



Planning Statement (including Affordable Housing Statement) Land South of Henfield Road, Albourne

Outline planning permission for the erection of up to 120 residential dwellings including 30% affordable housing, public open space and community facilities. All matters are reserved except for access.

**Prepared for Croudace Homes
July 2022**

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Planning Statement

Site Name:	Land South of Henfield Road
Client Name:	Croudace Homes Ltd
Type of Report:	Planning Statement
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Planning Statement

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared by Strutt & Parker under instruction from Croudace Homes Ltd. The statement supports an outline planning application for the development of up to 120 dwellings, of which 30% would be affordable, public open space and community facilities. All matters are reserved except access.
- 1.2 An illustrative site layout is submitted showing how the proposed development could be accommodated. The application includes land which is being reserved for the possible expansion of Albourne Church of England Primary School.
- 1.3 Access to the public highway would be via a new access at the north of the site onto Henfield Road. A pedestrian connection is also proposed to the north east of the Application Site which would tie in with the existing public footpath on The Street. Internal footpaths would connect with existing Public Rights of Way within the Site to create further non-motorised points of access.
- 1.4 Please see the covering letter for a record of the drawings and reports which support this application.
- 1.5 This Statement provides a description of the development proposed and the policy context before reviewing each of the relevant material considerations to the determination of the application.

2. Site Description

- 2.1 The overall site area extends to 11.54 Hectares. The Application Site boundary is shown edged red in Figure 1 below.

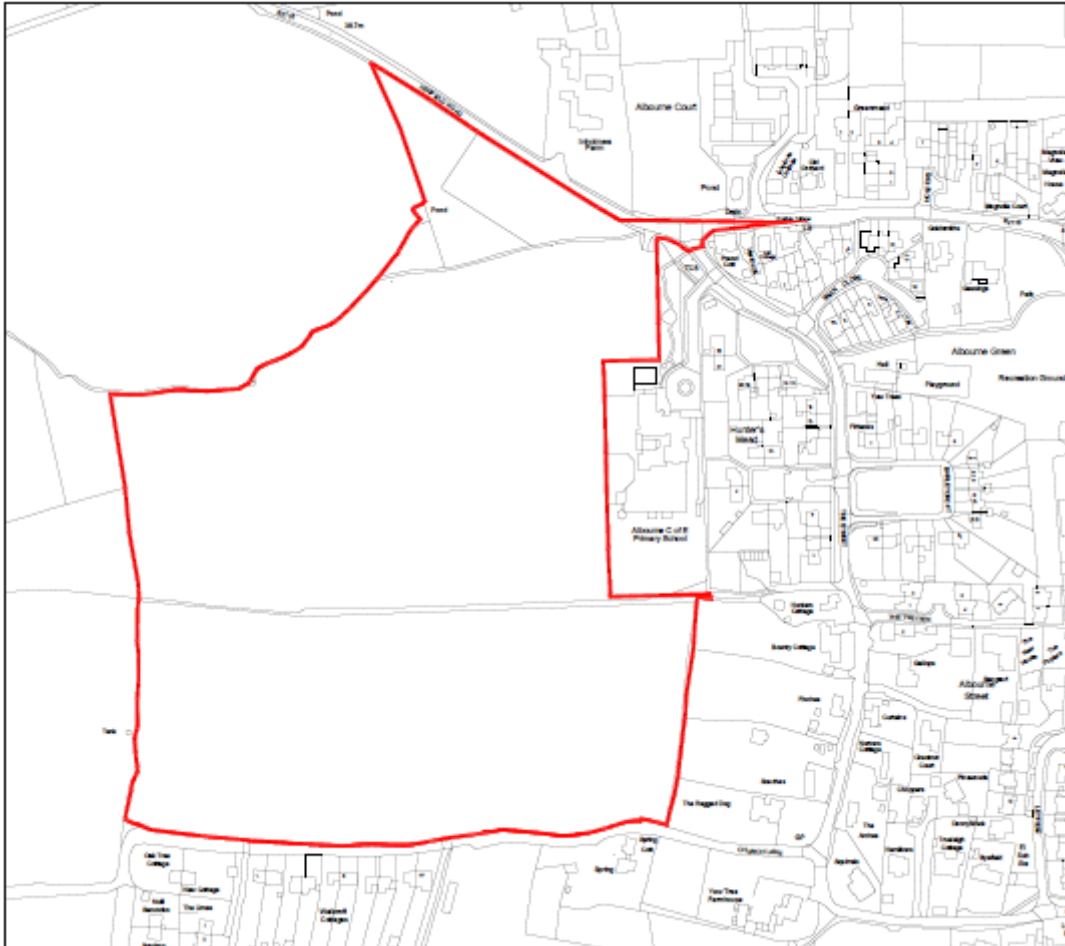


Figure 1 – Location Plan

- 2.2 The Application Site is formed of two large agricultural fields and a small orchard located to the south of Henfield Road, to the west of Albourne. The eastern site boundary abuts a small area of public open space known as the Millennium Gardens, Albourne Church of England Primary School, and the rear gardens of five residential properties.
- 2.3 The southern site boundary abuts Church Lane, a rural road which connects to The Street and the B2118 at its eastern extent, and North Park Farm and St Bartholomew's Church to the west and south west. There are a small number of dwellings located on the southern side of Church Lane opposite the southern site boundary. These dwellings set the western limit of the built form of the village, which effectively extends the settlement boundary up to the confines of the Application Site.
- 2.4 Agricultural fields and open countryside are located to the west and north west of the Application Site. A public footpath (Path 15_1AL) crosses the centre of the site east to west between the northern and

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southern fields. This adjoins with another public footpath (Path 12_1AL) which runs north/south along the eastern boundary of the southern field, connecting to Church Lane.

- 2.5 The Orchard to the north west of the site is physically separated from the agricultural fields by thick hedgerow and tree planting. The agricultural fields are also screened from the north, west and south by dense vegetation on these boundaries. The site is separated from the Millennium Gardens and Primary School by a mix of fencing and trees. The residential gardens which back on to the southern field are separated from the Application Site by garden fencing and, in most cases, boundary vegetation.
- 2.6 A small watercourse is located to the north west of the Application Site, running adjacent to the site boundary before cutting across the southern part of the Orchard land.
- 2.7 The site topography falls generally from north to south, although there is an area of higher land to the south west of the site within the southern field.
- 2.8 Albourne Conservation Area abuts the site boundary with the southern field. There are also several Grade II Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the site, including five which share a boundary with the southern field.
- 2.9 The Application Site is not located within a designated landscape designation. The South Downs National Park boundary is located approximately 1.5km to the south. There are no Tree Preservation Orders within or adjacent to the Site.

3. Planning History and Pre-Application Engagement

- 3.1 There is no planning history on the Application Site.

Pre-application engagement

Pre-application Submission

- 3.2 The Applicant engaged with the Local Planning Authority through its Pre-application advice service. A meeting was held with officers and a formal response received on 29th November 2021. The Scheme submitted for pre-application was for 125 dwellings set out in development blocks. It included two large attenuation basins, play areas to the edge of the development area and land safeguarded for potential school use in the southern field.
- 3.3 The Council's urban design officer provided feedback on the proposed development recommending that further consideration was given to the southerly views towards the National Park and to the development blocks proposed at the time which would need to be revised to take more account of its location on the rural edge. Officers also advised that public spaces should be more central to the site if possible and consideration given to the appearance of drainage basins.
- 3.4 Advice was also given on drainage matters, affordable housing composition and an appropriate mix of residential units. The views of the Council's officers have been taken into consideration and have informed the design evolution of the scheme. Full details on the design journey are set out in section 4 of the Design and Access Statement.
- 3.5 Officers noted that at the time of the application, the Council considered it could identify a five year supply of housing land, and that the Application Site is not allocated in either the Mid-Sussex Local Plan or the Albourne Neighbourhood Plan.

Public Consultation

- 3.6 Public Consultation has been a two stage process. Firstly, the Applicant and members of the project team met formally with the Parish Council on 4th February 2020 to discuss aspirations for the site. Scheme development was at an early stage and a lower quantum of development was proposed at the time. However, it provided an opportunity to engage with the Parish and inform of the Applicant's intent to develop the site.
- 3.7 A community consultation has also taken place on the current proposals. A website detailing the application was created at <https://albourne.consultationonline.co.uk/> and a mailshot issued to the local community to invite them to visit the website and leave feedback/comments on the proposals.

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- 3.8 This process and the results of the consultation are contained in the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) submitted in support of this application.

4. Description of Development

- 4.1 Outline planning permission is sought for the construction of up to 120 dwellings (including 30% affordable housing), public open space and community facilities. Vehicular and pedestrian access would be taken from Henfield Road. Details of the access are submitted for approval whilst all other matters are Reserved.
- 4.2 An illustrative masterplan is submitted demonstrating how the Site could be developed to deliver up to 120 units. These would be located on the northern field only. The southern field would be left undeveloped and would be subject to landscaping to create publicly accessible parkland.
- 4.3 The application proposes the following development:
- Up to 120 dwellings;
 - 30% Affordable units;
 - Community Shop located to the north east corner of the site, adjacent to the site access;
 - 0.35Ha of land to be transferred to Albourne Church of England Primary School;
 - Dedicated car park/drop off area for parents of Albourne Primary School;
 - Surface water drainage infrastructure, including five attenuation basins;
 - Public Open Space to include Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP), Pocket Parks/Trim trails for younger children and extensive parkland within southern field; and
 - Retention of existing trees and hedgerows and significant increases in planting across the site.
- 4.4 The development aims to make the best use of the site in terms of delivering market and policy compliant affordable housing whilst responding to the edge of settlement/rural fringe location.
- 4.5 Site layout is a reserved matter, but we have provided an illustrative masterplan which demonstrates that the proposed quantum of development is appropriate for the site. Development which is located at the site access, adjacent to the existing Albourne boundary and toward the centre of the site, is a slightly higher density (36dph) compared to those on the southern and western edge where development would be at the countryside edge (up to 32dph). This is shown clearly on the site density Parameter Plans submitted in support of the application.
- 4.6 The unit mix would also be finalised at reserved matters stage. The illustrative masterplan shows what could be delivered at this site, including a mix of one two bedroom flats and two to four bedroom houses.
- 4.7 Affordable Housing would be provided at Policy compliant levels (30%) and would be indistinguishable in terms of design from the market housing and constructed in accordance with National Space

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Standards. Some 25% of the affordable housing provided would be delivered as First Homes in accordance with relevant legislation.

