

PLANNING STATEMENT

Incorporating Draft HoT and Affordable Housing Statement

**HYBRID PLANNING APPLICATION THAT SEEKS CONSENT FOR
SEPARATE AND SEVERABLE ELEMENTS COMPRISING:**

**DEMOLITION OF ALL EXISTING BUILDINGS BAR THE CHAPEL, TO
RETAINED FOR USE WITHIN USE CLASS F AND:**

**A) FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE NORTH WESTERN PART OF THE LAND AT LVS HASSOCKS SO
AS TO ACCOMMODATE A NEW SEN SCHOOL WITH ASSOCIATED
ACCESS FROM LONDON ROAD, CAR PARKING, LANDSCAPING AND
DRAINAGE WORKS.**

AND

**B) OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION (APPEARANCE,
LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT AND SCALE RESERVED) FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THE REST OF THE LAND AT LVS HASSOCKS SO
AS TO ACCOMMODATE UP TO 210 DWELLINGHOUSES (INCLUDING
AFFORDABLE HOUSING) WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, CAR
PARKING, LANDSCAPING, PLAY AREAS, INFORMAL OUTDOOR
SPACE AND DRAINAGE WORKS.**

**LAND AT LVS HASSOCKS, LONDON ROAD,
SAYERS COMMON, WEST SUSSEX**

January 2026

**APPLICATION SUBMITTED BY
JUDITH ASHTON ASSOCIATES**

FOR

**WATES DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED AND
THE LICENSED TRADE CHARITY**

Exec Summary

1	Introduction	Page 8
2	The Site and Surrounding Area	Page 10
3	The Sites Former Planning History	Page 15
4	The Proposed Development	Page 23
5	Planning Policy	Page 33
	a) National Government Guidance – The National Planning Policy Framework	
	b) The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031	
	c) The Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022)	
	d) Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (2015)	
	e) The Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2021-2039 (Dec 2023)	
	f) Relevant MSDC Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance	
	g) Other Material Considerations MSDC Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (April 2023)	
6	Planning Appraisal	Page 55
6.1	The Issues	Page 55
6.2	The Principle of Development	Page 56
	a) Policies DP4 and DP12 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2014-2031	
	b) The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan	
	c) The Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan Dev 23	
	d) Special Educational Needs	
	e) Affordable Housing Need	
	f) Land at LVS - A Sustainable Location for New Development	
	g) A summary of the Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits Generated by the Proposed Development	
	h) Deliverability	
	i) Conclusions on the issue of the Principle of Development	
6.3	The Nature of the Residential Accommodation	Page 72
	i) The Housing Mix and Nature of the Affordable Housing Provsion	
	ii) The Density of Development	
6.4	The Form, Layout and Design of Development	Page 73
6.5	Landscape and Amenity Space	Page 79
6.6	The Potential Landscape and Visual Effects of the Proposed Development on the Area	Page 80
6.7	The Effect of the Proposed Development on Trees and Hedgerows	Page 83

6.8	The Effects of the Proposed Development on the Areas of Ecological Interest/Protected Species	Page 85
6.9	The Impact of the Proposed Development on the Privacy and Amenity of Adjacent Residents	Page 90
6.10	The Effects of the Proposed Development in Transportation and Highway Terms	Page 92
6.11	Site Suitability for Residential Development in Terms of Flood Risk	Page 100
6.12	Foul Water Drainage	Page 101
6.13	The potential effect of the Proposed Development upon the Historic Environment	Page 102
6.14	Lighting	Page 113
6.15	Renewable Energy	Page 114
6.16	Minerals	Page 115
6.17	Air Quality	Page 116
6.18	Noise	Page 117
6.19	Agricultural Land	Page 118
6.20	Other Material Considerations	Page 119
	i) Contamination and Remediation	
	ii) Utilities and Services Appraisal	
6.21	Infrastructure Provision	Page 121
7.0	The Planning Balance	Page 124
8.0	Summary and Conclusions	Page 130

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Policy DPSC7 Assessment

Appendix 2 - Socio-Economic Benefits Infographic

Executive Summary

j) This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the planning application made by Wates Developments Limited and the Licensed Trade Charity (LTC) for the development of Land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, West Sussex (the 'Site').

ii) The Land at LVS Hassocks, is identified for mixed use development comprising both new housing and replacement Special Educational Needs school (SEN) in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023 pursuant to Policy DPSC7.

iii) The planning application is a hybrid application that seeks consent for separate and severable elements comprising:
Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:

a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and

b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works

iv) The proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with Policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan.

v) Whilst the Local Plan Inspector in her Stage 1 Post Hearings Findings indicated that she considered the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local to be unsound, having in her opinion failed the Duty to Cooperate; we note that MSDC have challenged these findings, and most recently, in light of the Minister of State's letter on 9 October to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate, written to the Local Plan Inspector asking that the debate on the Duty to Cooperate be reopened and a further hearing session scheduled; the Inspectorate have agreed to this request, and a new Inspector has now been appointed. As a result, the examination remains open.

vi) The submission of this application now helps to demonstrate the deliverability of the LVS Hassocks site which as one of the proposed allocations in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local was considered to be a preferred location for future growth by the Council; helps facilitate the delivery of a bespoke new SEN school on the site and bolster the council's five year housing land supply situation as set out in the Submission Draft Local Plan's trajectory, at a time when given recent changes to National Government Guidance the council's lack of a five year housing land supply under the Adopted Development Plan leaves the council vulnerable to speculative applications for development in areas that have not been judged to be suitable through the allocation process.

vii) The application site is a part previously developed site located immediately adjacent to the current urban area of Sayers Common.

viii) The existing school buildings, while fully functional today, were not originally designed as a school therefore cannot meet the long-term needs of a

growing and increasingly specialist provision, as such, in order to secure the best possible environment for future generations, a modern replacement is required. This application will provide this.

ix) 30% of the up to 210 dwellings proposed on the site (63 homes) will be set aside as affordable housing to help meet the affordable housing requirements of the District. In addition, the unit mix will encompass a range of house types (terraced, semi-detached, detached and maisonettes) and sizes (1 and 2 bed flats and 2 – 5 bed houses), to meet local demand (both market and affordable).

x) 40%¹ of the overall site (over 50% of the residential area) will be set aside as green infrastructure and includes different forms of public open space, including a Local Equipped Area of Play.

xi) It is acknowledged that the site is located outside of the current urban area of Sayers Common as identified in the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan (2018). Whilst policy DP12 of the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan indicates that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty, it does permit development in the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan. Thus, it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with Policy DP12. That said, policy DP12 is in effect 'out of date' as the settlement boundary was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District as set out in Policy DP4 of the Mid Sussex District Plan which was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012. The scale of the housing need as now identified by the new standard method and the NPPF 2024 is significantly higher than that advocated in the District Plan (1,358dpa as opposed to 876dpa). As such and as the NPPF has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012, the approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted District Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024, and the weight to be attributed to policies DP4 and DP12 is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A point acknowledged in the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) (Dec 2025); and exacerbated by the fact the Council have confirmed they do not have a five-year housing land supply.

xii) In the context of the above, the site is situated immediately adjacent to the urban area of Sayers Common, is in part previously developed, and is identified as a proposed allocation site in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023.

xiii) Given the above and as Sayers Common, a category 3 settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy, and the site is one of the most sustainable sites in that settlement, as it is neither within the South Downs National Park which constrains much of the district to the south, or the High Weald National Landscape which constrains much of the central portion of the district, it would in our opinion result

¹ The overall level of amenity space (5.93ha) is equivalent to circa 41.15% of the total site area (14.41ha) As however 3.11ha is set aside for the SEN school and spine road, the amenity space is equivalent to 51.63% of the residential area (14.41 – 3.11 = 11.3 (5.93/11.3 x 100 = 52.47%).

in the delivery of sustainable development that would, we believe, accord with Paragraph 11 of the NPPF. As a result, it has been resolved to progress an application in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan Review. In doing so we have been conscious of the number of applications that have been submitted in Sayers Common pursuant to the spatial strategy advocated in the Submission Draft Local Plan and the requirement within the Plan and associated Statement of Common Ground entered into by the site promoters to work collaboratively to ensure a cohesive, integrated and master planned development at Sayers Common, supported by the necessary infrastructure to deliver sustainable development as proposed in the Submission Draft Local Plan, and confirm we have been working with the other site promoters accordingly.

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

- a) Enabling the provision of a replacement fit for purpose SEN school within the site.
- b) The delivery of new homes on a part previously developed site, in an area where such homes are needed. Mid Sussex District Council does not have a five-year Housing Land Supply, and these homes will assist in meeting the shortfall.
- c) The provision of affordable housing. The proposed development will provide 30% affordable housing, which will help address the affordable housing issues in the area, which are dire.
- d) The provision of a community building (Use Class F1) to help address local needs.
- e) The delivery of land for open space and recreational facilities together with a Community Growing Area that will be available not only for the future residents of the development but also for the existing residents of Sayers Common.
- f) Additional employment provision during the construction period which will generate additional spending in the local area, thus assisting in the maintenance of the vitality and viability of local services.
- g) Contributions to local services and facilities, such as education and health facilities, through a S106 agreement.

xv) Furthermore:

- a) The scheme has been designed to minimise any detrimental impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
- b) The development will not have a detrimental impact upon highway safety.
- c) The development will improve public transport links between the site and the surrounding area and provide enhanced pedestrian and cycle links towards both Sayers Common and the surrounding area, including upgrades to the Public Rights of Way network.
- d) The development will create and contribute towards an enhanced highways network within Sayers Common.
- e) Adequate on-site parking would be provided to support the development.
- f) The development will not increase flood risk on site or to third party land. Indeed, overall, the surface water drainage proposal will reduce the surface water runoff from the site, providing betterment.
- g) The development will not have an unacceptable impact upon wildlife and ecology, rather it will provide for biodiversity net gains, with a 21.52% gain in Hedgerow Units within the site boundary, and a 10% net gain in Habitat Units through the creation of off site habitats.

- h) The development will not have an unacceptable impact upon existing landscape features.
 - i) The development will not have an unacceptable impact upon the archaeology of the area.
 - j) The proposed development would not result in a change in the 'setting' of the Grade II Listed Kingscot that would impact upon the overall understanding and experience, and thus heritage significance of Kingscot; which is the only designated heritage asset that has been identified to be sensitive to the proposals.
- xvi) In terms of adverse effects, it is recognised that there would be localised effects on the landscape character of the site. However, these would exist with the development of any greenfield site, and in this case the application site is not subject to any landscape designations, and the proposed development has been developed with stakeholders to ensure the development is respectful to local landscape and visual constraints. Furthermore, it also provides for a number of beneficial effects such as an increase in landscape assets, and an improved local network of ecological and recreational spaces. On this basis and as the Council accepts that not all its housing requirement can be accommodated on brownfield sites and have acknowledged that this site, is a potentially developable / deliverable site by virtue of its proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan under policy DPSC7, any localised landscape effects do not in our opinion weigh heavily against the grant of consent.
- xvii) In the same way, whilst the proposed development will result in the demolition of the Monastic Arc and the Secular Wing which have been classified by Mid Sussex District Council as non-designated heritage assets, the loss of these buildings needs to be considered in the context of the application as a whole, not merely the demolition but also the construction of the new building, and a balanced judgement made by the decision maker. We believe there are clear social and economic benefits arising from the development, including the provision of up to 210 houses, including 63 affordable homes and new SEN school, on a part previously developed site. There would also be public benefits arising during the construction phase of the project and from the operational phase, from additional spending in the local economy. There will also be environmental benefits as a result of the biodiversity net gains. Whilst identified as non-designated heritage assets, these buildings have been judged to be of low local value. As such we believe the benefits arising from the development outweigh the loss of these non-designated heritage assets of low level.
- xviii) Similarly, whilst the proposed development will result in changes to the setting of the existing chapel which has also been classified by Mid Sussex District Council as a non-designated heritage asset, the design response provides an informed and proportionate approach to an understanding of the historic development of the site, and the experience of the Chapel, such that the proposed development is considered to result in a moderate impact on the overall heritage significance of the Chapel which has been judged to be of moderate local value only. Furthermore, the loss of its contextual setting, needs to be considered alongside the informed and sensitive response proposed by the proposed parameter plans and in the context of the application as a whole, and a balanced judgement made by the decision maker. As above, there would be clear social and economic benefits from the development of up to 210 houses, including 63 affordable homes, the

conversion of the chapel to a community use, and new SEN school, on a part previously developed site. There would also be public benefits arising during the construction phase of the project and from the operational phase from additional spending in the local economy. There will also be environmental benefits as a result of the biodiversity net gains. We believe the benefits arising from the development outweigh the moderate impact on the overall heritage significance of this non-designated heritage asset.

- xix) The same being true of the fact that whilst there are localised areas of surface water flood risk originating from on-site runoff collecting within local depressions within the site, with the main area of surface water risk relating to a flow path along the southern boundary, the development has been designed to avoid this surface water flow path, whilst other minor areas of surface water ponding and minor flow paths will be managed via site levelling and the proposed drainage strategy; such that a sequential approach to development has been applied with the more vulnerable aspects of the development being located outside of the areas of flood risk.
- xx) Specifically, the limited harm identified does not outweigh the significant benefits that have been identified; and certainly, goes nowhere near the requirement to demonstrate significant and demonstrable harm as set out in the NPPF.
- xxi) As such Wates and LTC consider that Mid Sussex District Council should support this application for the land at LVS Hassocks, as it helps address the Council's five year Housing Land Supply deficit and the special educational needs of the area, whilst also reflecting the aims and objectives of the Submission Draft Local Plan and recently adopted Position Statement: 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development); and grant planning consent subject to appropriate conditions and S106 obligations.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement is submitted in support of a hybrid application that seeks consent for separate and severable elements comprising:
Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:
- a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and
 - b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works; on land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, West Sussex.
- 1.2 The site area is some 14.409ha² / 35.606 acres and is shown edged red on the site location plan (Drawing Number: SC-LP-01a).
- 1.3 This statement seeks to comment upon how this application accords with the aims and objectives of national government guidance as set out in the NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance Notes; and the aims and objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022), and the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015), as well as the aims and objectives of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2039 (December 2023)), and Position Statement 1: Delivering sustainable development in Mid Sussex (December 2025) and Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025).
- 1.4 Whilst this statement sets out a range of planning considerations which should be taken into account in determining these applications, it should be read in conjunction with:
- The Design and Access Statement for the residential parcels produced by OSP Architecture;
 - The Design and Access Statement for the new school produced by ECA Architecture and Planning;
 - The Landscape and Visual Appraisal including Landscape Strategy produced by SLR;
 - The Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan produced for the residential scheme by SLR in consultation with Aspect Ecology, Simon Jones Associates and RSK;
 - Detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan produced for the school scheme by SLR in consultation with Aspect Ecology, Simon Jones Associates and RSK;
 - The Arboricultural Implications Report produced by Simon Jones Associates;
 - The Ecological Appraisal, and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment produced by Aspect Ecology;
 - The Built Heritage Statement produced by Pegasus;
 - The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment produced by Tetra Tech Consulting Services Ltd (a RPS company);

² 14.41 rounded

- The Transport Assessment produced by iTransport and Designer Response documents for both the site access and off-site improvements;
- The Framework Residential Travel Plan produced by iTransport;
- The School Travel Plan produced by iTransport;
- The Flood Risk Assessment produced by RSK;
- Foul Drainage & Utilities Assessment produced by RSK;
- The Desk top Geo Technical Assessment produced by Geo-Environmental Services Limited
- Mineral Safeguarding Assessment produced by IC Planning Ltd;
- The Sustainability and Energy Statement – produced by Icini;
- The Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources Report produced by Reading Agriculture;
- The Lighting Impact Assessment produced by Nature Positive (an RSK company);
- The Noise Impact Assessment produced by RSK Acoustics;
- The Air Quality Assessment produced by RSK Air Quality;
- The Statement of Community Involvement produced by Cratus
- The Socio-Economic Benefits Infographic – produced by Icini; and
- The Sustainability Infographic – produced by Icini

1.5 Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) confirmed following an application for a screening opinion in November 2025 (DM/25/2765 refers) that whilst the proposals for the development of the LVS Hassocks, comprising demolition of existing buildings bar the chapel, and development of site so as to accommodate a new SEN School, and up to 210 houses with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space, and drainage works, comprised an infrastructure project falling within category 10b of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and exceeded the thresholds in column 2 of the table in the Schedule, it would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment by virtue of the factors such as its characteristics, location and characteristics of potential impacts. Accordingly, the council directed that the development was **not EIA development**, and that consequently no Environment Impact Assessment was required to be submitted with any planning application for the above development.

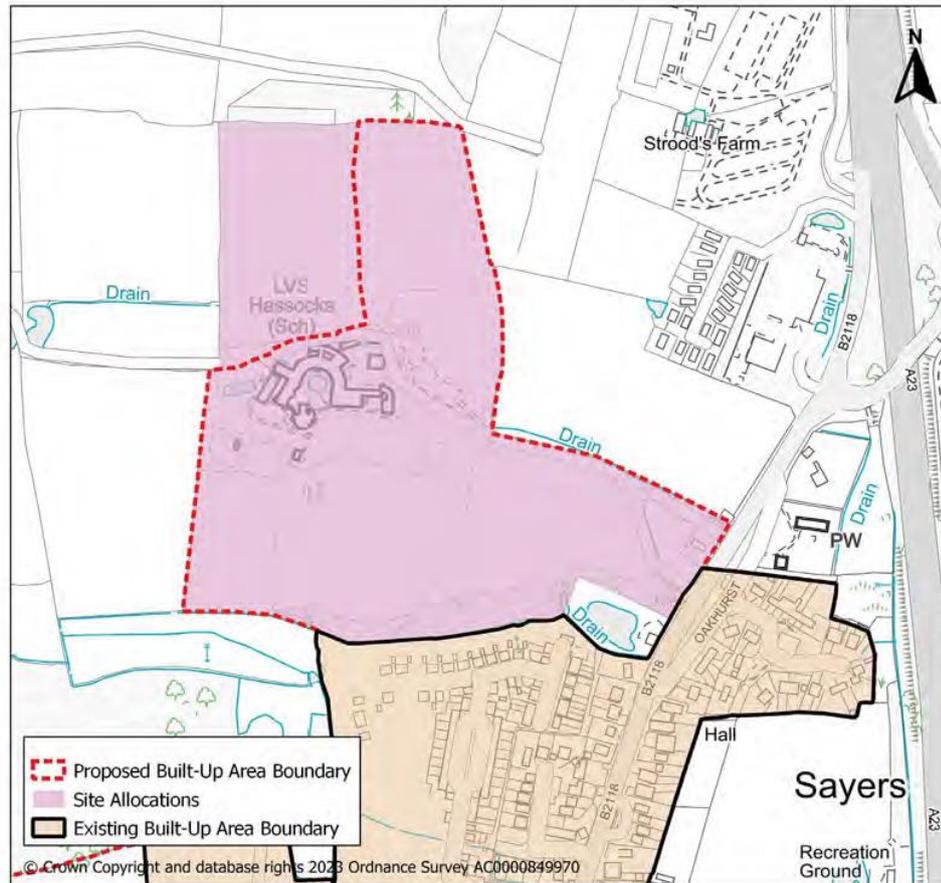
2.0 The Site and Surrounding Area

a) The Application Site

- 2.1 The application site consists of 7 parcels of land of varied shapes and sizes, that are bordered by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees. These parcels comprise a mix of permanent grassland used for grazing sheep to the north and managed parkland surrounding LVS Hassocks School to the south, as well as the school buildings themselves which include the 19th-century dwelling known as 'Kingsland' and ancillary building, including the gate houses, the chapel and former prior buildings, and 21st-century buildings constructed as part of the educational use of the site.



- 2.2 The LVS Hassocks school offers day placements for children aged 11 to 19 whose needs are diagnosed as being on the Autism spectrum and is registered with the Department for Education for 100 places.
- 2.3 Whilst the school previously had boarding pupils, changes in regulations and the care system, meant these facilities had to close, which has resulted in large areas of land and buildings being surplus to the schools' requirements.
- 2.4 The site is located immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of Sayers Common as defined on the Adopted District Plan proposals map. It extends to 14.409ha / 35.606 acres and whilst not allocated in the adopted Development Plan, was identified as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan (Dec 2023), as set out in the plan below.

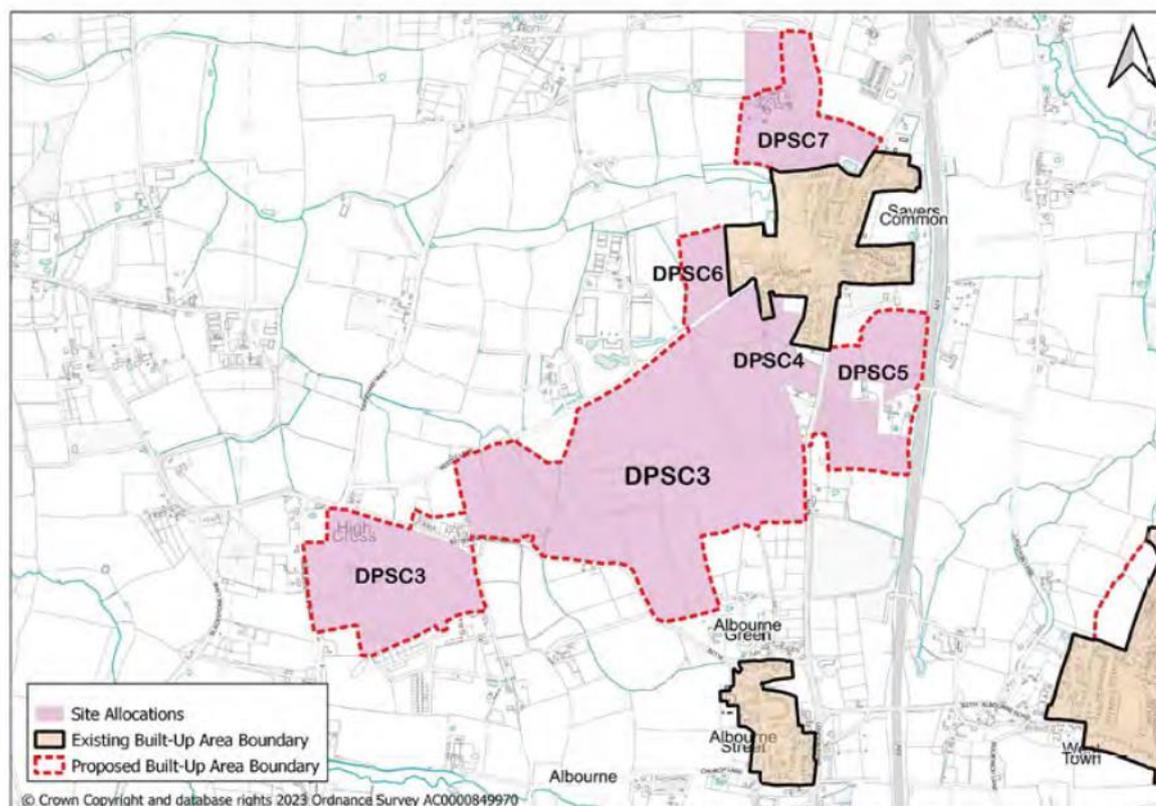


Plan 1 - Extract from MSDC Submission Local Plan Dec 2023

- 2.5 As indicated on the plan above, the site is located on the western side of the London Road (B2118), with residential dwellings located to the south and east. To the north-east of the site is Hickstead Park which comprises various commercial facilities and a static caravan park, whilst to the north are pastoral fields beyond which is Hickstead equestrian showground and to the west are pastoral fields beyond which is woodland/ Valley Farm Business Park.
- 2.6 The site benefits from two points of access with the B2118 London Road which provides direct vehicular connection to the primary and strategic road network. It also has a public right of way (9Hu) running through it on an east / west alignment, and a further footpath (Hu10) running along the northern boundary of the site, which enables the site to be well connected with established modes of sustainable travel, as well as providing connectivity for existing residents of the local community.
- 2.7 The site also includes a number of trees, none of which are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- 2.8 The highest point on the site is located on the northern boundary at 29.49m AOD. From here the site slopes gradually downwards to the core of the site surrounding the existing buildings which sit on a plateau of between 20 - 22m AOD. The land continues to fall to the south and east from this plateau to the lowest point on the Site at approximately 14m AOD in the south western corner.

b) The Surrounding Area

2.9 The site forms one of five distinct parcels being promoted for development in Sayers Common through the Submission Draft Local Plan, as shown in the plan below. A Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) was entered into between the promoters of these sites and MSDC in July 2024. This explained that whilst a comprehensive masterplan had been prepared jointly by the site promoters to show how the proposed allocations could be integrated and delivered holistically, it was nonetheless intended and agreed that separate planning applications would be submitted, in accordance with the timescales set out at paragraph 5.14 of the SoCG³, in due course to reflect the different land ownerships.



- 2.10 The LVS Hassocks site is the only part previously developed site of those identified in the Submission Draft Local Plan, contains the existing LVS Hassocks school buildings, and is the most northerly of the proposed sites, being physically separated from the other sites by the village.
- 2.11 Given the sites location on the northern edge of Sayers Common, the character of both the site and surrounding area is influenced by the settlement. In this respect the area to the south and east of the application site is predominantly residential in nature with properties comprising a

³ Para 5.9 of the SoCG states: 'Antler, Reside, Welbeck and Wates are preparing to commence pre-application discussions with MSDC in anticipation of submitting planning applications for their respective land interests in Autumn 2024 and it is agreed that this SoCG does not place any restriction on those sites coming forward independently of each other and/or DPSC3.'

Para 5.14 goes on to say: 'In the context of the above, it is noted that whilst Antler, anticipate completing their first units in 2025/26, Reside and Welbeck do not anticipate completing their first units until 2026/27, Wates do not anticipate completing their first units in 2027/28 and Berkeley Latimer do not anticipate completing their first units until 2028/29. The indicative delivery trajectory is set out in the table below.'

variety of different house types, ages, and styles, but predominantly 2 stories, with the occasional 2½ story property; whilst the areas to the north and west is predominantly rural in nature, albeit Hickstead show ground is not far beyond the northern boundary of the site. The accompanying Design and Access Statements provide a detailed assessment of character of the local area.

- 2.12 As set out in the Transport Assessment (TA), there is a good range of key facilities and services within a 2km reasonable walking distance of the site, with additional services within a 5km cycle distance, as shown in Table 6.1 of the TA – which is reproduced below

Purpose	Destination	Total Distance (m)	Walking Journey Time (mins)	Cycling Journey Time (mins)
Employment	Friday Medical Group – Brighton Campus	560	7	2
	King Business Centre	1,050	13	4
	AvTrade Global Headquarters	1,600	19	6
	Valley Farm Business Park	1,600	19	6
	Albourne Court Business Park	1,700	20	6
Education	Isabello's Pre-School	550	7	2
	Albourne C of E Primary School	2,300	27	9
Retail	Sayers Common Community Shop	420	5	2
	Little Waitrose	2,800	33	11
Leisure	Sayers Common Village Hall	420	5	2
	Oakhurst Play Area	580	7	2
	Berrylands Playing Fields	850	10	3
	Berrylands Farm Play Area	900	11	3
	All England Show Jumping Course	1,700	20	6
	Albourne Equestrian Centre	3,200	38	12

Key:

	Within a desirable walking (800m) / cycling (2km) distance
	Within a comfortable walking (1.6km) / cycling (5km) distance
	Within an acceptable (3.2km) walking distance / cycling (8km) distance

- 2.13 The site is not located within a Conservation Area or a National Landscape or Area of High Landscape Value. Nor does it contain any designated heritage assets, the nearest such asset being the grade II Kingscot located approximately 60m to the south of the site along the B2118. The High Weald National Landscape (previously Area of Outstanding natural Beauty (AONB)) is situated approximately 3.3km to the north of the site at its closest point, and the South Downs National Park (SDNP) is approximately 2.5km to the south-east of the site at its closest point.

3 The Site's Former Planning History

3.1 The site was acquired by the Priory of Our Lady of Good Counsel (formally of Haywards Heath) in the 1970s. In 1972 Planning Permission was granted for the construction of 'a new Monastery with centre for pastoral work' (LPA Ref. F/72/1183), with Reserved Matters for the design granted in 1975 (LPA Ref. HP/060/75). In the same year, change of use was granted for a new burial ground within the site (LPA Ref. HP/0828/75), with this located within the western part of the site. As part of the redevelopment of the Site, the eastern parkland reverted back to pasture.

3.2 The Priory complex was sold in the early 21st century, with the LVS Hassocks school opening in the former Priory buildings in 2009.

3.3 A review of the sites more recent planning history reveals a number of applications as set out below:

09/03302/FUL: Elevational changes consisting of the removal of doors and full height glazing at ground and first floor level and replacing with a low level infill panel and window above as shown on the drawings. Change of use from agricultural land to allow the following; Installation of below ground LPG storage tanks to provide heating and cooking. Construction of additional car park and temporary storage compound.
Approved

12/02199/FUL: Installation of a temporary classroom unit on the existing school site
Approved

12/04081/FUL Extension to existing school car park to provide 40 more car parking spaces.
Approved

13/01800/FUL: Erection of student shelter for use during outdoor play and teaching.
Approved

14/00213/FUL: Erection of a new teaching block, a social building and a garage/store including associated works and demolition.
Approved

14/01905/FUL: Demolition of the outbuilding and erection of a new timber framed structure, comprising of rooms for water tanks, a garage, storage and workshop space.
Approved

3.4 In addition the following relevant planning applications have been noted nearby

DM/20/2937: Kingsland Laines, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

3.5 In February 2021 planning application was granted to revise the approved permission (DM/19/1148) to provide for 13 additional dwellings including 30% affordable units with associated landscaping, road layout, access and parking on land at Kingsland Laines Reeds Lane Sayers Common.



DM/22/0640: Land To The North of Lyndon, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

3.6 In December 2022 a hybrid application was approved consisting of: a) Full application for 36 one, two, three and four bedroom dwellings (including 30% affordable housing), associated infrastructure, landscaping, pedestrian and vehicular access from Reeds Lane and the demolition of Lyndon; and b) Outline application for 2 three bedroom self/custom build plots on land to the North of Lyndon, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common.



DM/22/2416: Land South of Henfield Road, Albourne

- 3.7 In November 2022 outline planning permission was granted for the erection of up to 120 residential dwellings including 30% affordable housing, public open space and community facilities on land South of Henfield Road, Albourne.



DM/22/2485 Site of The Former Hazelden's Nursery, London Road, Albourne

- 3.8 In March 2023 a reserved matters application was approved for an extra care development of up to 84 units, comprising of apartments and cottages, all within Use Class C2, associated communal facilities, 2 workshops, provision of vehicular and cycle parking together with all necessary internal roads and footpaths, provision of open space and associated landscape works, and ancillary works and structures on the former Hazelden's Nursery pursuant to DM/19/1001.



DM/25/1434 Land Rear of Chesapeake, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

3.9 In June 2025 a detailed application was submitted for the demolition of an existing dwelling house, stables and barn buildings and the proposed development of 27 dwellings, with a new vehicular access, associated landscaping, parking, open space, and all other associated development works on land rear of Chesapeake, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common. Determination of this application is still pending. It forms area DPSC4 in the Submission Draft Local Plan.



