



Reps to Mid Sussex Local Plan
Matter 6: Housing
(representors 1191064)

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On Behalf of the landowners of West House Farm &
Gunners, Albourne (representors 1191064)

September 2024

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68. Mid Sussex, Crawley and Horsham are all in the process of reviewing their Local Plans. The Crawley Local Plan 2024-2040 has been examined and is due to be adopted on 16th October 2024.

The Inspector considered that the Crawley Local Plan has sought to accommodate as much of the housing need as reasonably practicable and that no stone has been left unturned. However, the Plan shows an unmet housing need of 7,505 dwellings.

Horsham are also progressing their Plan, with the Examination likely to start in early 2025. The Plan shows an unmet need of 2,377 due in part to Water Neutrality (WN) issues.

The fact that Crawley have done all they can, and Horsham have the additional constraint of WN means that Mid Sussex has added responsibility to ensure the maximum number of dwellings is accommodated within the Plan period.

Furthermore, there will be additional housing need resulting from Gatwick Airport's proposed extension and DCO. In addition, 30,000 dwellings of unmet need are identified up to 2050 in the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton authorities, Housing Need and Requirement Topic Paper (HN RTP) (H5). Whilst that need extends beyond the Plan period, 16 of the 26 years (62%) fall within the current Plan period and, therefore, consideration needs to be given to meeting some of that need within the Plan currently at examination.

Mid Sussex consider the ability for this grouping of authorities to meet housing needs in full to be challenging. 'Challenging' may be a fair description, but it is far from impossible, and it is not considered that the Plan 'leaves no stone unturned' in the search for additional housing land.

Whilst the Council state that 'no options for significant growth (e.g. through standalone new settlements) have been submitted for consideration', there are other options to add to the three proposed strategic allocations, particularly at Sayers Common.

69. Whilst there are policies within the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance such as the High Weald National Landscape, there are large parts of the District which are not protected in this way, including land adjacent to the three proposed strategic allocations and further sites close to most sustainable settlements of Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill, Hassocks and East Grinstead. One such location which could accommodate additional housing is land south of DPSC3. Full details are contained within our original Representations to the Regulation 19 Plan and summarised briefly below.

As MSDC are aware, at the Regulation 18 stage, the suggested site allocation (then known as DPSC2) included in the Policy Requirements section the following wording: *“.....Opportunities to improve connectivity and master planning between the eastern and western parcels of the site, by inclusion of further land parcels on the southern boundary, should be investigated”*.

There have been ongoing discussions between the landowners and the promoters of the DPSC3 allocation and MSDC recognise that the inclusion of the WHF land would be beneficial to the overall DPSC3 allocation. The landowners remain committed to discussing how the WHF land can assist in creating a better laid out site for the DPSC3 allocation and allowing a strong buffer zone to be incorporated in order to provide a clear separation between the DPSC3 allocation and Albourne Village.

Key components of vision

- Opportunity to create ‘infill’ development area linking the separated land parcels of the DPSC3 allocation;
- Development is to be solely located within the northern fields of the WHF land, in order to create improved connectivity for DPSC3 and a more logical contiguous southern edge.
- North-south green corridor biodiversity corridor containing existing stream, hedge/tree lines, and PRow; northwards connections to DPSC3 allocation;
- East-west green corridor aligning with providing connectivity between the separated land parcels land of DPSC3 allocation;
- Creation of nodal junction around ‘Godcake’ triangular green - as

found elsewhere in countryside;

- Enhanced approach to West House Farm – boulevard of trees – east-west connectivity to southern open space within DPSC3 allocation;
- Retention of hedgerows and trees within field boundaries to screen new development from West House Farm and adjacent dwellings.
- Opportunity for high quality farmstead style buildings within ‘Gunners’, around entrance to eastern development;
- Provision of large amounts of public open space within southern fields of the site; retention of landscape assets within these fields;
- Opportunity to create high quality areas of open space within south-eastern field.
- Potential to exceed BNG targets on site.

Key benefits

- Up to 300 new homes.
- Policy compliant 30% new affordable homes.
- Provision of extensive areas of public open space.
- New children’s play areas.
- Connections to the wider communication links to be created in the DPSC3 allocation.
- Protection of existing trees and hedges as far as is possible.
- Improved connectivity and continuity between eastern and western parts of the wider allocation.

The proposed site is fully contiguous with DPSC3 and would provide a logical extension of the allocation. Moreover, with the commitment to keep the land south of the farm access road free of any development, this would provide a defensible and suitable buffer between the expanded site allocation DPSC3 and the western side of Albourne village.

72. To make the Plan sound additional housing should be provided to assist in meeting increased needs, as set out above. Land south of the DPSC3 allocation would assist in the sustainability of that allocation as well as providing additional housing to meet the needs of the District and neighbouring authorities.