- 4.8 Vehicular and pedestrian access are taken off Henfield Road to the north of the site. This includes provision of a path which will tie in with the existing footway at the northern end of The Street. Detailed drawings are submitted with this application for approval. The illustrative masterplan shows that on-site parking can be delivered which meets West Sussex County Council Standards.
- 4.9 Development of this site also offers the opportunity to provide benefits for both the occupants of the site and existing residents of Albounre.
- 4.10 This includes the provision of a building which could include a community shop at ground floor level, located adjacently to the site entrance so that it is accessible to all local residents.
- 4.11 Furthermore, it is proposed to provide a car park/drop off area within the site (to the south of the shop unit) for use by parents of pupils at the Primary School and staff. The entrance to this area would be through the proposed site access and would operate internally with a one-way system for ease of traffic flow. This would divert school traffic away from The Street, which is a narrow residential road which suffers from congestion during the busy pick up and drop off times. This is a further quality of life benefit for existing residents. The locations are shown on the plan extract below:

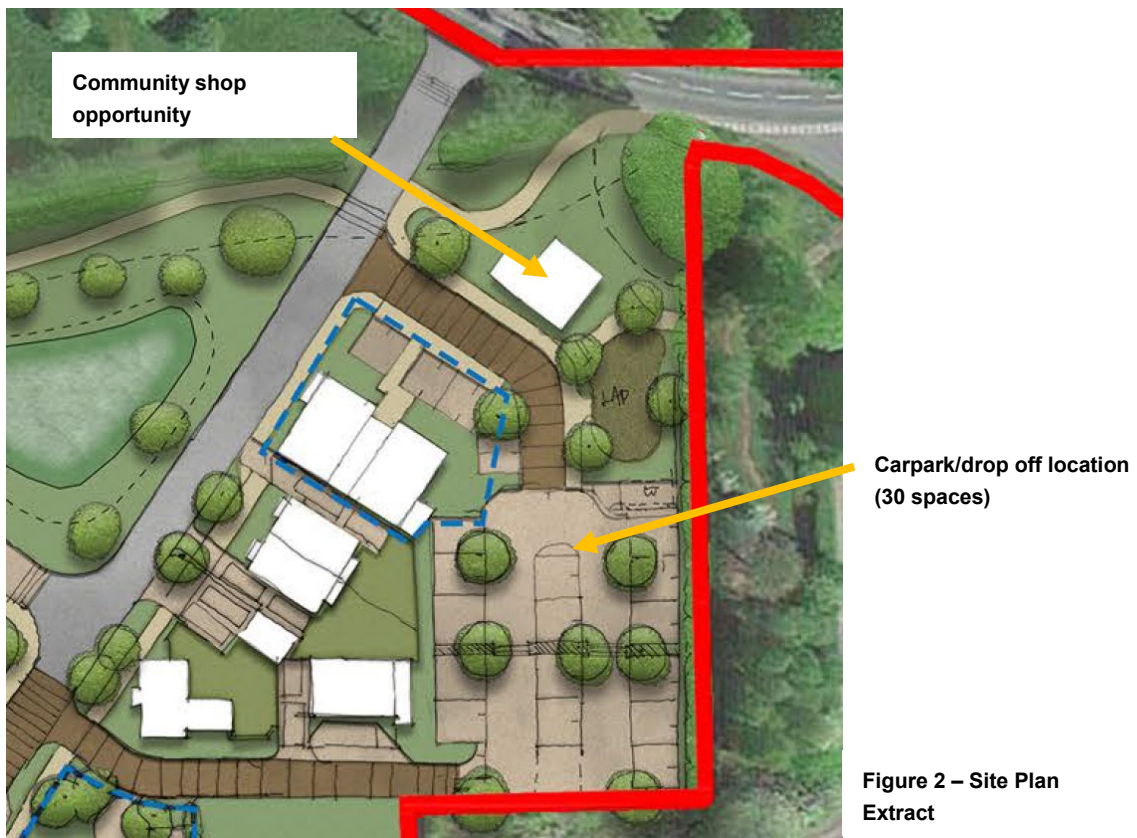


Figure 2 – Site Plan Extract

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- 4.12 The application also proposes the immediate transfer of 0.35Ha of land (as shown below) to Albourne Primary School. This would be located adjacent to the School's western boundary and is shown on the below image:

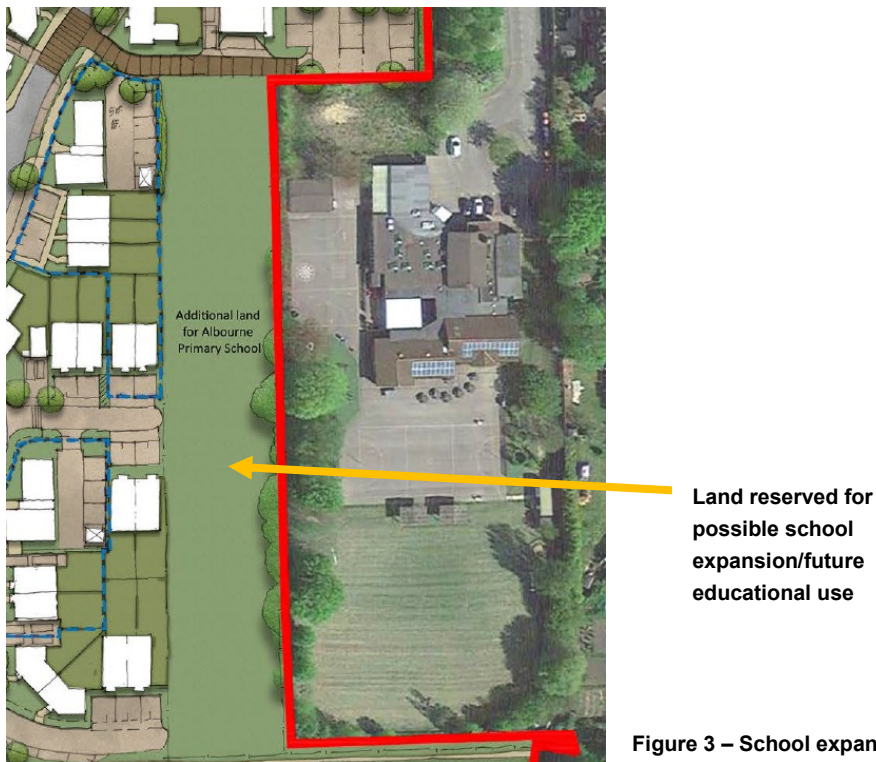


Figure 3 – School expansion land





- 4.13 The development does not propose built form on the southern field. Instead, the Applicant is seeking to implement a landscape strategy to open up the land south of the public footpath for public use. The landscape scheme proposes new woodland and orchard, species rich meadow, new planting, walking routes and seating areas so that this area can be enjoyed by future residents, the wider Albourne Community, and those using the existing Public Rights of Way. The landscape proposals are shown on the below plan:



Figure 4 – Landscape Plan

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LEGEND

	Application boundary		Species-rich meadow
	Public Rights of Way		SUDs depression
	Existing vegetation		Dry gravel swale
	Existing hedgerow		Self-bound gravel path
	New woodland		Seating / picnic bench - to maximise views to South Downs
	Proposed trees		Opportunity for interpretation boards / points of interest
	Proposed Orchard infill trees		
	Proposed native scrub		

- 4.14 The surface water drainage scheme proposes a series of attenuation basins which would be linked to the watercourse to the north of the site. The basins additionally offer biodiversity and landscape opportunities via the landscape scheme which will make them an integral feature of the scheme.

5. Planning Policy Context

- 5.1 This section of the report summarises the national and local policy context relevant to the determination of the proposed development.
- 5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that, where the Development Plan contains relevant policies, an application for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3 In this case, the Development Plan comprises of the:
- Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (adopted March 2018);
 - Mid Sussex District Council Site Allocations DPD (adopted June 2022); and
 - Albourne Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan (made September 2016).
- 5.4 MSDC has begun the process of reviewing its local plan given it is approaching five years since the District Plan was adopted (eight months remain at the time of writing). A consultation draft plan (Regulation 18) was due to be considered by Full Council in February 2022 prior to public consultation. However, discussion was deferred in January 2022 and no revised timetable for the review has yet been published.
- 5.5 National planning policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) with guidance provided in National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – July 2021

- 5.6 The NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Local development plans must be in conformity with the aims and objectives of the NPPF.
- 5.7 Chapter 2 of the NPPF focuses on achieving sustainable development. Paragraph 8 identifies three overarching objectives which need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways to achieve sustainable development. These objectives are economic; social and environmental. These are objectives to be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of policies in the Framework.
- 5.8 Paragraph 11 states that at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan making this means plans should “*promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area.*” Furthermore, “*strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing.*”
- 5.9 In terms of decision-taking, Paragraph 11 states:

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- 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 clear 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.*

- 5.10 Paragraph 11 is clear that for plan-making this means that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs for housing, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.
- 5.11 Chapter 3 focuses on plan-making and in particular paragraph 20 states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for a number of features, including, housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure, infrastructure, flood risk and community facilities.
- 5.12 Chapter 4 of the NPPF refers to decision-making and promotes the use of pre-application discussions for early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle and to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible. Engagement with the local community is also encouraged.
- 5.13 In determining applications, Paragraph 47 states that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.14 Applications for planning permission cannot be considered 'premature' except in certain limited circumstances, including where "*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 Chapter 5 seeks to address the delivery of a sufficient supply of homes. Paragraph 60 states that 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.
- 5.16 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF requires strategic policies to be informed by a local housing need assessment. This assessment should be conducted using the standard method as outlined in national planning guidance.