DM/25/1934 and DM/25/2661 land at Coombe Farm, London Road, Sayers Common

- 3.10 In August 2025 an application for screening was submitted for a residential development of circa 200 homes with associated infrastructure on land at Coombe Farm. MSDC confirmed by letter dated 5th September 2025 that having taken into account the criteria in Schedule 3 of the 2017 [EIA] Regulations, the proposed development, *'while constituting a Schedule 2 development, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment by virtue of the factors such as its characteristics, location and characteristics of potential impacts'*; and that *'Accordingly the Local Authority directs that the development above is not EIA development. Consequently, no Environment Impact Assessment is required to be submitted with any planning application for the above development.'*



- 3.11 Subsequently an outline application has been submitted with all matters reserved except for access for a residential development of up to 210 dwellings with associated access; landscaping; amenity space; drainage and associated works on land at Coombe Farm. DM/25/2661 refers. It forms area DPSC5 in the Submission Draft Local Plan.

DM/25/2637 and DM/25/3067 Land West of Kings Business Centre, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

3.12 In October 2025 an application for screening was submitted for a residential development of 80 homes with associated infrastructure on land West of Kings Business Centre. DM/25/2637 refers. MSDC confirmed by letter dated 11th November 2025 that having taken into account the criteria in Schedule 3 of the 2017 EIA Regulations, the proposed development, *'while constituting a Schedule 2 development, would not be likely to have a significant effect on the environment by virtue of the factors such as its characteristics, location and characteristics of potential impacts'; and that 'Accordingly the Local Authority directs that the development above is not EIA development. Consequently, no Environment Impact Assessment is required to be submitted with any planning application for the above development.'* A detailed application has now been submitted for: *'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'*



3.13 Subsequently a detailed application has been submitted for a residential development of 80 homes with associated infrastructure on land West of Kings

Business Centre. DM/25/3067 refers. It forms area DPSC6 in the Submission Draft Local Plan.

- 3.14 It is noted that no applications have yet come forward in relation to draft site allocation DPSC3, but that Berkeley Latimer are currently undertaking their own consultation exercise in respect of this site, and an application is anticipated later in 2026.
- 3.15 It is also noted that the council have recently approved a number of schemes on the basis of their 5 year housing land supply and the tilted balance being engaged, including land north and south of Huntsland Crawley Down (DM/25/0014 and 0016), (MSDC SDLP ref DPA9), and land at Fox Hole Farm Bolney (DM/25/1129), (MSDC SDLP ref DPA14).

4 The Proposed Development

4.1 The application is a hybrid application that seeks consent for separate and severable elements comprising:

Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:

a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and

b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works; on land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, West Sussex.

The Accessing Arrangements

4.2 The Transport Assessment (TA) provides the details of the proposed access arrangements. In simple terms, access to the site will be re-provided through a priority-controlled junction slightly north of the existing junction onto the B2118. In turn, this connects with a new 5.5m spine road providing access to the residential element of the development in addition to replacing the use of Bridleway 9hU for access to LVS Hassocks, as shown on drawing ITS19984-GA-009F, below.

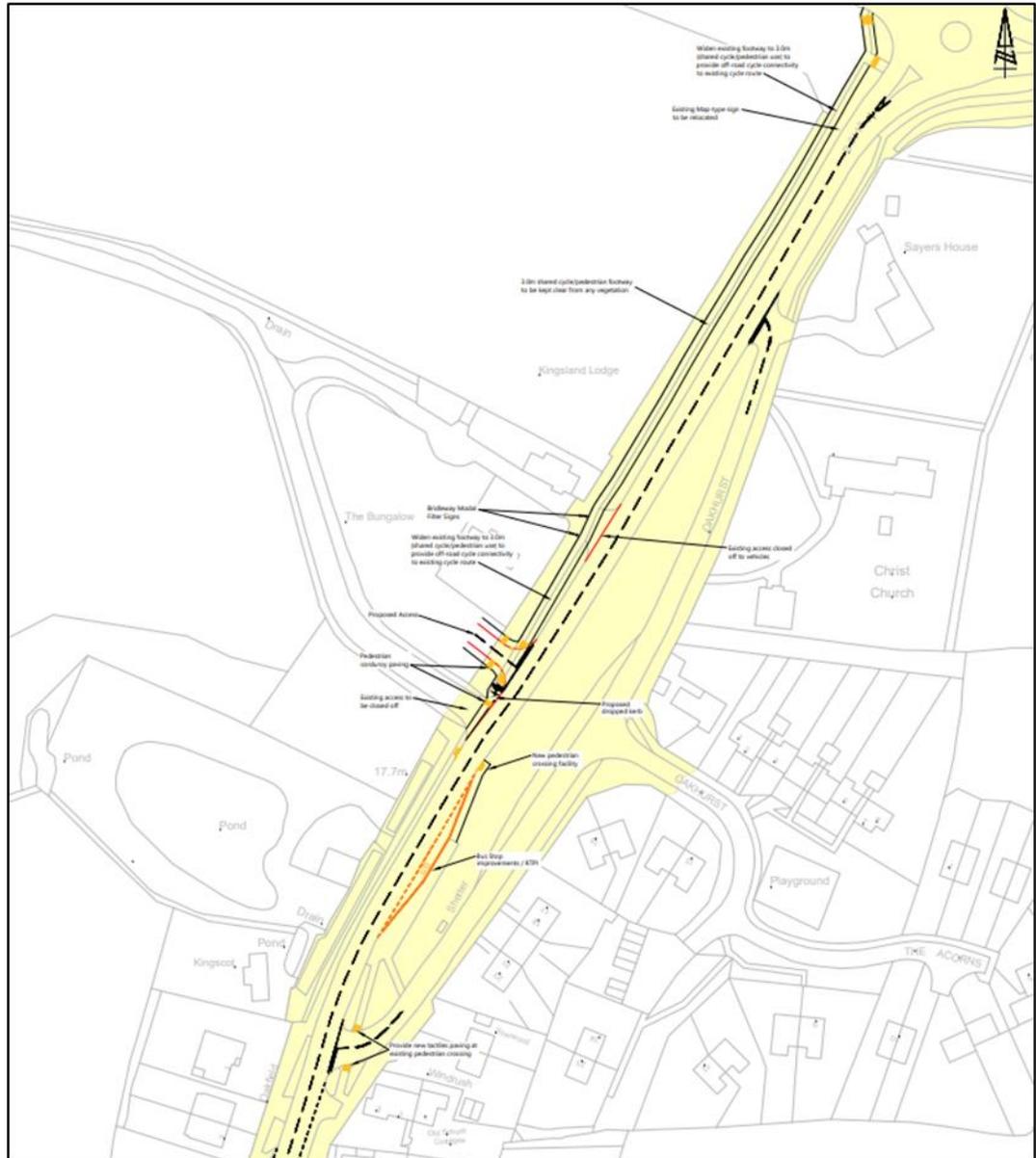


4.3 As set out in the TA the site access has the following geometric attributes:

- Visibility splays of 2.4m x 54m and 2.4m x 55.2m, consistent with observed 85th percentile speeds.
- 5.5m wide carriageway with 8m kerb radii on both sides of the access.

- 2.0m wide footways on both sides of the access road which will tie in with the existing footpath network
- A dropped kerb and tactile paving pedestrian crossing which will enable safe and continuous pedestrian movement across the site frontage.

4.4 In addition to the main site access junction, a range of off-site sustainable travel improvements have been identified in the immediate area as shown on Drawing ITS19984-GA-034A, below, to enhance the connectivity of the site:



4.5 These works provide for:

- Widening of the existing footway on the B2218 north of the site access to the B2218 / Mill Lane Roundabout to provide a 3.0m wide shared use pedestrian/ cycle route to connect with existing provision.

- An uncontrolled crossing on the B2218 and a new footway / cycleway on the western section of the B2218 to tie into an existing footway adjacent to the southbound bus stop.
- Tactile paving at the junction between B2218 / Oakhurst.
- Enhancement of the existing bus stop.

In addition, and as shown on the site masterplan, a footpath link within the site joining Bridleway 9Hu with footpath 10Hu will be provided.

The Masterplan

a) The residential element

- 4.6 As explained in DAS's and section 6 of this statement, the layout for the new school as well as the illustrative Masterplan for the residential development has been very much landscape and heritage led and seeks to respect the existing landscape features found on the site as well as the designated and non-designated heritage features that fall within and adjacent to the site. It also looks to create a softened transition between the proposed development and the wider landscape. A copy of the illustrative masterplan is set out below.



4.7 As set out in the DAS the illustrative masterplan encompasses the following features:

- Up to 210 new homes, 30% of which are proposed as affordable and 2% self build.
- The retention of the existing chapel and its conversion to a community facility.
- Vehicular accesses from the B2218 London Road.
- The removal of traffic from Bridleway 9Hu and landscaping enhancement along the route.
- The introduction of a route within the site linking PRoW 9Hu and 10Hu.
- One Local Equipped Areas of Play.
- Five Local Areas of Play offering doorstep play provision.
- An outdoor Gym.
- A communal food growing area and communal orchard.
- Native structure planting to reinforce the landscape boundaries to the north and west.
- The provision of 3.31ha of of natural and semi-natural space to ensure retention, protection, and enhancement of existing woodland, trees, shrubs and hedgerows; along with 1.99ha of amenity green space.
- Accommodation of sustainable drainage systems positively designed into the open spaces to support ecological and landscape quality and function; and
- Provision of amenity green space within the built-up area and to provide recreational facilities for all age groups.

4.10 In the context of the above the proposed development also provides for:

- A range of market house types and sizes with policy compliant parking provision and spacious private amenity areas compliant with the Local Plan.
- 30% affordable housing (up to 63 dwellings) comprising a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments and 2, 3 and 4 bedroom houses. These will be designed to be tenure blind and distributed throughout the development in clusters of 10 – 15 dwellings.
- Opportunity for significant biodiversity net gain on site - with reports indicating up to 21.52% net gains in Hedgerow Units within the site boundary, and a 10% net gain in Habitat Units through the creation of off site habitats.

4.11 In land use terms the proposed development provides:

JAA Table 4.1 – Land Use

Land Use	HA	Average Density	Dwellings	% of site area
Residential Development Area	5.09	41.26dph	210	35.29%
SEN School	2.63			18.27%
Community Building	0.03			0.22%
Access Roads	0.10			0.71%
Spine road	0.48			3.35%
Green infrastructure	6.07 ^[2]			42.16%
Total	14.41 ⁴			

^[2] 5.93ha + community growing area (0.07ha) and existing cemetery (0.08ha) = 6.08ha but rounding has taken it to 6.07

⁴ NB figures rounded so do not add up to 14.41

b) The Proposed School



- 4.12 The proposed development provides for the erection of a part 1 and part 2 storey detached SEN School, in the north-west corner of the site capable of accommodating up to 100 pupils in a series of classrooms, dining space and studios of various sizes, as well as the installation of a Multi-Use Games Area to the rear of the school, with fencing and astro-turf; the provision of up to 69 car parking spaces for staff and visitors as well as a drop-off/pick-up point; and the erection of a single storey training cafe building to replace the existing cafe ancillary to the school. The evolution of the design approach is set out in detail in the DAS prepared by ECA for the school. It explains how the layout of the school has been developed through multiple consultation meetings with the head teacher, estates manager, lead SEN staff and the applicant, as well as officers of MSDC, the aim being that the proposed layout provides a rationalised route through the school for students of multiple ages and learning abilities, with classrooms that overlook the private play spaces along the north and western spine of the building, and allow for easy access out to the countryside from each classroom.
- 4.13 The school DAS also explains how the proposed roof lights will maximise light, providing inspiring spaces and passive ventilation, and how window sizes are maximised in the ground floor classrooms to ensure well-ventilated and well-lit classrooms. It also explains how a bio-solar roof has been proposed on the single storey element to reduce rainwater runoff, improve biodiversity and soften the building within the landscape, with solar panels also providing renewable sources of energy.
- 4.14 The school DAS also explains how classrooms and staff office spaces are positioned on both the ground and first floor levels interspersed to maximise safeguarding and minimise congestion in corridors at peak times, whilst the kitchen, food tech and art classrooms have been positioned along the south and western spine of the building with easy access to the entrance turning heads for ease of deliveries/servicing.



- 4.15 The DAS also explains how the appearance of the building is highly influenced by its landscape setting and the need to maximise light and space inside the buildings whilst creating views out of the space. This contrasts, in part, to the need to create human scale welcoming spaces for those with special sensory needs. The building has a expressive and sculptural quality but is also very calm and simple facade with areas of glazing and tactile materials.
- 4.16 The materials themselves being concrete with tile-holes on the ground floor, arrowhead tiles at first floor, with a standing seam in a brown (pre-oxidised) orange/copper colour on the roof.



- 4.17 The DAS also advises that the following renewable and energy-efficient technologies will be implemented to significantly reduce the overall energy demand of the school:
- Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP)
 - Natural Ventilation with Heat Recovery (NVHR)
 - Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR)
 - Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels

Scale and Massing

- 4.18 The DAS and LVIA explain that based on the built and landscape context, the majority of the site can support up to two storey dwellings (up to circa 9m to the ridgeline, with two and a half storey dwellings (up to circa 11m to the ridgeline) possible in locations that would act as focal points such as along the main spine road leading to the chapel. The Proposed school being a part 1 and part 2 storey building.



The Housing Mix, Type and Tenure

- 4.19 As set out in section 6 of this statement, the proposed development provides for a range of house types and sizes including apartments, terraced, linked semi-detached, and detached dwellings. Whilst the final mix has yet to be determined, the affordable provision reflects that requested by the housing officer, and the private mix has sought to have regard to that proposed in policy DPH7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan and the variances allowed for therein, as set out below.

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

- 4.20 Parking provision for the residential scheme will be confirmed as part of future Reserved Matters Applications. These will adhere to WSCC's latest parking standards at the time of the Reserved Matters Application, unless otherwise agreed. The parking for the school reflects the needs generated by the existing facility and exceed WSCC's parking standards.

Open Space and Landscaping

- 4.21 Whilst a review of the form, layout and design of the development is set out in sections 6.3 and 6.4 of this statement and provided in greater detail in the relevant section of the DAS, the general principles adopted to the development are to maintain and strengthen the landscape features on the site and to ensure the proposed development integrates with rather than turns its back on the of the surrounding area. To this end, the proposed development includes a multilayered green infrastructure network, which delivers significant areas of amenity space⁵, as set out in the table below.

JAA Table 4.2 – Open Space Provision

Typology of Open Space	Quantity Standard (ha per 1000 pop) ⁶	Quantity Standard Required	Illustrative On Site Provision
Natural and Semi-Natural	0.0018 Ha/ 18sqm per person	0.91 Ha	3.31 Ha
Amenity Green Space (including green corridors)	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.40 Ha	1.99 Ha
Parks and Gardens/ Countryside Open Space	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.40 Ha	0.52 Ha
Play Facilities including:			

⁵ The overall level of amenity space (5.93ha) is equivalent to circa 41.15% of the total site area (14.41ha) As however 3.11ha is set aside for the SEN school and spine road, the amenity space is equivalent to 51.63% of the residential area (14.41 – 3.11 = 11.3 (5.93/11.3 x 100 = 52.47%)).

⁶ See table 3 of Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (Dec 2025)

NB Assumes an average occupancy rate of 2.4 per household so 210 dwellings = 480 residents

Typology of Open Space	Quantity Standard (ha per 1000 pop) ⁶	Quantity Standard Required	Illustrative On Site Provision
Fixed play areas with LAP and LEAP facilities	0.00025 Ha /2.5 sqm per person	0.13 Ha	0.11 Ha
Outdoor Sports	0.0016 Ha /16 sqm per person	0.81 Ha	Off Site Financial Contribution
Other outdoor provision	0.0003 ha/ 0.3sqm per person	0.15	Off Site Financial Contribution
Community Growing Area	-	-	0.07
TOTAL		2.8 Ha excl Community Growing Area	5.84 Ha/ 5.93 excl Community Growing Area

The Design Approach

- 4.22 The DAS for the residential scheme explains that to support the delivery of high quality environments at the RM design stages, a set of design principles to guide the design approach have been put forward. This starts with the parameter plans which look to address land use, density, building heights, access and movement, and landscape; and then goes on to consider the issue of green infrastructure, the road hierarchy, placemaking, the relationship with adjacent residents, external appearance, and architectural materials. The DAS then provides a number of illustrative views to demonstrate how the proposed development could look when viewed from various positions within the site. The DAS for the school is more detailed given the full nature of the application and provides various viewpoints and axonometric to demonstrate how the building will look when completed. As set out in both DAS's the overall approach is to deliver a development that represents a respectful and contextually appropriate extension to the existing settlement; is generous in its landscape and ecological improvements; will open up significant green space for public access, alongside dedicated community uses; and will provide much needed affordable and market housing locally for families, young and old alike, and a new SEN school in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development.

Public Consultation

- 4.23 The manner in which the proposed development has evolved is a result of extensive discussions with key stakeholders, including representative of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council, Twineham Parish Council, Albourne Parish Council, the local ward councillor and officers of MSDC; and following the public consultation that took place between 18th November and 9th December 2025; as well as the school drop in session that took place on the 1st December, when pupils, staff and parents were able to look and comment upon the scheme; is summarised in the Statement of Community Involvement. In broad terms, the liaison with MSDC, the local parish council's, and the school and the local community has resulted in:
- a. The relocation of the school from the north-eastern field to the north-western field, integration of the taxi queuing area, and separation between the parking and school frontage, enabling the relocation of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) and strengthening of the relationship

- between the building and landscaped areas, whilst reducing the impact on the bridleway.
- b. The reconfiguration of the internal arrangement of classrooms, staff rooms and therapy rooms.
 - c. The reconfiguration of the external arrangement of the school area, with the introduction of a footpath circuit within the secure area to the north linking various element of the school, and a forest school within landscape proposals.
 - d. The relocation of some of the proposed apartment buildings, with some now placed along the spine road to direct views towards the former chapel.
 - e. The retention of the former chapel as a community facility and the use of the structure as a focal point within the development.
 - f. The arrangement of the proposed development to the north of the former chapel, in particular the reference to the curved nature of the former Monastic Arc.
 - g. The retention of the circular pond to which the Monastic Arc (and in turn the new development) addresses and which forms a relic of the earlier 19th century landscape.
 - h. The retention of the treelined approach and the 'grove' at its northern end, both elements of 19th century design landscape.
 - i. The reconfiguration of the proposed development along the bridleway, with dwellings fronting on to the bridleway where practical to do so, to improve surveillance and safety.
 - j. The introduction of new footpath connections between the bridleway and existing PRoW footpath, with play areas, benches and further circulation routes proposed along or just off these routes, further enhancing this experience for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
 - k. Various teenage facilities such as a fitness trail, social seating, basketball hoop and swings would be incorporated into the site; catering for a range of interests which have been selected with both boys and girls in mind.
 - l. A larger play area has been proposed beside the existing chapel, along with social seating, the community growing space, orchards and ponds to deliver a central hub for the development which would provide opportunities for community events and activities and generally help to foster a sense of community.

5 Planning Policy

5.1 The planning policy framework relevant to the determination of this application comprises National Government Guidance (the NPPF 2024 and related Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), and the aims and objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022), the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015), and the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2021), as well as the aims and objectives of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2040 (December 2023). Each of these is examined below, together with the supplementary planning guidance issued by MSDC⁷.

a) National Government Guidance – The National Planning Policy Framework

5.2 In December 2024, the Government issued the latest revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁸. Para 231 makes it clear that the policies in this Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication'. The NPPF sets out the Governments planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

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

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

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

For decision-taking this means:

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

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁹, granting permission unless:

⁷ Whilst it is noted that the Development Plan for the application site comprises the following documents:

- The Saved policies from the Mid Sussex Local Plan (May 2004);
- The Saved policies from the Small Scale Housing Development Plan Document (April 2008);
- The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 (March 2018);
- The Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (June 2022);
- The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015); and
- The West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2021)

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

⁸ Minor referencing updates were published in February 2025

⁹ Footnote 8 makes it clear that: *'This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.'*

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance¹⁰ provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
- ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.*

- 5.5 As set out in this statement, it is accepted that MSDC cannot demonstrate a five year Housing Land Supply (HLS). Thus, if it is considered that the proposed development does not accord with the development plan, a point we return to in section 6, in accordance with NPPF footnote 8, NPPF paragraph 11(d) and the tilted balance is engaged, and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.
- 5.6 Section 5 of the NPPF is concerned with the supply of homes. Paragraph 61 makes it clear that:
‘To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet an area’s identified housing need, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.’
- 5.7 Paragraph 69 makes it clear that strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need can be met over the plan period. Paragraph 72 continues:
‘Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment’
- 5.8 Paragraphs 78, 79 and 80 go on to advise that:
‘78. Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years’ worth of housing, against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer moved forward from later in the plan period of:
- a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or*

¹⁰ Footnote 7 makes it clear that:

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

b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply¹¹; or

c) From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.'

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

a) where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;

b) where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph 78 of this framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan;

c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote 8 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

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

5.11 Deliverable is defined in the NPPF as:

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

a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).

b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.'

¹¹ Footnote 40 advises that this will be measured against the Housing Delivery Test, where this indicates that delivery was below 85% of the housing requirement.

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

- 5.16 Para 135 continues:
'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.'
- 5.17 Para 136 highlights the importance of trees and the contribution they make to the character and quality of urban areas. It states: *'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance'*
- 5.18 Para 139 continues:
'Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design¹², taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:
a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings'
- 5.19 Section 11 of the NPPF highlights the need to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- 5.20 In looking to achieve appropriate densities para 129 advises:
'Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:
a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
b) local market conditions and viability;

¹² Contained in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.

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

5.21 The NPPF also looks to promote sustainable transport. It makes it clear that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. To this end para 115 states:

‘In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking account of the vision for the site, the type of development and its location;*
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;.... and*
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach’*

5.22 In the context of the above paragraph 116 of the NPPF highlights the fact that:

‘Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.’

5.23 As far as parking is concerned Paragraph 112 of the NPPF advises:
‘If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

- a) the accessibility of the development;*
- b) the type, mix and use of development;*
- c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
- d) local car ownership levels; and*
- e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.’*

5.24 The NPPF also looks to meet the challenge of climate change and flooding (section 14), and to conserve and enhance the natural environment (section 15). In this respect we note that para 164 looks to new developments to be planned in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change, and helps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation, and design. We also note that whilst there are areas considered to be at a high risk from surface water flooding present in the north eastern and southern parts of the site, approximately 90% of the site is located in an area considered to be at a Very Low risk from surface water flooding, and that no built development is located in areas considered to be at risk of flooding from surface water, in accordance with the aims and objectives of para 175. We further note that the site is not located within a national landscape so is not subject to para 190 of the NPPF.

- 5.25 In terms of protecting and enhancing biodiversity we note that paragraph 193 of the NPPF makes it clear that:
'When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.'
- 5.26 The NPPF also looks to promote healthy and safe communities, with para 96 indicates that:
'Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:
a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other....;
b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion...; and
c) enable and support healthy live through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs.....'
- 5.27 Para 98 continues:
'To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:
a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities..... and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;....
e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services
- 5.28 Paragraph 39 makes it clear that Local Planning Authorities should *'approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level*

should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'

5.29 Para 103 also highlights the fact that: *'Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.'*

5.30 We further note that the NPPF looks to promote pre application engagement and front loading (Paragraph's 40 - 47 refer), that in assessing and determining planning applications Paragraph 48 requires *'applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise'*, and para 56 highlights the fact that planning conditions *'should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects'*. Para 58 goes on to advise that planning obligations must:

'only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- *necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
- *directly related to the development; and*
- *fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.'*

5.31 Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. Local Planning Authorities should approach development management decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to do so.

5.32 This statement will demonstrate how the requirements of the NPPF are to be met. In doing so we note the publication of the consultation draft NPPF on 16th December 2025. As this is however a consultation draft and as the approach advocated within it may well change through the consultation process we have not sought to comment further on it in this statement. That said we note that the direction of travel is clear on matters such as housing delivery, sustainable development and the tilted balance in the absence of a five year housing land supply. And that as set out in the Built Heritage Statement the revisions provided within the consultation draft in regard to heritage matters are not notable different to that set out within the current draft.

b) The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031

5.33 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 was adopted by MSDC in March 2018 and sets out the long-term spatial vision for the District and MSDCs approach to development up to 2031.

5.34 Policy DP4: Housing explains that during the period between 2014 and 2031, a minimum of 16,390 net additional dwellings will be provided in the plan area. It also advises that an average of 876 dpa will be delivered until 2023/24, with an average of 1,090 dpa thereafter (between 2024/25 and 2030/31), subject to there being no further harm to the integrity of European Habitat Sites in Ashdown Forest; and that the Council will commence a

review of the District Plan in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023.

- 5.35 In the context of the above Policy DP4 that having regard to completions and housing commitments (including sites with planning permission, strategic development at Kings Way, Burgess Hill (DP8) and Pease Pottage (DP10) and allocations in made Neighbourhood Plans), the District Plan looks to allocate two strategic developments one north and north-west of Burgess Hill (3,500 dwellings) and one on land north of Clayton Mills, Hassocks (500 Dwellings), the residual being addressed through the Windfall Allowance (450 dwellings) and future Neighbourhood Plans and the Site Allocations document (2,439 dwellings).
- 5.36 DP5: Planning to Meet Future Housing Need goes on to explain that the Council will continue to work under the 'Duty-to-Cooperate' with all other neighbouring local authorities on an ongoing basis to address the objectively assessed need for housing across the Housing Market Areas, prioritising the Northern West Sussex HMA as this is established as the primary HMA; and working jointly and proactively with the Gatwick Diamond and the West Sussex and Greater Brighton Strategic Planning Board to address unmet housing need in the sub region; so as to ensure that sites are considered and planned for in a timely manner and will be tested through a robust plan-making process, as part of a review of the Plan starting in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023.
- 5.37 Policy DP6 sets out the settlement hierarchy and in doing so indicates that: The growth of settlements will be supported where this meets identified local housing, employment, and community needs. Outside defined built-up area boundaries, the expansion of settlements will be supported where:
1. The site is allocated in the District Plan, a Neighbourhood Plan or subsequent Development Plan Document or where the proposed development is for fewer than 10 dwellings; and
 2. The site is contiguous with an existing built up area of the settlement; and
 3. The development is demonstrated to be sustainable, including by reference to the settlement hierarchy.
- 5.38 In addition, Policy DP6 indicates that the developer will need to satisfy the Council that:
- The proposal does not represent an underdevelopment of the site with regard to Policy DP26: Character and Design; or
 - A large site is not brought forward in phases that individually meet the threshold but cumulatively does not.
- 5.39 Sayers Common is identified as a Category 3 settlement i.e. medium sized villages providing essential services for the needs of their own residents and immediate surrounding communities. Whilst more limited, these can include key services such as primary schools, shops, recreation, and community facilities, often shared with neighbouring settlements.
- 5.40 The table on p37 of the District Plan indicates that the Minimum Residual housing requirement in Sayers Common from 2017 onwards (accounting for commitments and completions) is 23 dwellings.
- 5.41 DP12 looks to Protect and Enhance the Countryside, in doing so it advises that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character

and beauty; and that development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of BUAB on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

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

- 5.42 Policy DP12 also indicates that Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals; and that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.
- 5.43 Furthermore, policy DP12 advises that the Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.
- 5.44 Policy DP13 looks to prevent coalescence, whilst policy DP15 advises on those circumstances where new Homes will be appropriate in the Countryside. DP17 explains that in order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects.
- 5.45 Policy DP20 explains that the Council will expect developers to provide for, or contribute towards, the infrastructure and mitigation measures made necessary by their development proposals through:
- appropriate on-site mitigation and infrastructure provision;
 - the use of planning obligations (s106 legal agreements and unilateral undertakings);
 - the Community Infrastructure Levy, when it is in place.
- 5.46 Policy DP21 requires development to support the objectives of the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026, Transport Securing Infrastructure. Policy DP22 indicates that rights of way, Sustrans national cycle routes and recreational routes will be protected by ensuring development does not result in the loss of or does not adversely affect a right of way or other recreational routes unless a new route is provided which is of at least an equivalent value and which does not sever important routes; and at the same time looks to promote access to the countryside.
- 5.47 Policy DP24 indicates that development that provides new and/or enhanced leisure and cultural activities and facilities, including allotments, in accordance with the strategic aims of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy for Mid Sussex will be supported; and that the on-site provision of new leisure and cultural facilities, including the provision of play areas and equipment will be required for all new residential developments, where appropriate in scale and impact, including making land available for this purpose; and that

planning conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to secure such facilities.

- 5.48 Policy DP25 advises that the provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities will be supported.
- 5.49 Policy DP26 in addressing Character and Design indicates that:
All development and surrounding spaces, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings and replacement dwellings, will be well designed and reflect the distinctive character of the towns and villages while being sensitive to the countryside. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that development:
- is of high quality design and layout and includes appropriate landscaping and greenspace;
 - contributes positively to, and clearly defines, public and private realms and should normally be designed with active building frontages facing streets and public open spaces to animate and provide natural surveillance;
 - creates a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;
 - protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area;
 - protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;
 - does not cause significant harm to the amenities of existing nearby residents and future occupants of new dwellings, including taking account of the impact on privacy, outlook, daylight and sunlight, and noise, air and light pollution (see Policy DP29);
 - creates a pedestrian-friendly layout that is safe, well connected, legible and accessible;
 - incorporates well integrated parking that does not dominate the street environment, particularly where high density housing is proposed;
 - positively addresses sustainability considerations in the layout and the building design;
 - take the opportunity to encourage community interaction by creating layouts with a strong neighbourhood focus/centre; larger (300+ unit) schemes will also normally be expected to incorporate a mixed use element;
 - optimises the potential of the site to accommodate development.
- 5.50 Policy DP29 looks to address the issue of Noise, Air and Light Pollution; policy DP30, Housing Mix, and policy DP31, Affordable Housing (which is set at 30% for all residential developments providing 11 dwellings or more).
- 5.51 Policy DP34 requires developments to protect listed buildings and their settings, and to conserve other heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- 5.52 Policy DP37 explains that the District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting; and that ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected. It goes on to advise that:
'Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the

visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.

Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.

Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and*
- prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and*
- where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and*
- has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and*
- takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and*
- does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets.*

.....

Development should be positioned as far as possible from ancient woodland with a minimum buffer of 15 metres maintained between ancient woodland and the development boundary'

5.53 Policy DP38 advises that:

'Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

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

5.54 Policy DP38 also advises that designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks; valued soils will be protected and

enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution; and that geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites.

