
- Sustainable location
- Increased spending / New Homes bonus
- Provision of publicly accessible wildlife corridor

PROPOSAL

The proposal as submitted is for a residential development of 75 dwellings, together with up to 10% bungalows, tenure blind affordable housing, pedestrian and cycle paths, habitat creation, play space, SuDS and open space.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The Council would need to have regard to the following Development Plan policies:

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (Mar 2018)

Policy DP4: Housing

Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy

Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside

Policy DP13: Preventing Coalescence

Policy DP15: New Homes in the Countryside

Policy DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Policy DP20: Securing Infrastructure

Policy DP21: Transport

Policy DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes

Policy DP26: Character and Design

Policy DP27: Dwelling Space Standards

Policy DP28: Accessibility

Policy DP29: Noise, Air and Light Pollution

Policy DP30: Housing Mix

Policy DP31: Affordable Housing

Policy DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Policy DP35: Conservation Areas

Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

Policy DP38: Biodiversity

Policy DP39: Sustainable Design and Construction

Policy DP41: Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment

<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/>

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (Mar 2015)

Policy HurstC1: Conserving and Enhancing Character

Policy HurstC3: Local Gaps and Preventing Coalescence

Policy HurstC4: Conservation Areas

Policy HurstH1: Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common New Housing Development

Policy HurstH5: Development Principles

Policy HurstH6: Housing Sites Infrastructure and Environmental Impact Assessment

Policy HurstH7: Affordable Homes

Policy HurstH8: Small Dwellings

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/neighbourhood-plans/>

In addition, the Council would need to have regard to other material considerations. These include:

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 - Submission Draft (Regulation 19)

The District Council is reviewing and updating the District Plan. Upon adoption, the new District Plan 2021 - 2039 will replace the current District Plan 2014-2031 and its policies will have full weight. In accordance with the NPPF, Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies of the emerging plan according to the stage of preparation; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to the relevant policies; and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF. The draft District Plan 2021-2039 (Regulation 19) is currently at Examination and hearings were concluded on 19 March 2026. The District Plan remains at Examination until the Inspector has published his report, until that time only minimal weight can be given to the Plan.

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-review/>

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Dec 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Technical Housing Standards: Nationally Described Space Standard (Mar 2015)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

West Sussex County Council: Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Aug 2019)

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/information-for-developers/pre-application-advice-for-roads-and-transport/#additional-information>

Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (Nov 2020)

The Council has adopted a 'Mid Sussex Design Guide' SPD that aims to help deliver high quality development across the district that responds appropriately to its context and is inclusive and sustainable. The Design Guide was adopted by Council on 4th November 2020 as an SPD for use in the consideration and determination of planning applications. The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/supplementary-planning-documents/>

ASSESSMENT

A. Principle of development

The Council's Planning Policy team has made the following comments (on 10 April):

Planning Position Statements

The Council has approved to Planning Position Statements, which are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable development sets out how the Council will continue to support growth in sustainable locations during the period until a new Local Plan is adopted. The Statement explains that the Council will support development on sites identified for allocation in the Submission Draft District Plan where they deliver the site-specific principles set out in Appendix C; the infrastructure requirements of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and are in general conformity with the Development Principles as set out in the Position Statement.

Housing Land Supply Position

The Council has performed excellently in respect of the Housing Delivery Test, a new standard method formula was published alongside the NPPF which gives Mid Sussex a significantly higher housing requirement than the current District Plan. As a result, and having regard for the need for an appropriate buffer, the Council is unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites as per the requirements of paragraph 78 of the NPPF.

As a measure to help improve the supply position, the use of a shorter time to implement the permission would be supported. As a guide, 2 years for a full permission and 1 years under a reserved matters application.

Planning Policy – site selection process

All potential housing and employment sites are included within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The SHELAA provides the palette of sites that are assessed for their suitability for allocation in the Development Plan. A site selection methodology has been developed and tested at Examination (of the adopted site allocations DPD). The site selection methodology has been used to assess the SHELAA sites, and identify those sites with potential for development, via allocation in a Development Plan.