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- 5.17 Paragraph 74 states *“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 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.”* Furthermore *“The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land, or 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years.”*
- 5.18 Paragraph 92 promotes decisions which achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which are *“safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.”*
- 5.19 The provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs are promoted by Paragraph 97. Decisions should *“plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.”*
- 5.20 Paragraph 95 notes that great weight should be placed on *“the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications.”*
- 5.21 Paragraph 98 requires development to provide access to a network of high quality open spaces, whilst enhancement of public rights of way and accesses, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails, is encouraged at Paragraph 100.
- 5.22 Chapter 9 promotes sustainable transport in new development. Paragraph 104 states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:
- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
 - b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
 - c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
 - d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*

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e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.

- 5.23 The NPPF also requires all development that generates significant amounts of movement to be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment, and a Travel Plan. Paragraph 111 states 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 would be severe.”*
- 5.24 Chapter 11 requires new development to make the most effective use of land. Paragraph 119 states that *“Planning policies and decisions should 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.”* Decision should *“encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land”* and take *“opportunities to achieve net environmental gains”*, as set out in Paragraph 120.
- 5.25 Chapter 12 states that the creation of high quality buildings and places should be fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 states that policies and decisions should ensure 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 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*
 - f) where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*
- 5.26 Paragraph 132 requires design quality to be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals.

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5.27 Planning for flood risk is addressed in Chapter 14. The use of sustainable drainage systems in major development is required unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. Paragraph 169 sets out how these systems should operate.

5.28 Chapter 15 sets out how planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment. Paragraph 174 requires planning policies and decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

5.29 Chapter 16 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It requires that Heritage Assets (which includes archaeological remains) are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to quality of life for future generations.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 (Adopted March 2018)

5.30 Policy DP4 sets out the Council's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for housing which was 14,892 over the plan period. Provision is also made for 1,498 dwellings to ensure unmet need is addressed in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. This equals a minimum District housing requirement of 16,390 dwellings between 2014 – 2031. Policy DP4 goes on to state that *"The Plan will deliver an average of 876 dwellings per annum (dpa) until 2023/24. Thereafter an average of 1,090 dpa will be*

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delivered between 2024/25 and 2030/31, subject to there being no further harm to the integrity of European Habitat Sites in Ashdown Forest.”

- 5.31 Policy DP4 states that a review of the District Plan will commence in 2021, and be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2023.
- 5.32 The spatial distribution of housing requirement is also set out in the policy. It notes that Albourne is a Settlement 3 category together with 12 other towns and villages. There is a minimum requirement of 2,200 houses to be delivered in Category 3 Settlements, with a minimum residual from 2017 onwards (accounting for completions and commitments) of 311.
- 5.33 Policy DP5 commits MSDC to working with neighbouring authorities to address OAN across Housing Market Areas (HMA), particularly the Northern West Sussex HMA. It states that *“The Council’s approach will 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.”*
- 5.34 Policy DP6 (Settlement Hierarchy) notes that *“in order for the villages to continue to grow and thrive, in many cases, it is necessary to expand beyond the existing built-up area boundaries.”* Amongst the Strategic objectives DP6 aims to meet are the promotion of *“well located and designed development that reflects the District’s distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence; opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting; town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community; sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive; and the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.”*
- 5.35 Development under DP6 needs to show that it would not cause harm to the character and function of the settlement.
- 5.36 As noted above, Albourne is a Category 3 settlement, which are defined as *“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.”*
- 5.37 Albourne has a minimum requirement of 57 dwellings over the plan period, which became 41 as of 2017 (accounting for commitments and completions).
- 5.38 Policy DP13 notes that *“development will be permitted if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements which harms the separate identity and amenity of settlements, and would not have an unacceptably urbanising effect on the area between settlements.”*

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- 5.39 Infrastructure is secured by Policy DP20. It notes that the *“Council will expect developers to provide for, or contribute towards, the infrastructure and mitigation measures made necessary by their development proposals through: appropriate on-site mitigation and infrastructure provision; and the use of planning obligations (s106 legal agreements and unilateral undertakings).”* The Policy also refers to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), although the Council has not taken CIL forward at the time of this application.
- 5.40 Policy DP21 supports delivery of the West Sussex County Council Transport Plan 2011 – 2026. Development therefore should be sustainably located to minimise the need to travel. Further, development should provide *“appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car, such as the provision of, and access to, safe and convenient routes for walking, cycling and public transport.”* This should include *“suitable facilities for secure and safe cycle parking.”* Car parking provision should take into account the accessibility of the development.
- 5.41 Policy DP22 protects Right of Way and other recreational routes. It states that access to the countryside will be encouraged by; *“ensuring that (where appropriate) development provides safe and convenient links to rights of way and other recreational routes; supporting the provision of additional routes within and between settlements that contribute to providing a joined up network of routes where possible; [and] where appropriate, encouraging making new or existing rights of way multi-functional to allow for benefits for a range of users. (Note: ‘multi-functional will generally mean able to be used by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders).”*
- 5.42 On-site delivery of play equipment is required by Policy DP24. It also promotes the delivery of leisure and cultural facilities through new development.
- 5.43 Policy DP25 states *“The provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities will be supported.”* It notes that *“the on-site provision of new community facilities will be required on larger developments, where practicable and viable, including making land available for this purpose.”*
- 5.44 Good design in new development is supported by Policy DP26. 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;*

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- *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."*

- 5.45 National space standards are required in all new dwellings under Policy DP27, whilst DP28 requires development of five units or more to make provision for 20% of dwellings to meet Category 2 – accessible and adaptable dwellings under Building Regulations – Approved Document M Requirement M4(2).
- 5.46 Policy DP29 requires new development to make consideration for potential sources of pollution, including noise, light and air.
- 5.47 Policy DP30 supports the development of sustainable communities through delivery of an appropriate housing mix. It states that housing development will *"provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development (including affordable housing) that reflects current and future local housing needs."*
- 5.48 Affordable housing is address by Policy DP31 which requires delivery of 30% on-site from all development of 11 units or more. A mix of tenure of affordable housing is required, *"normally approximately 75% social or affordable rented homes, with the remaining 25% for intermediate homes"*.
- 5.49 Development must protect listed buildings and their settings. Policy DP34 requires development to demonstrate a *"thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting."* Conservation areas and their setting are protected by Policy DP35.
- 5.50 Policy DP37 requires *"the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting."* It requires trees, woodland and hedgerows to be protected and enhanced by ensuring development: *"incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; 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."*

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- 5.51 Furthermore, it requires appropriate protection measures to be taken throughout the development process, and development to take *“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.”*
- 5.52 Policy DP38 seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity in new development schemes. It states that development should contribute to and takes opportunities for improvements, enhancements and management of 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.”* Further, it states development should protect *“existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity”* and that *“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).”*
- 5.53 Policy DP39 requires developments to minimise energy use through the layout and design of the scheme.
- 5.54 Policy DP41 requires Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to be implemented in all developments of 10 dwellings or more. The Policy notes 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.”*

Mid Sussex Site Allocations DPD (Adopted June 2022)

- 5.55 The MSDC Site Allocations DPD (SADPD) allocates development sites (residential and employment) to meet the targets set out by the Local Plan. It also includes some strategic development management policies. There are no allocations at Albourne, and therefore the residual demand in the Local Plan remains outstanding.
- 5.56 The only additional policy relevant to this application is SA38; Air Quality. It sets out a requirement for an Air Quality Assessment to be provided in support of applications for Major Development. This is so that applicants can demonstrate that there is not unacceptable impact on air quality. The Policy states that the *“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.”*

Albourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan (Made September 2016)

- 5.57 Policy ALC3 establishes local gaps between Albourne, Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint.

Planning Statement

- 5.58 The plan notes a number of constraints to new housing development which proposed development would need to consider. This includes the lack of existing infrastructure such as a shop, transport connections and the capacity of the primary school. It also recognises congestion in the village centre, the setting of the conservation area and listed buildings, and the requirement to maintain settlement pattern to avoid coalescence with neighbouring authorities.
- 5.59 Policy ALH 1 (Housing Development) notes that development can be supported provided it is *“appropriate to a village setting in terms of scale, height and massing”* and *“is demonstrated to be sustainable, having regard to the settlement hierarchy”* and *“is infill and surrounded by existing development.”*
- 5.60 A stated aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to improve the safety for pedestrians and road users on The Street. Paragraph 6.4 states that *“a scheme to manage traffic congestion and parking arrangements in this area will be developed. It is intended that the scheme will include specific measures (in conjunction with the School) to seek to address the issues apparent at school drop off and pick up times.”*
- 5.61 The Neighbourhood Plan also supports further development of the Primary School. Paragraph 7.3 sets out the aim that *“The Council will support and assist efforts by the School to increase capacity and improve facilities for teachers and pupils.”*

Emerging Mid Sussex Local Plan Review

- 5.62 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 – 2038 Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) was published online in January 2022 prior to a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Housing, Planning and Economic Growth.
- 5.63 Emerging Policy DPH 1 noted that *“The Local Housing Need (LHN) for housing is 18,581 dwellings (an average of 1,093 dwellings per annum). This figure has been calculated using the standard method and there are no exceptional circumstances to justify an alternative approach.”*
- 5.64 The Plan went on to propose large strategic urban extensions and a number of smaller allocations to meet this increased need. As noted in Paragraph 5.4 of this report, the plan was not published for consultation and work on the Review has stalled. However, the document is an indication of the direction of travel for planning policy in Mid Sussex.
- 5.65 The emerging plan sets out areas it considers have potential for further growth. The below table is extracted from the document and demonstrates that Albourne is one such area

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Potential for Growth at Settlements