- 5.55 Policy DP40 requires all development proposals to improve the sustainability of development and where appropriate and feasible according to the type and size of development and location, incorporate the following measures:
- Minimise energy use through the design and layout of the scheme including through the use of natural lighting and ventilation;
 - Explore opportunities for efficient energy supply through the use of communal heating networks where viable and feasible;
 - Use renewable sources of energy;
 - Maximise efficient use of resources, including minimising waste and maximising recycling/ re-use of materials through both construction and occupation;
 - Limit water use to 110 litres/person/day in accordance with Policy DP42: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment;
 - Demonstrate how the risks associated with future climate change have been planned for as part of the layout of the scheme and design of its buildings to ensure its longer term resilience'
- 5.56 Policy DP41 indicates that development proposals will need to follow a sequential risk-based approach, to ensure development is safe across its lifetime and does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere; and that Sustainable Drainage Systems should be implemented in all new developments of 10 dwellings or more, unless demonstrated to be inappropriate, to avoid any increase in flood risk and protect surface and ground water quality; and that the arrangements for the long term maintenance and management of SuDS should also be identified. It also advises that SuDS should be sensitively designed and located to promote improved biodiversity, an enhanced landscape and good quality spaces that improve public amenities in the area, where possible; and that the preferred hierarchy of managing surface water drainage from any development is:
1. Infiltration Measures,
 2. Attenuation and discharge to watercourses; and if these cannot be met,
 3. Discharge to surface water only sewers.
- 5.57 Policy DP42 requires new development proposals to be in accordance with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, and accord with the findings of the Gatwick Sub Region Water Cycle Study with respect to water quality, water supply and wastewater treatment and consequently the optional requirement under Building Regulations – Part G applies to all new residential development in the district; such that development must meet the following water consumption standards:
- Residential units should meet a water consumption standard of 110 litres per person per day (including external water use);
 - Non-residential buildings should meet the equivalent of a 'Good' standard, as a minimum, with regard to the BREEAM water consumption targets for the development type.

- 5.58 As set out in section 6 of this statement, we believe the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 to be out of date as the housing requirement was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District across the period 2014 – 2031 as defined in policy DP4 of the Plan which was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016. This reflected the approach promoted in the NPPF 2012, which has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012 and is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024. As a result, the weight to be attributed to those policies of the Adopted Development Plan that relate to the scale and location of housing is in our opinion limited¹³. That said this statement will demonstrate how the requirements of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 have been met – where relevant.

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

- 5.59 The site allocations DPD looks to allocate employment and housing sites pursuant to the requirements of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018. Seven employment sites delivering 17.45ha of employment land and twenty two housing sites delivering some 1,704 homes are allocated in the Site Allocations DPD. One of the employment sites (SA5) relates to land in Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common parish, being the expansion of Bolney Grange Business Park; and one of the housing sites (SA 30) relates to Land to the north of Lyndon, Reeds Lane, Sayers Common, allocating the site for up to 35 dwellings.
- 5.60 Policy SA10 of the Site Allocations DPD indicates that with completions to date, Total Housing Commitments (including sites with planning permission and allocations in made Neighbourhood Plans), windfalls and the proposed allocations there will be an over-supply within the District Plan period 2014 – 2031 of some 907 dwellings, circa 5% of the minimum requirement.
- 5.61 The Site Allocations DPD also includes additional policies covering the following areas:
- SA34: Existing Employment Sites
 - SA35: Safeguarding of Land for Strategic Highway Improvements
 - SA36: Wivelsfield Railway Station
 - SA37: Burgess Hill/ Haywards Heath Cycle Network

¹³ Whilst we note that para 232 of the NPPF in commenting upon the implementation of the NPPF makes it clear that existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the Framework and that *'Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)'*. It also makes it clear that *'Where a local planning authority can demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) and where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing is more than 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years, policies should not be regarded as out-of-date on the basis that the most up to date local housing need figure (calculated using the standard method set out in planning practice guidance) is greater than the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, for a period of five years from the date of the plan's adoption'* the converse is in our opinion true where a LPA, such as MSDC, can not demonstrate a 5 year HLS and the HDT test results indicate that the delivery of housing is less than 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years.

- SA38: Air Quality
- SA39: Specialist Accommodation for Older People and Care Homes

- 5.62 We note that Kings Business Centre Reeds Lane Sayers Common, together with the Valley Farm Business Park Reeds Lane, Avtrade Global Reeds Lane, and Friday Ad London Road Sayers Common are all identified as existing employment sites pursuant to policy SA34; that policy SA35 references A23 junction upgrades at Hickstead; and that policy SA38 indicates that development should minimise any air quality impacts, including cumulative impacts from committed developments, both during the construction process and lifetime of the completed development, either through a redesign of the development proposal or where this is not possible or sufficient, through appropriate mitigation.
- 5.63 This statement looks to address the requirements of the Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD were relevant, having regard to our position on the weight to be attributed to it given the fact it is predicted on Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which we believe to be out of date.

d) The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.64 The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (HPP & SCNP) was 'made' in March 2015. It covers the period 2014 to 2031 and sets out a clear vision for the parish:
'We want to keep the village-feel of our community, and keep it a thriving and attractive Parish, a desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well being of our area and the quality of life for all, now and in the future'
- 5.65 This vision is supported by 5 'Strategic Objectives', which relate to keeping the village-feel and sense of place, protecting and enhancing the environment, promoting economic vitality, ensuring cohesive and safe communities, and supporting healthy lifestyles. To this end the Plan sets out 21 policies and 12 aims which it states will, together with the NPPF and the Local Plan, ensure that new development in the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Plan Area will be sustainable and in accordance with the vision. These policies include policies pertaining to the countryside, landscape, and conservation; amenities; housing; economy and employment; and Transport.
- 5.66 Having reviewed these policies and having regard to our comments in section 6 below about the weight to be attributed to the neighbourhood plan given its age and the basis upon which it was made, the following are considered relevant to the determination of this application.
- Policy Countryside Hurst C1: Conserving and enhancing character.
 - Policy Countryside Hurst C2: South Downs National Park.
 - Policy Housing Hurst H1: Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common new housing development
 - Policy Housing Hurst H3: Sayers Common housing sites
 - Policy Housing Hurst H5: Development Principles
 - Policy Housing Hurst H6: Housing Sites Infrastructure and Environment
 - Policy Housing Hurst H7: Affordable Homes
 - Policy Housing Hurst H8: Small Dwellings
 - Policy Employment Hurst E2: Whiteoaks Fram and Valley Farm

5.67 Of the proposed aims, Employment Aim 2 (Superfast Broadband), Transports Aim 1 (Safety) Transports Aim 7 (Off Street Parking) and Transports Aim 8 (Public Transport) are considered relevant to the determination of this application.

5.68 This statement addresses policies H1, H3, H5, H6, H7 and H8 and Employment Aim 2 where relevant, having regard to our position on the weight to be attributed to it given the fact it is predicated on Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which we believe to be out of date; whilst the Landscape and Visual Appraisal addresses policies C1 and C2, as well as H6; and the Transport Assessment addresses Policy H6 as well as Transports Aim 1, 7 and 8. Policy H6 is also addressed in the Design and Access Statement, the Ecology Statement, the flood risk assessment and the drainage strategy.

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

5.76 The Mid Sussex District Council is currently in the process of reviewing and updating the District Plan. The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 was submitted for independent examination on the 8th July 2024, and the first stage of the examination took place between 22nd and 31st October 2024.

5.77 Whilst the Local Plan Inspector in her Stage 1 Post Hearings Findings indicated that she considered the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local to be unsound, having in her opinion failed the Duty to Cooperate; we note that MSDC have challenged these findings, and most recently, in light of the Minister of State's letter on 9 October to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate, written to the Local Plan Inspector asking that the debate on the Duty to Cooperate be reopened and a further hearing session scheduled; the Inspectorate have agreed to this request, and a new Inspector has now been appointed and as a result the examination remains open.

5.78 The plan's vision remains the same as that of the adopted plan i.e. to create *“A thriving, attractive and resilient District, which is a highly sustainable and desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our District and the quality of life for all, now and in the future.”*

5.79 This the plan looks to do through its three priority themes of protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment; protecting economic vitality; and ensuring social cohesion, safe and healthy communities. These three themes are supported by 15 strategic objectives which help guide the strategy and policies within the Plan. The spatial strategy thus looks to protect the natural landscape, make effective use of land, promote the growth of existing sustainable settlements where it continues to be sustainable to do so, and to identify opportunities for the extension of existing settlements to improve their sustainability.

5.80 In the context of the above, having identified the Local Housing Need (LHN), and identified completions to date, proposed windfalls and the current sources of supply, (existing allocations and permission), the submission draft plan indicates at policy DPH1 that there is a need to

allocate sites to accommodate 6,687¹⁴ dwellings if the plan is to meet its LHN in full and have an oversupply to provide for resilience/ address the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities.

- 5.81 Given the local housing need, the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy, the plan, having regard to the findings of the Urban Capacity Study, Housing Land Availability Assessment, Settlement Sustainability Review Study, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Strategic Transport Study, the Site Selection Process, and Sustainability Appraisal looks to allocate 3 sustainable communities (on land west of Burgess Hill, at Crabbet Park and at Sayers Common); that at Sayers Common encompassing 5 sites, which includes the land at LVS Hassocks (Policy DPSC7) to meet its LHN¹⁵.
- 5.82 Policy DPSC7 indicates that the land at LVS Hassocks will provide for 200 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:
- Informal outdoor space
 - Relocation of the SEND School
- 5.82 It also requires the developers of the site to make financial contributions towards the provision of:
- Sustainable Transport
 - Improvements at Hassocks Station
 - Education
 - Library
 - Community buildings
 - Local Community Infrastructure
 - Emergency Services
 - Health
 - Play area
 - Other outdoor provision
 - Outdoor sports
- 5.83 And to make provision for the following off site:
- Sustainable transport measures
 - Highway works
 - Reprovision of SEND School
 - Sewerage network upgrades
- 5.83 In addition, policy DPSC7 also contains the following policy requirements:
1. *Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other housing allocations in the Plan within Sayers Common to deliver high quality placemaking which supports the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with direct enhanced active/ sustainable travel connections, and includes enabling the viability of new public transport services.*
 2. *Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the development and integrate and enhance the existing PRow which crosses the site.*
 3. *Provide any necessary upgrades to the existing access onto B2118.*
 4. *Redevelopment proposals shall provide evidence that demonstrates how a replacement SEND school will be provided either on-site or within the district, to the satisfaction of the Council and relevant key stakeholders.*

¹⁴ The sustainable communities (DPSC1 – 7) and other housing sites (DPA1-17) between then are according to policy DPH1 due to deliver 5,243 and 1,444 dwellings respectively.

¹⁵ Policy DPH1 refers.

5. *Occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure, in consultation with the service provider.*
6. *Follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk.*
7. *Investigate, assess and address any land contamination issues arising from former uses of the site or from uses, or former uses, of land in proximity to the site.*
8. *Address impacts associated with the brick clay (Weald) Minerals Safeguarding Area.*
9. *Meets the requirements of other relevant development plan policies*

- 5.85 This statement along with the other statements submitted in support of this application look to demonstrate how policy DPSC7 is addressed.
- 5.86 In addition to the above we also note that policy DPS1 looks to address the matter of climate change through a series of proposals looking to reduce carbon emissions, maximise carbon sequestration and promote climate change adaptation and mitigation. Policy DPS2 looks to promote sustainable design and construction via proposals to promote carbon zero development, adopting the energy hierarchy when addressing energy use, addressing embodied carbon and looking at measures to prevent overheating, address water resources and water efficiency and minimising waste. And policies DPS4 and DPS6 looks to address the issue of flood risk and sustainable drainage, and support health and wellbeing respectively. The Sustainability and Energy Statement, and FRA and Drainage Statement look to address these policies.
- 5.87 Likewise, we note that Policy DPN1 looks to protect Biodiversity, and Geodiversity and promote Nature Recovery, whilst policy DPN2 addresses the issue of Biodiversity Net Gain. That policy DPN3 looks to protect existing and support the provision of Green and Blue Infrastructure, whilst policy DPN4 addresses the protection of Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows, what is appropriate within buffer zones and the council's requirements when assessing proposals for new tree, woodland and hedgerow planting. Policy DPN6 comments upon Pollution prevention, policy DPN7 on how to address Noise Impacts and policy DPN8: on Light Impacts and Dark Skies. Policies DPN9 and DPN10, addressing Air Quality and Land Stability and Contaminated Land respectively. The Ecological Appraisal and associated BNG report, together with the AIR, LVA and Geotech report look to address these policies.
- 5.88 Policies DPC2 and DPC6 address the issue of Coalescence, and development within the 7KM zone of the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC. Policy DPB1 goes on to address the issue of the character and design of new development. In doing so it highlights the need to understand the context, how to address the layout, streets and spaces, how to establish the structure, high quality building design, residential amenity, and 20 - minute neighbourhoods. The LVA and DAS look to address these policies.
- 5.89 Policies DPT1, DPT 2, DPT 3 and DPT 4 look to address the issue of Placemaking and Connectivity, the protection and enhancement of rights of way and other recreational routes, the promotion of active and sustainable travel, and parking and electric vehicle Charging Infrastructure respectively and are addressed in the DAS and TA.

- 5.90 As set out above, policy DPH1 sets the minimum housing need, policy whilst DPH4 establishes the Council's approach to older persons housing and specialist accommodation. DPH6 goes on to establish the need for all sites of 100 (+) dwellings to make provision for self and custom build housing, and policy DPH7 explains the Council's approach to housing mix for market and affordable dwellings. Policy DPH8 goes on to explain that all residential and mixed use sites site will be required to provide 30% affordable housing, that these should be in clusters of no more than 10 units, the tenure split, the minimum floor area to be provided and 4% should be M4(3) compliant. Whilst not relevant to this application as it is in outline only, we also note that policy DPH11 addresses dwelling space standards and policy DPH12 Accessibility requirements. This statement, together with the DAS look to address these policies.
- 5.91 Finally, we note that chapter 17 of the Submission Local Plan addresses infrastructure, with policy DPI1 commenting on infrastructure provision, policy DPI2 on planning obligations, policy DPI4 on communications infrastructure, policy DPI5 on open space, sport and recreational facilities, policy DPI6 on community and cultural facilities and local services, policy DPI7 on water and wastewater infrastructure and policy DPI8 on viability. This statement, together with the LVA and FRA/ DS look to address these policies.
- 5.92 Whilst we accept that the weight to be attributed to the submission local plan is limited given the current status of the examination, this statement will demonstrate how the policy approach promoted in Submission Local Plan has been met – where relevant.

f) Relevant MSDC Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) & guidance

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

g) Other Material Considerations

MSDC Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement (April 2023)

- 5.95 The Council's Housing Land Supply statement for the position as at 1st April 2023, as updated October 2023 suggests, on the Council's own evidence that at the time they had 5.04 yrs supply (a surplus of just 47 dwellings).

- 5.96 The updated statement of common ground on housing land supply signed by the Council on the 19th December 2024 for the Scamps Hill appeal¹⁶ acknowledges that as of 1st April 2024 the Council only had 3.38 yrs worth of supply, a deficit of 2,304 dwellings against the 5 year requirement. They also acknowledge that the housing land supply deficit is significant and that the tilted balance contained in para 11 of the NPPF was thus engaged.
- 5.97 This statement comments upon the implications of the five year housing land supply situation in section 6 below.

MSDC - Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

- 5.98 In December 2025 MSDC adopted 'Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex' as a non-statutory document. Its purpose is to provide developers and other stakeholders guidance on how the Council will consider speculative planning applications in the light of their being unable to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply¹⁷. Whilst it is noted that the Position Statement does not replace the policies of the adopted Development Plan Documents, and that nor is it a Development Plan Document carrying the same legal weight; it has been approved by the Council and forms a material consideration in the determination of planning applications which are not subject to allocations within the adopted development plan. To this end it confirms that *'The Council's overarching approach for delivering sustainable development is:*
- *To continue to support sites that have been allocated for housing (within the adopted District Plan, Site Allocations DPD, saved policies from the Local Plan 2004 and Small Scale Housing DPD, and Neighbourhood Plans).*
 - *To support development on **sites identified for allocation in the Submission Draft District Plan** (the 'Councils Preferred Sites' – see section 5) that:*
 - o deliver the site-specific principles set out in Appendix C; and*
 - o the infrastructure requirements set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and*
 - o are in general conformity with the Development Principles set out in Section 6 of this Position Statement'* My emphasis
- 5.99 The Position Statement goes on to advise that:
*'The Submission Draft District Plan proposed sufficient housing sites to meet the housing need for the district until 2039. The Council considers it has a robust site selection process which has led to these sites being chosen and they have been tested through Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Viability and Transport modelling.
The sites have been subject to consultation with infrastructure providers, town and parish Councils and local communities. The consultation feedback has shaped the policy and infrastructure requirements to be delivered alongside new homes. Many of the site-specific policy requirements were the subject of discussion and agreement with site promoters/developers during the preparation of the Plan. The Council*

¹⁶ Appeal ref APP/D3830/W/24/3350075, MSDC ref DM/24/0446 – land off Scamps Hill Lindfield

¹⁷ Para 2.11 of Position Statement 1 says: *'As the Council can no longer demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, NPPF paragraph 11d, footnote 8 indicates that policies that affect the supply of housing may be considered out of date. This reduces the weight that may be given to such policies and engages the 'tilted balance' in decision making. Appendix A sets out the weight that the Council applies to its adopted policies.'*

recognises that there remain objections to these sites and that they haven't been tested through independent examination. However, when making its decision to approve the Submission Draft District Plan for public Examination, the Council was satisfied that the proposed site allocations represented the most sustainable pattern of development for the district. Therefore, the Council continues to support the delivery of the housing sites and the sustainable communities identified for development in the Submission Draft District Plan and continues to work with site promoters/developers to bring them forward as soon as practically possible.

.....

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

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

5.100 The land at LVS Hassocks is thus identified in appendix C of the Position Statement as a Preferred Site with an indicative capacity for 200 dwellings and the following key Principles:

'Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other preferred housing sites (SHELAA sites 601, 799, 830, 1026) in Sayers Common to deliver high-quality placemaking, with direct enhanced active/sustainable travel connections.

2. *Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the development and integrate and enhance the existing PRoW which crosses the site.*

3. *Provide any necessary upgrades to the existing access onto B2118.*

4. *Redevelopment proposals shall provide evidence that demonstrates how a replacement SEND school will be provided on-site, to the satisfaction of the Council and relevant key stakeholders'*

5.101 In the context of the above it is noted that in terms of the Sustainable Communities, and that proposed at Sayers Common, the Position Statement makes it clear that: *'To achieve a sustainable community at Sayers Common, it is crucial that development at this location is considered collectively rather than individually. A Statement of Common Ground was agreed between the Council and the site promoters in this location which sets out the parties' commitment to this approach. For sites at Sayers Common:*

- *The Council will continue to facilitate collaboration between site promoters to ensure a cohesive, integrated and master-planned development at Sayers Common*

- *Whilst applications may come forward individually, proposals should be brought forward with reference to the holistic, masterplan-led approach agreed in the Statement of Common Ground. This will include making proportionate financial contributions towards the delivery of necessary infrastructure identified within the Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).*

- *Services and facilities within Land to the South of Reeds Lane (site reference #799) such as education and primary neighbourhood centre should be easily accessible to the settlement as a whole, providing opportunities to meet day-to-day needs within walking distance, consistent with the 20-minute neighbourhood principle'*

5.102 The Position Statement also identifies a set of principles which are important to the Council in determining planning applications, which encompass:

- **Principle 1:** Sustainability
- **Principle 2:** Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
- **Principle 3:** Countryside
- **Principle 4:** Built Environment
- **Principle 5:** Transport
- **Principle 6:** Economy
- **Principle 7:** Housing
- **Principle 8:** Infrastructure

5.103 This statement and the other supporting statements that accompany this application look to address these principles as far as they are relevant to this application.

MSDC - Position Statement 2: Infrastructure

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

6 Planning Appraisal

6.1 The Issues

6.1.1 This hybrid application that seeks consent for separate and severable elements comprising:

Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to be retained for use within Use Class F and:

a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and

b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works.

6.1.2 The new school building and access arrangements form part of the full element of this hybrid application whilst the details of the residential development are in outline, with all matters bar access reserved for future determination. The site will be accessed via a new priority junction located slightly north of the existing junction onto the B2118. In turn, this connects with a new 5.5m spine road providing access to the residential element of the development in addition to replacing the use of Bridleway 9hU for access to LVS Hassocks.

6.1.3 Having regard to the aims and objectives of national and local government guidance, we consider that the key issues to be considered in determining this application are:

- the principle of development in terms of the aims and objectives of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018), and the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (March 2015); as well as the aims and objectives of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (December 2023) and Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex) (December 2025), the housing land supply situation in Mid Sussex, the affordable housing needs of the District, the site's suitability for development, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and the applicant's ability to start to deliver the site within the next 5 years;
- the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development on the area;
- the effect of the proposed development on existing landscape features;
- the impact of the proposed development on areas of ecological interest/protected species;
- the impact of the form, layout, and design of the proposed development on the amenities of adjacent residents;
- the sites ability to accommodate this level of development, the nature of the residential accommodation and the level of affordable provision;
- the effect of the proposed development in transportation and highway terms;
- the sites suitability for development in terms of flood risk and foul water drainage;

- the impact of the proposed development on the cultural heritage of the site and surrounding area;
- the impact of the proposed development in terms of the loss of agricultural land; and
- the effect of the proposed development in terms of energy consumption, lighting, amenity space, contamination and remediation, the capacity of service providers and impact on local infrastructure.

6.2 The Principle of Development

6.2.1 MSDC have in their December 2025 Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex) acknowledged at para 2.11 that they do not have a five year housing land supply. Whilst this is not quantified, we note that the Updated Statement of Common Ground on Housing Land Supply for the Scamps Hill appeal, which is dated 18th December 2024, accepted that as at 1st April 2024 the Council only had 3.38yrs housing land supply.

6.2.2 The Land at LVS Hassocks is identified for development in the Reg 19 Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2023 pursuant to Policy DPSC7. The proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with Policy DPSC7. In addition, the site is identified in the Council's Position Statement of December 2025 on Delivering Sustainable Development as a preferred site for development.

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

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

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

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

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

- 6.2.6 Whilst it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with policy DP12, policy DP12 is in effect 'out of date' given the housing land supply situation, and the fact the settlement boundary was defined having regard to the housing requirement for the District as set out in policy DP4 of the Adopted District Plan which looked to deliver an average of 876 dpa until 2023/24 and an average of 1,090 dpa until 2030/31, and was adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012.
- 6.2.7 Para 10 of the NPPF makes it clear that '*So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development*'. Paragraph 11 then makes it clear that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, and that for decision-taking this means:
'c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.'
- 6.2.8 Footnote 8 makes it clear that 'out of date' includes: for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where:
'the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites, (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.'
- 6.2.9 The Council have openly admitted in the recent Scamps Hill appeal and para 2.11 of the December 2025 Position Statement 1 on Delivering Sustainable Development that they do not have a five year housing land supply¹⁸.
- 6.2.10 Given the above it is necessary to consider the housing land supply situation as well as the age and the premise behind the policies that go to the heart of housing delivery in the Adopted Development Plan i.e. policies DP4 and DP12.

¹⁸ MSDC position as of 18th Dec 2024 was that for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2029 they had a supply of 4,815 dwellings equating to 3.38 years' worth of supply (-2,304 dwellings) and the Appellant's position was that the council had a supply of 3,427 dwellings equating to 2.41 years' worth of supply (-3,692 dwellings). This is reiterated in para 2.11 of the December 2025 Position Statement

i) The Housing Land Supply Situation

6.2.11 Para 78 of the NPPF makes it clear that local planning authorities are now required to *'identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:*
a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply.....

6.2.12 As the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which set the housing target in policy DP4 was adopted in 2018 it is over 5 years old, and whilst the Site Allocations DPD which seeks to enact the requirements of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 was only adopted in 2022 we would submit that as a 'daughter' document it is the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 which para 78 relates to. As para 78 makes it clear that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing, and the Council have openly acknowledged they do not have a five year housing land supply, the fact the application site is located outside of the current urban area of Sayers Common where policy DP12 applies whilst a material consideration, is of limited weight given the fact MSDC cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. This we note is a position that MSDC have themselves acknowledged in recent committee reports – such as that relating to the development of the land north and south of Huntsland in Crawley Down which was reports to committee in June 2025 (DM/25/0014 and 0016 refer) and land at Foxhole Farm Bolney which was reported to committee in October 2025 (DM/25/1129 refers).

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

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

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

6.2.15 In the context of the above we note that policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 indicates that the countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty and that development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:
 • it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or

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

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

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

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

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

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

b) The Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan

6.2.19 Whilst the HPP&SCNP does allocate housing sites, as it is over 5 years old (it was 'Made' in March 2015), para 14 of the NPPF does not apply and the weight to be attributed to it is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is exacerbated by the District Council's lack of a five year housing land supply. That said we accept that the fact that whilst the policies in the HPP&SCNP are out of date, this does not mean that they must be disregarded in the planning assessment. However, any breach of these policies would be afforded reduced (limited) weight in the planning balance. Again, we note that MSDC in their Position Statement of December 2025 on Delivering Sustainable Development, in appendix B look to comment on the status of made Neighbourhood Plans, and as far as the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan is concerned state:

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

Plan Area	Date of adoption	Housing Allocations	Status – does para 14 apply?
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	19.03.15	Yes	No - over 5 years old

c) The Submission Draft Local Plan December 2023

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

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

6.2.22 As a result of its housing need and having regard to the findings of the Urban Capacity Study, Housing Land Availability Assessment, Settlement Sustainability Review Study, Habitat Regulation Assessment, Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, Strategic Transport Study, the Site Selection Process, and Sustainability Appraisal the plan looks to allocate 3 sustainable communities on land west of Burgess Hill, at Crabbet Park east of Crawley, and south of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common, the latter including 4 smaller sites, which include the land at LVS Hassocks, in addition to 17 other sites.

6.2.23 Policy DPSC7 indicates that the land at LVS Hassocks will provide for 200 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:

Informal outdoor space
Relocation of the SEND School

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

- Sustainable Transport
- Improvements at Hassocks Station
- Education
- Library

- Community buildings
- Local Community Infrastructure
- Emergency Services
- Health
- Play area
- Other outdoor provision
- Outdoor sports

6.2.25 And to make provision for the following off site:

- Sustainable transport measures
- Highway works
- Reprovision of SEND School
- Sewerage network upgrades

6.2.26 In addition, policy DPSC7 also contains the following policy requirements:

1. Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other housing allocations in the Plan within Sayers Common to deliver high quality placemaking which supports the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with direct enhanced active/ sustainable travel connections, and includes enabling the viability of new public transport services.
2. Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the development and integrate and enhance the existing PRoW which crosses the site.
3. Provide any necessary upgrades to the existing access onto B2118.
4. Redevelopment proposals shall provide evidence that demonstrates how a replacement SEND school will be provided either on-site or within the district, to the satisfaction of the Council and relevant key stakeholders.
5. Occupation of the development will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure, in consultation with the service provider¹⁹.
6. Follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk.
7. Investigate, assess and address any land contamination issues arising from former uses of the site or from uses, or former uses, of land in proximity to the site.
8. Address impacts associated with the brick clay (Weald) Minerals Safeguarding Area.
9. Meets the requirements of other relevant development plan policies²⁰

6.2.27 We also note that Appendix 6 of the Council's Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper July 2024 (Trajectory of Proposed District Plan Allocations) actually show the application site delivering in 2026/27 i.e. the next five years.

6.2.28 Para 49 of the NPPF makes it clear that:

'Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and

¹⁹ Deleted in post submission mods – M104

²⁰ Deleted in post submission mods – MM77

c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).'

6.2.29 Para 50 continues:

'However, in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:

a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and

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

6.2.30 Having regard to the above, whilst the application site is a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan it is not so substantial/ its cumulative effect would not be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to the Submission Draft Local Plan. The application site is a small, self-contained site, located on the edge of the urban area that is not fettered by any land use designations and is capable of delivering a sustainable development that helps address the Council's five year housing land supply deficit and accommodates the requirements of the Submission Draft Local Plan without creating an undesirable precedent / being premature to the adoption of the Local Plan.

6.2.31 The NPPF is clear that applications can only be refused on grounds of prematurity in limited circumstances. The proposed development at up to 210 dwellings is not for a significant quantum of development, being just 1% of the overall housing land supply and 3% of the proposed allocations and is not reliant on any other allocations to come forward itself. Whilst we acknowledge that the Submission Draft Local Plan in its 'Vision and Objectives' for Sayers Common looks to facilitate collaboration between the site promoters at Sayers Common to ensure a cohesive, integrated and master-planned development at Sayers Common, the Statement of Common Ground entered into between the promoters of the five sites in Sayers Common and MSDC in July 2024 explained that whilst a comprehensive masterplan had been prepared jointly by the site promoters to show how the proposed allocations could be integrated and delivered holistically, it was nonetheless intended and agreed that separate planning applications would be submitted, in accordance with the timescales set out at paragraph 5.14 of the SoCG, and that these timescales did not place any restriction on those sites coming forward independently of each other and/or DPSC3²¹.

6.2.32 In the context of the above, the Council have through their evidence base deemed the site a sustainable one, suitable for development; and the scale of the proposed development cannot be said to equate to development that has such a significant cumulative impact that it would undermine the plan making process.

²¹ See section 2 and footnote 2 above

6.2.33 The grant of planning permission here would not therefore result in an undesirable precedent being set. Whilst every application should be assessed on its own individual merits, the fact is that the circumstances here are quite unique to this site. The site is identified as a potential allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan, and as such is already seen as helping to meet the Council's Local Housing Need. It's well contained in landscape terms, and its well connected to Sayers Common, a location identified in the Submission Draft Local Plan where further growth would actually add to the sustainability of the settlement. In addition, the site is part previously developed land and the proposed residential development enables LVS to move out of the existing school buildings which were not designed to meet the long-term needs of a growing and increasingly specialist provision, into a new bespoke school especially designed to meet their needs. Furthermore, the 'Delivering Sustainable Development' Position Statement adopted by the Council in December 2025 reiterates the council's support for this site as a suitable location for sustainable growth.

6.2.34 The documents submitted in support of this application look to demonstrate how the proposed development accords with policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan. A summary position is set out in **appendix 1**.

d) Special Educational Needs

6.2.35 West Sussex County Council (WSCC) as the education authority provides a range of provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including in mainstream schools, Specially Resourced Provision (known locally as Special Support Centres or SSCs) based in mainstream schools, special schools, and services for pre-school children with special educational needs or disabilities. In response to parental views, the Planning School Places 2025 document explains that the County Council will make arrangements for each child who has an Education, Health and Care Plan to ensure that:

- the school can meet the child's particular special needs; and that
- this is compatible with the efficient education of other children and the efficient use of resources.

6.2.36 In the context of the above we note that WSCC are currently working towards finalising its new version of The SEND and Inclusion Strategy, which is expected to be published towards the end of 2025. In the meantime, the current SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2024 remains in place. The SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2024, along with the Planning School Places 2025 document sets out how the County Council will support the inclusion of all children and young people, with a particular focus on those with (SEND).

