

## **Horsted Keynes Neighbourhood Development Plan Parish Council's responses to Examiner's Points for Clarification.**

### **Policy HK3 Dwelling Mix**

#### **Examiner's note:**

*The first paragraph of the policy reads well. The second paragraph reads as supporting text rather than policy. As such I am minded to recommend that it is deleted and repositioned into the supporting text*

*Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?*

#### **Parish Council's response:**

This policy is very important to our parishioners. Horsted Keynes has a high proportion of large houses and over the years existing properties have been extended and the housing stock of smaller properties is not being replaced. Also, the majority of the windfall development that has occurred in the parish consists of additional large properties. We are therefore very keen to retain a policy which will be effective in helping to redress this balance.

We are keen to work with you and MSDC on strengthening the wording of this policy so that it can be more effective in meeting our identified local housing need but we would be reluctant to see this part of the policy repositioned in the supporting text where it is unlikely to have any real impact.

### **Policy HK5 Infill development and Domestic Extensions**

#### **Examiner's note:**

*This policy also reads well.*

*In relation to the second bullet point have any locations been identified which provide views into the countryside? Otherwise, this policy may be difficult for the District Council to implement with certainty within the Plan period.*

#### **Parish Council's response:**

Yes, a number of important public view point locations have been identified and two examples of these are included within the current text (please see paragraph 5.29) which states the following:

"5.29 Extensions to existing buildings should maintain gaps which provide views out of the village into surrounding countryside. Examples of such views include, but are not limited to, between Giles Barn Cottage and Timbers in Church Lane and the east side of The Martindale Centre, Station Road."

In order to make the policy clearer we suggest amending the wording as follows:

- existing gaps between buildings which provide important views out of the village to the surrounding countryside (as referenced within paragraph 5.29 above) are retained; and

In support of this we provide the following additional information (which does not currently form part of our submitted plan):



Viewpoint location plan:



*Photo from viewpoint 1 by Giles Barn Cottage:*



*Photo from viewpoint 2 by The Martindale Centre:*

We would be happy to work with you to improve the wording of this policy and we can provide other examples of important views that we have identified if that would be helpful.

### **Policy HK6 Conserving Local Heritage**

#### **Examiner's note:**

*The policy reads well.  
The final sentence reads as supporting text rather than policy. As such I am minded to recommend that it is deleted and repositioned into the supporting text.  
Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?*

#### **Parish Council's response:**

We are happy to be guided by you on this point.

### **Policy HK9 The High Weald AONB**

#### **Examiner's note:**

*This is a beautifully written policy. Nevertheless, to what extent does it add distinctive local value to existing policies in the Local Plan and to published AONB guidance? Might it be more appropriate to refer to AONB issues in Policy HK4 (with links to the relevant policies/documents) rather than within a free-standing policy?*

**Parish Council's response:**

We consider that this policy does actually add to the existing policy in the Mid Sussex District Plan. Whilst we accept that it is drawing on evidence and guidance produced by the High Weald AONB, that is already in the public domain, we have attempted to highlight the important aspects of their work that are specifically relevant to our parish. In particular we have referenced the Landscape Character maps that have been prepared for our parish which identify the key features that make the High Weald special and have contributed to it being designated an AONB. Whilst we note that existing district plan policy DP16 does make reference to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, it does not summarise the key features in the way that our proposed policy does and there is no direct link to the relevant character maps.

Our experience, from engaging with numerous planning applications and appeals in our parish over recent years, is that there is a lack of understanding on the part of some developers on what specifically is important about the AONB. When the High Weald AONB is consulted on applications they have been able to provide helpful advice on these issues but we understand that they are not a statutory consultee, are not always consulted and do not have sufficient resources to advise in all cases. We therefore consider that our policy would help applicants and decision makers to focus on some of the key elements that are relevant to our parish and where they are can be found.

We note you have suggested that reference could be made to the AONB issues in policy HK4 but we are concerned that, whilst this would be preferable to not including any reference at all, it might detract from what we see as another important, and different, policy in our plan. We note that the AONB is afforded the highest level of protection under the national planning policy framework and we suggest that, as such, it warrants having a free-standing policy in our plan. If we were to only include a reference to AONB issues under the policy relating to design and character, this might give the impression that these factors are more to do with how a development is designed rather than the principle of development in a particular location. We are concerned that this might potentially weaken the policy and not give it the full status that we believe it deserves.

We would be very happy to work with you to improve the wording of the proposed policy if you think that it does not achieve our aim but our strong preference would be to keep a policy specific to the AONB and how it is relevant to our parish.

**Policy HK11 Low Carbon - Design and Renewable Energy Schemes**

**Examiner's note:**

*Is the policy intended to apply to the development of the two allocated sites in the Local Plan?*

### Parish Council's response:

We would have liked this policy to apply to both the allocated sites however we do understand that, in the case of SA29 (Land behind St Stephen's Church), a planning application was submitted before our submitted plan was published and this application is currently pending consideration. In the case of SA28 (Land at the rear of The Old Police House), no detailed proposals have yet been submitted by the developers and we anticipate that the policy would at least apply to that site. Similarly, if the current application relating to the Land Behind St Stephen's Church is withdrawn, we would like to see this policy apply to any future application relating to this site.

