



## Mid Sussex District Local Plan 2021-2039: Examination

### Matter 6 Housing: Other Specialist Needs

#### Written Statement by Welbeck Strategic Land III LLP

***Question 66: What assessment has taken place of the needs of particular groups by household size, type, and tenure, including self-build and custom housebuilding? What assumptions have been made to calculate the need for specialist housing: for example, housing for older people, and for households with specific needs, to offer a better choice of housing? Are these assumptions justified and consistent with national policy?***

1. Welbeck Strategic Land III LLP (Welbeck) is supportive of Mid Sussex District Council's (the Council) approach to establish the housing need in relation to specialist accommodation for older people.

***Question 70: Is the requirement for Older Person's Housing and Specialist Accommodation (DPH4); DPH5: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and DPH6: Self and Custom Build Housing justified and positively prepared?***

2. Welbeck is supportive of the Council's approach to establish the requirement for older person's housing and the allocation of sites for this purpose pursuant to Policy DPH4 of the Mid Sussex Local Plan.
3. However, and for reasons clarity, a modification is proposed whereby, in respect of older person's housing it is clearer that the accommodation could fall within Class C2 and/or Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning Uses Classes Order 1987 (as Amended) (the 1987 Order). This is implied by reference to the table included in the policy and the link to Policy DPH8 concerning affordable housing. The acceptable uses are not actually explicitly stated.
4. Welbeck is also supportive of the proposed allocation DPA19: Land at Hyde Lodge, London Road, Handcross for older person's accommodation as part of Policy DPH4.
5. The allocation of the land at Hyde Lodge for older person's housing demonstrates the Local Plan to be positively prepared and the reasoning for the allocation is justified by the supporting evidence. This evidence includes the Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report (November 2023), Habitat Regulations Assessment (November 2023) and the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (November 2023). However, Welbeck is seeking a degree of flexibility in this policy.



6. Such accommodation usually requires a specialist operators/providers to deliver the homes and subsequent management of the facility. The specialist provider involvement is recognised in the explanatory text to Policy DPH4 at page 141. Having discussed the site with specialist Agents, the involvement of such a specialist will depend upon a range of factors, including the demand for the accommodation and the form of development which the Council is prepared to allow and, hence, the modification sought concerning acceptable uses as an explicit part of the policy. For the avoidance of doubt, the specialist Agents have had some interest in the site, particularly where similar accommodation exists in Handcross, but the clarification about its planning status in the Local Plan needs to be crystallised before any commitments would be made.
7. In circumstances where the interest does not come forward as currently envisaged, what Welbeck is seeking is the introduction of an element of flexibility into Policy DHP4 which allows for the identified sites to come forward for general housing provided it can be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that there is no demand for the older person's specialist accommodation (even with the clarification of the acceptable use classes). Such an approach would not be an invitation to immediately apply for general housing and the control would remain with the Council.
8. As part of the explanatory text it can be set out that any demonstration of a lack of need would need to be evidenced in the form of a comprehensive and independent marketing exercise directed at specialist providers and undertaken over a period of not less than 6 months. It would need to be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council that there is no interest either because the demands for older person's accommodation in this location no longer exists or an appropriate price for the site benchmarked against typical expectations associated with specialist older person's accommodation of the type being proposed under Policy DPH4.
9. The assessments undertaken as part of the evidence base and referenced above in paragraph 5 about the suitability of the land at Hyde Lodge for residential purposes would apply whether specialist older person's accommodation or general housing is eventually brought forward for development. This approach would ensure that the land at Hyde Lodge would still make a contribution to meeting the wider housing needs of Mid Sussex District.



10. The modification sought would be an addition to Policy DHP4 whereby the following text would be added above New Developments:

*“In the event that a comprehensive and independent marketing exercise demonstrates to the satisfaction of the Council that either site DPA18 or site DPA19 would not be brought forward for older person’s accommodation during the plan period then any proposals for general housing (Class C3) would be assessed against Policy DHP3.”*

**Question 72: Are any main modifications necessary for soundness, if so, why?**

11. Welbeck has identified Main Modifications to Policy DHP4 at paragraphs 3 and 10, which in summary are:
- a) Clarity that the allocated sites for older person’s accommodation can fall within Class C2 and/or Class C3 of the 1987 Order; and
  - b) In the event the sites allocated for older person’s housing are demonstrably not required for that use then they would be considered for general housing purposes.

Version: Final

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