6.2.37 In addition to the above, WSCC in their Corporate Plan for 2021-2026²² when addressing the issue of '*helping people and communities to fulfil their potential*', in the sub section dealing with access to education and learning, and performance indicator 58 on Children and Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) accessing Independent and

²²<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrljoiOGNiMzdkZGMtMDcxOC00ODdkLWJjNzQtZWZlZjJiMjZlMm13liwidCI6IjI1N2ZkYWwRjLTVjMGMtNGRmYS05NzdILTkzODZkZmQ3MmQyMiJ9>

Non-Maintained Special Schools (INMSS), states under 'Measure Description': *'Currently there is a high level of demand for special school placements for children with EHCPs, particularly around the transfer from primary to secondary, and for those children with social communication needs, Autism and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH). In West Sussex, the demand exceeds the capacity in our maintained special schools, particularly for those with SEMH. We do not have provision for children with high functioning autism within our maintained special schools and when the mainstream school is unable to meet needs this group move into the independent sector.'* It goes on to advise under 'Commentary' that as of August 2025 *'The % of children in INMSS provision has increased slightly. Many of the INMSS provisions are now full. New pupil places created from the Schools Capital Programme, within the LA's maintained specialist provision, will aim to continue to reduce the planned usage of INMSS over time. However, progress in bringing new places into operation is likely to take significant time'*. The actions being: *'New pupil places created from the Schools Capital Programme, within the LA's maintained specialist provision, will aim to continue to reduce the planned usage of INMSS over time. However, progress in bringing new places into operation is likely to take significant time'*.

6.2.38 Whilst performance indicator 59 regarding the Number of New Pupil places created from the Schools Capital Programme to meet Basic Need and SEND indicates in the commentary, that as of Jun-25 work was underway to create Basic Need and SEND places across the County, including additional places at Fordwater and QE2 Special Schools, as well as additional places at a number of schools without the need for capital investment; it also advises that discussions continue with the DfE in relation to approved Special and Mainstream Free Schools which are required to provide sufficient school places. It is thus clear that the delivery of SEND places remains challenging and that this application in delivering a new state of the art SEND school will actively assist in addressing the SEND needs of the area in a real and valuable way.

e) Affordable Housing Need

6.2.39 The Strategic Housing Assessment (SHA) Oct 2021 produced to support the Submission Draft Local Plan indicates an estimated annual need for 470 rented affordable homes and 455 affordable home ownership homes in Mid Sussex District. Together this equates to circa 85% of the annual Local Housing Need as advocated in the Submission Draft Local Plan²³ and 68% of the Local Housing Need proposed under the new standard method set out in the Dec 2024 NPPF²⁴. Even if one takes into account the fact the Council are proposing an affordable housing policy requirement of 30%, its clear that as not all sites provide affordable housing, the Submission Draft Local Plan will not address the districts affordable housing needs. In order to meet 100% of the affordable requirement the plan would need to deliver a minimum of 2,312dpa²⁵ over the plan period i.e. more than double that currently planned for, and 71% more than the Local Housing Need calculated under the new standard methodology.

²³ $925/1090 \times 100 = 85\%$

²⁴ $925/1356 \times 100 = 68\%$

²⁵ $100/40 \times 925 = 2,312.5$

6.2.40 In the context of the above we note that according to table 11 of MSDC Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) (April 2022 – May 2023) (published Dec 2023) the Council have, over the past 9 years only delivered 1,878 affordable homes²⁶. An average of 208 affordable completions per annum, significantly less than the annual need.

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

6.2.42 The above is exacerbated by the ONS affordability ratios published in March 2025. The ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 1997 to 2024 indicates that the ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings in MSDC has increased significantly over the past 10 years from 9.71 to 11.35²⁷.

JAA Table 6.3 – Extracts from ONS median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings across West Sussex - 1997 to 2024

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

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

6.2.44 As set out below, the proposed development will provide for up to 63 affordable dwellings. This is a highly significant material consideration and should carry substantial weight in the context of the NPPF.

6.2.45 As this is an outline application the affordable housing mix and tenure split has yet to be agreed with the Council's housing department. That said, it would, as set out in the DAS, comprise a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments and 2, 3 and 4 bed houses, providing affordable or social rent and affordable home ownership. These dwellings will be secured through a S106 Agreement, and as the DAS demonstrates will be designed to be tenure blind and distributed throughout the development in clusters of 15 – 25 dwellings.

²⁶

Table 7: Affordable Housing Completions

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

²⁷ ONS House price to workplace-based earnings ratio – March 2025 – table 5c
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>

6.2.46 On the basis of the above the proposed development of the application site would actively assist in addressing the affordable housing requirements of the Council in a real and valuable way. Furthermore, as set out in section 6.21 of this statement it is Wates intention that the nomination rights for the affordable housing units are such that the affordable units are in the first instance made available to people in housing need with appropriate connections to Sayers Common. Thereafter the nomination rights will, if necessary, cascade down to those in need in the neighbouring parishes and then those in need in the rest of the District.

f) Land at LVS Hassocks - A Sustainable Location for New Development

6.2.47 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. Paragraph 9 of the NPPF advises that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the Framework; *'they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged'* it continues: *'Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.'* Having regard to the advice in the NPPF it should be noted that: -

i) The Economic Role

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

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

- a) Construction Phase:
 £47m Construction Value
 153 Direct Jobs (per annum)
 52 Indirect / Induced Jobs (per annum)
 £94m Total Gross Value Added (over build period)
 Apprenticeships, Training and Local Supply Chain Opportunities and
 S106 contributions towards social infrastructure
- b) Operational Phase
 £6.7m Total Residential Spend (per annum)
 £1.5m First Occupation Expenditure
 242 Economically Active Residents
 £9.7m Resident Income (per annum)
 £473k Council Tax (per annum)

Stamp Duty Land Tax
 Supports the vitality of local centres through additional spending
 Supports 65 roles in the school
 2.5mill in school wages

- c) Wider Benefits including:
- Significant contribution towards meeting housing needs and economic growth (particularly affordable housing), which best serves the needs of the local community
 - A new modern SEN school to support young people with learning disabilities and additional needs
 - Provides for a new community building which will help address local needs
 - Network of footpaths and cycleways to encourage active travel and healthy lifestyles
 - Electric vehicle charging to reduce air pollution
 - Sustainable and energy efficient design
 - Opportunities for local food growing and vibrant natural setting to support well-being and biodiversity

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

ii) Social Role

6.2.51 The provision of up to 210 new dwellings will make a contribution to the Districts housing land supply and will help meet the identified need, particularly in respect of affordable homes (up to 63 dwellings) in a significant way. In addition, the range of house types proposed will help to meet the needs of present and future generations.

6.2.52 The proposed development will also enable the provision of a new SEN school, thus supporting members of the community with learning disabilities and additional needs; and provides for a new community building within the main site, which will help address local needs.

6.2.53 Furthermore, the proposed development, in providing circa 6ha of public open space to be used for formal as well as informal recreational areas, children's play areas, and community orchards, will actively help address the recreational needs of the area.

6.2.54 In addition to the above, the proposed development also provides an opportunity to expand/consolidate/introduce new services and infrastructure, through S106 contributions towards transport improvements, library services, community facilities, health facilities, etc.

6.2.55 In accordance with para 8 of the NPPF the application site will be accessible to local services that reflect the community's needs and will support the existing and future communities' health, social and cultural well-being. The NPPF seeks to promote a strong vibrant and healthy community by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations, and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports it health, social and cultural wellbeing. It can be considered that the proposed development satisfies the social dimension of sustainable development.

iii) Environmental Role

- 6.2.56 The proposed development is on land that is free from any national environmental designations, i.e. National Landscapes (previously Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or a National Park. Albeit we note that the South Downs National Park is approximately 2.5km to the south-east of the site; and the High Weald National Landscape is circa 3.3km to the north of the site.
- 6.2.57 In the context of the above it is acknowledged that there is an overriding need to ensure that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside is recognised, and that development should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built, and historic environment.
- 6.2.58 In accordance with para 8 of the NPPF the proposed development provides an opportunity to enhance and actively increase the biodiversity on the site. As set out in the LVA and AIR, the proposed development has been designed to ensure the majority of the existing landscape features are retained and incorporated within the development; and where existing features are lost, their loss will be mitigated by substantial new planting, reinforcing the site's landscape character. In addition, as set out in the Ecological Impact Assessment the large swaths of informal open space, and community orchard, along with the proposed SuDS features and ecological enhancement works will ensure biodiversity net gains of circa 21.52% in Hedgerow Units within the site boundary, and a 10% net gains in Habitat Units through the creation of off site habitats.
- 6.2.59 In addition, the proposed development will look to make the most efficient use of the site, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Energy Statement explains how significant improvements above Building Regulations are proposed in this instance to reduce energy demand and CO2 emissions thus helping to address the council's climate emergency.
- 6.2.60 Given the above it is considered that the proposed development satisfies the environmental dimension of sustainable development.
- 6.2.61 It is also noteworthy that the application site is located immediately adjacent to the built confines of Sayers Common and is identified as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan, which demonstrates that MSDC recognise that the site is situated in a sustainable location for development/ that development here would add to the sustainability of the settlement, thus satisfying relevant national and local policy on this matter.
- 6.2.62 As set out in the Transport Assessment, the application site is located within reasonable walking and cycling distance of a range of facilities in Sayers Common and the surrounding area. In addition, there is access to existing bus stops within easy walking distance. These bus stops are served by the number 100 service which provides an hourly service to destinations between Burgess Hill, Storrington, Pulborough, Billingshurst and Horsham on weekdays and Saturdays; and the number 273 service which operates circa every hour on Mondays to Sundays between Brighton and Crawley. In addition, Burgess Hill railway station is located approximately 6km to the east of the site, and Hassocks railway station is located approximately 5km to the southeast. These stations provide frequent access to a range of

destinations, including London Victoria and Littlehampton via Southern services, Brighton and Cambridge via Thameslink services, and Gatwick Airport via Gatwick Express services.

6.2.63 Table 6.1 of the TA provides a summary of the local facilities, amenities, educational and employment opportunities accessible within a comfortable or reasonable walking and cycling distance of the site.

6.2.64 In addition to the above the proposed development would, along with the other developments proposed in Sayers Common both individually and cumulatively enhance access to active and sustainable modes of transport, enhancing connectivity between the sites and village/ wider area, facilitating enhanced/ additional routes off-site to other nearby settlements, including a link to Burgess Hill Town Centre.

6.2.65 Given the above we consider the application site is ideally situated to accommodate further growth in a sustainable manner as defined by para 8 of the NPPF.

6.2.66 Thus, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies and consideration needs to be given to the application in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF i.e. it should only be refused if any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development, when assessed against the NPPF as a whole, or specific NPPF policies indicate development should be restricted.

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

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

JAA Table 6.4 – Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits Generated by the Proposed Development

	Benefit	Type
1	Provision of up to 210 market dwellings	Social/Economic
2	Provision of up to 63 affordable dwellings (30%)	Social
3	An appropriate dwelling mix	Social
4	Enables LVS to relocate from the existing school buildings which while fully functional today, were not designed to meet the long-term needs of a growing and increasingly specialist provision, into a new bespoke SEN school specifically designed to meet their needs thus contributing towards the Council's need for accommodation for children, teenagers and adults with severe learning disabilities and complex needs.	Social
4	The provision of a community building (Use Class F1)	Social
5	Provision of 0.11ha of formal play space together with community growing areas/allotments	Social/Environmental

	Benefit	Type
6	Provision of circa 6ha of publicly accessible incidental open space/ amenity space/ natural and semi natural space	Social/Environmental
7	Developing in a sustainable location/ enhancing sustainability through growth	Social/Environmental/ Economic
8	Avoiding designated landscapes such as the High Weald National Landscape and South Downs National Park	Environmental
9	Landscape enhancement with new tree and hedgerow planting	Environmental
10	Avoiding impacts on protected areas/ species and ecological enhancements resulting in a BNG	Environmental
11	Improved pedestrian, and cycle links between the site and the wider area	Environmental
12	Enhanced bus services between the site and the wider area	Economic/ Environmental and Social
13	Contributions towards off site highway works, including pedestrian improvements along London Road.	Economic/ Environmental and Social
14	The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1. A sequential approach to development with the more vulnerable aspects of the development being located outside of any localized areas of higher surface water flood risk; and introduction of a positively managed surface water drainage strategy	Environmental
15	Provision of energy efficient homes exceeding current policy requirements	Environmental
16	In accordance with spatial strategy of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan – especially policy DPSC7 and the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) (Dec 2025).	Social/Economic/Environmental
17	Short-term economic benefits from construction	Economic
18	Long-term economic benefits from new residents spending in the local area, S106, New Homes Bonus and Council Tax revenues	Economic/ Social

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

h) Deliverability

6.2.69 There are, as will be set out later in this statement, no impediments to development on this site. Furthermore, despite the scale of development proposed on this site, there are no significant advanced infrastructure requirements. On this basis and as the site is already under contract to the applicants, it is anticipated the development of this site will start as soon as is practically possible after the grant of planning permission.

6.2.70 To this end it should be noted that if consent is granted locally in spring 2026 the new SEN School facility would look to be open by September 2028, and first occupations of the proposed dwellings would be expected in autumn 2027, and the development could be completed by the summer of 2031, dependent on market conditions.

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

JAA Table 6.5 – Housing Trajectory

26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	Total
0	30	50	50	50	30	0	210

6.2.72 Whilst the above is a year beyond the position promoted by the Council in Appendix 6 of the Council's Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper July 2024 (Trajectory of Proposed District Plan Allocations) produced in support of the Submission Local Plan, it nonetheless shows the application site delivering in full within the next five years.

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

i) Conclusions on the Issue of the Principle of Development update

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

6.2.75 The application site is located on the edge of Sayers Common, which is defined in the Settlement Hierarchy Review as a category 3 settlement i.e. a medium sized village providing essential services for the needs of their own residents and immediate surrounding communities.

6.2.76 The proposed development also complies with the aims and objectives of policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan and the recently adopted Position Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (Dec 2025).

6.2.77 In determining this application, the Council should do what the government encourages where there is a 5 year housing land supply deficit - look at sustainable sites and apply the tilted balance. In doing so and approving this application they would be facilitating delivery in the next 5 years in accordance with the Council's Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper July 2024 produced in support of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

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

6.3 The Nature of the Residential Accommodation

i The Housing Mix and Nature of the Affordable Housing Provision

- 6.3.1 The proposed development provides for up to 210 dwellings and would encompass a mix of 1 and 2 bed apartments and 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed houses; 30% of which would be affordable and 2% of which would be self and custom build plots. Thus, the proposed development looks to provide for a range of different house types, sizes and tenures so as to reflect the character of the area, the aims and objectives of policies DP30 and DP31 of the Adopted District Plan and policies DPH6, DPH7 and DPH8 of the Submission Draft Local Plan, as set out below.

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

- 6.3.2 The proposed mix whilst illustrative as this is the outline element of this application reflects pre application advice received from the council’s housing officer and as set out below reflects the aims and aspirations of the Submission Draft Local Plan.
- 6.3.3 Furthermore, as set out in the DAS, the affordable housing units will be designed to be tenure blind and will be distributed throughout the proposed development.
- 6.3.4 In addition, all houses will be designed to be M4(2) compliant, and 4% of the affordable dwellings will be designed to be M4(3)(2)(b), with 5% of the market dwellings designed to be M4(3)(2)(a) compliant in accordance with policy DPH12 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

ii The Density of Development

- 6.3.5 The proposed development will result in the provision of up to 210 dwellings on a site of circa 11.779ha²⁸ i.e. a density of 17.83 dph²⁹. As however 6.09ha is set aside for green infrastructure, 0.48ha encompasses the spine road and 0.10 other access roads and 0.03ha is the Community Building, the net residential area is only circa 5.09ha. 210 dwellings on an area of circa 5.09ha would generate a density of 41.26dph net.
- 6.3.6 Whilst neither the Adopted District Plan nor Submission Draft Local Plan contain policies related to the density of new development, other than in conservation areas, the above reflects the desire in the NPPF to optimise the use of land whilst preserving the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

6.4 The Form, Layout and Design of Development

- 6.4.1 The form, layout and design of the proposed development has, as set out in the Design and Access Statements (DAS's) for both the school and housing, been predicated on a detailed understanding of the whole of the site and its surrounding, its relationship with the other sites identified for development in the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan in Sayers Common, and the associated masterplanning work being undertaken by Berkeley in respect of the land at Reeds Lane (DPSC3), and adherence to the draft site allocation policy DPSC7. This has led to an appreciation of the site wide constraints, which as summarised in the DAS for the new homes include:
- i. The location of the existing access from the B2118.
 - ii. The surrounding highway network and proposed means of access to the site.
 - iii. The location and character of the existing Public Rights of Way (footpaths and bridleways) crossing the site, and adjacent to it.
 - iv. The existing trees and hedges both within the site and situated on its boundaries and their associated no development zones and Root Protection Areas (RPAs).
 - v. The location of the commemorative tree planted to mark Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee which could be transplanted if necessary.
 - vi. The important existing ecological features present including areas of grassland, hedgerows, scrub and woodland edge.
 - vii. The wildlife that exists on site including roosting, foraging and commuting Bats, Dormouse, Reptiles (Slow Worms), and Birds.
 - viii. The location of the existing school buildings and former chapel, as well as the nun's cemetery, and existing ponds.
 - ix. The fall of the land from north to south.
 - x. The areas of surface water flood risk in the lower parts of the site, especially in the south eastern corner of the site.
 - xi. The location of the overhead cables crossing the eastern end of the site.

²⁸ 14.409 – 2.63 = 11.779

²⁹ We note this compares with the gross Residential densities of surrounding developments as set out in residential DAS which range from 15.8 dph for the mid twentieth century development on Oakhurst to 29.3 dph for the recently completed development by Linden Homes at Sayers Meadow immediately to the south of the site.

- xii. Long distant views to and from the elevated northern part of the site.
- xiii. Views from the site to the south.
- xiv. Relationship with and proximity to the listed building 'Kingscot' to the south.
- xv. Potential noise disturbance from traffic travelling on the A23 to the east of the site.
- xvi. The privacy and amenity of the occupants of existing properties to the south and east.

The Proposed Homes

6.4.2 The DAS for the new homes also explains how the design evolution has had regard to the above and the design policy approach advocated in the adopted development plan as well as supporting supplementary planning guidance and the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan. To this end it highlights the site opportunities as being:

- i. The Provision of a new, purpose built SEN school with associated playing fields, taxi queuing area and parking as per Criterion 4 of Policy DPSC7.
- ii. Provision of much needed private and affordable homes designed to complement the landscape setting of the site.
- iii. The retention of existing trees and hedges as far as practically possible and their augmentation with new native planting to retain the landscape setting of the site, protect views into/ out of the site, protect the amenity of adjacent residents and create a defensible boundary to the site that will also act as a new green corridor linking areas of ecological importance. To this end the southern edge of the site, incorporates a landscaped buffer zone with integral SuDS features (where levels are lowest) which will create a suitable offset to the dwellings in Sayers Meadows to the south, and help protect the setting of the adjacent listed Kingscot; whilst to the north and west the landscaped buffer zone will provide a transition to the open countryside beyond, as well as a sense of enclosure, that can, where necessary, screen any sensitive views into and out of the site. The new planting will also help to enhance the setting of the existing PRow / Bridleway that cross the site and help enhance the sites biodiversity.
- iv. The retention of the former chapel building with proposed surrounding dwellings arranged to echo the shape of the existing monastic arc.
- v. The retention of the visual link between the former chapel and London Road.
- vi. The introduction of integrated green corridors providing quality amenity spaces and legibility, alongside the provision of areas of public open space/ play areas and orchards and food growing areas for use by both existing and new residents.
- vii. The opportunity to enhance connectivity by providing a new upgraded access onto London Road (B2118), as per Criterion 3 of Policy DPSC7, as well as enhancements to and integration of the existing PRow which crosses the site, and provision of new pedestrian links, as per Criterion 2 of Policy DPSC7; the new access road into the site from London Road providing access to the new dwellings and school.
- viii. A sequential approach to development, that whilst it limits development to the lower and less visually sensitive areas of the

site, also directs development away from areas of flood risk and incorporates a flood risk strategy that looks to create a betterment over the existing situation.

- ix. Retention of existing ponds providing habitat for wildlife.
- x. The re-route the existing overhead cables below ground, thus enhancing the visual appearance of this edge of the site.

6.4.3 Having established the site constraints, undertaken a detailed analysis of the historic growth of Sayers Common, as well as that proposed in the Submission Draft Local Plan, and the proposed masterplan for the wider area, along with the villages settlement structure, and what makes the area unique; had input from the consultant team on the landscape, heritage, transport, arboricultural, ecological and drainage issues that impact upon the sites development potential; and noted the issues arising from public consultation and discussions with key stakeholders including statutory providers, the Parish Council and officers of the District Council through the pre application process; the DAS for the new homes sets out a vision for the site, which is that the proposed development at LVS Hassocks will:

- Expand Sayers Common in a sustainable manner.
- Provide much needed housing, including affordable homes.
- Provide a much needed replacement SEN school.
- Provide an opportunity to deliver additional community facilities through the retention and conversion of the existing chapel.
- Provide a community focused multigenerational development to promote positive physical and mental wellbeing.
- Deliver a net gain in biodiversity terms.
- Provide integrated and landscaped open space of approximately 6ha.
- Provide a mix of housing types and tenures.
- Provide future-proof homes.
- Create a development that will integrate sustainable drainage strategies into the wider ecology and landscaping gains on site.
- Retain and protect existing hedgerows and trees wherever possible.
- Upgrade surrounding public rights of way to encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- Respect the setting of nearby Listed Buildings.
- Respect existing topography and views in/out of site.
- Provide appropriate architectural design.

6.4.4 To this end the DAS explains that the aim has been to produce a design which is compatible with the distinctive qualities of Sayers Common and Mid Sussex; respects the setting of adjacent heritage assets (such as the Grade II Kingscot); respects the privacy and amenity of adjacent neighbours; results in wildlife and landscape improvements; and is sympathetic to new and existing residents alike.

6.4.5 To support the delivery of this vision the DAS contains a series of parameter plans which look to address the land use, density, building heights, access and movement, and landscape aspirations for the site. It then goes on to consider the green infrastructure and the road hierarchy, the relationship with adjacent residents, and the external appearance and architectural materials that could be utilised in the RM application. The DAS then provides a number of illustrative views to demonstrate how the proposed developmmet could look when viewed looking west along the spine road towards the chapel and from the southwestern corner of the western parcel, looking north.

- 6.4.6 The DAS for the new homes, in its conclusions advises that this outline application represents *'an opportunity to deliver a high quality and attractive residential development that responds to the future housing needs of Mid Sussex in a manner that is sensitive to the site and its setting.'* It explains that *'A key feature of the concept and illustrative layouts is the retention of the majority of existing trees and hedgerows along the boundaries and within the site, together with the creating a new focus around the retained former chapel.'* The DAS also highlights the fact that *'This landscape-led approach will enable the provision of a generous amount of open space. There is the potential to provide a high quality landscaped setting on this site with informal open spaces including amenity green space and play areas.'* Furthermore, the DAS indicates that *'Consultation with key technical consultants has enabled a thorough assessment of the opportunities and constraints of this site which has, in turn, informed the preparation of an initial concept proposals. These proposals identify key layout and design parameters and advocates a landscape and ecology led approach for this site.'* To this end, the DAS explains that *'The development has been sensitively designed, and Wates has been keen to ensure that the final scheme is created in collaboration with the local community by taking an effective community-led approach. The proposals are part of the wider masterplan for Sayers Common and as such the design team have been working collaboratively with MSDC and the other site promoters to ensure that a cohesive, integrated and masterplanned development is brought forward at Sayers Common.'*

The Proposed School

- 6.4.7 The separate DAS for the school explains the design principles and concepts underpinning the proposals, which include:
- a) A school which promotes health, well-being and access to nature.
 - b) A school which responds to the local context and has its own identity.
 - c) A school which creates inspiring views and is connected to the landscape.
 - d) A school which is comfortable to use and affordable to run.
 - e) A legible school for wayfinding.
 - f) Well-ventilated and well-lit classrooms and spaces to promote well-being.
 - g) The most sustainable school possible.
- 6.4.8 Having regard to the above, the DAS explains that the proposed development looks to provide for:
- The erection of a 1 and 2 storey detached SEN School in the north west corner of the existing site capable of accommodating up to 100 pupils in a series of classrooms, dining space and studios of various sizes
 - The installation of a Multi-Use Games Area to the rear of the school, with fencing and astroturf.
 - Internal driveway and waiting area (looping driveway) and car park for up to 69 car parking space, plus spaces for deliveries, and drop-off/ pick-up
 - Erection of a single storey cafe building
 - Associated landscaping to achieve BNG
 - Installation of an improved access road to be shared with the associated housing development
- 6.4.9 In the context of the above the DAS also explains that the associated residential development is required as enabling development to fund the building of the new school; and that because the school requires there to

be minimal disruption and a complete continuation of education on the site before, during and after building work, the new buildings need to be on a separate, but adjoining the existing facilities, whilst also given the type of education provision it cannot fully integrate into the street-scape of the wider development, but parts will be visible and the new cafe will provide a vital link between the school community and new residents. The uses will thus complement each other to provide a viable, sustainable community and unique sense of place.

6.4.10 In terms of its design the DAS explains that as the school is to located in the northern western part of the wider site, away from the main road and built up area, so as to maximise the potential to create a calm, secluded and safe environment needed for a SEN school. As however this area is on higher ground the scale and height of the building has been minimised to protect views from the surrounding countryside, National Landscape (AONB) and National Park, and the school has been sited in the centre of the field so as to retain the established hedgerow and public footpath. In addition, the car park has been pushed to the far south of the school site, inside and close to the existing hedgerow and treeline. Located away from the entrance this, together with the integral landscaping, maximises the landscape setting of the school and minimises the impact of the hard surfacing associated with the access road and car park on the setting of the school.

6.4.11 The DAS also explains that the footprint occupied by the proposed school is considerably less than the existing school in order to minimise the impact on the landscape and respond to the sites rural character; and that having a single storey green roofed element creates variety and responds to the sloping topographical nature of the site. To this end the DAS advises that the appearance of the building is highly influenced by its landscape setting and the need to maximise light and space inside the buildings whilst creating views out of the space. This, as set out in the DAS, contrasts, in part to the need to create human scale welcoming spaces for those with special sensory needs. The building has an expressive and sculptural quality but is also very calm and simple facade with areas of glazing and tactile materials. To this end the DAS indicates the proposed materials themselves are concrete with tile-holes on the ground floor, arrowhead tiles at first floor, with a standing seam in a brown (pre-oxidised) orange/copper colour on the roof. The glazing and signage is to be finished in a light blue/grey metal. These will pick up on the blues of the tiles and provide important way finding and colour markers for the pupils. There will be signage next to each classroom - giving names of the rooms to aid with orientation.

6.4.12 The DAS also advises that the roof form creates a strong design feature whilst also providing an opportunity for natural ventilation. And has been designed to create a contemporary sculptural interpretation of the existing chapel, so as to relate to the rural landscape here. As set out in the DAS, this form also has the benefit of creating a strong sense of place and familiar design feature and is a truly unique design solution.

6.4.14 The DAS also advises that the following renewable and energy-efficient technologies will be implemented to significantly reduce the overall energy demand of the school:

- Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHP) located adjacent to the plant room on the eastern end of the building and will enable heat distribution throughout the building will be provided via Underfloor Heating (UFH) in all occupied spaces, ensuring efficient and consistent thermal comfort.
- Natural Ventilation with Heat Recovery (NVHR)
- Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR)
- Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels - The scheme allows for the installation of 58 Solar PV panels (430 W each) on the flat roof area, providing a total generation capacity of 24.94 kWp. This renewable energy source will contribute to reducing the building's overall electricity demand and offset operational energy costs.

- 6.4.15 Overall the DAS's demonstrates that the development of the land at LVS Hassocks can be accommodated on the site in a way which delivers a high quality development respectful of Sayers Common's character and landscape setting, whilst also promoting enhanced sustainability.
- 6.4.16 Given the above the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of policy DP26 of the Adopted District Plan, the MSDC Design Guide SPD, Policy HurstH5 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and policy DPB1 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

The relationship with the wide Sayers Common Masterplan

- 6.4.11 In accordance with the Submission Draft Local Plan and recently adopted Position Statement 1 on delivering sustainable development in Mid Sussex, the DAS for the new homes highlights how we have been working collaboratively with the District Council and the other site promoters in Sayers Common to ensure a cohesive, integrated and master-planned development at Sayers Common. To this end, whilst LVS is somewhat separate from the other sites the DAS explains how we are still adopting certain design techniques to ensure a joined up approach, delivering high-quality placemaking, with enhanced active/sustainable travel connections; utilising green-corridors to help assimilate the proposed development into the landscape, soften views from the north and west and provide varied green-corridor character areas that respond to their setting and function; creating uninterrupted, people and nature focused movement routes through the site, and retaining and enhancing priority habitats such as shaws, hedgerows and linear woodland features; adding to the overall sequence of characterful "greens, glades and groves" that offer community-focused parkland spaces for play, recreation, leisure and food growing, while linking existing and proposed open areas to bring communities together; and adding to a connected web of active-travel routes woven through landscapes and neighbourhoods, making movement easy, intuitive, healthy and enjoyable.
- 6.4.12 As set out in this statement we are also looking to make proportionate financial contributions towards the delivery of necessary infrastructure identified within the Mid Sussex Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support development at Sayers Common.

6.5 Landscape and Amenity Space

6.5.1 The proposed development looks to deliver significant areas of amenity space, which as set out below will exceed that required by the Council's recently adopted Position Statement 2: Infrastructure (December 2025).

JAA Table 6.7 – Open Space Provision

Typology of Open Space	Quantity Standard (ha per 1000 pop) ³⁰	Quantity Standard Required	Illustrative On Site Provision
Natural and Semi-Natural	0.0018 Ha / 18sqm per person	0.91 Ha	3.31 Ha
Amenity Green Space (including green corridors)	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.40 Ha	1.99 Ha
Parks and Gardens / Countryside Open Space	0.0008 Ha / 8sqm per person	0.40 Ha	0.52 ha
Play Facilities including:			
Fixed play areas with LAP and LEAP facilities	0.00025 Ha / 2.5 sqm per person	0.13 Ha	0.11 Ha
Outdoor Sports	0.0016 Ha / 16 sqm per person	0.81 Ha	Off Site Financial Contribution
Other outdoor provision	0.0003 Ha / 3 sqm per person	0.15 Ha	Off Site Financial Contribution
Community growing area	-	-	0.07
TOTAL		2.8 Ha Excl Community growing area	6 Ha ³¹ / 5.93 Excl Community growing area

6.5.2 Overall, the land set aside for formal and informal recreational open space, encompasses 40% of the overall site area / over 50% of the residential area, and is over 200% more than the policy requirement. It has the ability to provide for the following types of play:

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

6.5.3 In addition to the above, the proposed development provides for private amenity space for each of the proposed new houses which is comparable to that found elsewhere within the locality, and the proposed maisonettes

³⁰ See table 3 of Position Statement 2

NB Assumes an average occupancy rate of 2.4 per household so 210 dwellings = 480 residents

³¹ The overall level of amenity space (5.93ha) is equivalent to circa 41.15% of the total site area (14.41ha) As however 3.11ha is set aside for the SEN school and spine road, the amenity space is equivalent to 51.63% of the residential area (14.41 – 3.11 = 11.3 (5.93/11.3 x 100 = 52.47%)). NB this does not include the existing nuns cemetery and community growing area which would increase the amenity open space to 6.08ha (6.07 rounded), or the area occupied by the existing chapel which is to be retained and converted

/apartments will all benefit from their own private balconies / ground floor terraces thus creating their own private amenity space.