There are 3 steps to the site assessment process, which are:

Stage 2(a) – Relationship to existing settlements – sites that are disconnected from existing settlements are rejected and not subject to further assessment.

Stage 2(b) – Showstopper constraints – where environmental constraints and deliverability considerations result in very negative impact against the site assessment criteria. Sites with showstopper constraints are rejected and not subject to further assessment.

Stage 2 (c) – Overall Assessment – Sites that remain in the pool are subject to full assessment. Sites may be rejected at this stage if there are a combination of negative impacts. Sites may also be rejected at this stage if the loss of the site's current use is contrary to national policy.

For the purposes of plan making, sites that remained in the pool, after Stage 2(c) were subject to further testing including Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulation Assessment and Transport Modelling. This is Stage 3 of the site selection process. Those sites remaining in the pool after this stage were proposed for allocation in the submitted Draft District Plan Review (2024).

The Application site was submitted to the Council and has been included in the SHELAA as site #19 – Land east of College Lane. This site has been assessed through the site selection process. Further detail on the site assessment can be found [here](#) (see the 2024 Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and 2024 Site Selection Conclusions Paper).

In summary, the site was rejected at stage 3 as it was considered to be in conflict with the strategic objectives of the Plan.

Sustainability

The Council has undertaken a Settlement Sustainability Review, which enabled a classification of the district's settlements, taking into account service provision and accessibility. Policy DP6 of the adopted District Plan set out this hierarchy. The application site is on the eastern edge of Hurstpierpoint, a Category 2 settlement: a larger village providing key services for the rural area of Mid Sussex and serving the wider hinterland.

The settlement benefits from a good range of services and facilities. Good pedestrian and cycling connectivity are important to encourage active travel and to access local services and facilities, including public transport options to access further services in the main towns.

Infrastructure

Policy DP20: Securing Infrastructure sets out 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; and the use of planning obligations.

Other relevant matters

As the site is located on the edge of a settlement, a landscape-led and high-quality design will be important. The Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD is also relevant. The Council's Urban Designer should be involved in the development of detailed design matters.

Mandatory biodiversity net gain will apply to the development proposal. A biodiversity net gain of at least 10% will need to be delivered. The Council encourages higher levels of biodiversity net gain as well as on-site biodiversity enhancements such as swift bricks, bird boxes, bat boxes, bee bricks, hedgehog highways and native wildflower planting with nectar- and pollen rich flowers.

Since then, as you will be aware, the District Plan Review is at examination and the Inspector asked the Council to provide more sites for potential allocation, including this one. Further information can be found on our website at:

[District Plan Review - Examination - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

B. Housing

Policy DP30 of the Mid Sussex District Plan aims to provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development that reflects current and future local housing needs.

Policy DP31 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks provision of affordable housing within developments, unless significant clear evidence demonstrates that the site cannot support the required affordable housing from a viability and deliverability perspective.

Policy HurstH7: Affordable Homes

'On housing developments of 4 or more dwellings, there will normally be a 30% 'affordable' homes content, for rent and assisted purchase schemes for local people and generally, not more than 25% of affordable homes being of shared ownership. On residential developments of less than 4 dwellings and in other circumstances where on-site provision is not practicable a commuted payment towards off-site provision will normally be required equivalent to providing 30% on-site affordable housing provision.'

Policy H7 conflicts with Policy DP31, in relation to the threshold for on-site affordable housing provision and in relation to the threshold for payments of commuted sums for off-site affordable housing provision.

Policy HurstH8: Small Dwellings

'Housing development which meets the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan and provides small homes with ground floor accommodation designed for people with access and movement difficulties will be supported.'

The Council's Principal Housing Enabling Officer, Nick Royle, has confirmed directly to you he is happy with the proposed provision and mix, based on an uplift to 88 dwellings, set out in the table below:

	Affordable Rent	Shared Ownership	Total
1b bungalow	2	-	2
1b apartment	4	-	4
2b apartment	6	-	6
2b house	4	4	8
3b house	4	3	7
Total	20	7	27

Policy DP27 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires all dwellings to meet the minimum nationally described space standards, other than in exceptional circumstances, where clear evidence will need to be provided to show that the internal form or special features prevent some of the requirements being met.