Limited Further Growth Potential	Potential for Proportionate Growth	High Growth Potential
East Grinstead	Burgess Hill	Copthorne (Crabbet Park)
Haywards Heath	Cuckfield	Sayers Common
Hassocks	Crawley Down	Ansty
Hurstpierpoint	Ashurst Wood	
Lindfield	Albourne	
Ardingly	Bolney	
Balcombe	Pease Pottage	
Handcross	Scaynes Hill	
Horsted Keynes		
Turners Hill		
West Hoathly		
Sharpthorne		
Twineham		

	Settlement within the High Weald AONB
	Settlement contains a "Significant Site" with potential

Figure 5 – Extract from Local Plan Review

6. Planning Assessment

- 6.1 The Mid Sussex District Plan sets out a vision in the District to meet the Social, Economic and Environmental arms of Sustainable Development. It further sets out 15 objectives, in four priority themes, setting out how the plan takes forward the vision and applies it to planning issues.
- 6.2 The proposed development would accord with these objectives and themes, and thereby be in conformity with the overriding spatial strategy and priorities of the District to achieve sustainable development.
- 6.3 This section of the Planning Statement considers how the proposed development would meet these policy areas and sets out the features of the scheme which would be in accord with the spatial strategy. These matters are considered under the following sub-headings:

- a) The Principle of Residential Development;
- b) Affordable Housing Provision;
- c) Community Facilities;
- d) Access, accessibility, traffic and Parking;
- e) Trees, woodland and ecology (including Biodiversity Net Gain);
- f) Heritage and archaeology;
- g) Landscape, including Public Open Space and play;
- h) Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Water Drainage;
- i) Lighting;
- j) Air quality; and
- k) Ground conditions

Principle of Residential Development

- 6.4 The following are considered material considerations indicating that the proposed development should be supported:
- i. Uncertainties regarding the delivery of strategic sites in Mid Sussex to meet identified housing demand;
 - ii. The increased pressure on housing land supply in Mid Sussex resulting from recent changes to adopted national planning policy; and
 - iii. The Site is sustainable and development accords with the settlement hierarchy and spatial strategy as set out in the Local Plan.

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i) Strategic sites and housing demand

- 6.5 The adopted MSDC Local Plan sets out an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for 16,390 dwellings to be delivered over the plan period. This is at an average of 876 dwellings per annum (dpa) until 2023/24, when there will be a stepped increase to 1,090 dpa to be delivered between 2024/25 and 2030/31.
- 6.6 The Plan allocates large strategic sites to meet this demand, located to the east of Burgess Hill at Kings Way (Policy DP8; up to 480 homes), to the north and north-west of Burgess Hill (DP9; up to 3,500 homes); east of Pease Pottage (DP10; up to 600 new homes); and north of Clayton Mills (DP11; up to 500 homes).
- 6.7 The Council has also adopted a Site Allocations DPD to “*allocate sufficient housing sites to address the residual necessary to meet the identified housing requirement for the district up to 2031 in accordance with the Spatial Strategy set out in the District Plan*”. It allocates a further 22 sites to help meet the Local Plan requirements.
- 6.8 It is material that the OAN method of establishing housing need has been superseded by the Standard Method (discussed later in this report), meaning housing need in the District is higher than that catered for in the adopted plan. MSDC will need to calculate its five year housing land supply to meet the demand required by the standard method in March 2023, once the Local Plan is five years old and deemed to be out of date in accordance with the NPPF.
- 6.9 Mid Sussex is therefore facing an increased pressure to meet existing and future housing need in the district.
- 6.10 MSDC is reliant on the large strategic sites allocated in the Local Plan as the main component of five year housing land supply. It's latest housing trajectory shows The Northern Arc expected to deliver the following in the current five year period (as set out in a Statement of Common Ground dated June 2021):

Site	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
Burgess Hill North Arc (phase 1)	0	135	172	272	335	914

- 6.11 There is some uncertainty that these delivery rates will be realised. A first reserved matters application for residential development (in accordance with the outline consent) was not approved until May 2022 (DM/21/3870) and is for 247 dwellings. The decision notice sets out a number of pre-commencement planning conditions which will need discharging prior to the start of works. The delivery of 307 units in between 2022/23 and 2023/24 is questionable.
- 6.12 Furthermore, it is noted that there is an undetermined application to vary the original outline consent (DM/18/5114) in addition to a record of only partial discharges of conditions associated with the link road consent (DM/20/0254) which is vital infrastructure for the scheme.

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- 6.13 These planning uncertainties cast further doubt as to the anticipated delivery rates at the Northern Arc site.
- 6.14 There are similar uncertainties elsewhere. The final phase of the allocated site East of Kingsway has also only recently been granted planning consent (March 2022) with a large number of pre-commencement conditions which need discharging. It is not clear when construction at this site will commence so that it can begin to contribute to the five year position.
- 6.15 There is also uncertainty at Clayton Mills where Reserved Matters for housing were granted in December 2021, but pre-commencement conditions are still to be finally discharged.
- 6.16 These allocated sites are part of the 'B-List Sites' in MSDCs housing land supply trajectory. This category is supposed to deliver 2,336 units over the next five years (as of June 2021), and includes sites in the MSDC SADPD and those major developments with outline consent.
- 6.17 Housing land supply in MSDC is heavily reliant on major sites. The delivery of these has been sluggish to date resulting in some uncertainty in the ongoing land supply position. The Council needs a reliable source of housing land in order to provide for the needs of the District.

ii) Increasing Housing Need in Mid Sussex

- 6.18 The government has introduced the Standard Method for calculating housing need which has superseded calculations using OAN. MSDC's housing need under the standard method has increased to 18,581 as outlined in the Local Plan Review Regulation 18 document. This would be delivered at 1,093 dpa and the plan states that it needs to make provision for 8,332 more dwellings, further to the allocations in the MSDC Local Plan and SADPD.
- 6.19 The existing MSDC Local Plan is approaching five years old and the housing need in the district has significantly increased. Dwellings are coming forward in the District, but not at the pace expected or of sufficient quantity to meet the increasing demand.
- 6.20 Policy DP4 of the MSDC Local Plan states that the housing figure for the District is a minimum target. This does not therefore preclude development of unallocated sites provided they are sustainable. Policy DP5 also states that the Council will meet future housing need. This is in accordance with the spatial strategy which states the Council will provide "*housing that meets the needs of present and future generations in locations that are consistent with other policies in the Plan.*"
- 6.21 Policy DP5 states that the plan review would take place in 2021, with submission to the government in 2023 in order to "*ensure that sites are considered and planned for in a timely manner.*" This timetable has not been met.

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- 6.22 Housing need in the District has demonstrably increased meaning further sites which would meet the Council's strategic spatial policy are required. It is therefore appropriate for the Council to seek and consider other sustainable sites in order to 'meet future housing need'.

iii) Sustainable Location

- 6.23 The proposed application would deliver up to 120 homes, 30% of which would be affordable, together with community facilities and public open space in Albourne.
- 6.24 Policy DP6 relates to Settlement Hierarchy and expansion and sets out criteria for acceptable development. Albourne is a Category 3 settlement in the hierarchy meaning it is a medium sized village 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."*
- 6.25 The Application Site is contiguous to Albourne's settlement boundary, and the Village itself is a sustainable location by definition. The second and third criteria of DP6 are therefore met. The Site is not currently allocated in a development plan but it is clear that it would help meet the needs of present and future generations (including future educational needs) in a location considered sustainable by the Local Plan, thereby meeting one of the social criteria of sustainable development.
- 6.26 Furthermore, it would deliver a number of wider community benefits (outlined in more detail later in this report) which meet identified needs in the local area. The development would therefore contribute to the creation of *"balanced communities that meet the needs of all residents with appropriate infrastructure and public facilities that are accessible to all"*, which is a further element of the social arm of sustainable development. These elements of the scheme also have wider social and environmental benefits which will be detailed later in this report.
- 6.27 It is also material that the site was received positively in the recent Local Plan Review process. The Site Assessments Conclusions by Settlement document notes that *"overall, the site represents a sustainable option for allocation."* There were no identified 'showstoppers' in terms of transport modelling, Habitats Regulation Assessment or Air Quality. The report concludes *"that the site represents a suitable option for allocation."* An extract from the document is copied below:

986	Land to the West of Albourne Primary School Henfield Road Albourne	125	The Sustainability Appraisal concludes that, overall, the site represents a sustainable option for allocation. The transport modelling undertaken to date for the District Plan Review does not indicate that there will be any showstoppers. However, the transport assessment is an iterative process, and the next stage will be to assess capacity mitigation measures, where applicable. The HRA is not anticipated to identify any likely significant effect on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, subject to appropriate mitigation. In terms of air quality, there are currently no anticipated significant effects on the Stonepound Crossroads AQMA, or adverse impacts on the Ashdown Forest; however, this will be confirmed through ongoing scenario testing. In light of the above, it is considered that the site represents a suitable option for allocation.
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Figure 6 – Local Plan Review; Conclusions by settlement

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- 6.28 Development of the site would meet identified local housing and community need, which is in keeping with the strategic aims of the Local Plan. The site is not yet allocated for development, but the increasing housing need in the District is a material consideration in favour of an application which will deliver significant wider benefits in addition to new dwellings (including policy compliant affordable units).
- 6.29 Albourne, as a Category 3 settlement, is considered an appropriate location to help meet the future need outlined above. It is noteworthy that the stalled Local Plan Review is considering significant settlement expansion at both Sayers Common and Antsy, which are Category 3 and Category 4 settlements respectively. Development at Albourne is in keeping with this emerging spatial strategy.
- 6.30 The Application Site is the only logical area to accommodate growth in Albourne. This is demonstrated on the below inset map prepared in support of the Site Allocations DPD (Site is marked by a red star):

