

Planning Policy Advice (Pre-app and Applications)

Application Ref:	DM/25/3067
Application Type: (Pre-app/ application)	Full Planning Application
Address:	Land West of Kings Business Centre, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common
Description:	Erection of 80 new residential dwellings (Use Class C3), including affordable housing units, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access (including new footpath links to the east and west of the site along Reeds Lane), landscaping and open space, parking, sustainable drainage and other related works.
Date:	12 December 2025
Policy Officer:	Kathryn Banks
DM Officer:	Stuart Malcom

Development Plan

The Development Plan comprises of the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018) which is currently under review, and the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) (2022). The site lies within the boundary of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan which was Made in March 2015.

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

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (2018)

DP6: Settlement Hierarchy supports development outside defined built up area boundaries where the site is contiguous with an existing built-up area of the settlement and the development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy. Policy DP6 classifies Sayers Common as a medium sized village providing essential services for the needs of their own residents and the immediate surrounding communities. The proposed development is contiguous with the built-up area of Sayers Common, to the east of the site.

DP22: Rights of Way and other Recreational Routes seeks to protect rights of way, cycle routes and recreational routes and encourage access to the countryside. The Design and Access Statement sets out that the proposal includes a footpath link to the village south of Kings Business Centre to the east of the site and a footpath to link on to Reeds Lane to the west of the site.

DP30: Housing Mix sets out that housing development will provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes that reflects current and future local housing needs including provision for older people and vulnerable groups and evidence of housing need will be based on the best available evidence. The latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment is the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2021 ([Strategic Housing Market Assessment - Final Report](#)). The Design and Access Statement sets out that the housing mix is to be provided

by 12 x 1-2 bedroom flats, 5 x 2 bedroom houses and 7 x 3 bedroom houses (affordable provision of 24 dwellings total (30%)) and 11 x 2 bedroom houses, 36 x 3 bedroom houses and 10 x 4 bedroom houses (open market provision of 56 dwellings total (70%)).

DP31: Affordable Housing seeks the provision of a minimum of 30% on-site affordable housing for all residential development providing 11 dwellings or more and a mix of tenure of affordable housing (75% social or affordable rented, 25% intermediate homes). The Design and Access Statement sets out that affordable housing will be provided at 30% of the 80 proposed units (total 24 units).

DP38: Biodiversity seeks to ensure that biodiversity will be protected and enhanced. There is no minimum requirements set out in this policy, however, the Environment Act 2021 now requires that new developments must provide a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity. The Biodiversity Net Gain report concludes that the proposed development will achieve the minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan

The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan was Made in March 2015. Since then, the Mid Sussex District Plan (2018) has been adopted. If there is a conflict between non-strategic policies in the District Plan and the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, the District Plan takes precedence.

Policy Housing HurstH1: Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common new housing development supports new housing developments where they enhance the existing settlement pattern of the village and can enhance the flood and drainage management in the village.

Policy Housing HurstH5: development principles requires house designs, layouts and densities to follow the Village Design Statement (2004).

Policy Housing HurstH6: housing sites infrastructure and environmental impact assessment supports new housing developments where they are supported by a full assessment of infrastructure needs and environmental impact to optimise the benefit to the community.

Policy Housing HurstH7: affordable homes seeks 30% affordable housing on housing developments of 4 or more dwellings.

Policy Housing HurstH8: small dwellings supports provision of small homes with ground floor accommodation designed for people with access and movement difficulties.

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.

The Council would look to use a shorter time to implement the permission. As a guide 2 years for a full permission and 1 for outline and submission of reserved matters.

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 maybe 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 has been submitted to the Council and has been included in the SHELAA as site #830. 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 proposed to be allocated within the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Submission Draft as site DPSC6: Land to the West of Kings Business Centre, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common.

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 in Sayers Common, a Category 3 settlement: a medium sized village providing essential services for the needs of their own residents and the immediate surrounding communities.

Part 3 of the site assessment considers sustainability and access to services. In terms of the availability of public transport, the assessment's conclusions identify that the access to public transport in this location is neutral; and that journey times to primary school, health services and retail provision are over 20 minutes' walk.

The application site, however, is one of a number of sites proposed to be allocated in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 Submission Draft in Sayers Common (DPSC3-7) as part of the Plan Strategy which seeks opportunities for extensions to improve the sustainability of existing settlements, by delivering services and facilities to support sustainable growth in the area.

Infrastructure

The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) (September 2024) outlines the types of infrastructure identified to support growth within the district, specifically growth to deliver the draft District Plan (2021 – 2039). The application site is associated within certain infrastructure provisions within Section 7 – Infrastructure Delivery Schedule, either as onsite provision or in the form of financial contributions. The IDP is a living document and will be updated intermittently. The Council's S106 Monitoring Officer should be engaged with any discussions on provision and securing financial contributions.

The proposal provides for 80 dwellings including affordable housing, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access (including new footpath links to the east and west of the site along Reeds Lane), landscaping and open space, parking, sustainable drainage and other related works.

The draft district plan sets out the infrastructure requirements for the site as:

- On site:
 - natural, semi natural and amenity green space
- Financial contributions:
 - sustainable transport,
 - improvements at Hassocks Station,
 - education,
 - library,
 - community buildings,
 - local community infrastructure
 - Emergency services
 - Health
 - Play area
 - Other outdoor provision
 - Outdoor sports
 - Parks and gardens
- Provision of:
 - Highway improvements
 - Sustainable transport measures
 - Sewerage network upgrades