### Policy HK17 Cycleways and Footways

#### Examiner's note:

*The policy reads well.*

*As submitted, it refers to all development. Most new development in the Plan period will continue to be minor and/or domestic in scale. As such, I am minded to recommend a modification so that the policy can be applied in a proportionate way. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?*

#### Parish Council's response:

We are happy to be guided by you on this point.

### Representations

#### Examiner's note:

*Does the Parish Council wish to make any comments on the representations made to the Plan by the District Council?*

#### Parish Council's response:

Please see our comments relating to each item in the table below:

Ref	MSDC Comment	MSDC Recommendation	Parish Council Comment
Para 1.1	This document is the draft Neighbourhood Plan for Horsted Keynes parish. If "made", it will form one part of the statutory development plan for the parish over the period 2016 to 2031, the other parts being including the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, adopted in March 2018 and the recently adopted Mid Sussex Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).	Amend wording	Agreed

	The development plan for the neighbourhood area contains a portfolio of documents.		
Para 1.16	<p>This paragraph is out of date.</p> <p>Suggested wording: 'Mid Sussex District Council is in the process of reviewing and updating the adopted District Plan. The Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039 aims at achieving the adopted vision and strategic objectives while implementing a revised strategy to guide growth during the plan period. It provides updated and new policies to ensure that the Plan remains effective and in accordance with National Policy. It also includes new housing allocations to meet identified housing needs.'</p>	Amend wording	Agreed
HK5	<p>The second bullet point refers to 'important views out of the village' which have not been defined within the Plan or accompanying evidence base.</p> <p>The Council fully support the initiative to preserve the visual integrity, identity and scenic quality of valued countryside across the neighbourhood area, and more generally across the district. However, the proposed policy does not provide any details as to the specific characteristics that need particular attention and protection when considering planning applications.</p>	Define 'important views out of the village' or delete the policy requirement.	Please see our response to this policy above
HK9	<p>The Council is unsure that this policy is needed as it refers to existing documents and lists criteria that all development must demonstrate which we believe lacks local specificity and may be too onerous and unreasonable with challenging concepts to apply to all proposals.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Neighbourhood Plan Roadmap</a> prepared by Locality stresses the importance to consider the adequacy of existing policies as part of the neighbourhood planning process and</p>	Delete the policy	Please see our response to this policy above.

	<p>points out that “<i>If existing policy is robust and relevant to the neighbourhood area in question, then they may be no need for a neighbourhood plan, or a simpler more selective neighbourhood plan could be produced, otherwise the neighbourhood plan risks repeating already existing policy</i>”. Experience has shown that policies that repeat or duplicate existing policies are generally deleted at the examination stage by the Examiner to avoid confusion or potential misinterpretation, unless they are genuinely locally specific to the plan area.</p>		
HK11	<p>The Council is in the process of reviewing its District Plan. It will include an updated sustainable buildings policy with introducing new climate change policies to assist processing towards the government’s net zero target of 2050.</p> <p>It is encouraging to see a clear support for renewable and low carbon facilities, however the proposed policies would need further definition (e.g. ‘zero carbon ready’, ‘all development’, ‘landform’, ‘greening of the building’) and the inclusion of a mechanism to demonstrate how the policy is met. In the current state, the policy will be challenging to implement and is likely to be superseded upon adoption of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039.</p>	<p>Provide further information to strengthen the policy.</p>	<p>See comment below *</p>

\* HK11

Zero-carbon ready is defined within paragraph 6.19 of the text in our submitted Neighbourhood Plan which states the following:

*An aspiration in Horsted Keynes is to achieve a higher level of energy efficiency. The policy therefore requires developers to ensure that they address climate change targets and energy performance at the very initial stages of design. ‘Zero Carbon Ready’ by design means making spatial decisions on layout and orientation of buildings at the outset to maximise the passive design benefits (‘free heat’) of a site and avoids leaving this to technical choices and assessment at the Building Regulation stage, by which time the opportunity may have been lost. In the absence of supplementary guidance from MSDC, applicants are directed to the Net-Zero Carbon Toolkit created by Cotswold District Council and two partner councils, West Oxfordshire District Council and Forest of Dean District Council. The toolkit is*



*available as a resource for private and public sector organisations to use and adopt.*

<https://news.westoxon.gov.uk/resources/net-zero-carbon-toolkit-5>

This definition is aligned with that recognised by the government in its response to the consultation on the 'Future Buildings Standard': 'Zero Carbon Ready' means that no further retrofit work will be necessary to enable them to become zero carbon homes (see paragraph 2.8).

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/956094/Government\\_response\\_to\\_Future\\_Homes\\_Standard\\_consultation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/956094/Government_response_to_Future_Homes_Standard_consultation.pdf)

We understand, from the proposed wording of the policy in the Regulation 18 version of the revised District Plan, MSDC's intention is that, in the future, there will be a requirement to demonstrate, through a Sustainability Statement, how developments will contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions. We would like to see this taken further with a requirement to demonstrate that developments are 'zero carbon ready'. The supporting text to our proposed policy also provides a toolkit to use which has been made available for this purpose.

We note that this policy has now been through examination (Iver's Neighbourhood Plan in Buckinghamshire). However, we do recognise that there may need to be some flexibility on this, to take account of any potential conflict between 'zero carbon ready' developments and the preservation of buildings of heritage significance.

Horsted Keynes Parish Council  
13 December 2022