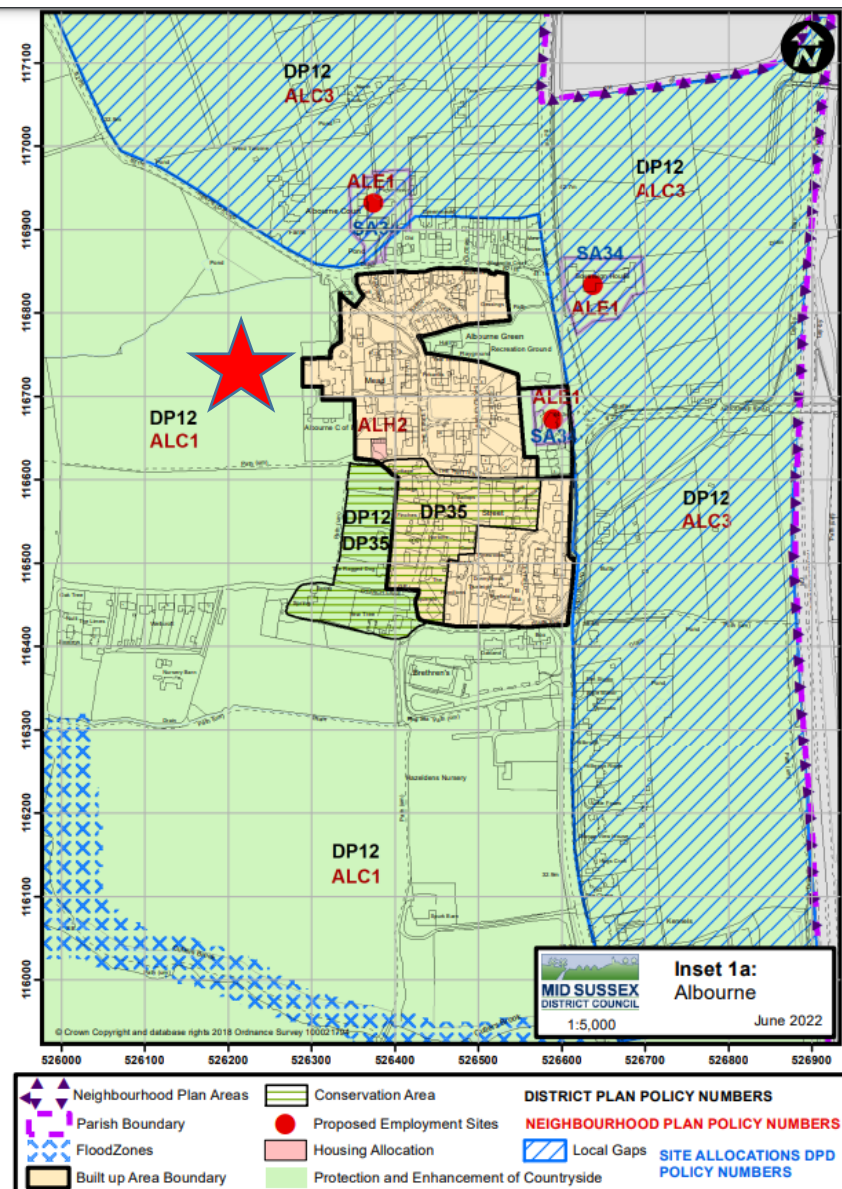


Figure 7 – Albourne Inset Map from SADPD

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- 6.31 Development to the east and north is constrained by Policy ALC3 which seeks to prevent settlement coalescence. Development to the south would be in close proximity to the Conservation Area and would also be closer to the National Park Boundary. The Application Site, to the west of Albourne School, would come no further west than the existing dwellings on Church Lane which, whilst not in the settlement boundary, mark a physical boundary to the settlement edge. Development would therefore sit within the existing built form of Albourne.
- 6.32 There are therefore no other sites in the Village which would deliver growth necessary to meet both existing and future housing need.
- 6.33 Albourne is a Category 3 settlement which is identified for growth. The proposed application does not conflict with Policies DP4 or DP5. It would meet identified local needs and is located in a sustainable settlement as identified in Policy DP6. Development of the site represents sustainable development as described in the NPPF and the MSDC Local Plan, and contributes toward the wider strategic objectives of the District.

Affordable Housing

- 6.34 Policy DP31 seeks provision of 30% affordable housing on major development sites. This should be provided as a mix of tenure approximately 75% social or affordable rented homes, with the remaining 25% for intermediate homes. A minimum 25% of affordable units could be delivered as First Homes in line with government policy.
- 6.35 The application is not seeking approval of layout but proposes to deliver 30% on-site affordable in accordance with policy. Units will meet the nationally described space standards in line with Policy DP27 and appear indistinguishable in design from the market housing. Further, in accordance with Policy DP28, a reasonable proportion of affordable homes will comply with Category 3 – Wheelchair-user dwellings under Building Regulations – Approved Document M Requirement M4(3). This will be secured at reserved matters.
- 6.36 The tenure and mix will be policy compliant but will be determined at Reserved matters stage. The illustrative site masterplan shows that the affordable housing units can be appropriately located across the site so that they are not clustered in the same area. This will assist with creating a more cohesive community at the site in the medium to long term.
- 6.37 In summary, the development will deliver 30% on-site affordable units with an appropriate mix of dwelling size to be determined at reserved matters along with final tenure mix. The proposal demonstrates how the Site can deliver affordable housing which is integrated with the market units. Detailed design is a Reserved Matter, but the affordable units will be indistinguishable from the market housing. The proposal accords with the provisions of the NPPF and Policy DP31.

Community Benefits

- 6.38 The proposed application would deliver the following wider community benefits:

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- Land transferred to Albourne Primary School for recreation use or possible expansion by one form of entry;
- Provision of car park/drop off area serving Albourne Primary School;
- Dedicated community building with the potential for a community shop; and
- Creation of parkland in the southern field as dedicated public open space with additional benefits for educational provision for school children.

Reserved School Land

- 6.39 Policy DP25 of the MSDC Local Plan supports *“the provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities.”* It notes that *“Community facilities and local services to meet local needs will be identified through Neighbourhood Plans.”*
- 6.40 The Albourne Neighbourhood Plan notes the importance of the School to the community with particular reference to the desire for children resident in the village being able to attend. Developments both in the village and in surrounding areas have placed more pressure on School capacity, and the Neighbourhood Plan sets out that the Parish Council will *“support and assist efforts by the School to increase capacity and improve facilities for teachers and pupils.”*
- 6.41 The Council’s strategic policy to deliver sustainable development requires development to increase opportunities for people to spend more time in their communities, and build safe and socially inclusive places. Providing land for the School to potentially expand, or to increase the quality of existing educational provision contributes toward this objective.
- 6.42 The land shown as reserved would be transferred to Albourne School (see Figure 3 on page 10) for this purpose. This would be dealt with in a Planning Obligation. The proposal therefore accords with the Aim of the Neighbourhood Plan as expressed in Paragraph 7.3, meets a need identified by the local community and contributes toward sustainable development.

Congestion on The Street

- 6.43 A further need expressed in the NP is a desire to tackle congestion in The Street resulting from School traffic. Paragraph 6.4 states that *“There are significant, and at times serious, problems with traffic congestion and car parking arrangements in and around The Street, and in all areas adjacent to the School.”* The NP aim, as expressed in Paragraph 6.4 is that *“A scheme to manage traffic congestion and parking arrangements in this area will be developed. It is intended that the scheme will include specific measures (in conjunction with the School) to seek to address the issues apparent at school drop off and pick up times.”*
- 6.44 It has been six years since the Plan was Made and no such scheme has come forward. The proposed development includes land for a car park to be used by parents at pick up and drop off points. It will be managed so that traffic flows are one way only to maintain movement through the site. Further, it would

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be accessed via the main site entrance from Henfield Road. Pedestrian access would be provided from the car park to the school land.

- 6.45 This would remove a significant amount of traffic from The Street, thereby easing congestion and meeting an identified Community need. It would also have a heritage benefit given the existing congestion has an adverse impact on the character of the Conservation Area.
- 6.46 Furthermore, by helping to improve the quality of life, wellbeing and general conditions on The Street, it would contribute to meeting the Social arm of sustainable development in the Council's overarching strategy.

Shop

- 6.47 Albourne's position within the settlement hierarchy as a Medium Village is by virtue of the School, Village Hall and good connectivity with the services at Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint, both of which are within 5km and with which it is well connected. However, the lack of a shop is a constraint to development noted in the NP as residents' only options for basic goods (bread, milk etc) is online shopping or making a trip to an adjoining settlement.
- 6.48 The proposed application includes space for a community shop within the ground floor of the building at the entrance to the development. This would require local interest in operating the shop, but if successful would make a small contribution to the local economy.
- 6.49 Importantly, the shop would provide an alternative choice for existing and future residents to get day to day provisions, reducing the need to travel, and increasing opportunities to spend more time in local communities. It also increases opportunities to walk or cycle to meet day to day needs, and contributes to the creation of balanced communities. It is also well located in relation to the proposed drop-off point, providing potential combined trips from those driving their children to school.
- 6.50 The shop space provides the opportunity for meeting both the social and economic arms of sustainable development in the Council's strategic policy.

Parkland on the Southern Field

- 6.51 The southern field will remain undeveloped, but the application takes the opportunity to propose a landscape scheme for this area, creating a diverse and species rich environment for the benefit of both biodiversity interest and recreational users. This would open up the area from private agricultural land to public open space delivering environmental, social and community benefit.
- 6.52 The masterplan includes sowing the land with species rich meadow mix, planting of new trees and scrub (both within the site and to the boundaries) and the opportunity to create a community woodland area. The woodland could also be utilised for forest school opportunities by the School and/or wider

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community benefit. Recreational routes would be provided through this land, connecting with the existing rights of way network, so that it becomes a space for everyone to enjoy.

- 6.53 The parkland would create a community space and the opportunity to spend more time in the Village, providing recreational space for walks and congregating for leisure. It would help improve quality of life for existing and future residents through this public area which would be open to all.
- 6.54 In addition to the social benefits, the parkland provides opportunity for significant environmental gains. The biodiversity net gain is outlined later in this report and in the separate document submitted with this application. In summary, the planting and habitat creation across the site would protect, enhance, restore and utilise natural and environmental assets and respect the beauty and character of the countryside, in accordance with the Council's spatial strategy.
- 6.55 The proposed delivery of these community benefits is in accordance with Policy DP25 of the MSDC Local Plan and also meets a number of the stated Aims of the Albourne Neighbourhood Plan. It also makes significant contributions to delivery of the Council's overarching spatial strategy. These benefits are material considerations which weigh heavily in favour of the Application.