- 6.5.4 The proposed arrangements for the maintenance and management of the areas of amenity space would be addressed by a Landscape & Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) that can be a condition of any planning consent, and through the draft Heads of Terms of the S106. The outline strategy is that a Management Company will be responsible for the management of the common areas beyond the ownership boundaries of individual properties; this will be funded via a Commuted Maintenance Sum, financed by an annual maintenance charge on each residential property.
- 6.5.5 Allied to the proposed landscape and open space strategy are the proposed enhancement of public bridleway (9Hu) which extends through the site, east to west, and the introduction of new routes which will enhance local residents access to 10Hu which runs along the northern boundary of the site.
- 6.5.6 Given the above we believe the proposed development would provide future residents with more than sufficient amenity space to meet their needs and therefore accords with the aims and objectives of the recently adopted Position Statement 2: Infrastructure.
- 6.5.7 In the context of the above, as referenced in the IDP; and as set out in section 4 above it is proposed to provide for contributions towards improving existing and proposed new sports facilities within Sayers Common. The nature, extent and location of the proposed facilities have yet to be agreed.

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

- 6.6.1 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) prepared by SLR is based upon a desk top assessment of all relevant character assessments, maps and policies, and several site assessments carried out in both the winter and summer months between May 2024 and December 2025. The potential landscape and visual effects have also been assessed with the aid of a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).
- 6.6.2 In the context of the above, the LVA explains that the proposed masterplan prepared by architects at OSP and the detailed plans of the school prepared by ECA, have been subject to regular guidance and input from SLR on landscape and visual matters; and that the assessment assumes that the baseline for the site remains the site in its existing condition; and the fact that the site is a draft allocation for residential development has not been factored in. Therefore, the LVA represents a worst-case scenario.
- 6.6.3 In terms of its planning policy context the LVA explains that the site is not located within any national, landscape or landscape-related designations; rather it lies adjacent to the built up area boundary to the north of Sayers Common and whilst not allocated for development within the current Local Plan is allocated for 200 homes and SEN school under Policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan. It goes on to note that a public bridleway (9Hu) extends through the site, east to west, and a public footpath is located immediately north of the site (10Hu).

- 6.6.4 The LVA goes on to advise that the High Weald National Landscape is located 3.3km to the north of the site, and the South Downs National Park (SDNP) is located approximately 2.5km to the south-east of the site. The LVA indicates that the site does not form part of the setting of either designation.
- 6.6.5 In terms of landscape character, the LVA explains that at a national level the site has been classified as forming part of NCA 121, Low Weald; and at county level, West Sussex County Council in their Landscape Character Assessment (2005) identify the site as being within landscape character LW19; Eastern Low Weald. Mid Sussex District Council in their Landscape Character Assessment (2005) identify the site as falling within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 4: "Hickstead Low Weald". The LVA indicates that the site and its immediate context strongly align with the character area's key characteristics, with the landscape being mostly agricultural, and comprising woodlands, shaws, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, which together form a predominantly rural landscape, but also with some influences of built form, particularly to the east of the LCA, the A23 being a key feature too.
- 6.6.6 The LVA goes on to advise that within the Mid Sussex Capacity Assessment (June 2014), the site has been classified as being part of Landscape Capacity Area 62: Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald and assessed as having Medium capacity to accommodate development. The LVA also highlights the fact that only two sites within the assessment have a higher capacity at High/ Medium, and that the study does also state that *"it is important to note that these scores are only indicative of potential capacity and would need to be tested through more detailed assessment at the site-specific level when proposals for specific development locations are known"*; and that within the Mid Sussex District Plan (Reg 19) Sustainability Appraisal (Nov 2023), landscape matters are also anticipated to be minor positive if the proposed development fulfils the site allocation's policy requirements.
- 6.6.7 Within the context of the above, the LVA acknowledges that whilst the introduction of built form to a greenfield site will always result in negative landscape effects; the landscape effects resulting from the proposed development would be highly localised as the proposed built form would be located within a site that is already directly and indirectly influenced by existing built form of the same nature, and is enclosed by well-established vegetation.
- 6.6.8 That said the LVA indicates that there would be major/ moderate and negative effects on the fields which form part of the application site which equates to an important planning consideration; and that there would also be moderate and negative effects on the predominantly simple, still and quiet site but with some diversity to the character of the site itself although these would not be considered important planning considerations given that the site is already partially influenced by built form. All other landscape receptors would be moderate/ minor at most or of a neutral nature. To this end the LVA indicates that the South Downs would experience no landscape effects.
- 6.6.9 In terms of visual impacts, the LVA explains that 15 viewpoint locations were visited and photographed to represent the range of views and receptors likely to be affected by the proposed development; and that four

of the nearest and most sensitive views have also been developed into verifiable photomontages to represent the potential visual effects from these views.

- 6.6.10 As with landscape impacts the LVA advises that whilst the introduction of built form in a green field is likely to result in negative visual effects, the appraisal found that visual effects of the proposed development would be highly localised with all but one receptor being within the immediate vicinity of the site. The exception is for receptors within the South Downs National Park who would experience very distant views of the proposed development. Visual effects would also always be experienced within views that are already influenced by the existing built form at Sayers Common, reducing the extent of these visual effects
- 6.6.11 Within the context of the above the LVA advises that the highest level of visual effect would be Major/ Moderate and Negative. These the LVA advises would be experienced by walkers, cyclists and horse riders along bridleway 9Hu within the site and would reduce to Moderate at year 15 due to the proposed planting partially screening and filtering views. Whilst the LVA concludes these Major/ Moderate and Negative effects are regarded as important planning considerations, it also acknowledges that they are highly localised, would not affect any valued or designated landscapes and would be temporary.
- 6.6.12 The LVA also notes that elsewhere within the site or the immediate vicinity, visual effects would be at most Moderate and Negative; and that from further afield, visual effects would be at most Moderate/ Minor and Negative. For all views, the LVA indicates that the proposed development would be seen in the context of or in place of the existing built form at Sayers Common and would reduce in the long term as the proposed planting establishes and progressively filters or screens views of the proposed dwellings. The LVA also indicates that from the South Downs National Park, visual effects would be at most a Negligible magnitude of change at Year 1 and 15 and that there would eventually be no visual effect once the proposed planting has established. Given the high sensitivity of walkers, cyclist or horse riders within the South Downs, this the LVA suggests equates to Moderate/ Minor and Negative visual effects.
- 6.6.13 The LVA concludes:
'This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been carried out by an experienced landscape architect and in accordance with the latest landscape guidance including GLVIA3. Alongside this assessment, the landscape architects have been actively involved in the design process. This has ensured that negative landscape and visual effects are highly localised as the proposed development would retain the majority of existing vegetation and built form has been set back from sensitive edges, together allowing for open spaces to be distributed throughout the development. Proposed building heights and densities would also be in keeping with existing development at Sayers Common. The landscape and visual assessment process has also informed finer aspects of the illustrative masterplan, including the rural nature of the proposed open spaces throughout the site which would provide new public facilities including a range of play facilities for children, and teenagers, community orchard and allotments, and a new footpath connection. Together these would cater to a wide range of residents, both existing and new.'

In regard to landscape and visual harm associated with the proposed development, in the short-term a small number of major/ moderate and negative effects would be experienced by landscape and visual receptors which equate to important planning considerations. However, given the incorporation of existing vegetation and landscape buffers, these would be contained to within the site and would not affect any valued or designated landscapes and would be temporary. Moderate and negative effects would also be limited to within the site so the greatest level of landscape or visual harm outside of the site would be moderate/ minor and negative. This includes visual harm from the South Downs where negligible effects would be experienced at isolated, elevated locations..'

6.6.14 Given the above, the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the landscape related aims and objectives of policies DP12, 13, 16, and 22 of the Adopted District Plan, Policies Hurst C1, Hurst H1, Hurst H5 and Hurst H6 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and policies DPN3, DPB1, DPC1, DPC2 and DPC4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

6.7 The Effect of the Proposed Development on Trees and Hedgerows

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

6.7.2 It indicates that there are a total of 428 individual trees, 24 groups of trees, and 9 hedges/hedgerows growing within or adjacent to the site. The surveyed trees and tree groups are shown on the Tree Survey Schedule (TSS) and Tree Protection plan (TPP) at appendix 2 of the SJA trees report.

6.7.3 Of the 428 individual trees, there are 13 category 'A' specimens (Trees of high quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 40 years) on or immediately adjacent to the site, 138 category 'B' specimens, (trees of moderate quality with an estimated remaining life expectancy of at least 20 years), and 252 category 'C' trees i.e. trees being either of low quality, very limited merit, only low landscape benefits, no material cultural or conservation value, or only limited or short-term potential; or young trees with trunk diameters below 150mm; or a combination of these. In addition, the AIR advises that 25 category U trees are present on site i.e. moribund specimens which are unlikely to live beyond the next 10 years. No TPO trees are located on or immediately adjacent to the site and only 1 veteran (tree 357) is located on the site. Of the 33 groups of trees, hedges, and hedgerows, 3 have been assessed as category 'B', and the remaining 30 as category 'C'. No ancient woodland is located on or immediately adjacent to the site.

6.7.4 The AIR goes on to indicate that no ancient, veteran or notable trees, no category 'A' trees, and no trees of high landscape or biodiversity value are to be removed. Of the 82 trees to be removed to accommodate the development, none are category A trees, only 10 are category B trees i.e. 7% of the category B trees surveyed, 68 are category C trees i.e. 27% of the category C trees surveyed, and 4 are category U trees. The AIR also indicates that whilst the proposed removal of individuals and groups of trees will represent a partial alteration to the main arboricultural features of the

site, with the greatest alteration being to the frontage of the site in views from the B1128, the retention of 79% of the existing canopy cover, including the vast majority of mature trees, ensures that the mature arboricultural character of the site is protected. Accordingly, the AIR concludes that the proposed development will result in a minor alteration to the overall arboricultural character of the site, which will not have a significant adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape.

- 6.7.5 The AIR also indicates that four hedges and three groups of trees need to be removed in their entirety together with sections of a further four hedges and six groups to accommodate the proposed development. All are category C specimens, and are the AIR indicates largely limited to semi-mature or young specimens and will not result in the removal of any large or mature canopies. Overall, the AIR concludes that *'taking account of the numbers, sizes and locations of the trees to be retained, including those that are off-site, the felling of the trees and groups identified for removal will represent only a partial alteration to the main arboricultural features, but all the large-canopied mature, notable and veteran trees are to be retained, which ensures that the mature arboricultural character of the site is to be retained and protected.'*
- 6.7.6 The AIR also explains that two of the trees (oak nos. 27 and 303) are to be crown lifted to 2.5m above ground level over the footpath and play areas proposed beneath their canopies. Said pruning will comply with the recommendations at paragraph 7.6 of British Standard BS 3998:2010, Tree work – Recommendations, and the AIR concludes will have a negligible effect on the appearance of the trees when viewed from outside the site itself and accordingly will not detract from the character or appearance of the local area.
- 6.7.7 The AIR also indicates that the proposed foundations, roads, parking bays and works subject to proposed level changes will as currently shown lead to incursions into the RPAs of just eleven trees. The proposed incursions are however small and located on the very periphery of RPAs with the largest incursion equating to 6.3% of the total RPA. As a result, and subject to implementation of the measures recommended on the Tree Protection Plan and set out at Appendix 2 of the AIR, the AIR concludes that no significant or long-term damage to their root systems or rooting environments will occur. Similarly, the AIR indicates 26 trees will be subject to incursions into their RPAs as a result of the proposed footpaths, hard surfaces and play areas. As however the encroaching into RPAs is for the most part less than 7% equates, with the maximum incursion being 16.4%, and as this does not exceed the 20% maximum incursion into currently unsurfaced ground recommended in BS 5837, the AIR again concludes that subject to implementation of the measures recommended on the Tree Protection Plan and set out at Appendix 2 of the AIR, no significant or long-term damage to the root systems or rooting environments of these trees will occur.
- 6.7.8 The AIR also confirms that none of the proposed dwellings or apartments or their associated amenity spaces are likely to be shaded by retained trees to the extent that this will interfere with their reasonable use or enjoyment by incoming occupiers, which might otherwise lead to pressure on the Local

Planning Authority to permit felling or severe pruning that it could not reasonably resist.

6.7.9 Overall the AIR concludes that:

- *'As the proposals will retain most of the main arboricultural features of the site, its arboricultural attractiveness, history and landscape character and setting will be maintained, thereby complying with Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework.*
- *Whilst some trees are to be removed, there is no duty in planning policy to retain all existing trees in all circumstances. Paragraph 136 of the NPPF states (italics added for emphasis): "**Planning policies and decisions should ensure... that existing trees are retained wherever possible**"; and thereby recognises circumstances in which it might not be possible to retain every tree. Accordingly, the proposed removal of trees does not mean that this application must thereby be refused; and does not mean it conflicts with this paragraph of the NPPF.*
- *As the proposals will not result in the loss or deterioration of any ancient woodland or any ancient or veteran trees, they comply with paragraph 193 (c) of the NPPF.*
- *The proposed development retains all veteran, notable and aged oaks with appropriate buffers provided through enhanced RPAs that will protect them from development pressures. Whilst the majority of trees proposed for removal are small or of lower quality, several trees are of moderate arboricultural and landscape value. The proposed removals have provided the necessary space for access, development, landscaping and the protection of the important arboricultural features, so their removal should be balanced against the benefits of these.*
- *The retention of 79% of the existing canopy cover, including the majority of mature trees ensures that the mature arboricultural character of the site is retained. Furthermore, the proposed tree planting, subject to successful establishment, has the potential to mitigate the proposed removals and provide an increase in canopy cover once mature, which could improve the site's green infrastructure network and arboricultural character. Accordingly, the proposals comply with Policy DP 37 of the adopted Mid Sussex District Council District Plan 2014 - 2031 and Policy DPN4 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2012-2039 Submission Draft (December 2023).*
- *As the proposed development retains and protects the significant arboricultural landscape features within the site and along its boundaries, it complies with Policy Housing HurstH5 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish 2031 Neighbourhood Plan.*
- *On the basis of our assessment, we conclude that the arboricultural impact of this scheme is of negligible magnitude, as defined according to the categories set out in Table 1 of this report.'*

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

- #### 6.8.1
- Aspect Ecology has carried out an Ecological Appraisal of the proposed development, based on the results of a desktop study, Phase 1 habitat survey and detailed protected species surveys in respect of roosting, foraging and commuting Bats, Badger, Dormouse, breeding birds, Great Crested Newts (GCN), and Reptiles.

- 6.8.2 The Ecological Appraisal indicates that there are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations present within or adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory designation is the South Downs National Park, which is located approximately 2.47km southeast of the site. The next nearest statutory nature conservation designation to the site is Wolstonbury Hill SSSI, which is located approximately 4.5km southeast of the site. All of the statutory ecological designations in the surrounding area are well separated from the site by existing development and given the type and scale of the proposals, the Ecological Appraisal advises are unlikely to be affected by the proposals.
- 6.8.3 The nearest non-statutory designation is Mill Lane Designated Road Verge (DRV) which is located approximately 1.21km east of the site. As this site is well separated from the site by existing development and given the type and scale of the proposals, the Ecological Appraisal advises it is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development.
- 6.8.4 The Ecological Appraisal also advises that the nearest European designation is Castle Hill Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and National Nature Reserve (NNR), which is located approximately 15km southeast of the site. It is thus physically well separated from the site and unlikely to be adversely affected by the proposals.
- 6.8.5 The Ecological Appraisal goes on to advise that the Phase 1 habitat survey area is dominated by modified grassland that does not form an important ecological feature; and that the features of ecological importance include native hedgerows and associated trees, trees (including those of veteran age), treelines, woodland, orchard and ponds.
- 6.8.6 As set out in the Ecological Appraisal, aside from lengths of hedgerow and several trees to be removed for access and/or facilitate the proposals, these important features are fully retained under the proposals and will be protected during construction. Furthermore, the hedgerow and tree losses will be compensated for by new planting.
- 6.8.7 The Ecological Appraisal goes on to advise that habitats within the site are suitable to support protected and notable fauna including roosting bats, Reptiles, Hedgehog, Brown Hare and birds. A number of mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the risk of harm to any protected species present within the site, with compensatory measures proposed, where appropriate, in order to maintain or enhance the conservation status of local populations.
- 6.8.8 The bat assemblage is noted to be of local level importance, with Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle considered to form ecologically important features at the local level due to their high occurrence on-site and Barbastelle also considered ecologically important features at the local level due to their very rare status. As set out in the Ecological Appraisal other species occurred only infrequently and are not considered to be of particular importance outside of a site context.
- 6.8.9 As set out in the Ecological Appraisal buildings B1a and B5 are confirmed to support roosting bats. Whilst the loss of these roosts would have an impact on the local populations of Common Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared bats, given the low status of the roosts recorded the Ecological

Appraisal indicates that their loss is not considered to be crucial to the long-term favourable conservation status of these populations. Nonetheless, a mitigation strategy will be implemented (under a Natural England licence) to ensure that bats are fully safeguarded during works, and roosting opportunities within the site are carefully maintained. In addition, whilst emergencies were not recorded in buildings B1c, B1d, B2, B3, B4a, B4b, B6, B7, B8, B9 and B10, as bats are dynamic animals and could possibly colonise these buildings in the future, the Ecological Appraisal recommends reasonable precautions be taken to minimise the risk to protected species in the unlikely event that they should be found during the course of construction.

- 6.8.10 The Ecological Appraisal advises that with the exception of T335, all trees with roosting potential are to be retained, and that whilst the loss of this tree would have an impact on the local population of Noctule bats, given the low conservation status of the roost, it is not considered to be crucial to the long-term favourable conservation status of this population. Nonetheless, a mitigation strategy will be implemented (under a Natural England licence) to ensure that bats are fully safeguarded during works, and roosting opportunities within the site are carefully maintained.
- 6.8.11 Similarly, the majority of the woodland, trees and scrub within the site are to be retained under the proposals, with new tree, hedgerow and shrub planting proposed that will improve the connectivity and foraging potential through the site.
- 6.8.12 Whilst the site supports habitat of potential value to Badger, in the form of hedgerows, woodland and the offsite woodland, and whilst the orchard could provide a seasonal foraging resource, the Ecological Appraisal advises that no evidence of Badger setts or Badger activity was recorded within the site and as such, Badger are considered unlikely to be affected by the proposals.
- 6.8.13 The Ecological Appraisal also explains that whilst the site contains suitable habitat for Dormouse in the form of woodland and hedgerows and, to a lesser extent, scrub, surveys found no evidence of Dormouse within the site, with no individual Dormice or characteristic nests recorded during the surveys. Accordingly, Dormouse is considered to be absent from the site and its immediate surrounds and does not form a constraint to the proposals. Nevertheless, a precautionary approach including hand searches is proposed during vegetation removal in relation to Dormouse (see below). If any evidence of Dormouse is found, works will cease immediately and advice will be sought from Natural England to agree on appropriate actions.
- 6.8.14 Turning to other UK mammal species the Ecological Appraisal explains that the water bodies present within the site are unsuitable for use by Water Vole and Otter; and that habitat losses arising from the proposals are not considered likely to have significant effects on Brown Hare and Hedgehog. Indeed, for Hedgehog, habitat losses will be offset by the provision of new gardens and open space. As such, subject to the implementation of precautionary safeguards and enhancement measures outlined in Chapter 6, the Ecological Appraisal indicates that it is not considered that these species will be significantly affected by the proposals.

- 6.8.15 The Ecological Appraisal also advises that whilst the site contains suitable habitat for reptiles in the form of field margins, tall ruderal vegetation and grassland, surveys only found a low population of slow worm. As a result, and as the proposed development looks to retain and enhance the majority of the suitable reptile habitats, the Ecological Appraisal concludes that the proposals maintain and enhance suitable areas of reptile habitat. That said it also acknowledges the fact that areas where reptiles have been recorded will be affected by construction works posing the potential risk of injury or disturbance to reptile species, albeit the Ecological Appraisal indicates that on the basis of the survey results and the low reptile populations recorded, it is considered that these species can be appropriately safeguarded by a habitat manipulation exercise as detailed in Chapter 6 of the Ecological Appraisal.
- 6.8.16 Turning to Amphibians, the Ecological Appraisal advises that the site provides potential opportunities for amphibians including Great Crested Newt and Common Toad, in the form of ponds, hedgerows and field margins; and that whilst eDNA surveys returned a negative result, as a single Great Crested Newt was found in terrestrial vegetation during one of the reptile surveys, an application will be made to join the Nature Space district licensing scheme. Subject to joining the district licensing scheme the Ecological Appraisal indicates that it is considered that the conservation status of the Great Crested Newt population will be maintained. In addition, whilst Common Toad was also recorded during the site surveys, as the majority of habitats of elevated value for the species will be retained, with new habitat created, including SuDS basins which will enhance the habitat for this species post-development, it is considered, subject to the implementation of safeguards set out in Chapter 6 of the Ecological Appraisal, that this species will not be significantly affected by the proposals.
- 6.8.17 The Ecological Appraisal also advises that a total of 23 breeding species of bird were recorded at the site during the breeding bird surveys, of which 7 were considered to be breeding. It goes on to advise that most of the birds recorded at the site are not listed as having any special conservation status, although Starling and Mistle Thrush are included on the Red List and Mallard, Stock dove, Woodpigeon, Moorhen, Tawny Owl, Swallow, Wren, Song thrush and Dunnock, are included on the Amber List as a result of declines in UK breeding populations. Starling and Song thrush are also S41 Priority Species. Of the above species, Starling, Moorhen, Stock Dove, Woodpigeon, Wren, Song Thrush and Dunnock, were recorded as breeding. The Ecological Appraisal also indicates that species breeding at the site were recorded utilising pond habitat, buildings, trees and hedgerows, and that these habitats are common in the surrounding area and there is no evidence to suggest the site is of elevated value at the local level for these species, which remains common throughout Great Britain. It also advises that all these species are included on the Red or Amber Lists having undergone major or moderate declines in their UK populations, albeit they all remain abundant and widespread in suitable habitat in both a local and national context, as are all the remaining species that were recorded breeding at the site.
- 6.8.18 Given the above the Ecological Appraisal concludes that whilst the proposed development will result in the loss of several sections of hedgerow to facilitate site access and this could affect nesting birds that

may be present at the time of works, a number of safeguards in respect of nesting birds are proposed, as described in Chapter 6; and that in the long-term, newly created habitats and faunal enhancements will provide additional nesting opportunities for birds, as described in Chapter 6 of the Ecological Appraisal.

6.8.19 Finally, we note that no evidence of any protected, rare or notable invertebrate species was recorded within the site during the course of the survey work.

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

6.8.19 Overall the Ecological Appraisal concludes that:
'the proposals have sought to minimise impacts and subject to the implementation of appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will result in significant harm to biodiversity, in accordance with national and local planning policy.'

The separate Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment having measured the habitats that currently exist on site and that proposed suggests that the data from the baseline habitat survey work and the proposed habitat enhancement and creation works indicates.

6.8.20 The separate Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment having measured the habitats that currently exist on site, and that proposed, indicates that the data from the baseline habitat survey work and the proposed habitat enhancement and creation works indicates a net habitat biodiversity unit change for the proposals within the site boundary of -0.54 Habitat Units (representing a calculated loss of 0.88%) and +3.89 Hedgerow Units (representing a calculated gain of 21.52%) within the site boundary.

Table 4.3 Anticipated Change in Biodiversity

	Change in Units	% Change	Trading Rules Satisfied?
On-site Habitats	-0.54	-0.88%	No
On-site Hedgerows and Tree Lines	+3.89	+21.52	Yes
On-site Watercourses	N/A – No watercourses present		

6.8.21 Having regard to the above it is clear that whilst the development proposals will realise significant qualitative enhancements to on-site hedgerows and trees, a net gain in biodiversity will not be delivered within the site itself. To achieve a 10% net gain in habitat units and satisfy trading rules, a minimum of 6.68 off-site units are required, of which 5.63 units must comprise individual trees or a higher distinctiveness habitat type.

- 6.8.22 Within the context of the above the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment goes on to advise that under the relevant legislation, consideration of how the 10% gain will be delivered offsite is normally determined post-planning, via a Biodiversity Gain Plan. However, at this stage it acknowledges that it is helpful to highlight that there are local offsetting options available, such as the Ardingly Habitat Bank covered by Mid Sussex District Council. The site is the BNG assessment confirms in the National Character Area (NCA) Low Weald. The BNG Assessment also indicates that given the low number of habitat units required and the low distinctiveness of the existing on-site habitats, offsetting through the creation of off-site habitats is expected to be readily achievable. Alternatively, the BNG Assessment advises that the offsite BNG units could be delivered through a national BNG broker, subject to the application of the relevant spatial risk multiplier, where relevant. Finally, as a last resort, the off-site BNG units can be delivered by purchasing the government's statutory biodiversity credits. The exact approach to be pursued can be confirmed by way of a Biodiversity Gain Plan following grant of planning permission.
- 6.8.23 On this basis, the development proposals accord with all legislation and planning policy of relevance to ecology and nature conservation and indeed should be viewed as an opportunity to secure significant ecological enhancements at a wider level.
- 6.8.23 On the basis of the above, the proposed development would in our opinion accord with the aims and objectives of policies DP17, 37 and 38 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy Housing HurstH6: of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and policies DPN1, DPN2, DPN3 and DPN4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

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

- 6.9.1 The proposed development has, as set out in the DAS, been designed to ensure that it does not adversely impact upon the privacy and amenity of the existing residents located in properties adjacent to the site.
- 6.9.2 In the context of the above, it is fair to say that as shown on the illustrative masterplan, most of the properties that abut the site are situated quiet some distance from the site boundaries and separated by intervening vegetation, such that any impacts will be minimal. To this end we note, as set out below, that the properties proposed along the southern boundary of the site are circa 50m from those to the south in Sayers Meadows, and over 80m from Kingscot, a grade 2 listed building located to the south, on London Road. Similarly, the proposed dwellings, as set out in the illustrative layout over 60 from the houses to the east, on the opposite side of London Road.
- 6.9.3 Given the distances involved and both existing and proposed new planting there will be no adverse impact on the privacy and amenity of the occupants of these properties.



- 6.9.3 Whilst a number of the proposed dwellings will be located adjacent to the proposed SEN school, the actual distance between built from is, as set out below circa 65m, and the proposed orientation of said dwellings and boundary treatment will ensure there is no adverse overlooking.



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

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

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

6.10.1 The application is accompanied by a detailed Transport Assessment (TA). This has been prepared following pre-application discussions with WSCC and assesses the proposed development against the 'key transport tests' set out in paragraph 115 of the NPPF, as follows:

a) Will the opportunities for sustainable travel be prioritised?

6.10.2 The TA explains that there is an established precedent for development in this location given recent local consents, and that future residents of the site will have access to a variety of everyday facilities and services located within a comfortable walking and cycling distance of the site, supplemented by additional services and facilities to be developed as part of the wider growth planned in Sayers Common through The Submission Draft Local Plan allocations.

6.10.3 The TA also explains that journeys further afield can be accommodated by public transport with bus stops located on the B2218, within 100m of the site, which provide onward connection to Hassocks and Burgess Hill rail

stations; and that these opportunities for sustainable transport will be promoted and taken up appropriately and proportionately through:

- Site design, e.g. providing an environment that is conducive for use by active travel modes, the provision of cycling parking and EV charging and dwelling design that seeks to enable working from home.
- The removal of traffic from Bridleway 9hU and a new connecting route between Bridleway 9hU and Footpath 10hU.
- Enhancements to local off-site active travel infrastructure.
- Financial contributions to strategic intervention identified through the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- Comprehensive sustainable transport strategy.
- Measures and initiatives, including a Car Club, provided through a Travel Plan for both the residential and school elements of the development proposal.

6.10.4 Given the above the TA concludes that the opportunities for sustainable travel have been prioritised, consistent with the objectives of the NPPF.

b) Will safe and acceptable access be provided to the site for all modes?

6.10.5 The TA explains that access to the site is proposed through the slight relocation of an existing priority-controlled access onto the B2218, and that in turn, this connects with a new 5.5m spine road providing access to the residential element of the development in addition to replacing the use of Bridleway 9hU for access to LVS Hassocks SEN school.

6.10.6 The TA also advises that both the access arrangements and off-site sustainable travel infrastructure improvements comply with relevant design guidance and have been subject to an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. Thus, the TA concludes that safe and suitable access will be provided, consistent with the requirements of the NPPF.

c) Will the site layout comply with design guidance?

6.10.7 The TA explains that the internal layout of the LVS School is a matter for determination, and the layout of the site has been demonstrated to operate effectively with sufficient parking and refuse/fire access. It also advises that the design of the school layout has taken the opportunity to introduce a one-way taxi waiting loop distinct to the car park, enabling the removal of traffic from Bridleway 9hU and the internalisation of traffic associated with the school within the school site boundaries, supplemented with an on-site car park to accommodate parking demands arising with the operation of the school.

6.10.8 Likewise, the TA explains that whilst the internal layout of the residential site is a reserved matter and will not be determined at this stage, the illustrative site layout plan shows a street hierarchy in line with design guidance, adequate provision for car and cycle parking, sufficient space for servicing and is in line with Building Regulations guidance for fire access.

d) Will the traffic impacts be acceptable?

6.10.9 The TA explains that the assessment demonstrates that, in isolation, the proposed development will not have a 'severe' impact upon the performance of the highway network and thus satisfies the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework. That said it also acknowledges that the site is identified as a location for planned growth, the impacts of which have been assessed through the Mid Sussex Transport Study, and that a package of measures required to manage the impact of this planned growth has been identified, and an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is being prepared by Mid Sussex District Council that identifies the proportional contributions required to enable its delivery. To this end the TA confirms that the Applicant is willing to pay proportional contributions towards the necessary improvements.