Policy DP28 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires all development to meet and maintain high standards of accessibility, so that all users can use them safely and easily. Of particular note:

'Developments of 5 or more dwellings will be expected to make provision for 20% of dwellings to meet Category 2 – accessible and adaptable dwellings under Building Regulations – Approved Document M Requirement M4(2), with the following exceptions:

- 1) Where new dwellings are created by a change of use;*
- 2) Where the scheme is for flatted residential buildings of fewer than 10 dwellings;*
- 3) Where specific factors such as site topography make such standards unachievable by practicable and/ or viable means;*

4) Where a scheme is being proposed which is specifically intended for the needs of particular individuals or groups, where a greater proportion may be appropriate.'

Policy DP39 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to improve the sustainability of development. A Sustainability and Energy Assessment will be required to accompany any application, demonstrating how the development would be efficient in its use of energy, water and drainage.

C. Design and visual impact on the character of the area

Policy DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan aims to ensure that all development is well designed and reflects the distinctive character of towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. Policy HurstH5 of the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that:

'House designs and the layouts and densities shall respond to the village character of the area and shall follow the Village Design Statement (May 2004).'

Policy HurstH6 of the Neighbourhood Plan states:

'New housing developments which meet the policies of this plan and meet the criteria below will be supported:

- a) the provision of a satisfactory access point or points to the site for motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians;*
- b) the preparation and submission of an up to date Transport Assessment and Travel Plan to include the consideration of the cumulative impact of traffic and the provision of any necessary off-site transport improvements;*
- c) the provision of a comprehensive package of highway and footpath improvements, for vehicular, pedestrian and cycling uses, serving the local area;*
- d) the retention and protection of significant landscape features within the site and along the site's boundaries;*
- e) an ecological survey to be carried out and appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures to be undertaken;*
- f) the provision of adequate surface water and foul water drainage capacity;*
- g) the provision of, or financial contributions towards, community facilities and the provision of public open space;*
- h) the provision of parkland areas, to be owned and managed by the local community.'*

The Council's Urban Designer, Anna Kramarczyk, has made the following comments on 27 May from your Minutes of our meeting, as set out below:

- AK led discussion with commentary, emphasising that she could see her previous commentary has been taken on board and was largely comfortable with the direction of travel for the scheme design. Minor commentary was discussed with following suggestions:
 - Request to look at site connectivity and perimeter blocks
 - Queries about onwards connection from ped/cycle link onto Belmont Lane, and how this then links south
 - Consideration to be given to pedestrian routes, particularly through open

space and ensuring nice routes with appropriate surfacing to ensure accessible for all.

- Desire to see further detail as part of landscaping scheme as to how any landscape area interacts with the ditch/stream that runs along northern boundary
- Preference to see private amenity space for the apartments. We would expect all apartments to have private outdoor space directly accessible from the living zones. Please explore recessed or partially recessed balconies
- Query over suitable locations for the apartment buildings and whether there may be a more suitable location within the site (more centrally – to work with topography). Furthermore, any apartment blocks organized around a main open space will benefit from the immediate access of outdoor space and more direct access to the play areas. Locating them right ‘at the heart’ of the development will add to the legibility of the scheme and it will help framing, activating and providing more passive surveillance to the main focal space.
- Thought to be given to potential landscaping and frontage of plots -with preference to see reflection with local character.
- Queried location of bungalows again, stressing importance that these are in accessible location to site amenity space and ensure topography is considered and doesn’t cause issue for future residents who may have mobility issues.
- Again, reiterated that the proposals have greatly improved.
- Following request for private amenity to apartments, SF queried the policy position for private amenity space for the apartments, with AK confirming no policy requirement, however AW did direct to design guide, with particular reference to DG46.
- SF queried if officers were comfortable with the suggested naturalistic play provision, rather than a more formal approach to LEAP. This principle was supported by AK/AW and it was confirmed by SF that application will be accompanied by imagery to show intention for space, with intention that detail would likely to be conditioned. AK made reference to ensuring longevity of materials used as part of any future detailed proposals.
- AK suggested that area of land to south of Site is being promoted, and queried whether there would be opportunity for liaison and coordination. However, SF queried this, noting that the area hadn’t been assessed in the recent MSDC site assessments. It was confirmed by AW that there was no formal promotion at present, SF therefore confirmed that it would not be reasonable to expect coordination with third party land given advanced nature of the application work.
- AK confirmed that she would like to see some form of lighting strategy to show coordination with landscape proposals, suggestion that this could be included within DAS.