Access, Accessibility, Traffic and Parking

Site Access

- 6.56 The proposed vehicular access would be provided some 45 metres east of the existing orchard access and 50 metres west of the Henfield Road/The Street junction. It would be a bellmouth junction measuring 5.5 metres with 6 metre radii. This is in accordance with pre-application discussions.
- 6.57 The access would allow two vehicles to pass simultaneously without conflict. Vehicle swept path analysis has been provided demonstrating this is possible.
- 6.58 Pedestrian access is provided by a path which exists the site at its north east corner and provides a tie in with the existing footway on The Street. The illustrative masterplan also shows how a footpath connection could be made with the Millennium Garden (located to the north west of The Street) in future, in addition to connections to the internal existing public rights of way.
- 6.59 Vehicle and pedestrian access is therefore suitable and safe for all users in accordance with Paragraph 110 of the NPPF.

Accessibility

- 6.60 Albourne is a Category 3 settlement so by definition relies on other towns and villages to support its residents. Existing pedestrian footpath connections to Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint help to facilitate access to these services by non-car modes of transport. This is illustrated on the below table extract from the submitted Transport Assessment:

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Amenity	Distance	Walking Time	Cycle Time
Primary School (Albourne CE Primary School)	55m	1 min	1 min
Park (Albourne Recreation Ground)	200m	2 min	1 min
Public House (Duke of York – Sayers Common)	1600m	21 min	6 min
Restaurant (Crossways Fish and Chips Hurstpierpoint)	1850m	22 min	6 min
Convenience Store (Sayers Common Community Shop)	1900m	25 min	6 min
Supermarket (Co-Op Hurstpierpoint)	2000m	25 min	6 min
Post Office (Hurstpierpoint Post Office)	2100m	26 min	6 min
Pharmacy (Lloyds Pharmacy Hurstpierpoint)	2200m	27 min	7 min
Health (Hurstpierpoint Health Clinic)	2200m	27 min	7 min
Leisure (Hurstpierpoint Village Theatre/Cinema)	2300m	28 min	7 min

- 6.61 The above table demonstrates that there are facilities within ‘desirable’ walking distances of the Application Site. There are also public transport options located within 150 metres (Holders Bus Stops) and 300 metres (Traffic Light bus stops) of the Site providing services to both Sayers Common and Hurstpierpoint, but also the larger settlements of Horsham, Crawley and Brighton.
- 6.62 It is noteworthy that a planning inspector, when considering an application for an extra care development to the south of Albourne (reference DM/19/3241644) concluded that residents and staff would have genuine travel choices available and that the scheme would “*be relatively sustainable in terms of location to minimise the need to travel*”. The Appeal Site is only some 350 metres from the southern boundary of the Application Site.
- 6.63 The proposed scheme additionally provides the opportunity for the establishment of a community shop which would provide further opportunity to meet day to day needs without travelling outside the Village. The application is supported by a Travel Plan which includes a package of measures and incentives (with monitoring targets) to further encourage future residents to use non-car modes of transport.
- 6.64 The proposed development is therefore located in an area with access to services and employment. It is sustainably located to minimise the need to travel and takes appropriate opportunities to facilitate and promote the increased use of alternative means of transport to the private car. This is in keeping with the social objectives of the Council's spatial strategy.
- 6.65 Furthermore, there are safe and convenient routes for walking and cycling, helping to encourage opportunities to walk, cycle or use public transport to access those services outside of Albourne. The proposal accords with the provisions of MSDC Local Plan policy DP21 and the wider spatial strategy.

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Traffic

- 6.66 The Transport Assessment (TA) considers the impact of the operational development traffic (i.e. when the site is fully occupied) on both the site access and the Henfield Road / B2118 junction (on the basis that some 99% of traffic leaving the Site is predicted to travel via this junction).
- 6.67 The junctions work within their capacity in all modelling scenarios (2027 baseline and 2027 baseline plus development) meaning that off-site traffic mitigation is not required. Details of the full assessment are included in the TA.
- 6.68 The TA also includes details of a parking survey undertaken on The Street during School drop off and pick up times to assess congestion. The surveys confirm that the parking scenario and current movements of the School do have a detrimental impact upon the current operation of The Street, Barn Close and Albourne's wider local road network during peak periods. Vehicles were observed to park illegally along dropped kerbs and grass verges, creating queues that generated issues along the carriageway. The parking/drop-off area at the proposed development would help alleviate this problem resulting in local betterment to the road network.
- 6.69 The TA demonstrates that the proposed development avoids severe additional traffic congestion (either individually or cumulatively) and would help to protect the safety of road users and pedestrians, particularly through its offer to improve School parking. The proposal accords with Local Plan policy DP21 in this regard.

Parking

- 6.70 The proposed development is outline with matters of layout a reserved matter for a future application. However, the illustrative masterplan demonstrates that residential parking can be delivered in accordance with West Sussex County Council's '*Guidance on Parking at New Developments*' (September 2020).
- 6.71 Cycle parking will be provided within the curtilage of each plot and will be within accordance of the local specific standards
- 6.72 The scheme can therefore provide adequate car parking for the proposed development in accordance with Policy DP21 of the MSDC Local Plan.

Trees, woodland and Ecology

Trees and woodland

- 6.73 There would be no trees harmed or removed as part of the proposed development. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) submitted in support of this application confirms this position and also sets out the root protection areas for those trees located on the site which would be protected during the

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development. This is especially important for the three veteran trees identified on the southern and western site boundaries.

- 6.74 The new site access onto Henfield Road would require the removal of two small sections of hedgerow. The AIA notes that both are managed agricultural hedgerows of low tree and shrub species diversity. Their loss is also compensated for by additional hedgerow planting and strengthening as set out on the landscape masterplan.
- 6.75 Existing trees and woodland are incorporated into the development proposals within public areas so they can be safeguarded into the future. The landscape plan also shows the opportunity presented by the site for significant levels of new planting; the masterplan currently shows approximately 2.08Ha of woodland creation and tree and scrub planting is possible at the site. The proposed development is therefore in accord with Policy DP37 of the Local Plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.76 The significant ecological benefits which the development can deliver is demonstrated in the assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) at the site.
- 6.77 The BNG report submitted in support of this application undertakes an assessment of existing habitat on the site compared with that which would be delivered by the proposed development. This is scored according to the Natural England Biodiversity Metric 3.0.
- 6.78 The metric shows the site would gain 19.65 'habitat units' as a result of the development, equalling a net gain of 54.57%. It would also deliver a gain of 1.01 hedgerow units (2.48% net gain). The site therefore delivers measurable net gains in biodiversity in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the NPPF and Policy DP38 of the MSDC Local Plan. Croudace commits to a minimum 10% BNG as part of this development.
- 6.79 The development would protect, enhance, and restore natural and environmental assets, and respects the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, in keeping with the Council's spatial strategy.

Ecology

- 6.80 A thorough review of site ecology has been undertaken and is supported by a suite of surveys. This is detailed in the Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) submitted in support of this application.
- 6.81 The surveys have recorded bat activity at the site, mainly to the woodland on the western boundary. There is an outstanding survey at the time of writing, but work to date suggest prevalent species are those common to the area and therefore this is of local interest only. The proposal does not include any development which would interfere with the woodland to the west of the site. Further, a lighting scheme has been submitted which shows that the development would not have an impact on bats.

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- 6.82 Survey effort to date has not found evidence of dormice using the site. Badgers are also likely absent. Hedgehogs, invertebrates and Harvest Mice have also been scoped out of the assessment.
- 6.83 Bird surveys have identified species of local importance. These will not be adversely affected given the scheme does not propose the removal of trees, and indeed includes a significant biodiversity net gain. Those which rely on arable fields for habitat will be displaced, but the EclA shows this to be a very small number and that there is plenty of alternative habitat available nearby.
- 6.84 Reptiles (Slow Worms and Grass Snakes) have been found on site, and it is likely that the on-site habitat is suitable for Great Crested Newts (GCN). Mitigation is designed in to the scheme in terms of the habitat creation opportunities, including provision of five new attenuation basins. These landscaping and habitat creation measures will result in a significant increase the amount of semi-natural habitat, and a diversification of the habitat types at the Site. As such, the scheme has the potential to deliver significant benefits for biodiversity, through provision of new habitats of value to bats, birds, reptile and amphibians. A Landscape Environmental Management Plan can be secured by planning condition to bring forward these benefits.
- 6.85 The development would protect existing habitats and provide significant biodiversity net gains. It is fully in accord with both the NPPF and MSDC Local Plan policy DP38.

Heritage and Archaeology

Built Heritage

- 6.86 The eastern boundary of the southern field within the Application Site abuts both the Albourne Conservation Area and the rear gardens of four Grade II Listed Buildings. A Heritage Statement prepared by RPS is submitted in support of this application, prepared in accordance with Paragraph 194 of the NPPF which requires applicants to describe and assess the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, as the basis from which to understand the potential impact of the proposals.
- 6.87 The four listed buildings in question are Hunters Cottage; Bounty Cottage; Finches and Souches, which are all located south of the Public Right of Way, and back on to the southern field boundary. A fifth Grade II Listed Building, Spring Cottage, is also included in the assessment. This is located to the south east corner of the site, on the other side of Church Lane.
- 6.88 The four buildings to the south of the right of way are assessed as a group given they all share the same spatial relationship with the Application Site.
- 6.89 The degree to which the Application Site contributes to the significance of these heritage assets varies across the site as a whole. The buildings are located on The Street, and are not visible from much of the northern field because the school site projects westwards into the site, intervening with views to

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and from the north east corner. Within the north west quadrant of the site there are longer views of the south eastern boundary and the rear gardens to the listed buildings. However, the distance between this part of the site and the Listed Buildings is considerable and no real sense of the historic or architectural character of those buildings is perceptible.

