

## Planning Policy Advice

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| Application Ref:                            | DM/25/2373  |
| Application Type:<br>(Pre-app/ application) | Outline Planning Application  |
| Address:                                    | 6 Highfields, Brighton Road, Warninglid, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 5SY                                      |
| Description:                                | Outline planning permission with all matters reserved for the construction of four detached dwellings with garages. |
| Date:                                       | 22 October 2025   |
| Policy Officer:                             | Natalie Sharp   |
| DM Officer:                                 | Katherine Williams  |

### Development Plan

The Development Plan comprises of the adopted 2018 Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, currently under review, and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (Site Allocations DPD) adopted June 2022. The site falls within the Ansty and Staplefield Neighbourhood Plan (ASNP) area which was 'made' in 2017.

Below are the Development Plan policies considered key to the consideration of the application proposal.

#### 2018 Mid Sussex District Plan (2014 – 2031)

##### *Principle of Development*

The site is outside of the built-up area boundary as shown on the Policies Maps, Policies DP6: Settlement Hierarchy, DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside and DP15: New Homes in the Countryside of the 2018 District Plan (the Plan) are therefore relevant.

Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy - Outside of the defined built-up area boundary proposals are supported where certain criteria are met.

- “1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings; and*
- 2. The site is contiguous with an existing built up area of the settlement; and*
- 3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy.”*

The application site is not allocated for housing within the Development Plan and, whilst it is for less than 10 dwellings, it is not contiguous to the built-up area boundary. The Policy also requires that development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including reference to the settlement hierarchy. The hierarchy stems from the Council's Settlement Sustainability Review which classifies the district's settlements, taking into account service provision and accessibility. The nearest settlement to the application site is Warninglid, a Category 4 settlement: a small village with limited services often only serving the settlement itself.

Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside seeks to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty. Development outside the built-up area boundaries will only be supported if there is special justification, such as those set out in Policy DP15.

Policy DP33: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople identifies the local need for permanent pitches and sets out criteria for the provision of new sites and extensions to existing sites, as well as identifying the safeguarding of existing sites. The application site falls within western section of the 'Highfields, near Warninglid' site identified within Policy DP33 as a safeguarded site for Gypsy and Traveller use.

Policy DP33 states that:

*“Planning permission will not be granted for an alternative use on a safeguarded site unless an alternative, replacement site has been identified and development to provide facilities of an equivalent or improved standard (including its location) whilst there remains a need for such sites as evidenced by the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment or best available evidence”.*

No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the site (or at least the area relevant to the application proposal) is no longer needed for Gypsy and Traveller use, or that a suitable alternative is available to replace the equivalent area that would be lost in the event the four dwellings were approved.

The Council's latest evidence (Mid Sussex Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2022)) identifies a need for a minimum 16 net permanent pitches between 2021 to 2038. Once commitments are taken into account, there is a residual need for three permanent pitches. It is therefore prudent to continue to safeguard these sites for Gypsy and Traveller use.

DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty – The application site is within the High Weald National Landscape (formerly known as AONB) and therefore protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for its outstanding natural beauty. The High Weald National Landscape, AONB Management Plan 2024 - 2029 is the strategy for looking after the High Weald AONB in order to achieve the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the High Weald AONB. It is a material planning consideration. The Management Plan can be used to guide environmental land management and assess the impact of development or other changes on the High Weald AONB. The High Weald Statement of Significance sets out what comprises the natural beauty of the High Weald.

#### Ansty and Staplefield Neighbourhood Plan ('made' February 2017)

The Ansty and Staplefield Neighbourhood Plan (ASNP) was made in February 2017. Since then, the 2018 District Plan has been adopted. If there is conflict between non-strategic policies in the District Plan and ASNP, the District Plan takes precedence.

The following Neighbourhood Plan policies are considered key to the application:

AS1: New Housing Development – This policy relates to development outside the Built-Up Area Boundary and sets out the circumstances within which development would be supported.

AS3: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - sets out criteria against which development proposals need to fulfil.