6.10.10 Thus, the TA concludes that '*Consistent with the objectives of the NPPF, the proposed development will not have a 'severe' cumulative impact on the performance of the highway network.*'

6.10.11 Turning to the subject of Mitigation the TA indicates that the development proposals are supported by a comprehensive package of mitigation measures, comprising:

- Widening of the existing footway on the B2218 north of the site access to the B2218 / Mill Lane Roundabout to provide a 3.0m wide shared use pedestrian / cycle route to connect to existing provision - illustrated on drawing ITS19984-GA-034A
- Provision of an uncontrolled crossing on the B2218 and a new footway / cycleway on the western section of the B2218 to tie into an existing footway adjacent to the southbound bus stop - illustrated on drawing ITS19984-GA-034A
- Provision of tactile paving at the junction between B2218 / Oakhurst - illustrated on drawing ITS19984-GA-034A
- The introduction of a route within the site linking PRoW 9hU and 10hU.
- The removal of traffic from Bridleway 9hU and landscaping enhancement along the route.
- Financial contributions to bus service enhancements.
- Financial contributions towards improvements to Hassocks Station (in accordance with Policy DPSC3 and the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan).
- The provision of Car Club vehicles.
- The potential provision of on-site electric bicycles or membership of Brompton cycle-hire subscription scheme, secured through the Travel Plan.
- Residential Travel Plan.
- School Travel Plan.
- Financial contributions towards the delivery of improvement schemes identified within the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

6.10.12 In terms of policy DPSC7, the TA indicates that:

Policy requirement	Response
Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other housing allocations in the Plan within Sayers Common to deliver high quality placemaking, which supports	The development proposes off-site active travel infrastructure upgrades to the B2218 to ensure sustainable modes of travel are prioritised. This will not only benefit future

Policy requirement	Response
the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with direct enhanced active/ sustainable travel connections, and includes enabling the viability of new public transport services.	residents of the development but will also support a coordinated approach with other housing allocations within Sayers Common.
Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the development and integrate and enhance the existing PRow which crosses the site.	The existing PRow will be integrated within the site and the provision of a specific waiting area / car park for taxis within the LVS School will remove existing use by vehicles and associated parking that occurs along the PRow, enhancing its use for walking, cycling and equestrian trips. A new linking route between Bridleway 9hU and Footpath 10hU will be provided.
Provide any necessary upgrades to the existing access onto B2118.	The existing access to the site will be relocated and enhanced to provide a geometric design suitable for accommodating the demands of both the proposed residential development and continued operation of the school, new footways on both sides of the access and dropped kerbs and tactile paving to facilitate safe pedestrian journeys across the access point.
Provide financial contributions towards the provision of sustainable transport including improvements at Hassocks Station	In collaboration with the other allocates sites, the applicant will provide proportionate contribution towards facilitating the delivery of infrastructure identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

6.10.13 As such, the TA concludes that all site-specified transport policies associated with DPSC7 have been addressed.

6.10.14 Overall the TA concludes:

- *The site is located in an accessible location that is suitable for a residential development of up to 210 dwellings. Current public transport and local active travel links provide opportunities for sustainable travel to be taken up. The site provides connections and proposes improvements to local infrastructure and through the delivery of the Sustainable Transport Strategy and Travel Plan will ensure that these opportunities have been prioritised to be taken up by future residents.*
- *The site access arrangements comply with local and national design guidance and have been subject to an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit as well as pre-application engagement with WSCC. Connectivity for active travel modes has been considered. Safe and suitable access will therefore be provided for all users.*
- *The impact of the development on the operation of the local highway network within Sayers Common has been assessed and it is demonstrated that there will not be any significant residual impacts arising from the development.*
- Overall, the proposal is therefore demonstrated to comply with relevant transport policy, particularly the NPPF and MSDC Local Plan

allocation, and in transport and highways terms is shown to be acceptable.’

- 6.10.15 Given the above it is considered that based on the findings of the TA and in the context of the guidelines within para. 115 of the NPPF, that there are no residual cumulative impacts in terms of highway safety or the operational capacity of the surrounding road network and therefore planning permission should not be withheld on transport grounds. The proposed development effectively accords with the aims and objectives of policies DP21 and DP22 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy Housing HurstH6 and Transport Aims 1 – Safety and 8 - Public transport of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and policies DPT1, DPT2, DPT 3 and DPT 4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

The Framework Residential Travel Plan

- 6.10.16 The Framework Residential Travel Plan (FRTTP) explains that the FRTTP has been prepared to improve awareness of the opportunities for reducing car dependency (particularly single occupancy journeys) through the promotion of car sharing, walking and cycling; the overarching aim of the FRTTP being to influence behaviour change towards the use of sustainable modes of transport and active travel. To this end the FRTTP will be promoted widely amongst residents to not only minimise any development related traffic impacts on the local highway network but also promote the associated health and environmental benefits of active travel as well as the social benefits of car sharing.

- 6.10.17 In the context of the above the FRTTP advises that in order to implement the TP, a TP Co-ordinator (TPC) will be appointed to promote the TP amongst residents from the initial marketing of the proposed dwellings until completion of the 5-year monitoring period.

- 6.10.18 The TP measures include³²:
 TMP2 - The site will be designed to provide a safe pedestrian and cyclist friendly environment with footways provided throughout and internal speeds suitable for cycling on carriageway.

TPM3 – Covered, secure cycle parking will be provided for each dwelling within the curtilage of each property.

TPM4 – Electric vehicle (EV) charging will be provided at each dwelling across the site in accordance with Building Regulations.

TPM5 – the TPC will offer personalised travel planning to each household and look at arranging organised drop-in sessions.

TPM6 – A Travel Plan website and Welcome Pack will be created for the development prior to first occupations and will contain information on public transport services (timetables, maps), cycle maps, walking routes and information on local facilities and services accessible via active travel modes.

The packs will also contain details of sustainable transport events such as Bike Week (normally held in June) which can be promoted across the

³² TPM1 being the appointment of the TPC.

development to encourage people to try new sustainable modes of transport and reduce private car dependency.

The health and environmental benefits of walking and cycling will also be provided within the website and Welcome Packs.

TPM 7 – The TPC and Travel Information Pack will set out the benefits of working at home, internet shopping and home delivery options to reduce reliance on private car use – ‘Zero Travel’ Options - The development will provide high-speed broadband to enable these options. The TPC will also provide information on the local supermarkets that provide home grocery delivery services, such as Sainsbury’s and Iceland in Haywards Heath as well as supermarkets in Burgess Hill such as Waitrose and Tesco. The TPC will explore any incentives supermarkets offer for new customers and promote this across the Travel Plan website and Welcome Packs.

TPM 8 - The TPC will promote Bus Taster Passes in order to encourage residents and visitors to utilise the local public bus services that serve the site. Funded by the developer, one bus taster pass will be provided per household.

TPM 9 - The TPC will encourage cycling to residents living on the site through providing appropriate information (e.g. cycle routes, training), liaising with local cycle shops to provide discounts on cycle equipment and promoting key national events such as Bike Week and Cycle to School Week. Residents will also be provided with information on the local walking and Public Rights of Way routes as well as school walking routes and National Walking Month.

TPM 10 - The TPC will promote the benefits of car sharing and provide details of existing car share schemes operating in the area.

TPM 11 - Off-site Pedestrian and Cycle Improvements will be provided as set out on Drawing ITS19984-GA-034A and para 6.11 above.

TPM 12 - Improvements to Bus Stops will be provided as set out on Drawing ITS19984-GA-034A and para 6.11 above.

6.10.19 The key target of the Travel Plan is to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicular trips generated by the site by 10%, the action plan for doing so being set out in summary form in table 9.1 of the FRTP, as set out below.

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Prepare final Full Travel Plan	Prior to occupation of the site	Developer
Appoint Travel Plan Co-ordinator	From opening of sales suite on the site through to full occupation	Developer
Provide TPC details to WSCC	Following appointment of TPC	Developer / TPC
Deliver pedestrian / cycle access and infrastructure (TPM 2)	During construction phase / prior to first occupation	Developer
Install secure parking provision for each dwelling (TPM 3)	During construction phase	Developer

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
Install electric charging infrastructure for ultra-low emission vehicle charging (TPM 4)	During construction phase	Developer
Offer personalised travel planning (TPM 5) and discuss travel plan choices with residents and users of the site.	From first-occupation and on-going through the lifetime of the Travel Plan	TPC
Issue Travel Plan Welcome Pack and Website (TPM 6)	Upon occupation of dwellings	TPC
Promote zero-travel options (e.g. home working, internet shopping, home grocery delivery) (TPM 7)	During construction phase and from first occupation of the site.	TPC
Promote bus taster passes (TPM 8)	Upon occupation of dwellings	TPC
Encourage walking and cycling through the promotion of national events (TPM 9)	Upon occupation of dwellings	TPC
Promote Car Sharing scheme (TPM 10)	Upon occupation of dwellings	TPC
Conduct baseline travel surveys	On completion of development	TPC
Conduct subsequent travel surveys	On the anniversary of the baseline surveys and, every year for five years	TPC
Prepare annual monitoring report	Within 3 months of completion of travel surveys	TPC
Prepare action plan setting out future travel plan incentives / measures	Included as part of monitoring report	TPC / Developer
Off-site pedestrian / cycle improvements (TPM 11)	Prior to first occupation	Developer
Bus stop improvements along B2118 London Road (TPM 12)	Prior to first occupation	Developer

6.10.20 As set out in the FTP it is important that all parties are clear from the outset as to the objectives being sought through the FRTP. These requirements will drive the form and content of the FRTP, including the targets chosen.

6.10.21 In the context of the above the FRTP indicates that the proposed objectives are:

- 1) Reduce the need for unnecessary travel to and from the development and assist those who need to travel to do so by sustainable modes.
- 2) Achieve a reduction in the number of additional single occupancy car traffic movements to and from the development.
- 3) Encourage those travelling to and from the development to use public transport, cycle, walk and car share.
- 4) Provide adequately for those with mobility difficulties; and
- 5) Monitor travel patterns and identify further opportunities to encourage travel by walking, cycling and public transport.

6.10.22 The interim target is to reduce car mode share from 2021 census levels of 81% to 67% with increases in public transport, walking and cycling mode shares over the 5 year monitoring period following completion of the development. In order to be able to monitor this the FRTP indicates that

travel surveys will be undertaken upon completion of the full development to determine the baseline modal split, then biannually for 5 years after completion of the development.

The Framework School Travel Plan (FSTP)

6.10.23 The headline aims for the FSTP are:

- 1 To reduce single occupancy vehicle trips to / from the school amongst staff
- 2 To Promote Cycling for shorter journeys to work by staff

6.10.24 The (FSTP) looks to achieve this by appointing a Travel Plan Coordinator who will implement the measures set out in Section 6 of the FSTP, provide a point of contact for staff in relation to the Travel Plan, carry out marketing and promotion of the Travel Plan, as set out in Section 6 of the FSTP, organise travel surveys as set out in Section 8 of the FSTP, oversee the monitoring and review procedure for the Travel Plan, and report the results of the progress of the Travel Plan to WSCC as required.

6.10.25 A summary of the overall action plan proposed in the FSTP is set out in Table 9.1 of the FSTP, which is reproduced below.

Measures	Summary of Measures	Responsibility	Timescale
Management			
Travel Plan Co-ordinator	Travel Plan Co-ordinator	Headteacher (TPC)	Upon First Occupation
WSCC Liaison / Co-ordination	Liaison with WSCC	Headteacher (TPC)	Ongoing
Site Infrastructure and Management Measures			
Cycle Facilities	Provision of secure and covered cycle parking on site for staff.	Headteacher (TPC)	Prior to occupation of LVS
Disabled Car Parking	Allocate one disabled parking space	During construction phase	Prior to occupation of LVS
Car parks	Provision of additional car parking spaces with new building	During construction phase	Prior to occupation of LVS
Drop Off	Active management of drop off and collections of pupils	Headteacher (TPC) / Management Team	Ongoing from occupation of LVS
Staff Travel Plan Measures			
Walking and Cycling	Provision of walking and cycling information to staff	Headteacher (TPC)	Within 3 months of occupation of LVS and review annually
	Facilities for staff changing and storage of outdoor clothes/equipment	Headteacher (TPC)	Ongoing from occupation of LVS

Measures	Summary of Measures	Responsibility	Timescale
Public Transport	Information on public transport routes to be made available to staff	Headteacher (TPC)	Within 3 months of occupation of LVS and review annually
Car Sharing	Promote Car Sharing to appropriate staff members	Headteacher (TPC)	Within 3 months of occupation of LVS and review annually
Visitor Travel Plan Measures			
	Promote sustainable travel options to/from the site on the LVS Hassocks website and update as necessary.	Headteacher (TPC)	Prior to occupation / ongoing
	Develop electronic travel information sheets for visitors	Headteacher (TPC)	Ongoing
Off-site Improvements			
Off-site pedestrian / cycle improvements	Walking and cycling infrastructure improvements along B2118, London Road including pedestrian crossings	Developer – as part of wider development	During construction phase
Bus stop improvements	Improvements to bus stops in vicinity of site access on B2118, London Road	Developer – as part of wider development	During construction phase
Travel Plan Promotion / Marketing			
Travel Plan Promotion	Electronic copies of the Travel Plan available to staff	Headteacher (TPC)	On occupation of LVS and review annually
	Pack of travel info for staff	Headteacher (TPC)	Within 3 months of occupation of LVS and review annually
Monitoring			
Travel Plan Monitoring and Review	Undertake monitoring surveys of staff travel patterns (to be undertaken using questionnaire surveys)	Headteacher (TPC)	Surveys undertaken on a yearly basis
	Prepare a monitoring report considering survey results	Headteacher (TPC)	Within 2 months of undertaking each travel survey
	Report the results of the surveys and the review of the Travel Plan to WSCC as appropriate	Headteacher (TPC)	Annually, to be produced and submitted within 2 months of undertaking each travel survey

6.10.26 Overall, the FSTP aims to reduce the proportion of staff travelling by single occupancy car by 10% from a baseline mode split.

6.11 Site Suitability for Residential Development in Terms of Flood Risk

6.11.1 The application is accompanied by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). This explains that the application site lies in an area designated by the EA as Flood Zone 1 and is outlined to have a less than 1 in 1,000 (<0.1%) of flooding in any year from fluvial sources. The FRA also indicates that given the underlying geology and the results of groundwater monitoring undertaken, the risk of groundwater flooding at the site is low. Further to this, it is considered that, based on the local topography, any surcharged water from sewers present within and surrounding the site would likely flow southwards, with water likely to follow the road levels, and to flow away from the site. The risk of flooding from sewer sources is therefore considered to be very low. In addition, the FRA advises that EA mapping indicates that the site is not located within an area that is at risk of reservoir flooding when river levels are normal, or during times when the peak fluvial event and reservoir failure occur at the same time. The resultant risk of flooding from reservoir sources is therefore concluded to be very low.

6.11.2 Whilst some limited areas of surface water flood risk have been identified on-site, the FRA explains that the primary flow path along the southern boundary has been kept free from development and other areas of ponding / localised minor flow paths will be managed through the site levels strategy and the proposed drainage infrastructure.

6.11.3 Given the above, whilst the proposed development is classified as 'more vulnerable' it is considered appropriate within Flood Zone 1 without application of the Exception Test.

6.11.4 The FRA goes on to advise that the proposed surface water drainage strategy will manage and attenuate runoff from the proposed development through a system of SuDS which will include a combination of permeable paving, rain gardens, detention basins/ponds and potential conveyance swales which have been located depending on the positions of proposed buildings, overland flow routes, and topography; and are designed to provide the required storage volume to retain the 1 in 100 plus 45% climate change event, prior to a controlled discharge to the adjacent Ordinary Watercourse; and that it is proposed to discharge runoff at the Qbar greenfield runoff rate. The FRA also explains that by managing runoff that currently discharges in an uncontrolled manner and restricting the rate of discharge from the site, the overall flood risk within the wider area will be reduced; and that as the proposed drainage strategy will also remove suspected current discharges of surface water into the foul drainage system, this will help reduce the risk of foul sewer surcharging within the wider area.

6.11.5 In addition, the FRA advises that Temporary drainage should be established for the construction phase of development to prevent silt mobilisation, potentially impacting on flow regimes and silt pollution downstream.

6.11.5 Given the above the development can be satisfactorily drained in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and the aims and objectives of policy DP41 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy Housing HurstH1, HurstH3 and HurstH6 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and policy DPS4 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

6.12 Foul Water Drainage

6.12.1 The Preliminary Foul Drainage & Utilities Assessment explains that a Pre-Development Enquiry was submitted to Southern Water for 210 residential units and school with a proposed connection to the existing 150mm diameter public foul sewer in London Road; and that Southern Water have confirmed that the existing foul network currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development based on a foul discharge rate of 6.0 l/s connecting to the existing 150mm diameter public foul sewer in London Road.

6.12.2 The Preliminary Foul Drainage & Utilities Assessment also explains that given the existing site levels and location and depth of the receiving public foul sewer, a pumping station will be required to drain the foul flows from the majority of the proposed development, with a gravity connection anticipated for the residential units at the front of the site. Said pumping station is shown in the south western part of the site.

6.12.3 In addition to the above it is noted that the Flood Risk Assessment highlights the fact that the discharge of all surface water runoff in a controlled manner to the existing watercourse will represent an improvement with respect to the local foul sewer system capacity as it is anticipated that some surface water from the site currently discharges to the foul sewer network; and that the removal of this runoff from the foul sewer network will help alleviate any existing capacity issues.

6.12.2 Given the above the development can be satisfactorily drained in accordance with the aims and objectives of the NPPF and the aims and objectives of policy DP42 of the Adopted District Plan, Policy Housing HurstH6 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and policy DPI7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

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

6.13.1 The application is accompanied by both an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (ABDA) and a Built Heritage Statement (BHS). The former, produced by Tetra Tech Consulting Services Ltd (a RPS company) confirms that in terms of relevant, nationally significant designated heritage assets, no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wrecks or Registered Battlefields lie within the study site or in its immediate vicinity; the nearest Scheduled Monument being a Romano-British villa at Randolph's Farm located over 3.7km south of the site. The ABDA also confirms that in terms of relevant local designations, the study site does not lie within a locally designated, Archaeological Notification Area (ANA); and that the few past archaeological investigations undertaken in the vicinity of the site have identified only limited archaeological evidence of low (local) significance.

- 6.13.2 The ABDA goes on to advise that based on available information, the site is considered to have a high potential for the remains of 19th century farm buildings of low (local) significance and for evidence related to Post-Medieval and modern archaeological activity of low/no (Local/Negligible) significance. A low/uncertain archaeological potential is identified for all other periods.
- 6.13.3 In view of the size of the site, the ADBA indicates that it is anticipated that the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority will require archaeological mitigation in advance of development. In the first instance a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation will be required, focussed within the areas of proposed impact, with further works depending upon the results of the evaluation. As remains of national significance are not anticipated, this work can, the ADBA concludes, be secured to the granting of consent, by the inclusion of a standard archaeological planning condition.
- 6.13.4 The BHS assesses the significance of the built heritage resource within the site/study area, the contribution that the site makes to the heritage significance of the identified built heritage assets, and any harm or benefit to them which may result from the implementation of the development proposals, along with the level of any harm caused, if relevant.
- 6.13.5 Within the context of the above the BHS indicates that assets in the vicinity identified for further assessment on the basis of potential historical functional associations and intervisibility with the site comprise the Grade II Listed Kingscot only.
- 6.13.6 The BHS also advises that during pre-application discussions, the Council's Conservation Officer advised that:
- The 1970s Priory buildings within the site were deemed to represent non-designated heritage assets in the terms of the NPPF.
 - The surviving 'rural setting' of the 1970s Priory buildings was considered to contribute positively to their significance.
 - The remainder of built form within the site, including the 19th-century Kingsland, was deemed to be of insufficient interest to warrant classification as non-designated heritage assets.

The Grade II Kingscot

- 6.13.7 The BHS in the Statement of Significance, advises that the significance of Kingscot is principally derived from the architectural and historic interest of its physical fabric as an example of post-medieval vernacular architecture; and that the setting of the asset also contributes to the significance of the asset, although the significance derived from the setting is less than that derived from its historic fabric. The BHS also advises that the surrounds of the asset have been subject to notable change during the 20th and early 21st centuries.
- 6.13.8 The BHS goes on to advise that the principal elements of the physical surrounds and experience of the asset (its "setting") which are considered to contribute to its heritage significance comprise:
- The positioning of the asset within its domestic demise, and the understanding and experience of it from this location, with this being

the area from which its architectural detailing and evolution can be best understood.

- The spatial and visual connection between the asset and London Road, albeit acknowledging the change that has occurred to the character and alignment of this route.

6.13.9 In terms of the contribution made by the Site the BHS explains that in considering the Kingscot within their Pre-Application response, the Mid Sussex District Council Conservation Officer made the following commentary with regard to its 'setting':

"...the surviving rural setting of the listed building (which consists primarily of the site to the north and northwest) will be considered to contribute positively to the special interest of the listed building and how this is appreciated, in particular those parts of that interest which are drawn from historical illustrative and aesthetic values. The site is particularly important in terms of the context in which the house is appreciated in views from London Road, including the character of the approach to it from the north."

6.13.10 The BHS questions the above, which it considers does not accurately take into account the evolution of the surrounds of Kingscot, the current situation, or the manner to which the understanding and experience of the asset has the potential to contribute to its significance. The BHS also indicates that whilst elements of the site to the north and northwest of the asset may be undeveloped, it is not considered accurate to describe it as 'rural' in character. Such areas comprise modern, engineered sports pitches and the remnants of a former designed landscape, and are experienced in the context of the modern institutional use of the site, and adjacent modern development. The field to the north west whilst retaining a greater sense of the former agricultural context, is the BHS suggests, distinctly removed from the asset and is not understood or experienced from, or in-conjunction with, the asset. The BHS also confirms that there is no confirmed historic functional or associative connections between the asset and the site.

6.13.11 The BHS goes on to also advise that any visual connections between the asset and the site are limited to co-visibility between the asset and the London Road frontage of the site, from an isolated section of this route, in particular when travelling southwards. In such cases, views the BHS states limited to the partially obscured views of the gable elevation with the modern outbuilding in the foreground and modern development to the rear; and that views are anticipated to be further screened at times when vegetation is in full leaf. Thus, the BHS concludes '*No intervisibility between the asset and the wider Site has been identified.*'

6.13.12 The BHS concludes that when taking into account the existing baseline, the only element of the site which can be considered to contribute to the understanding and experience of the asset is the undeveloped element of the London Road frontage, south of the existing access route; and that by virtue of its undeveloped nature, this part of the site facilitates the views from London Road, as discussed above. However, when taking into account the nature of these views, they are considered to make a minor, at most, contribution to the overall experience and appreciation of the asset. The BHS also indicates that the remainder of the Site is considered to form part of the 'setting' of the asset which makes a neutral contribution to its significance.

- 6.13.13 In assessing the impact of the proposed development on Kingscot, the BHS indicates that the only element of the site which has been identified as positively contributing to the understanding and experience of the asset would not be subject to change. Specifically, the BHS advises that the Land Use and Green Infrastructure Parameters Plans secure the exclusion of built form from the London Road frontage south of the access route; and that even where development is proposed in proximity to London Road, as secured via the Land Use and Green Infrastructure Parameters Plans, this would be within the locality of existing built form and set back from the road. Accordingly, the BHS suggests development would not be introduced such that it would obstruct views of Kingscot when travelling along London Road, nor introduce built form into views where modern built form is not already experienced in-conjunction with the asset. As a result, the BHS concludes that *'When taking into account the existing baseline, the required changes to the access point are not considered to alter the ability to understand or experience of the asset.'* The BHS also indicates that the same is also considered to be the case with regard to the remainder of proposed development. As secured via the Land Use and Green Infrastructure Parameters Plans, residential built form proposed under the outline application would be set away from the asset and its associated demise and would not result in a change that would alter the ability to understand or experience the asset as an example of post-medieval vernacular architecture situated within a defined domestic demise adjacent to London Road; and that the area of the proposed school is distinctly removed from the asset and is not understood or experienced from, or in-conjunction with, the asset.
- 6.13.14 The BHS concludes that *'When taking into account the existing baseline and the informed nature of the proposed development, it is concluded that no harm would arise to the overall heritage significance of Kingscot as a result of a change in 'setting', and we respectfully disagree with the Mid Sussex District Council Conservation Officer that a 'low-mid level' of less than substantial harm would arise, as set out within their Pre-Application response.'*

The 1970s Priory Buildings

- 6.13.15 The BHS explains that the Priory Buildings can be divided into three principal areas:
- The former, deconsecrated Chapel, now commonly known as 'The Oast House' ('A' on the plan below).
 - The curved, two-storey structure which extends northwest from Kingsland and encircles the pond ('B' on the plan below). This section is referred as 'the Monastic Arc'.
 - The single storey 'guest wing' attached to the eastern side of Kingsland ('C' on the plan below).



a) The Former Chapel

6.13.16 The BHS explains that the former Chapel is situated at the western end of the Priory complex and forms a focal point of the design. The principal element comprises a straight conoid, similar in appearance to an oast house (hence the alternative name for the structure), with a rectangular extension with a pyramid shaped roof located to the north, known as the 'Bless Sacrament Chapel', with a connecting covered link to the dormitory element of the Monastic Arc extending to the northwest.





6.13.17 The BHS goes on to explain that the Chapel as constructed was not reflective of the original design intent for the complex and that this has reduced the architectural and aesthetic merit of the building; and the construction methods of the resulting structure are not considered to be of any particular technological or engineering interest in the context of buildings of the 1970s or 1980s. Having explained the design of the interior of the Chapel, the BHS also comments on the connection between the chapel and the dormitory elements of the Monastic Arch.

b) The Monastic Arc

6.13.18 The BHS explains that the Monastic Arc comprises the principal building associated with the development of the 1970s Priory complex, and as originally constructed, was divided into private areas for exclusive use of the sisters, and communal areas to be utilised by the religious community and visitors. It goes on to explain that the Monastic Arc, and to a degree the Chapel, are seeking to respond to the Post-Modernist movement that prevailed at the time, providing a 'modern' take on monastic complex typology and associated symbology, and drawing upon the local vernacular in regard to materiality and timber-framing. Neither are however considered to represent a particularly refined or good example, and the Monastic Arc has, as set out in the BHS undergone considerable change both externally and internally, all of which has impacted upon the integrity of the original design intent of the external envelope, and eroded the overall character and aesthetic merit.



c) The Secular Wing

6.13.19 The BHS explains that the Secular Wing is situated to the east of Kingsland, and provided accommodation for guests of the Priory, separate from the monastic accommodation. Whilst displaying some common architectural themes with the Monastic Arc, the BHS indicates that this single storey structure is simpler in its overall presentation and architectural detailing. The BHS also indicates that whilst the general plan form and layout of the Secular Wing remains as constructed, there has been a wholesale reconfiguration of the design and materiality of the window units, which has resulted in a notable change in character. Likewise, the BHS indicates that internal doors to each of the guest rooms have been replaced. Not only does the BHS conclude that the architectural interest associated with the original design of the Secular Wing is limited, but that this is further reduced as a result of changes that have been made.



- 6.13.20 The BHS in the Statement of Significance, refers to Historic England's assessment of the Priory Building for designation, and their conclusion that:

“Although undoubtedly of some architectural and historic interest, on balance, the architecture is not sufficiently strong, in part due to later alterations, to possess special architectural interest and although an important work by Blee and unusual as a late-C20 religious house, it is not of special historic interest. It is therefore recommended that the priory is not added to the National Heritage List for England.....

The former Priory of Our Lady of Good Counsel, 1976-1980 by the Michael Blee Whittaker Partnership is not recommended for listing for the following principal reasons:

Degree of architectural interest:

** while a sensitive and creative response to its brief, its architectural success is not consistent throughout the complex and overall does not amount to special interest;*

** the complex has been compromised by alterations to the plan, loss of original joinery and overpainting of interior finishes.*

Degree of Historic interest:

** although an important work by Michael Blee and unusual as a late-C20 religious house, these factors are not sufficient to outweigh the limitations of the complex's architectural interest.”*

- 6.13.21 As set out in the BHS the 1970s Priory buildings are considered to be of some architectural and historic interest as an example of late 20th-century monastic complex, designed by a known architect as a modern interpretation of the typology based upon detailed research. That said, the BHS indicates that the architectural interest has been eroded and the integrity of the original design intent has been compromised by the extensive change to the external envelope of the building, and changes to the layout and character of principal spaces. The 'success' of the former Chapel also limits the overall level of interest that can be attributed this element. As a result, in considering the buildings in the context of their typology and the historic interest that may derive from such factors, the BHS notes the following:

- The establishment of the complex does not illustrate an important aspect of the nation's religious history, nor the history of the Order to which the complex was associated.
- Although the buildings seek to draw upon the local vernacular, they are not considered to represent the most significant or distinctive of such examples

- 6.13.22 The BHS goes on to advise that whilst the connection with Blee is considered to be of some interest – in particular in light of Blee being an architect known for his involvement with ecclesiastical sites – the level of interest that can be attributed to the connection is limited by way of the buildings not representing the best, or most intact, examples of Blee's work; and that not all of the Priory buildings, or parts thereof, are of equal architectural and historic interest. To this end the BHS indicates that whilst the former Chapel and the principal elements of the Monastic Arc are considered to be the areas of that would hold the most degree of any potential interest, the former Chapel as constructed was not reflective of Blee's original design intent for the complex, the Monastic Arc has been subject to change internally and externally and thus does not represent a

relic of its original form; and the buildings are not the best examples of Blee's work, nor Post-Modernist architecture.

- 6.13.23 Furthermore, the BHS advises that there are also differing levels of interest associated with component parts of these two spaces, in particular the Monastic Arc, with this largely being reflective of the hierarchy of spaces and how this influenced their design intent, which have then been influenced by the degree of change they have been subject to.
- 6.13.24 Given the above the BHS concludes that the Chapel should be classified as of moderate local value only, with the Monastic Arc and Secular Wing of a lower local value.
- 6.13.25 The BHS goes on to consider the setting of the 1970s Priory buildings and how this also contributes to their heritage significance, albeit noting that any significance derived from their 'setting' is less than that derived from their historic fabric and has been subject to notable change during the early 21st centuries.
- 6.13.26 In the context of the above the BHS highlights the fact that in considering the 'setting' of the 1970s Priory buildings, the council's conservation officer in her Pre-Application response advised: *"In terms of the contribution made by setting to the significance of the NDHA, the relatively tranquil, rural context of the site will have been contributory factors both in the original establishment of Kingsland as a country house and estate, and its later adaptation and development as convent with a focus on study and retreat. As such, the surviving rural setting of the NDHA will be considered to contribute positively to its significance."*
- 6.13.27 Whilst the BHS does not dispute that the 'rural setting' would likely have formed part of the selection of the site by the Priory of Our Lady of Good Counsel, it goes on to advise that it is important to take into account the level of change that has occurred since, which means the setting of the 1970s Priory buildings is now largely characterised by changes associated with the evolution of the complex to serve an educational role. This the BHS suggests is particular evident to the south where a level playing field has been created, and by the modern residential development to the south of the site which is clearly visible from the complex and its surrounds; such that the site now reads as being situated adjacent to the modern settlement. Similarly, the BHS suggests that whilst the northern fields (F0 and F1) retain a greater sense of rural character, it is important to recognise that this area reads as being distinctly separate from the built element of the site, and that the 1970s Priory buildings were not designed to address such areas.
- 6.13.28 Having regard to the above the BHS concludes that the principal elements of the physical surrounds and experience of the 1970s Priory buildings (their "setting") which now contribute to the significance of these buildings comprise:
- The interrelationship between the three principal areas of the 1970s Priory buildings, and Kingsland.
 - The spatial relationship between the 1970s Priory buildings and their immediate surrounds, in particular the area enclosed by the Monastic Arc.

- The experience and appreciation of the 1970s Priory buildings from their immediate surrounds both individually and as part of the wider group alongside Kingsland.
- The cemetery associated with the use of the complex as a Priory; however, no strong visual connections are identified.

6.13.29 Based upon the above, the BHS concludes that Area A (Fields F1 – 6) is considered to form part of the ‘setting’ of the 1970s Priory buildings which positively contributes to their overall heritage significance, whilst Area B (Field F0) is considered to make a neutral contribution.