- 6.90 There is a clearer relationship between the listed buildings and the southern field, which does make some contribution to their setting and significance. However, the RPS assessment is clear that the significance of these historic buildings is derived from the large degree of historic fabric in situ and of the experience of the listed buildings as a traditional village group with The Street. The Application Site provides a rural backdrop, but its contribution to historic significance is at a low level. This is mitigated by the undeveloped nature of the southern field.
- 6.91 This relationship was understood from an early stage of scheme development, and was one of the reasons why built form is contained in the northern field only.
- 6.92 It is also noted that there is little (if any) historic connection between the Application Site and the properties. What connection there is can only be ascertained by documentary study rather than anything observable.
- 6.93 The separation of Spring Cottage from the Application Site and the resultant low level of inter-visibility means that any contribution made to its significance as a heritage asset is limited.
- 6.94 The Heritage Statement concludes that the proposals would result in less than substantial harm (at the lower end of the scale) to Bounty Cottage, Finches and Souches on the basis that the northern field would be developed with houses and therefore cease to form a rural backdrop to the listed buildings. This harm is minimised because the southern field is being left undeveloped.
- 6.95 In terms of the Conservation Area, MSDC's appraisal document describes the inward-looking, enclosed character of the historic village centre. It identifies this as one of the principal characteristics that contribute to character and appearance, justifying the designation of the historic core of the village as a conservation area. Features such as the post-medieval to 18th century, cottage-style houses, many trees and hedges which line The Street, the sunken road in relation to many of the properties (creating a sense of enclosure) and attractive retaining walls, are mentioned in the document.
- 6.96 A visual connection to the surrounding landscape is not included in the reason for designation as a Conservation Area, although there are limited views to the countryside glimpsed from The Street.
- 6.97 The character of the sunken lanes of The Street and Church Lane, and the extensive vegetation in rear gardens to the houses along the west side of The Street mean that there is a limited perception of the open landscape to the west, outside the Conservation Area. The Application Site therefore makes a limited contribution to the Conservation Area.

- 6.98 From the west, from outside the conservation area, the historic core of the village that comprises the extent of the conservation area, is seen and experienced within the same context as the village centre when approaching the village along Church Lane. Here the open landscape of the southern section of the site contributes to significance in that it provides a rural landscape setting to the conservation area and reinforces its character as an historic rural settlement. The southern field is left undeveloped.
- 6.99 In summary, less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area is identified, again at the lower end of the scale. This is because the special historic qualities of the heritage asset are not reliant on open views to the countryside, and therefore the proposed development of the northern field (located away from the Conservation Area boundary in any case) has a reduced impact.
- 6.100 Paragraph 202 of the NPPF notes that where development will lead to less than substantial harm, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case, the public benefits are the delivery of up to 120 new homes; school expansion land; a community shop; provision of a drop off/pick up area to the School to resolve a long-running congestion problem within the Conservation Area, and public open space within the southern field. These benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm identified.

Archaeology

- 6.101 An archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) has been undertaken together with a geophysical report of the Application Site.
- 6.102 This work confirms a low potential for significant archaeological finds or features of all periods. No further mitigation work is recommended by the DBA. It is suggested that any further archaeological work can be considered by a suitably worded condition attached to a planning consent.
- 6.103 On this basis it is clear that the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological potential of the study site could be adequately mitigated, and the development made acceptable in terms of archaeological impacts. It therefore accords with the requirements in paragraph 203 of the NPPF and policy DP34, DP35 and DP36 of the local plan.

Landscape

- 6.104 A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken by Allen Pyke Associates and is submitted in support of this application. The LVIA considers the impact of the development on both the surrounding landscape receptors, including the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and Low Weald, and visual receptors including residents of Albourne, the School and surrounding public rights of way.
- 6.105 The SDNP is a designated landscape and a sensitive receptor. The LVIA notes that it is some 1.5km from the Application Site and that views from public vantage points towards the South Downs National Park will be retained and protected. Further, additional vantage points will be made accessible to the

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existing and future residents of the village. The effects on landscape character to this sensitive receptor will be neutral.

- 6.106 It is also noted that the proposed development will be glimpsed from long distance views from Wolstonbury Hill and Devil's Dyke within the SDNP, but this will be at some distance that it will be difficult to perceive. The decision to restrict built form to the northern field only helps to ensure that the extent of new development is negligible in the context of the wider view. The residual effects on views from the South Downs will be neutral. The development would not detract from, or cause detriment to the visual and special qualities of the National Park or its tranquillity and essential characteristics. The proposal is therefore in line with Policy DP18 of the MSDC Local Plan.
- 6.107 It is acknowledged that at a local scale there will be a loss of greenfield land to facilitate the development. This loss is permanent and will result in a low change to the Hickstead Low Weald and Hurstierpoint Foothills character areas.
- 6.108 There will also be adverse effects on the rural landscape surrounding Albourne during the construction stages although these will be short-lived.
- 6.109 The development includes a number of wider public benefits and opportunity to undertake significant levels of new planting to strengthen the retained woodland and vegetation, and further enhance the local area.
- 6.110 The retention of boundary vegetation and the restriction of development to the southern field will reduce any landscape effects on the Conservation Area. The orchard area will be enhanced and include a small extension of planting within and to the boundaries.
- 6.111 The southern field will be enhanced through native planting and management in the long term. Adverse effects will be limited to the construction phases but will be short-lived. At year 1 and beyond there will be an enhancement to the landscape with new features offering enhanced amenity and biodiversity benefit whilst responding to local character guidance.
- 6.112 The LVIA concludes that there will be some medium magnitude of change in the surrounding landscape, but it is mainly low to negligible.
- 6.113 Limiting development to the northern field has reduced the impacts on local residents and users of the public footpaths which cross the site. The most valued views to the south toward the SDNP are retained and enhanced. Care has also been taken to integrate the site into its immediate context at the entrance area. Visitors to the Millennium Green, for example, will note the Green would be framed by new street trees to enhance the sense of arrival into the village.

- 6.114 Limiting to the northern field also ensures that residents at The Street (within the Albourne Conservation Area) will see a low change in their views. Skyline views towards the Site's western boundary vegetation will be retained and enhanced through the new areas of planting with a residual benefit to the Conservation Area setting in the long term.
- 6.115 Middle distance views from the north and south receptors will see a low change in their views with the built form to the north of the footpath being one of several built elements in the view. During construction, machinery will be visible and will result in a short-lived adverse effect. The new built form will, at year 1, be viewed as a logical extension to the settlement edge. At year 15 the new landscape elements will mature to provide a softening to the built form and successfully integrate the proposed development into the setting formed by the gently undulating farmland.
- 6.116 The magnitude of change for visual receptors by year 15, once the landscape elements are properly integrated, will be mainly low to negligible. A number of receptors will have minor to moderate beneficial effects by year 15.
- 6.117 The development has been designed to ensure it integrates as much as possible with the surrounding landscape. Limiting development to the least sensitive part of the site ensures valued views are retained and enhanced, and that adverse impacts are kept to a minimum. The MSDC Landscape Character Assessment and WSCC Landscape strategy have been used to assess the impact of development on local landscape character. Further, it seeks to create a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape and protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area. The development therefore accords with Policy DP12 and DP26 of the MSDC Local Plan.

Play Areas and Public Open Space

- 6.118 The proposal includes children's play areas in the form of both Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) and Local Area for Play (LAP). These are provided in accordance with Field's in Trust (FIT) guidance which requires the provision of LAPs distributed to provide coverage for 0-3 year old play within 100m walking distance of every dwelling, and at least one LEAP on site.
- 6.119 The illustrative masterplan shows that 683m² of play can be delivered in LAPs and LEAPs at the site which is in accordance with Policy DP24 of the Local Plan.
- 6.120 Amenity green space is required at 1,638m² (0.6ha/1000p) as well as natural and semi-natural green space of 4,914m² (1.8ha/1000p). The total amount of public open space provided at the site is 6.77Ha (some 60% of the total site area). The illustrative masterplan demonstrates that the amount of public open space, including play areas at the site is in accordance with the provisions of FIT guidance and Policy DP24 of the Local Plan.

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- 6.121 The application is supported by a landscape masterplan which proposes the creation of distinct character areas for the site.
- 6.122 The existing orchard to the north of the site is considered a significant wider benefit and will be protected and enhanced as part of the development. A small section of hedgerow in this area lost via creation of the new access will be replaced by new orchard planting adjacent to the existing area (some 0.01ha will be lost and replaced by 0.03ha). The wider 'Community Orchard and Entrance Green' area will be enhanced to provide a rich, vibrant, productive space for the existing and expanded community. This will include new planting of both trees and grassland, the establishment of a basin as a wet feature and a LAP area.
- 6.123 The western edge, adjacent to existing tree lines, will include retention of all existing features, with the addition of new wooded areas, naturalistic play and educational features. It will also include enhancements to connections with the existing rights of way network.
- 6.124 The central corridor reflects the more residential nature of this part of the site through creation of pleasant and green streets incorporating the SuDS drainage scheme by way of open swale and attenuation basins.
- 6.125 The Southern Parkland itself is a significant opportunity to create a diverse recreational, educational and biodiversity rich area. It will be formed of an informal naturalistic open landscape characterised by managed meadow grassland with seasonal wildflowers and mown paths.
- 6.126 Informal seating and habitat features will allow for appreciation of the views towards the south, west and east. Structure planting with specimen trees will be located to allow for filtering of views towards the extended settlement edge whilst maintaining key vistas to the distant South Downs.
- 6.127 The parkland also ensures the views to the South Downs are retained for both users of the public right of way and pupils and staff at the School.
- 6.128 There is opportunity for the southern parkland to become a key community facility which not only helps to improve quality of life, wellbeing, and community cohesion through a beautiful shared open space, but also delivers significant and measurable environmental benefits. The parkland is a key part of the scheme, delivering social and environmental benefits which contribute significantly to the Council's overarching strategic spatial policy to deliver sustainable development.