D. Impact on the setting of heritage assets

Policy DP34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan requires development to protect listed buildings and their settings. Policy DP35 of the Mid Sussex District Plan and Policy HurstC4 of the Neighbourhood Plan require development to conserve or enhance the special character of Conservation Areas and their setting.

The Council's Conservation Officer, Emily Wade, has made the following comments:

The proposed development site is an area of open agricultural fields located to east of College Lane, just to the north of its junction with Wickham Hill.

The access to the site from College Lane is located opposite the historic farmstead of Wickham Farm, which includes the Grade II listed former farmhouse, a 17th century or earlier timber framed building. The farmstead also includes a historic barn, now a residential conversion (12 College Lane) and a small number of other former farm buildings, which would be likely to be regarded as either curtilage listed or as non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs)- more information would be required to comment further. The group is recorded in the West Sussex Historic Farmstead and Landscape Character Assessment as a historic farmstead of the Medieval period.

Based on the limited information in front of us Wickham Farmhouse is considered likely to possess architectural value based on its construction and craftsmanship, historical illustrative value as a good example of a Sussex farmhouse of its period, and aesthetic value based in part on the use of vernacular materials drawn from the local landscape. The other historic buildings within the farmstead will possess similar values as former farm buildings of their type and period.

As such, the surviving rural setting of the farmhouse will make a strong positive contribution to its special interest and the manner in which this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. The site forms a significant part of the close rural setting, which consists of the remaining fields to the eastern side of College Lane. If a historical relationship of function between the farmstead and the site was demonstrated (i.e. if it was shown that the fields were once part of the farmlands associated with the building) this would further strengthen that contribution.

Although intervisibility from the house and its immediate garden setting will be partly screened by the existing development along the eastern side of the southern end of the Lane, views remain of a large portion of the northeastern part of the site, especially in winter. These views would become much more open were the vegetation along the northern boundary of the site to be lost or become thinner- the potentially ephemeral nature of screening of this type is noted in the relevant Historic England guidance (see below). The site is also important to the character of the approach to the listed building and historic farmstead along College Lane, for example in kinetic views moving southwards along the Lane in which the fields to the east form a rural vista that contrasts sharply with the existing modern development to the west.

The Council has an adopted character appraisal for the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, which can be found on our website, here:

[Conservation Areas - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

This appraisal notes in relation to the setting of the Area that:

'Despite the spread of development from Hurstpierpoint to the southwest, Hurst Wickham remains largely surrounded by open fields. This open, rural setting is very important to the character of the area as a small hamlet. Countryside views between the properties lining College Lane and from their rear gardens help to place the settlement in its rural context, as does the

approach to the hamlet along College Lane with fields to one or both sides of the road. The open fields to the south of Hurst Wickham to the east of College Lane are particularly important in retaining a feeling of separation from Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.'

The site forms a significant portion of the surviving open fields located to the south of the Area.

The current pre-application proposal is for a residential development with associated access from College Lane, internal access roads, pedestrian and cycle paths and hard and soft landscaping. No detail is given at this stage, and the pre-application submission is not consistent as to the number of houses proposed- the covering letter says c.75, and the vision document 60. The illustrative masterplan mentions '*green infrastructure*' to either side of the entrance from the Lane, the '*retention of existing trees and hedgerows where feasible*', and places a SUDS along the northern boundary.