6.13.30 The BHS in assessing the impact of the proposed development on the 1970s Priory buildings indicates that the demolition of the Monastic Arc and the Secular Wing should be considered in the policy context set out in para 216 of the NPPF i.e. the scale of any harm or loss is articulated having regard to the significance of the asset. The BHS also highlights recent case law which as expressed in the Bohm decision, stated that: *[34] “Unsurprisingly, given that an NDHA [non-designated heritage asset] does not itself have statutory protection, the test in para 135 [Paragraph 216 of the 2024 NPPF] is different from that in paras 132-4 [Paragraphs 213-215 of the 2023 NPPF], which concern designated heritage assets. Paragraph 135 [Paragraph 216 of the 2024 NPPF] calls for weighing “applications” that affect an NDHA, in other words the consideration under that paragraph must be of the application as a whole, not merely the demolition but also the construction of the new building. It then requires a balanced judgement to be made by the decision maker. The NPPF does not seek to prescribe how that balance should be undertaken, or what weight should be given to any particular matter.”*

6.13.31 Having regard to the above the BHS advises that when considering the loss of the Monastic Arc and the Secular Wing, it is important to take into account the fact that the Monastic Arc has been subject to change internally and externally, and does not represent a relic of its original form, and that the Secular Wing is considered to be the element of the complex which holds the least architectural and historic interest. Accordingly, the BHS indicates that the proposed demolition of the Monastic Arc and the Secular Wing, for the purposes of decision-making, and thus the planning balance, can be classified as the total loss of built form of low local value, only.

6.13.32 Turning to the Chapel, the BHS notes this is to be retained and would be utilised for purposes falling within use Class F; and that the extent of built form retained includes the projecting connecting corridor to the north and the Bless Sacrament Chapel, thus preserving the design intent resulting from the alignment and form of all spaces, including circulation spaces adjacent to the principal space. Whilst no physical changes are proposed to the exterior or interior of the building under this application, the BHS acknowledges that future changes may be required in order to serve the proposed use class, and that such changes would be subject to future application, as required.

6.13.33 The BHS also notes that the demolition of the remainder of the 1970s Priory buildings and Kingsland (see below), and the subsequent redevelopment of fields F1 – 6 [Area A], would result in a change to the ‘setting’ of the retained structure as the proposals would remove the

contextual built form associated with the former Chapel and introduce a new residential character. That said the BHS acknowledges that a degree of contextual understanding would remain via the retention of the associated cemetery to the west; and that the parameter plans submitted with the application and to be 'approved' as part of any planning permission secure a number of design responses which provide an informed and proportionate approach to an understanding of the historic development of the site, and the experience of the Chapel. These the BHS indicates include:

- The use of the Chapel as a focal point within the scheme.
- The informed arrangement of the proposed development to the north of the former chapel, in particular the reference to the curved nature of the former Monastic Arc and the setback provided from the Chapel.
- The retention of the circular pond to which the Monastic Arc (and in turn the new development) addresses.

6.13.34 The BHS also indicates that the retention of the circular pond would also retain a relic of the earlier 19th-century designed landscape, and that further elements of the 19th-century designed landscape which are to be retained and incorporated into the development, as secured via the Land Use and Green Infrastructure Parameters Plans, comprise the treelined approach and the 'grove' at its northern end.

6.13.35 The BHS also highlights the fact that the principal access route through the site has been aligned with the former Chapel so that the structure forms a visual landmark within the development and remains visible from London Road. As a result, the BHS concludes that the informed approach taken means the proposed development will be understood as part of the ongoing evolution of the site which, as per earlier phases of change, retains an understanding of the varied time depth of the site. It also indicates that the retained former Chapel is not considered to be sensitive to the development proposed on field F0 [Area B] (the proposed school) and nor does this area form part of the 19th-century designed landscape.

6.13.36 Overall the BHS concludes that the design responses provide an informed and proportionate approach to an understanding of the historic development of the site, and the experience of the Chapel; and that the proposed development is considered to result in a moderate impact on the overall heritage significance of the Chapel as a result of the loss of its contextual setting; and that this needs to be considered alongside the informed and sensitive response proposed by the proposed parameter plans as discussed above.

6.13.37 The BHS also considers the relative merits of the 19th-century Kingsland, which it notes, Historic England concluded whilst retaining some original features, was too altered to have intrinsic architectural interest based on its age; and was not therefore added to the National List and is not a designated heritage asset. The BHS also notes that the council's Conservation Officer has also concluded that *"Although the house is quite an impressive building, it has been altered, and is of a fairly common type. I would consider it to be of some interest in terms of the development of Sayers Common, but probably not sufficient to be regarded as a non-designated heritage asset (NDHA)."*



6.13.38 Thus the BHS acknowledges that whilst Kingsland holds some architectural or historic interest as an example of a 19th-century minor country house, the building is not considered to be of any particular interest in the context of buildings of this type and date; and the building has been subject to change during the 20th and early 21st century which has compromised the integrity of the fabric and design, and thus the level of interest that can be ascribed to it; and thus should not be classified a non-designated heritage asset for the purpose of decision-making. A similar view is taken of the remnant 19th-Century Buildings Associated with 'Kingsland' i.e. Kingsland Lodge which is located adjacent to the London Road, and the ancillary building to the north of Kingsland.

6.13.39 Overall the BHS concludes that *'the proposed development is in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Section 16 of the NPPF and Local Policy in so far as they apply to the consideration of designated heritage assets'*

6.14 Lighting

6.14.1 A Lighting Assessment has been prepared to evaluate the potential effects of lighting associated with the proposed development. It reviews the existing / baseline artificial lighting levels in the area of the development and the predicted effects of new artificial lighting installed as part of the proposed scheme on the existing potentially sensitive receptors (e.g. residential properties and wildlife) present in the locality. It confirms that the site is in part lit, around the existing school and along London Road, and unlit elsewhere.

6.14.2 The Lighting Assessment goes on to explain that a detailed lighting design has been carried out for the school and the new adoptable roads and private footpaths associated with the school; and that in the absence of a detailed lighting design for the outline element of the development, the lighting assessment adopts broad assumptions on the likely lighting design and locations of luminaires. In doing so it assume the indicative design uses lighting with 0% upward light to minimise Sky Glow and promote a Dark

Skies policy; that a column height of 6m is used, and that the general recommendations for the detailed lighting scheme will provide for:

- The use of controlled light distribution, optimised optics, and considered luminaire positioning.
- Modern LED luminaires to minimise the obtrusive light spill and be as energy efficient as possible.
- Lighting throughout the site to be designed to minimise horizontal spill of light to hedgerows.
- Dimmed and reactive lighting to be used where appropriate.
- Lighting to be directed away from the site boundaries.
- Lighting to be designed in accordance with ILP Guidance Notes for Reduction of Obtrusive Light and CIE 126 (1997) Guidelines for Minimising Sky Glow.

6.14.3 The Lighting Assessment also assumes the indicative lighting design includes column mounted luminaires selected to have no upward light as well as sharp cut off characteristics, the lighting has been selected to provide adequate illumination of footpaths and roads without polluting the site boundary and also reducing upward light to minimise Sky Glow, and that smart controls will be used including time clocks and photocells. It also highlights the fact that for the purpose of the assessment all lighting was assumed to be on to show the worst-case effect.

6.14.4 On the basis of the above the Lighting Assessment advises that the combined detailed and outline scheme will result on a relatively small increase predicted in illuminance across the site, with a maximum increase of 0.79 Lux at measuring position 47 which is adjacent to the site entrance on London Road, which has existing street lighting. The Lighting Assessment goes on to highlight the fact that the results show the scheme will not cause significant light spillage beyond the developed area with all receptor locations recording predicted levels below 0.5 lux.

6.14.5 The Lighting Assessment concludes that the proposed development will have a negligible impact on the area surrounding the site; and that although light spill from the site will increase in some locations the impact of the new development will be negligible in these locations.

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

6.15 Renewable Energy

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

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

- The overall development has been assessed using the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, as well as the Mid Sussex Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan, and the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 (Regulation 19; with Main Modifications), to demonstrate that the proposed dwellings and proposed school will maximise resource efficiency, minimise the generation of waste and pollution, and ensure the risk of flooding on-site is mitigated during both construction and in operation, to provide both dwellings and school buildings that meet the recommended standards for well-being of future occupants; and
- The carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions reduction strategy for the proposals is based on the energy hierarchy to provide a rigorous methodology, which aims to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the development as far as possible. This is intended to be achieved through the employment of highly efficient building fabric components to reduce energy demand, and the potential inclusion of renewable and low carbon energy technologies to deliver further carbon dioxide emissions reductions. It is anticipated that the proposed carbon dioxide emissions reduction strategy will facilitate significant carbon dioxide emissions savings³³ compared to the Part L:2021 baseline, aiming to significantly exceed the current requirements of Mid Sussex District Council and to align with the draft policies set out within the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2039 (Regulation 19; with Main Modifications).

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

- make efficient use of land;
- retain the existing chapel building on-site to deliver community uses
- promote the use of sustainable and active modes of transport;
- reduce the risk of flooding on-site and in the surrounding area;
- minimise internal water consumption to 100 litres per person per day;
- incorporate low-impact materials, in consideration of the BRE Green Guide to Specification;
- minimise waste production during construction and maximise the proportion of waste to be diverted from landfill;
- mitigate the risk of overheating;
- incorporate measures to improve site biodiversity, including biodiverse planting;
- ensure air, noise, ground, light and water pollution are minimalised as far as possible;
- minimise energy demand through the specification of low U-values, low air permeability and low thermal bridging to reduce heat loss;
- be fossil fuel free, utilising electric-only systems, such as air source heat pumps (ASHPs) to serve the space and water heating demands of the proposed dwellings and new school;
- utilise renewable technology, such as rooftop photovoltaic panels where possible,, to provide renewable electricity; and

³³ Homes will be designed in line with the Future Homes Standard, achieving an approximate 31% reduction in CO₂e emissions on the 2021 Part L baseline

- achieve a significant reduction in CO2 emissions for the proposed dwellings, following the Energy Hierarchy methodology.

6.15.4 Given the above the Sustainability and Energy Statement concludes that: *'Overall, the proposals constitute sustainable development in accordance with national and local policy requirements and will provide a development that seeks to promote these principles in operation'*.

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

6.16 Minerals

6.16.1 A Mineral Safeguarding Assessment (MSA) has been produced by I C Planning. This seeks to demonstrate that the proposed development can be undertaken without having a negative impact upon the safeguarded mineral resources that are located beneath the site.

6.16.2 The MSA confirms that the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (WSJMLP) recognises the safeguarded brick clay mineral resource found on the site covers a broad extent of West Sussex. The MSA goes on to explain that the Mineral Planning Authorities (MPA) latest monitoring report of 2023/24 notes that Paragraph 220 of the NPPF [now para 227] states that MPAs should plan for maintaining a stock of permitted reserves to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant, and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment. For brick clay reserves this should be at least 25 years. As there are estimated to be two brickworks in West Sussex with at least 25 years of reserves the 2023/24 monitoring report concludes that on that basis the supply of brick clay in West Sussex complies with the NPPF requirements.

6.16.3 The MSA goes on to advise that the mineral resources found on site are already significantly sterilised by virtue of the fact they are within 250m of existing residential properties and a SEN school, as well as a public right of way and mature landscape features such as tree lines and hedgerows, all of which would also restrict any potential to undertake prior extraction on the site before any development was undertaken.

6.16.4 In addition the MSA advises that the permanent loss of the remaining small parcel of safeguarded land would not have a material effect upon the long-term supply of brick clay within West Sussex.

6.16.4 Given the above the MSA concludes that the proposed development is consistent with the MPA mineral safeguarding policies which are set out in both Policy M9 of the WSJMLP and the supporting Mineral Safeguarding Guidance

6.16.5 Having regard to the above the proposed development does not in our opinion conflict with the aims and objectives of para 226 and 227 of the NPPF, policy M9 of the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan, or the aims and objectives of policy DP12 of the Adopted District Plan.

6.17 Air Quality

- 6.17.1 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) of existing/baseline air quality conditions and potential air quality impacts during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development has been undertaken.
- 6.17.2 The assessment of construction phase impacts reflects the IAQM construction dust guidance. It recommends mitigation measures to reduce the risk of dust and particulate matter being generated and re-suspended during the construction phase and concludes that with the implementation of the appropriate measures no significant impacts are anticipated during the construction phase.
- 6.17.3 The AQA goes on to advise that the principal air quality impact once the proposed development is complete and operational is likely to be emissions from the increased traffic on local roads surrounding the site. Thus, an assessment of operational phase impacts has been undertaken using the ADMS-Roads atmospheric dispersion model. The AQA explains that concentrations of the key pollutants (NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) were predicted at relevant receptor locations for the base year and for the proposed opening year of 2031 without and with the proposed development in place; and that the air quality impacts were assessed as 'negligible' with respect to annual mean NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} at all assessed sensitive receptors. Therefore, the overall air quality impact of the development may the AQA concludes, be considered 'not significant'.
- 6.17.4 The AQA goes on to advise that the authors understand that the energy source for the proposed development will comprise air source heat pump (ASHP), for both the proposed school and dwellings, with rooftop PV panels also proposed as part of the scheme, and that as such there will be no significant stationary combustion sources, such as combined heat and power (CHP) plant or biomass boiler in the proposed development.
- 6.17.5 In the context of the above the AQA advises that in accordance with Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex (2021), the proposed development is classified as a major development; and that therefore an emission mitigation assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development, with a damage cost calculation undertaken for both NO_x and PM, as these are the major pollutants associated with road traffic emission. The AQA advises that the calculated central damage cost value is £30,144; and that various types of mitigation measures have been recommended, and the extent of the total money for air quality mitigation should be equal to/greater than the value determined by the damage cost calculation (i.e. £30,144).
- 6.17.6 On the basis of the above the AQA concludes that the proposed development is unlikely to be adversely affected by or have a significant impact on local air quality.
- 6.17.7 Having regard to the above the proposed development does not in our opinion conflict with the aims and objectives of para 199 of the NPPF or the aims and objective of policy DP29 of the Adopted District Plan, policy SA38 of the Site Allocations DPD, and policy DPN9 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

6.18 Noise

- 6.18.1 The Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) explains that a noise survey has been undertaken to establish the baseline noise levels across the site, comprising of unattended measurements throughout continuous daytime and night-time periods from Wednesday 02 October to Wednesday 09 October 2024; and that a site suitability assessment, undertaken to the requirements of BS 8233: 2014 and WHO (1999), has been undertaken to determine potential internal and external noise levels at locations across the development site.
- 6.18.2 As a result of the above the NIA advises that predicted noise levels, within the proposed residential areas, in conjunction with highest maximum noise levels, are of a magnitude where a standard specification single glazed system to the building façade, providing a minimum sound reduction of 34 dB Rw+Ctr and accompanied by a suitable acoustically treated trickle ventilator ensuring the overall envelope acoustic performance do not diminish in the open position (for background ventilation purposes), would be required to meet the internal design targets within BS 8233: 2014/WHO, 1999 during daytime and night-time periods.
- 6.18.3 In addition, the NIA advises that based on the simplified method of overheating assessment within Approved Document 'O' of the Building Regulations the site would likely allow for partially open windows for ventilation purposes during a potential overheating scenario for the majority of the site. Those dwellings located towards the eastern portion of the proposed development are the NIA suggests likely to be at high risk of overheating. As a result, it is recommended during the detailed design (reserved matters) stage that input be sought from the wider design team to identify areas of overheating risk to ensure appropriate mitigation options are explored (where necessary) and confirmed through engagement with an overheating specialist.
- 6.18.4 The NIA goes on to advise that noise levels within amenity areas are likely to comply with the upper design target of 55 dB LAeq,16hr, as specified within BS 8233: 2014 assuming appropriate mitigation, such as sympathetic building orientation and the use of standard garden fencing is incorporated through design.
- 6.18.5 Turning to the proposed school, the NIA advises that External noise levels associated with the SEN school are of a magnitude that is likely to result in compliance with the relevant teaching space design target of 30 dB LAeq,30mins, assuming the use of a suitable ventilation system, offering a minimum 20 dB reduction (made up of a closed window double glazed unit). MUGA noise emissions are also likely to result in compliance with external amenity noise criteria at the nearest existing and proposed residential dwellings.
- 6.18.6 The NIA also advises that in order to provide an indicative design target at proposed residential locations as a result of fixed plant associated with the SEN school, suitable design targets have been provided at the baseline monitoring positions in order to avoid significant adverse effects, in accordance with NPSE and based on the requirements of BS 4142: 2014+A1: 2019.

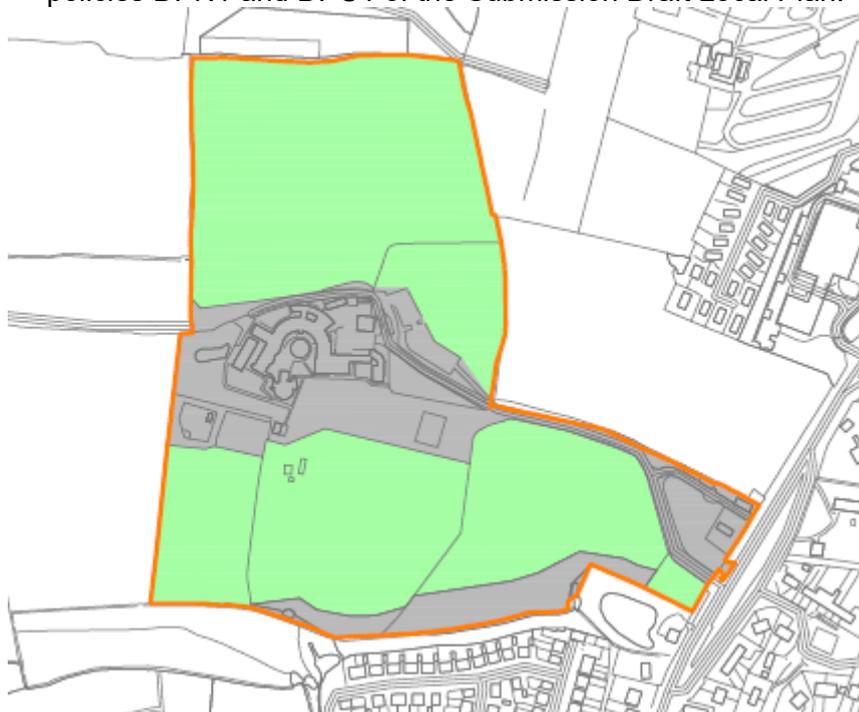
6.18.7 The NIA also explains that the noise predictions indicate that the effect of the development on traffic noise would increase noise levels by a maximum of 0.3 dB LA10,18hr in the short term and by a maximum of 0.7 dB LA10,18hr in the long term; and that the magnitude of change would be of negligible impact, in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.

6.18.6 The NIA concludes: *'In summary, predicted noise levels across the site are of a magnitude suitable for the Proposed Development. It is recommended that the principles of good acoustic design and specific mitigation measures included within this assessment be adopted within the final masterplan in order to ensure compliance with the relevant design targets'*.

6.18.7 Having regard to the above the proposed development does not in our opinion conflict with the aims and objectives of para 198 of the NPPF or the aims and objective of policies DP26 and DP29 of the Adopted District Plan, and policies DPB1 and DPN7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.

6.19 Agricultural Land

6.19.1 An Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources report has been undertaken of the site. This confirms that those parts of the site that could be defined as agricultural are grade 3b i.e not best and most versatile agricultural land, this being grades 1, 2 and 3a. On this basis there is no conflict with the aims and objectives of para 187 (b) of the NPPF or the aims and objective of policies DP12 and DP38 of the Adopted District Plan, and policies DPN1 and DPC1 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.



KEY - AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION

	Non-agricultural		Subgrade 3a
	Grade 2		Subgrade 3b

6.20 Other Material Considerationsi) Contamination and Remediation

- 6.20.1 A Generic Quantitative Risk Assessment (GQRA) has been undertaken in accordance with LCRM. The investigation included a desk study coupled with intrusive geotechnical and geo-environmental ground investigation with laboratory testing to inform geotechnical and geo-environmental assessments for the proposed development.
- 6.20.2 The GQRA indicates that ground conditions encountered comprised Topsoil and Made Ground overlying the Weald Clay Formation. It also indicates that during the ground investigations groundwater was encountered within WS03 only at a depth of 3.10mbgl and was standing at a depth of 1.50m bgl after drilling had ceased for twenty minutes. Groundwater monitoring wells were installed within twelve monitoring wells with two monitoring visits undertaken to date. Groundwater depths during the monitoring to date ranged between 0.25m and 3.60m bgl.
- 6.20.3 The GQRA goes on to advise that five samples of the Made Ground were sent for laboratory testing; and that whilst a concentration for Lead was recorded above the respective screening value within WS13 at a depth of 0.50m bgl with a concentration of 250mg/kg compared to a GAC of 200mg/kg, the Made Ground recorded in WS13 was likely to be associated with backfill around a service and as such is not considered typical of the Made Ground encountered across the wider site. No asbestos was identified within the Made Ground, and pesticide screening did not identify the presence of any pesticides.
- 6.20.4 As would be expected, the GQRA recommends that post demolition of the existing school structures a further phase of investigation and chemical testing should be undertaken targeting the footprint of the former buildings, and that further testing be undertaken at the same time around the former nursery as only limited investigation has been undertaken in that area to date.
- 6.20.5 The GQRA also indicates that Ground Gas monitoring confirmed that no radon protection measures are required for the new dwellings; and that the results of the relevant chemical analyses did not indicate any elevated concentrations within the boreholes and that it is thus unlikely that any water pipe protection measures will be required. That said it is recommended that the results of this investigation be presented to the water utility company as soon as reasonably practicable in order to confirm the pipe material.
- 6.20.7 Given the findings of the GQRA, a suitable worded condition requiring further investigation prior to development commencing is thought to be prudent.

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

ii) Utilities and Services Appraisal

6.20.8 The Preliminary Foul drainage and Utilities Assessment prepared by LDE (an RSK Company) confirms that consultation has been undertaken with the relevant drainage authority (Southern Water) and various utility companies in order to determine the suitability of these networks to serve the proposed development; and that where possible, budget costs were obtained for new utility supplies and for diversion and/or upgrading works (where applicable). To this end it is noted that Southern Water have confirmed that the existing foul network currently has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development based on a foul discharge rate of 6.0 l/s connecting to the existing 150mm diameter public foul sewer in London Road.

6.20.9 The Utilities Assessment concludes that there are suitable utilities services in the surrounding area to service the proposed development/ these can be addressed through upgrade works where necessary.

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

6.21 Infrastructure Provision

6.21.1 As set out in the draft Heads of Terms for the Section 106 Agreement, a planning obligations list has been prepared in the light of Policy DP20 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2014 – 2031, Policy Housing HurstH6 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan March 2015, and policy DPI2 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2021 – 2039 (Dec 2023). The substance of the draft Heads of Terms also reflects initial advice received from officers at Mid Sussex District Council and the comments received from Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council and WSCC Highways during pre-application discussions.

6.21.2 The draft planning obligations set out below will only be included in the Section 106 Agreement to the extent justifiable in planning policy terms, in particular paragraph 58 of the NPPF and regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. This will be established following further discussions with officers. This draft assumes that the site will not be subject to Community Infrastructure Levy or any other similar charge. If this is not the case the applicant reserves the right to withdraw or amend any of the planning obligations listed below. The following is also based upon the schedule of infrastructure projects drawn up by the Council in consultation with statutory consultees that is deemed necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development identified in the draft Mid Sussex District Plan (2021 – 2039) in Sayers Common; and is part of the comprehensive package that will be funded by the Sayers Common developments on a proportionate basis having regard to the nature and scale of development proposed on each site.

- The provision of up to 63 affordable units³⁴ (30%) – to be 75% social and affordable rent and 25% affordable ownership products.
- The nomination rights for the affordable housing units will be such that the affordable units will in the first instance be made available to people in housing need with an appropriate connection to Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish. Thereafter the nomination rights will, if necessary, cascade down to those in need in the neighbouring parishes in Mid Sussex.
- A minimum of 4% of the affordable units to be identified as M4(3) (2) (b) dwellings.
- All dwellings to meet M4(2) standards.
- 2% of all dwellings will be set aside for Self-Build.
- The conversion of the existing chapel to a community building (Use Class F1) or a contribution towards the provision of a community building elsewhere in Sayers Common.
- The provision of a minimum of 2.8ha of informal recreational open space, as set out in the agreed parameters plan, across the site as a whole including 1 x Local Equipped Area of Play and 5 x Local Areas or 'Play on the Way' which together equate to 0.11ha.
- The provision on site of a community food growing area
- Contributions towards local community infrastructure in Sayers Common
- Contributions towards improvements to/ provision of new outdoor sports and leisure facilities within the vicinity of the site/ in Sayers Common.
- Contributions towards the expansion/enhancement of play areas within the vicinity of the site / in Sayers Common.
- Contributions towards the expansion/enhancement of other outdoor provision within the vicinity of the site / in Sayers Common.
- Contributions towards Highways Works linked to:
 - The physical capacity of Hickstead Junction
 - The physical capacity of the A23/B2118 NB On-slip Merge Junction
 - The physical capacity of the A23/B2117 SB On-slip Merge Junction
 - Safety intervention at A23/A272 SB Off-slip
- Improvements to existing cycle and pedestrian routes linking the proposed development to Sayers Common and surrounding area, including:
 - Widening of the existing footway on the B2218 north of the site access to the B2218 / Mill Lane Roundabout to provide a 3.0m wide shared use pedestrian / cycle route

³⁴ Assuming 210 dwellings are accommodated on site – if not then 30% of the number of dwellings that are accommodated on the site.

- An uncontrolled crossing on the B2218 and a new footway / cycleway on the western section of the B2218 to tie into an existing footway adjacent to the southbound bus stop
- Tactile paving at the junction between B2218 / Oakhurst
- Contributions to support and enhance existing bus serves, including but not limited to:
 - The provision of Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) and bus border kerbs at the northbound and southbound bus stops on the B2118
 - Service enhancements to the 273 bus between Crawley and Brighton via Sayers Common
 - The provision within the site of a footpath link joining Bridleway 9Hu with footpath 10Hu
- The provision of two car club vehicles for three years, with three years free membership for new residents of the site.
- The provision of Bus Taster Passes / Sustainable Travel Vouchers to residents of the development to encourage the uptake of sustainable travel.
- Contributions towards Sayers Common to Burgess Hill Cycle Route
- Contributions towards improving existing cycle storage and access at Hassocks Station.
- The implementation of a Travel Plan to encourage use of sustainable transport modes for both the residential and school elements of the scheme.
- Contributions towards nursery, primary, secondary and sixth form educational facilities within Sayers Common / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Library Services within Sayers Common/ Hurstpierpoint or Burgess Hill.
- Contributions towards Youth services within Sayers Common/ 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Community Learning within Sayers Common/ 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Social Care within Sayers Common / 5km of the site.
- Contributions towards Waste and Recycling facilities.
- Contributions towards the Local Primary Care Trust to be put towards the provision of new GP facilities or an increase in the capacity of existing facilities at Burgess Hill and surrounding villages
- Contributions towards the Police Service for use on:
 - Police premises (Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill)
 - Police vehicles

- Personal equipment for officer/staff (police)
 - Contributions towards the Fire Service for the provision of new (fire and rescue) station or extension of existing station within Sayers Common / 5km of the site.
 - Contributions to improvements and /or expansion of Burgess Hill transfer site/HWRS as necessary.
- 6.21.3 We believe the draft HoT of the S106 look to secure the mitigation that is necessary to satisfactorily meet the additional infrastructure impacts and needs that would be generated by the development as set out in Policy DP20 of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031, Policy Housing HurstH6 of the Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan March 2015 and policy DPI2 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan 2021 – 2039 (Dec 2023).

7 The Planning Balance

- 7.1 Given the detailed information provided with this application we believe that the planning balance rests firmly in favour of granting planning permission, particularly in the light of the engagement of the 'tilted balance'.
- 7.2 In the context of the above, we note that the Mid Sussex District Plan 2018, in policy DP4 looks to meet a minimum district housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031; and that policy DP4 explains how this will be achieved through a combination of completions, extant permissions and proposed allocations.
- 7.3 The application site was not allocated within the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan and thus remains outside the urban area of Sayers Common as identified on the Proposals Map and does not fall within one of the 'exceptions' criteria listed in policy DP12 for new dwellings in the 'countryside'. However as set out above these policies are out of date in as much as they were adopted against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012. As the NPPF has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012 the approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted Development Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2024. As a result, the weight to be attributed to policies DP4 and DP12 is significantly reduced. and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. A position which is exacerbated by the fact the Council openly admit they do not have a five year housing land supply.
- 7.4 Before commenting upon the tilted balance, it should also be noted that not only is the site situated immediately adjacent to the urban area boundary of Sayers Common, on a part previously developed, part greenfield site, that is unfettered by any landscape or ecology designations; but has been identified as a proposed allocation pursuant to policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan (December 2023). As set out within this statement the proposed development has been designed to be in general conformity with the aims and objectives of policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan, the form and quantum of development proposed being appropriate for the context of the site; such that it would create a high quality development on the edge of the existing built up boundary of Sayers Common.
- 7.5 Given the lack of a 5 year supply and the fact large swaths of the District are constrained by the High Weald National Landscape and the South Downs National Park, the proposed development provides an ideal opportunity to accommodate the housing needs of the District on what is a relatively unconstrained part previously developed site, thus addressing the housing land supply deficit in a policy compliant manner.
- 7.6 Furthermore, the proposed development enables the relocation of the existing SEN School into new bespoke buildings, and provides for 30% affordable housing, which accords with the adopted and emerging policy requirement.

- 7.7 The site also enjoys good access to local services and facilities and has good access to public transport that would enable future residents to access services and facilities by means other than the private car. In addition, it will contribute towards new / enhanced pedestrian and cycle links to the village centre, new and improved bus links to the wider area, and off site highway improvements; the scale of development proposed reflecting that accepted by the Council as being suitable for the site in policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Local Plan.
- 7.8 The site is not designated for its landscape value, or any landscape related attributes. The High Weald National Landscape (previously Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) is over 3km to the north of the site at its closest point, and the South Downs National Park (SDNP) is approximately 2.5km to the south east of the site at its closest point. For various reasons including the distance from the proposals and limited intervisibility, the LVA concludes that the site is not considered to form part of the setting of the South Downs National Park or the High Weald National Landscape, and therefore is not a valued landscape in the sense of paragraph 187(a) of the NPPF.
- 7.9 In the context of the above, whilst it is recognised that there would be localised effects on the landscape character of the site, these would exist with the development of any greenfield site, and in this case not only is the application site partly developed, and free from any landscape designations, but the proposed development has been developed with stakeholders to ensure the development is respectful to local landscape and visual constraints. Furthermore, it provides for a number of beneficial effects such as an increase in landscape assets and an improved local network of ecological and recreational spaces. On this basis and as the Council accepts that not all its housing requirement can be accommodated on brownfield sites and have sought to identify this site as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan, any localised landscape effects do not in our opinion weigh heavily against the grant of consent. Indeed, having regard to the LVA, it is considered that the proposed development sits sympathetically within the wider landscape, having minimal effects on the surrounding landscape and visual receptors. Thus, it respects the aims and objectives of para 187 of the NPPF and footnote 7 of para 11 in terms of the tilted balance.
- 7.10 The site does not contain any nationally designated heritage assets. Whilst one Grade II listed buildings have been identified in the vicinity of the site the Built Heritage Statement indicates that the proposed development would not result in a change in the 'setting' of the Grade II Listed Kingscot that would impact upon the overall understanding and experience, and thus heritage significance of Kingscot. Whilst the site does contain non designated heritage assets in the form of the former priory buildings (the former chapel, monastic arch and secular wing), it looks to retain the former chapel and convert it in to a community use. As a result, and as the design response provides an informed and proportionate approach to an understanding of the historic development of the site, and the experience of the Chapel, the proposed development is considered to result in a moderate impact on the overall heritage significance of the Chapel which has been judged to be of moderate local value only. The Built Heritage Statement also indicates that the loss of the Chapels contextual setting, needs to be considered alongside the informed and sensitive response

proposed by the proposed parameter plans and in the context of the application as a whole, and a balanced judgement made by the decision maker. To this end there are in our opinion clear social and economic benefits arising from the proposed development of up to 210 houses, including 63 affordable homes and new SEN school, on a part previously developed site. There would also be public benefits arising during the construction phase of the project and from the operational phase from additional spending in the local economy from the future residents. There will also be environmental benefits as a result of the biodiversity net gain. As a result, we believe the benefits arising from the development outweigh the moderate impact on the overall heritage significance of this non-designated heritage asset.