Flood Risk, Surface Water and Foul Water Drainage

- 6.129 The NPPF directs new development away from areas at a higher risk of flooding. The Application Site is located within Flood Zone 1, defined by the Environment Agency (EA) of having a 'Low Probability'

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(1 in 1000 annual probability) of river or sea flooding, and is therefore in an appropriate location in terms of acceptable flood risk.

- 6.130 The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) submitted in support of this application demonstrates that the site is at low risk from all types of flooding (fluvial, tidal, surface, ground, reservoir, canal and lake).
- 6.131 It does note that the northern boundary of the site appears to lie in an area of low to high risk of flooding from surface water. The area shown on the EA flood map is consistent with the location of the existing small watercourse crossing and bounding the site in this area. There is also another surface water path of low to high risk of flooding to the south of the site. This is consistent with topographical low-lying areas draining south toward the unnamed watercourse.
- 6.132 The drainage strategy has taken these flow paths in to account whilst the illustrative layout shows that the development can take place without any residential dwellings located within the surface water flow paths.
- 6.133 The FRA has identified all potential sources of flooding and demonstrates that the site is at low risk. The site's location in Flood Zone 1 means that no sequential test is required to demonstrate that it is safe for development. The development accords with Policy DP41 of the MSDC Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 6.134 The surface water drainage strategy submitted in support of this application includes the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), in accordance with the drainage hierarchy. It has been prepared in accordance with relevant local and national guidance, including the West Sussex Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Policy for the Management of Surface Water.
- 6.135 National and local Policy requires surface water from new development to leave the site at the greenfield runoff rate (i.e. the same as it would pre-development). The submitted surface water drainage strategy demonstrates that this is a discharge rate of 12.2 litres per second (l/s).
- 6.136 Attenuation storage is required to achieve this runoff rate, and this is shown in the drainage strategy through the provision of five attenuation basins and a small area of underground storage. The attenuation volumes are based on the 1 in 100yr rainfall event and include a 45% allowance for climate change. Furthermore, each attenuation pond has a depth of 1m with 300mm of freeboard.
- 6.137 The attenuation basins will be landscaped (see landscape masterplan) such that the banks will be shallow, making the area accessible and safe to the public. This has an amenity benefit to the wider site.

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- 6.138 The drainage strategy shows the site split into six catchments, each draining to one of the basins. The point of discharge is to the watercourse on the northern boundary through Basin 3 where a hydrobrake controls the flow leaving the site to 12.2l/s.
- 6.139 The surface water drainage strategy has been devised to conform with LLFA local standards. It demonstrates that SuDS can be implemented at the site to manage surface water and ensure it leaves the development at the greenfield run off rate. They have been designed sensitively and incorporated into the wider landscape strategy so that they can also deliver wider amenity and biodiversity benefits. The development is in accordance with Policy DP41, LLFA guidance and National Policy. Further, it includes measures that reflect the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, thereby creating a development which meets both present and future needs, in accordance with the Council's wider spatial policy.

Lighting

- 6.140 An indicative lighting strategy is submitted to demonstrate that the development impact on this edge of settlement site
- 6.141 The scheme is designed with limits on the type, mounting height, inclinations, positions, and operating hours of the proposed lighting, to ensure it is minimally obtrusive within the landscape and has a minimal impact on nearby potentially sensitive receptors. These details can be secured by condition and implemented through the detailed design phase at Reserved Matters. The lighting strategy demonstrates the scheme's compliance with Policy DP29 of the MSDC Local Plan.

Air Quality

- 6.142 An Air Quality Assessment (AQA) is submitted in support of this application. It demonstrates that appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place to reduce emissions and their impact during the construction phase
- 6.143 Modelling work is ongoing to further consider traffic emissions associated with the development and their impact on local existing sensitive receptors. However, it is noted that existing pollutant concentrations within the vicinity of the Application Site, and within the village of Albourne itself, are expected to be at a level where there is likely capacity for the traffic flows associated with the development. The development would not therefore have a significant impact on local air quality.

Ground Conditions

- 6.144 A Phase 1 Preliminary Assessment has been undertaken on the Application Site Stantec. It concludes that known potential hazards present a Very Low or Negligible risk to future site users. Furthermore, it identifies possible pollutant linkages and concludes that the risk to the identified receptors is considered to be Very Low.

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- 6.145 A further ground investigation and environmental testing of soils is recommended at detailed design stage in advance of any development.

7. Summary

- 7.1 The proposed application would deliver up to 120 new homes, 30% of which would be affordable, together with public open space and community facilities
- 7.2 Mid Sussex District Council's Housing land supply is heavily reliant on major sites, the delivery of these has been sluggish to date resulting in some uncertainty in the ongoing land supply position. The Council needs a continuing and reliable source of housing land in order to provide for the needs of the District.
- 7.3 The introduction of the Standard Method has revealed an increasing need for housing in the District above and beyond that which is already planned. Further sites are needed to meet the needs of the District and the Council's strategic spatial policy. It is therefore appropriate for the Council to seek and consider other sustainable sites in order to 'meet future housing need'.
- 7.4 Albourne is a Category 3 settlement which is identified for growth. The proposed application does not conflict with Policies DP4 or DP5 of the Local Plan. It would meet identified local needs and is located in a sustainable settlement as identified in Policy DP6. It is the only logical site available in the Village to meet demand.
- 7.5 Development of the site represents sustainable development as described in the NPPF and the MSDC Local Plan, and contributes toward the wider strategic objectives of the District.
- 7.6 The development will deliver 30% on-site affordable units. The proposal demonstrates how the Site can deliver affordable housing which is integrated with the market units. Detailed design is a Reserved Matter, but the affordable units will be indistinguishable from the market housing. The proposal accords with the provisions of the NPPF and Policy DP31
- 7.7 The Application would deliver a number of community benefits. These are: Land to be transferred to Albourne Primary School for recreation use or possible expansion by one form of entry; Provision of car park/drop off area serving Albourne Primary School; Dedicated community building with the potential for a community shop; and Creation of parkland in the southern field as dedicated public open space with additional benefits for educational provision for school children. These all meet stated local needs and are material considerations in favour of the application.
- 7.8 The application includes safe and convenient routes for walking and cycling, helping to encourage opportunities to walk, cycle or use public transport to access those services outside of Albourne. The proposal accords with the provisions of MSDC Local Plan policy DP21 and the wider spatial strategy.
- 7.9 The TA demonstrates that the proposed development avoids severe additional traffic congestion (either individually or cumulatively) and would help to protect the safety of road users and pedestrians,

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particularly through its offer to improve School parking. The proposal accords with Local Plan policy DP21 in this regard.

- 7.10 The scheme can provide adequate car parking for the proposed development in accordance with Policy DP21 of the MSDC Local Plan.
- 7.11 The proposed development would incorporate existing trees and woodland into the development, safeguarding them into the future. The landscape plan also shows the opportunity presented by the site for significant levels of new planting; the masterplan currently shows approximately 2.08Ha of woodland creation and tree and scrub planting is possible at the site. The proposed development is therefore in accord with Policy DP37 of the Local Plan.
- 7.12 The biodiversity metric shows the site would gain 19.65 'habitat units' as a result of the development, equalling a net gain of 54.57%. It would also deliver a gain of 1.01 hedgerow units (2.48% net gain). The site therefore delivers measurable net gains in biodiversity in accordance with Paragraph 179 of the NPPF and Policy DP38 of the MSDC Local Plan. The development would protect existing habitats and provide significant biodiversity net gains. It is fully in accord with both the NPPF and MSDC Local Plan policy DP38.
- 7.13 The proposed development has been designed to have a limited impact on nearby heritage assets. The lower end of less than substantial harm has been identified in the supporting information. The public benefits identified in this application significantly outweigh the less than substantial harm identified.
- 7.14 Archaeological potential of the study site can be adequately mitigated, and the development made acceptable in terms of archaeological impacts. It therefore accords with the requirements in paragraph 203 of the NPPF and policy DP34, DP35 and DP36 of the local plan.
- 7.15 The development would not detract from, or cause a detrimental impact on the visual and special qualities of the National Park or its tranquillity and essential characteristics. The proposal is therefore in line with Policy DP18 of the MSDC Local Plan.
- 7.16 The development has been designed to ensure it integrates as much as possible with the surrounding landscape. Limiting development to the least sensitive part of the site ensures valued views are retained and enhanced, and that adverse impacts are kept to a minimum. The MSDC Landscape Character Assessment and WSCC Landscape strategy have been used to assess the impact of development on local landscape character. Further, it seeks to create a sense of place while addressing the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape and protects open spaces, trees and gardens that contribute to the character of the area. The development therefore accords with Policy DP12 and DP26 of the MSDC Local Plan.

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- 7.17 The surface water drainage strategy has been devised to conform with LLFA local standards. It demonstrates that SuDS can be implemented at the site to manage surface water and ensure it leaves the development at the greenfield run off rate. They have been designed sensitively and incorporated into the wider landscape strategy so that they can also deliver wider amenity and biodiversity benefits. The development is in accordance with Policy DP41, LLFA guidance and National Policy.
- 7.18 Further, it includes measures that reflect the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, thereby creating a development which meets both present and future needs, in accordance with the Council's wider spatial policy.
- 7.19 A lighting scheme is submitted with the application limiting the type, mounting height, inclinations, positions, and operating hours of the proposed lighting, to ensure it is minimally obtrusive within the landscape and has a minimal impact on nearby potentially sensitive receptors. The lighting strategy demonstrates the scheme's compliance with Policy DP29 of the MSDC Local Plan.
- 7.20 An Air Quality Assessment demonstrates that appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place to reduce emissions and their impact during the construction phase. The operational phase is unlikely to result in any adverse impacts on air quality.
- 7.21 Ground conditions are considered acceptable for the development proposed. A further ground investigation and environmental testing of soils is recommended at detailed design stage in advance of any development.
- 7.22 The proposed development represents sustainable development which will provide housing (including much needed affordable) in addition to a range of significant wider community benefits. It accords with local and national planning policy, and is in line with MSDC's wider spatial policy of delivering sustainable development.