Firstly, I would note that in making these comments I am aware of the appeal decision on the site dating from 2014. However, in heritage terms the context has changed since that date in that the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area was extended in 2018 to include Hurst Wickham Barn, located a short distance to the north of the site. We also now have the adopted character appraisal for the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area of the same date, which I have quoted from above and below. Furthermore, relevant Historic England guidance GPA Note 3 '*The Setting of Heritage Assets*' was published in December 2017. In my opinion, this materially changes the circumstances of the proposal in terms of the nature and proximity affected heritage assets and the policy context. In my opinion, therefore, the Inspector's comments in relation to heritage given as part of that appeal decision can only be given limited weight.

In relation to Wickham Farmhouse, assessing the impact of the development in accordance with the staged approach set out in GPA Note 3, the proposal will in my opinion result in harm to its special interest and the manner in which this is appreciated through adverse impact on setting. The positive contribution which is made to this special interest by the site in its current rural character will be removed and reversed by the suburbanisation of the fields within the site- the development will adversely affect both the rural character of views from the house and its immediate setting and the character of the approach to it along College Lane. This harm will be exacerbated by the proximity of the entrance to the development to the farmhouse, notwithstanding the suggested 'softening' of this access. There will also be an adverse impact on the settings of the other historic farm buildings within the farmstead, including the barn, whether these are regarded as curtilage listed or as NDHAs.

In respect of Hurst Wickham Conservation Area, there is relevant commentary in the Council's adopted character appraisal:

'Development within the setting of the Conservation Area

The setting of the Conservation Area is very important to the manner in which its special interest as a rural hamlet close to, but separate from, the larger villages of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks is appreciated. Development within the setting of the Conservation Area, where this is acceptable, should be respectful of this, and in particular should preserve important views into and out of the Conservation Area, the character of the approaches to it, and the sense of separation from adjacent settlements.'

As noted above, the proposed development will have a marked impact on the currently agricultural character of the site, which will become suburbanised. Again, based on the approach

to assessment set out in GPA Note 3, as well as the adopted character appraisal, this will remove and reverse the positive contribution which the site makes through setting to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This includes not only impact on long views from within the Area looking southwards across the intervening field and along College Lane, but also the character of the approach to the Area along College Lane, as well as the sense of separation of Hurst Wickham from Hurstpierpoint. The inclusion of Hurst Wickham Barn in the Area since 2018 has moved the boundary closer to the site; the agricultural nature of this building, which is one of the earliest in the Area, is complemented by the surviving fields to the south, including the application site. This setting in turn enhances the Barn's positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which will therefore be further harmed by the proposal.

For these reasons I would consider the proposed development to be contrary to the requirements of District Plan Policies DP34 (Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets) which requires that development should protect listed buildings and their settings, and DP35 (Conservation Areas) which requires that development will protect the setting of a Conservation Area.

Without further detail of the proposal, it is not possible to accurately assess the level of harm arising to the affected heritage assets, but in terms of the NPPF I would place this as within the less than substantial spectrum, such that the balancing exercise set out in paragraph 215 will apply.

Any formal application should be informed and accompanied by an appropriately detailed Heritage Statement, which should be prepared according to the staged approach set out in the Historic England guidance on development within the setting of heritage assets mentioned above.

E. Highways matters

Policy DP21 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to ensure that developments are sustainably located and safely designed.

Separate pre-application advice should be sought from the Highway Authority at West Sussex County Council, in respect of the suitability of the access, visibility splays (which should be informed by a speed survey), impact on the local road network and parking and cycle provision. Any application should be accompanied by a Stage 1 Safety Audit and Designers' Response.

F. Flood Risk and Drainage

Policy DP41 of the Mid Sussex District Plan aims to ensure that developments are adequately drained and not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

As the site includes areas of surface water and inland watercourse flood risk, any planning application will need to be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment.