- 7.11 In the same way, whilst the proposed development will result in demolition of the Monastic Arc and the Secular Wing, the loss of these buildings needs to be considered in the context of the application as a whole, not merely the demolition but also the construction of the new building, and a balanced judgement to be made by the decision maker. To this end, we note that whilst identified as non-designated heritage assets, these buildings have been judged to be of low local value and we believe the benefits arising from the development as set out above outweigh the low level of loss of significance of these non-designated heritage assets.
- 7.12 As a result of the above, and as set out on the Built Heritage Statement, the proposed development is in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Section 16 of the NPPF and Local Policy in so far as they apply to the consideration of designated heritage assets.
- 7.13 As for the non-designated heritage assets, as set out above we believe the public benefits outweigh any impact on these assets, such that the balance is firmly in favour of the proposed development.
- 7.14 Not only has the proposed development looked to minimise ecological impacts, but maximise benefits, with the development predicted to deliver Biodiversity net gains of circa 21.52% in Hedgerow Units within the site boundary, and a 10% net gain in Habitat Units though the creation of off site habitats.
- 7.15 In addition, whilst the proposed development is wholly in fluvial flood zone 1 and approximately 90% of the site is located in an area considered to be at a very low risk from surface water flooding, it is acknowledged that there are localised areas considered to be at a high risk from surface water flooding as a result of on-site runoff collecting within local depressions, the main area of surface water risk relating to a flow path along the southern boundary. That said as set out in the FRA the development has been designed to avoid this surface water flow path, whilst other minor areas of surface water ponding and minor flow paths will be managed via site levelling and the proposed drainage strategy; such that a sequential approach to development has been applied with the more vulnerable aspects of the development being located outside of the areas of higher flood risk.
- 7.16 Given the above it is considered on balance that the application site is acceptable in principle for residential development.

- 7.17 In the context of the above, as set out in section 6 of this statement the proposed development would meet the three overarching objectives of sustainable development as described in paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Prospective occupiers would help to support the range of local facilities and services in Sayers Common, including public transport, and would contribute to the vitality of the locality and social cohesion. The development itself would also provide short term construction jobs – economic benefits. There would also be benefits from S106 contributions to local services and facilities such as education facilities, health facilities, sports and leisure facilities, community learning, youth services, social care and library services. The proposed development would also generate New Homes Bonus. All of the above should be acknowledged in the planning balance.
- 7.18 The weight to be given to those policies restricting development in this area in the District Plan should be limited given the basis upon which they were conceived and the housing land supply situation. Furthermore, whilst the weight that can be given to the Submission Draft Local Plan and the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) (Dec 2025) is limited, it should nonetheless be noted that the application site has been identified as a proposed allocation in the Submission Draft Local Plan and that the proposed development looks to comply with the aims and objectives of the Submission Draft Local Plan, and the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development). There are in addition, other material considerations which also weigh heavily in favour of the development such as the housing need, and the fact that the Council is unable to substantiate a five year supply of deliverable housing land. The proposal would assist in the provision of housing and help meet the affordable housing needs of the area. This is a highly significant material consideration and carries substantial weight in the context of the NPPF. The proposals also provide for a replacement SEN School and retain the existing chapel for use as a community facility within use class F; and over 5.8ha of public open space, all of which are highly significant material considerations which carry substantial weight in the context of the NPPF.
- 7.19 The proposed development is considered to represent sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and the Submission Draft Local Plan, and the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) (Dec 2025). The limited harm identified does not outweigh the significant benefits that have been identified. It certainly goes nowhere near the requirement to demonstrate significant and demonstrable harm.
- 7.20 As a result of the above we consider the proposed development is ideally situated to accommodate further growth in a sustainable manner as defined by para 8 of the NPPF.
- 7.21 The overall planning balance, encompassing the various benefits and limited disbenefits and the weight that should be afforded to them is set out in the table below:

JAA Table 7.1 – The Planning Balance

	Issue	Benefit/ Harm	Weight
1	Provision of up to 210 market dwellings	Benefit	Very Substantial
2	Provision of up to 63 affordable dwellings (30%)	Benefit	Very Substantial
3	An appropriate dwelling mix	Benefit	Moderate
4	Enables LVS to relocate from the existing school buildings, which while fully functional today, were not designed to meet the long-term needs of a growing and increasingly specialist provision, into a new bespoke SEN school specifically designed to meet their needs thus contributing towards the Council's need for accommodation for children, teenagers and adults with severe learning disabilities and complex needs.	Benefit	Very Substantial
5	The provision of a community building (Use Class F1)	Benefit	Substantial
6	Provision of 0.11ha of formal play space together with potential for allotments	Benefit	Moderate
7	Provision of circa 6ha of publicly accessible incidental open space/ amenity space/ natural and semi natural space	Benefit	Substantial
8	Developing in a sustainable location		
9	Avoiding designated landscapes such as the High Weald National Landscape and South Downs National Park	Benefit	Substantial
10	Landscape enhancements with new tree and hedgerow planting	Benefit	Moderate
11	Avoiding impacts on protected areas/ species, and creating ecological enhancements resulting in a BNG	Benefit	Moderate
12	Improved pedestrian and cycle links between the site and the wider area	Benefit	Moderate
13	Enhanced bus services between the site and the wider area	Benefit	Moderate
14	Contributions towards off site highway works, including pedestrian improvements to The Street encompassing the introduction of additional crossing points and new stretches of footway.	Benefit	Substantial
15	The site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1. A sequential approach to development with the more vulnerable aspects of the development being located outside of any localized areas of higher surface water flood risk; and introduction of a positively managed surface water drainage strategy	Benefit	Substantial
16	Provision of energy efficient homes exceeding current policy requirements	Benefit	Moderate
17	In accordance with spatial strategy of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan – especially policy DPSC7, and the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) (Dec 2025).	Benefit	Moderate
18	Short-term economic benefits from construction and employment spending	Benefit	Moderate
19	Long-term economic benefits from new residents spending in the local area, S106 and New Homes Bonus and Council Tax revenues	Benefit	Moderate

	Issue	Benefit/ Harm	Weight
20	Localised Impact on landscape character of area	Harm	Major/ moderate and negative effects
21	Localised impact on views experienced by walkers, cyclists and horse riders along bridleway 9Hu within the site	Harm	Major/ moderate and negative
22	Demolition of the non-designated heritage assets comprising the Monastic Arc and Secular Wing	Harm	Major
23	Localised impact on the setting of the non-designated heritage assets of The Chapel	Harm	Moderate

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

8.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1 This application seeks consent for the redevelopment of the land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, West Sussex, through a hybrid application that seeks consent for separate and severable elements comprising:
Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:
- a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and
 - b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works.
- 8.2 The new school building and access arrangements form part of the full element of this hybrid application, whilst the details of the residential development are in outline, with all matters bar access reserved for future determination. The site will be accessed via a new priority junction located slightly north of the existing junction onto the B2118. In turn, this connects with a new 5.5m spine road providing access to the residential element of the development in addition to replacing the use of Bridleway 9hU for access to LVS Hassocks SEN school.
- 8.3 The starting point for the determination of this application is the Adopted Development Plan. The application site is located outside, but adjacent to, the urban area of Sayers Common as defined in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (March 2018).
- 8.4 Policy DP12 of the Mid Sussex District Plan looks to restrict development outside the urban area to that falling within certain criteria. Whilst it would appear implicit that where a need can be demonstrated, there is no conflict with policy DP12, policy DP12 is in our opinion out of date in as much as the confines of the urban areas were defined against the backdrop to the Objectively Assessed Housing Need established in the Mid Sussex Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), as updated in November 2015 and August 2016, and the NPPF 2012. As the NPPF has been subject to a number of revisions since 2012, the approach adopted to the housing requirements in the Adopted Development Plan is inconsistent with the NPPF 2021. A point accepted in the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) (Dec 2025). Furthermore, the Council do not have a five year Housing Land Supply (housing land supply³⁵). As a result, the weight to be attributed to policy DP12 is significantly reduced and para 11d of the NPPF and the tilted balance engaged. This means there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development i.e. that planning permission should be granted unless the adverse effects of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

³⁵ Please refer to para 5.96/ 5.97

- 8.5 Given the lack of a five year housing land supply the Council need to find alternative (new) sites to meet the shortfall. The only way this can be achieved is by revisiting the planning strategy set out in the Adopted Development Plan and finding new sites in appropriate locations.
- 8.6 In the context of the above we note that the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (2021 – 2039 (December 2023)) in reviewing the development needs of the District resolved to identify the application site as a proposed allocation pursuant to Policy DPSC7.
- 8.7 The proposed development has been designed to be in conformity with Policy DPSC7 of the Submission Draft Mid Sussex Local Plan and the recently adopted MSDC Position Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development) which echoes the spatial strategy of the Submission Draft Local Plan.
- 8.8 The proposed development would help meet the Districts housing needs in what is a highly sustainable location, on the edge of Sayers Common, at a time when the Council have a five year housing land supply deficit. Not only would the proposed development comply with the criteria set out in policy DPSC7 of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan, but facilitate a number of economic, social, and environmental benefits. As such, whilst it is recognised that there would be localised effects on the landscape character of the site these do not in our opinion weigh heavily against the grant of consent.
- 8.9 Similarly, whilst the impact on the non-designated heritage assets that are situated within the site is in the case of the demolition of the Monastic Arc and Secular Wing, Major, despite the fact these buildings are only considered to be of low value; and Moderate in terms of the localised impact on the setting of The Chapel; the impacts are not considered to be unacceptable when considered in the planning balance.
- 8.10 The same being true of the fact that whilst there are localised areas of surface water flood risk originating from on-site runoff collecting within local depressions within the site, with the main area of surface water risk relating to a flow path along the southern boundary, the development has been designed to avoid this surface water flow path, whilst other minor areas of surface water ponding and minor flow paths will be managed via site levelling and the proposed drainage strategy; such that a sequential approach to development has been applied with the more vulnerable aspects of the development being located outside of the areas of flood risk.
- 8.11 Given the above, the limited harm identified does not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole, as would be required to be demonstrated pursuant to para 11(d) (ii) of the NPPF if looking to refuse this development. Nor, having regard to para 11(d) (i) are there any policies that look to protect areas or assets of particular importance that provide a clear reason for refusing the proposed development. Rather, the balance is firmly in favour of the proposed development and permission should be granted without delay.
- 8.12 Aside from the principle of development, we have also sought to address a number of other issues which are in our opinion material to the

determination of this application. These include the nature of the residential accommodation and overall scale of development including the level of affordable provision; the form, layout and design of the proposed development; the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development; the effect of the proposed development on existing landscape features; the impact of the proposed development on areas of ecological interest/protected species; the impact of the proposed development on the privacy and amenity of adjacent residents; the effect of the proposed development in transportation and highway terms; the sites suitability for development in terms of flood risk and foul water drainage; the potential impact of the proposed development upon the cultural heritage of the site and surrounding area; and the effect of the proposed development on energy consumption, lighting, amenity space provision, contamination and remediation, the capacity of the service providers and impact on local infrastructure.

- 8.13 Having regard to the above, and given the aims and objectives of national and local planning policies we would submit that: -
- a. The proposed development will contribute to the Council's five year housing land supply requirements/ housing need.
 - b. The proposed development will contribute to the Council's affordable housing requirements – overall it will provide up to 63 affordable units (30% of the units to be provided on site (assuming 210 dwellings are bought forward)), in accordance with the requirements set out in both the adopted and Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan.
 - c. The unit mix reflects the aims and objectives of the development plan, with the scheme providing a range of house types (terraced, semi-detached, detached and apartments) and sizes (1 and 2 bed flats and 2 – 5 bed houses), to meet local demand (both market and affordable). The affordable units being evenly distributed across the site.
 - d. The provision of a replacement fit for purpose SEN school within the site will contribute towards meeting the Council's special educational needs.
 - e. The retention of the existing chapel and its use as a community building (Use Class F1), will contribute towards the Council's community needs.
 - f. The proposed development will contribute to the Council's recreational needs, with circa 6ha of publicly accessible / incidental open space/ amenity space being provided across the development as a whole, which is over 40% of the site area / 50% of the residential area, and 200% more than the policy requirement.
 - g. The proposed development will contribute to the public realm, providing formal recreation opportunities, such as the proposed LEAP and LAPs, as well as flexible play space, connected via a series of footpath networks; these features together with the introduction of an effective management regime, the creation and conservation of wildlife habitat and natural corridors, and provision of SuDS will contribute to local amenity.
 - h. The illustrative layout looks to respect the existing landscape, topographical, drainage and ecological features found on the site/ site boundaries, to respect the setting of nearby heritage assets and respect the privacy and amenity of adjacent residents.

- i. At a density of circa 17.83 dph gross/ 41.26dph dph net the proposed development seeks to make the most effective use of the application site without detracting from the character and appearance of the area.
- j. The landscape and visual effects would be localised and would not significantly affect sensitive landscape and visual receptors further from the site.
- k. None of the main arboricultural features of the site are to be removed. No mature, ancient, veteran or notable trees, no category 'A' trees and no trees of high landscape or biodiversity value are to be removed to accommodate the proposals. Of the 82 trees to be removed to accommodate the development, none are category A trees, only 10 are category B trees i.e. 7% of the category B trees surveyed, 68 are category C trees i.e. 27% of the category C trees surveyed, and 4 are category U trees. The AIR concludes that as the proposed development retains 79% of the existing canopy cover, including all ancient, veteran, and notable trees, it protects the mature arboricultural character of the site and the benefits that the trees provide in terms of green infrastructure, biodiversity and landscape value. It also advises that whilst the majority of trees proposed for removal are small or of lower quality, several trees are of moderate arboricultural and landscape value; and that the proposed removals have provided the necessary space for access, development, landscaping and the protection of the important arboricultural features, so their removal should be balanced against the benefits of these. As such and as the proposed development will provide the opportunity to plant more trees/hedgerows on the site through the landscape strategy plan, the AIR concludes this will mitigate the proposed removals, improve the age class balance of the trees on site, enhance the local landscape, and re-establish a framework for the ongoing and long-term character of the site.
- l. Following detailed ecological survey work, it has been found that the site and surrounding study area is home to roosting bats, reptiles (slow worms), Hedgehog, Brown Hare and birds. As a result a number of mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the risk of harm to any protected species present within the site, with compensatory measures proposed, where appropriate, in order to maintain or enhance the conservation status of local populations. All of which will ensure the protection of these species and provide biodiversity net gains, with a 21.52% gain in Hedgerow Units within the site boundary, and a 10% net gain in Habitat Units through the creation of off site habitats.
- m. The proposed development provides for a significant amount of publicly accessible amenity space that will form an integral part of the development, with all residents having access to an appropriate level of private/communal amenity space. Overall, circa 40% of the site area / 50% of the residential area, will be publicly accessible green space.
- n. The application site is located in a sustainable location, that is within walking distance of day to day services and facilities, and provides residents, visitors and staff appropriate opportunities to travel by public transport, cycling and walking.
- o. The proposed accessing arrangements have been designed in accordance with design standards and are able to accommodate the traffic demands placed upon them. The internal road network

- provides for a hierarchy of different streets, all of which have been designed to ensure the car does not dominate.
- p. The proposed development looks to provide for a series of new / enhanced pedestrian and cycle links that would improve access to/ from the site to the village centre/ the surrounding area and to public transport connections.
 - q. The level of traffic generation associated with the proposed development would not, in isolation, result in an unacceptable traffic impact to the local highway network and can be cost-effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree when considered cumulatively with other planned development in the area.
 - r. The level of car and cycle parking provision will accord with WSCC standards and is appropriate for this location given the site's proximity to Sayers Common and its associated facilities, including public transport facilities.
 - s. Both a Framework Residential Travel Plan and a School Travel Plan has been provided to demonstrate how the developer and the school intends to try and reduce the use of the private motor car;
 - t. The FRA and Drainage Strategy submitted with this application demonstrates that the proposed development is wholly in Flood Zone 1 and can encompass a surface water drainage strategy that can accommodate up to and including the 1% AEP storm event with an appropriate allowance for climate change (of 45%), without any onsite flooding or increasing the extent of any offsite flood risk. Indeed, as set out in the FRA the proposed surface water drainage strategy will improve upon the current situation with regard to surface water management and flood risk.
 - u. The Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (ADBA) advises that based on available information, the study site is anticipated to have a high potential for the remains of 19th century farm buildings of low (local) significance and for evidence related to Post-Medieval and modern archaeological activity of low/no (Local/Negligible) significance. A low/uncertain archaeological potential is identified for all other periods. It also advises that in view of the size of the study site it is anticipated that the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority will require archaeological mitigation in advance of development. In the first instance a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation will be focused within the areas of proposed impact, with further works depending upon the results of the evaluation. As remains of national significance are not anticipated at the study site, the ADBA recommends that this work be secured by the inclusion of a standard archaeological planning condition.
 - v. The Built Heritage Statement advises that the Site does not contain any designated heritage assets; and that whilst one Grade II listed building (Kingscot), has been identified in the vicinity of the site no harm would arise to the overall heritage significance of Kingscot as a result of a change in 'setting' brought about by the proposed development.
 - w. The Built Heritage Statement also acknowledges that the site contains three non-designated heritage assets, the Former Chapel, the Monastic Arc and Secular Wing. It goes on to advise that the demolition of the Monastic Arc and Secular Wing will result in the total loss of non-designated built form of low local value, and that the loss of these buildings needs to be considered in the context of the application as a whole, not merely the demolition but also the

construction of the new building, and a balanced judgement made by the decision maker. The BHS also indicates that the proposed development is considered to result in a moderate impact on the overall heritage significance of the Chapel as a result of the loss of its contextual setting; which the Built Heritage Statement says needs to be considered alongside the informed and sensitive response proposed by the proposed parameter plans, which secure a number of design responses which provide an informed and proportionate approach to an understanding of the historic development of the site.

- x. The Sustainability and Energy Statement indicates that the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions reduction strategy for the proposals is based on the energy hierarchy to provide a rigorous methodology, which aims to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the development as far as possible. This is intended to be achieved through the employment of highly efficient building fabric components to reduce energy demand, and the potential inclusion of renewable and low carbon energy technologies such as air source heat pumps to serve the space and water heating demands of the proposed dwellings and deliver further carbon dioxide emissions reductions. It is anticipated that the proposed carbon dioxide emissions reduction strategy will facilitate significant carbon dioxide emissions savings compared to the Part L:2021 baseline, aiming to significantly exceed the current requirements of Mid Sussex District Council and to align with the draft policies set out within the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan (Dec 2023).
- y. The Sustainability and Energy Statement indicates that the carbon dioxide emissions reduction strategy for the school will encompass Air Source Heat Pumps located adjacent to the plant room on the eastern end of the building which will enable heat distribution throughout the building to be provided via Underfloor Heating in all occupied spaces, ensuring efficient and consistent thermal comfort; Natural Ventilation with Heat Recovery; Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery; and Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels - The scheme allows for the installation of 58 Solar PV panels, providing a total generation capacity of 24.94 kWp which will contribute to reducing the building's overall electricity demand and offset operational energy costs.
- z. The West Sussex Joint Minerals Plan (WSJMP) indicates that Weald brick clay exists on the site. As this mineral resource covers a broad extent of West Sussex, and as the MPA have identified in its most recent monitoring report that there is a 25-year supply of brick clay within the county of West Sussex, and as the mineral resources found on site are already sterilised by virtue of the fact they are within 250m of the existing residential properties and SEN school on and adjacent to the site, the Mineral Safeguarding Assessment submitted with this application concludes that the proposed development will not have an unacceptable affect upon the safeguarded mineral resources found beneath the site and thus complies with both Policy M9 of the WSJMLP and the supporting Mineral Safeguarding Guidance.
- aa. The Air Quality Assessment indicates that subject to the proposed mitigation measures to reduce the risk of dust and particulate matter being generated and re-suspended during the construction phase no significant impacts are anticipated during the construction phase.

It also advises that an assessment of operational phase impacts have been assessed as 'negligible' with respect to annual mean NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} at all assessed sensitive receptors, such that the overall air quality impact of the development is considered 'not significant'. That said in accordance with Air Quality and Emissions Mitigation Guidance for Sussex, an emission mitigation assessment has been undertaken for the proposed development, with a damage cost calculation undertaken for both NO_x and PM, as these are the major pollutants associated with road traffic emission. The AQA advises that the calculated central damage cost value is £30,144; and that various types of mitigation measures have been recommended, and the extent of the total money for air quality mitigation should be equal to/greater than the value determined by the damage cost calculation (i.e. £30,144).

- bb. The Noise Impact Assessment advises that predicted noise levels across the site are of a magnitude suitable for the Proposed Development. It goes on to recommend that the principles of good acoustic design and specific mitigation measures included within the noise assessment be adopted within the final masterplan in order to ensure compliance with the relevant design targets.
- cc. The proposed development will meet its infrastructure needs via a S106 Agreement, as long as the contributions sought are fairly and reasonable related to the scale of development proposed, such that there will be no adverse impact on day to day services.
- dd. The proposed development generates significant economic, social, and environmental benefits.

8.14 The application site is sustainable. Development on this site is capable of being assimilated with the wider area without detriment to the character of the area, or amenities of local residents. The landscape strategy, drainage strategy and ecological strategy will all enhance the sites' nature conservation value.

8.15 On the basis of the above we believe the case for granting planning permission to be compelling, and that consent should be granted without delay. We trust that planning permission will be granted accordingly.

Planning Statement

Appendix 1

Policy DPSC7 Assessment

Appendix a – JAA Planning Statement

A Review of compliance with Policy DPSC7 of the Reg 19 Submission Draft Local Plan 2021 - 2039 as amended by the schedule of Proposed Modifications - July 2024

Policy DPSC7	Compliance
<p><i>The land at LVS Hassocks, London Road, Sayers Common, will provide for 200 dwellings, and the following infrastructure on-site:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Informal outdoor space.</i> • <i>Relocation of the SEND School</i> 	<p>The planning application is a hybrid application and seeks separate and severable elements for: Demolition of all existing buildings bar the chapel, to retained for use within Use Class F and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Full planning permission for the development of the north western part of the Land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate a new SEN School with associated access from London Road, car parking, landscaping and drainage works; and b) Outline planning permission (Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale Reserved) for the development of the rest of the land at LVS Hassocks so as to accommodate up to 210 dwellinghouses (including affordable housing) with associated access, car parking, landscaping, play areas, informal outdoor space and drainage works <p>Thus, it does provide for the onsite infrastructure required of it by policy DPSC7.</p>
<p><i>Financial contributions towards the provision of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainable Transport</i> • <i>Improvements at Hassocks Station</i> • <i>Education</i> • <i>Library</i> • <i>Community Buildings</i> • <i>Local Community Infrastructure</i> • <i>Emergency Services</i> • <i>Health</i> • <i>Play area</i> 	<p>As set out in the draft HoT in chapter 6.21 of the Planning Statement the proposed development will make financial contributions towards the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Transport – see below • Improvements at Hassocks Station – see below • Education • Library • Community Buildings – if not provide on site • Local Community Infrastructure • Emergency Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Other outdoor provision</i> • <i>Outdoor sports</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Play area • Other outdoor provision • Outdoor sports <p>As long as they are fairly and reasonably related to the proposed development</p> <p>The nature of the Sustainable Transport Contribution is set out in the Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan – see below</p>
<p><i>And to make provision for the following off site:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sustainable transport measures</i> • <i>Highway works</i> • <i>Reprovision of SEND School</i> • <i>Sewerage network upgrades</i> 	<p>The Transport Assessment explains the proposed off site sustainable transport measures and proposed off site highway works. In summary, it includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scheme of highway works on London Road to enhance non-vehicular connectivity. • reconfiguration of the existing vehicular access point and pedestrian footways on the B2118 London Road and reconfiguration for existing infrastructure. <p>In addition, there are ongoing discussions with Metrobus to identify improvements to service and bus connectivity, to be secured via S106 Agreement.</p> <p>The S106 Agreement will also make provision for any network mitigation that may be required that arises from the MSDC Transport Study, including any measures relating to the physical capacity of Hickstead Junction and the A23/B2118 north and south bound on-slip merge, and the A23/A272 south bound off-slip</p> <p>In addition, sustainable travel works include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sayers Common to Burgess Hill Cycle Route • Improving existing cycle storage & access to Hassocks Station • On-site electric vehicle charging.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site resident & visitor cycle parking for conventional & e bikes • On-site Car club • Travel Plan <p>The Planning Statement and Design and Access Statement explain how the proposed development facilitates the reprovision of the existing SEN School</p> <p>And the Drainage Statement explains the sewerage network upgrades</p>
<p><i>In addition, policy DPSc7 also contains the following policy requirements:</i></p>	
<p><i>1. Demonstrate a coordinated approach and collaboration with other housing allocations in the Plan within Sayers Common to deliver high quality placemaking which supports the 20-minute neighbourhood principles, with direct enhanced active/ sustainable travel connections, and includes enabling the viability of new public transport services.</i></p>	
<p><i>2. Prioritise pedestrian and cycle access throughout the development and integrate and enhance the existing PRow which crosses the site.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Transport Assessment the proposed development does provide pedestrian and cycle access onto London Road (B2118), and throughout the development; and integrates and enhances the existing PRow which crosses the site, with additional PRow proposed to the north west.</p> <p>The changes in the accessing arrangements to the school actively reducing the use of the existing bridleway by waiting taxis as a new in/ out strategy is proposed, with additional landscaping making for a more attractive route, supplemented by that heading NW.</p> <p>In addition, the illustrative layout provides for a network of roads in accordance with Manual for Streets design guidance, enabling the shared use of the carriageway by cyclists consistent with LTN 1/20.</p>

<p><i>3. Provide any necessary upgrades to the existing access onto B2118.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Transport Assessment the proposed development provides suitable vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access from London Road (B2118). The design of the existing junction has been reviewed and a revised design is proposed following detailed discussions with WSCC. The revised design has been agreed in principle with WSCC and been subject to a road safety audit. To this end:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It has been agreed that the form of junction design is appropriate. 2. Fully accords with design standards. 3. Provides appropriately for pedestrians and cyclists. 4. Provides appropriate visibility for prevailing vehicle speeds. 5. Takes on board the comments of a road safety auditor.
<p><i>4. Redevelopment proposals shall provide evidence that demonstrates how a replacement SEND school will be provided either on-site or within the district, to the satisfaction of the Council and relevant key stakeholders.</i></p>	<p>The proposed development provides an opportunity to deliver a new SEN facility within the northern part of the site, replacing the existing outdated facilities, the details of which are the subject of a separate but interrelated application.</p>
<p><i>5. Occupation of development will be phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure, in consultation with the service provider.</i></p>	<p>This criterion has we note been deleted in the pre examination mods</p>
<p><i>6. Follow a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy (DS) reports the proposed development follows a sequential approach by directing development away from areas of flood risk and mitigates impacts through the integration of SuDS to deliver biodiversity/environmental improvements and flood resilience.</p> <p>Indeed, as set out in the FRA not only is no built development proposed in areas deemed to be at a high or medium risk of flooding, but the discharge rates for the proposed surface water drainage</p>

	<p>strategy will be limited to the mean annual flood return period, considered a 1 in 2.33 year event, thereby considerably reducing the peak flows presently emanating from the site.</p> <p>The strategy will therefore improve upon the current situation with regard to surface water management and flood risk including in the east of the site where surface water drainage is presently directed toward The Street and its adjacent residential dwellings, where it will now be captured, stored and diverted west where it will be released at the above stated low return period runoff rate.</p>
<p><i>7. Investigate, assess and address any land contamination issues arising from former uses of the site or from uses, or former uses, of land in proximity to the site</i></p>	
<p><i>8. Address impacts associated with the brick clay (Weald) Minerals Safeguarding Area.</i></p>	<p>The Mineral Safeguarding Assessment submitted with this application confirms that the proposed development can be undertaken without having a negative impact upon the safeguarded mineral resources that are located beneath the site.</p>
<p><i>9. Meets the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.</i></p>	<p>This criterion has we note been deleted. That said the proposed development does, as summarised in the Planning Statement and expanded upon in the supporting statement meet the requirements of other relevant development plan policies.</p>

Planning Statement

Appendix B

Socio – Economic Benefits Infographic

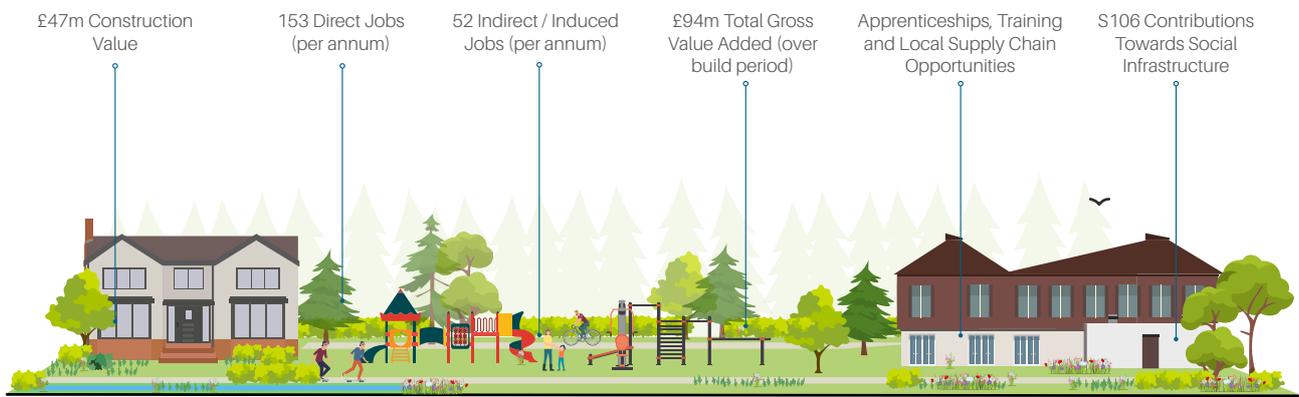
Socio-Economic Benefits of Development at Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common



This infographic provides an overview of the socio-economic benefits that could be delivered from the development of the Land at LVS Hassocks, Sayers Common, Mid Sussex. The proposal includes a new sustainable development of up to 210 homes and will make a significant contribution towards meeting a range of local housing needs. It includes a new relocated SEN school. The development will provide open spaces, play facilities, allotments, orchards and active travel opportunities, which will encourage healthy lifestyles for the local community.

Overall, the construction of new housing and social infrastructure will provide benefits for the local economy and will further deliver social benefits once occupied, which are captured and summarised here (n.b. figures are approximate and rounded).

Construction Phase



Operational Phase



Wider Benefits