Please see the webpage below for further advice and ensure that your submission has taken account of the checklists in particular:

G. Impact on trees

Policy DP37 of the Mid Sussex District Plan supports the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourages new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.

The council's Tree Officer, Emma Rivett, has made the following comments:

I am aware that it is a pre-application at this stage, so limited information has been provided.

Should it go to full application, I need more information. I would need a Tree Constraints Plan, Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan. If trees are to be impacted by the proposal, I would also need an Arboricultural Method Statement, detailing methods to be implemented to minimise the impact on the trees.

Further, if important trees require removal to facilitate the proposal, then mitigation planting will be required. Landscaping details and plans should also be submitted, preferably favouring native, long-lived species.

H. Ecology

Policy DP38 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to ensure that developments protect and enhance biodiversity. Chapter 15 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. Paragraph 193 advises that applications should be refused if significant harm to biodiversity or loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats will be caused.

An Ecological Report will need to accompany any planning application and will be assessed by the council's Ecological consultant.

The site is located within a designated Great Crested Newt – Impact Risk Zone (Red) and there are a number of ponds in the vicinity. The West Sussex Newt Officer will be consulted as part of any application, to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and above policies and guidance.

Any application will need to comply with mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

Further advice on these matters can be viewed at:

[Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Biodiversity Net Gain - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

[Wildlife and Planning - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

I. Impact on Ashdown Forest

The proposal has the potential to increase the number of traffic movements across the Ashdown

Forest that may have an adverse impact on the amount of nitrogen dioxide pollution deposited on the lowland heaths that make up the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a site of European importance.

Proposed development planned as part of the Mid Sussex District Plan has been accompanied by a Habitats Regulation Assessment, part of which was informed by the Mid Sussex Transport Study. Where proposals have been included in the Transport Study, the council can undertake a Screening Assessment. However, where proposals have not been included, the council needs to satisfy itself on the potential traffic impacts as part of a Habitats Regulation Assessment in terms of screening and any further appropriate assessment.

Each site will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the time of determining any application and further information can be found on our website via the following link (scroll down towards the bottom):

[Protecting Ashdown Forest - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

J. Infrastructure contributions

Policy DP20 of the Mid Sussex District Plan seeks to ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure.

Any application would need to make provision for local and county-wide infrastructure contributions, as set out in the 'Position Statement 2: Infrastructure' document, which can be viewed at:

[Development Contributions - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

In addition, there are likely to be financial contributions relating to Health and Police resources if requested during their consultation process (primary care, acute care, mental health care and community health)

A legal agreement would be used to secure these contributions, as well as the provision of the affordable units.

K. Amenity

The Council's Environmental Protection Officer has advised that if an application comes forward, we would expect to see the usual consideration for contaminated land and an air quality emissions mitigation calculation.

[Air Quality - Mid Sussex District Council](#) (click on Guidance for Developers on Emissions Mitigation).

CONCLUSION

I understand that you will be submitting an application. Application forms (Form 5), guidance notes and detailed validation requirements can be downloaded from our website at:

[Apply for Planning Permission - Mid Sussex District Council](#)

Validation requirements may include:

- Site Location Plan
- Block/Site Plan
- Planning Statement, including affordable housing statement and Waste Infrastructure Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Air Quality Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain Statement & information
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Foul Sewage and Surface Water (drainage) Assessment
- Heritage and Archaeological Assessment
- Land Contamination Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Planning Obligation Instruction Form
- Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and Designers' Response
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Sustainability and Energy Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Travel Plan Statement
- Tree Reports (TPP, TCP, AIA, AMS)

The information contained in pre-planning advice may be subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Unless the information contained is legally exempt from disclosure, we cannot guarantee that we will not provide the whole or part of this advice to a third party making a request for information about the subject matter.

The views expressed in this email are at officer level only and do not prejudice the Council from making whatever decision it considers appropriate on any application subsequently submitted.

I hope these comments are of assistance.

Kind regards

Andy Watt, BSc (Hons), MTPL, MRTPI

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