

Matter 6: Housing

Issue 1: Whether the Council's approach to calculating its full, objectively assessed needs and housing requirement is justified, based on up-to-date and reliable evidence, effective, positively prepared, and consistent with national policy?

Objectively Assessed Need-Housing

Q57. Does the Plan period cover an appropriate time frame for the provision of housing (2021-2039) consistent with national policy? If not, what would be the implications for housing need?

57.1 As per our response to Matter 3 Q32 we believe the plan period should be extended to 2040 to be consistent with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, especially para 22, and ensure it looks ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption. We note that MSDC appear to accept this in their schedule of proposed mods (DP2) and have set out in Modification reference M67 what the implications of such a change would be on the housing need – see screen shot below.

DPH1: Housing

The district's Local Housing Need is a minimum ~~19,620~~ 19,741 dwellings over the Plan period

Minimum Housing Need

The Housing Need will be met from the following sources:

Commitments (Existing allocations and Permissions)	8,696 <u>9,921</u>
Completions 2021/22	1,187
Completions 2022/23	1,053
Completions 2023/24	1,247
Sustainable Communities	5,393 <u>5,243</u>
of which Significant Sites	4,850 <u>4,700</u>
DPSC1: Land to West of Burgess Hill/ North of Hurstpierpoint	1,350
DPSC2: Land at Crabbet Park, Copthorne	1,500 <u>850</u>
DPSC3: Land to the South of Reeds, Sayers Common	2,000 <u>1,850</u>
of which Housing Sites DPSC4 - DPSC7	543
Housing Sites DPA1 – DPA17	1,439 <u>1,444</u>
Windfall allowance	1,768
Of which larger identifiable sites	466
Of which smaller and other non-identifiable sites	1,302
Total Housing supply from 2021 - 2040	20,783 <u>20,616</u>
Mid Sussex Housing Need	19,620 <u>19,741</u>
Total under/over supply for resilience and unmet need	<u>1,042</u> + 996

Q58. To determine the minimum number of homes required, housing policies should be informed by the Government's local housing need methodology. As such, are the inputs used to determine the level of housing needed within the Plan appropriate?

58.1 The Housing Need and Requirement Topic Paper (H5) explains at paragraphs 11- 13 the basis of the calculation for the Minimum Local Housing Need of 1,090dpa (19,620 dwellings over the plan period (2021-2039)) in the Reg 19 Plan. Para 14 explains that the data sources for the Standard Method calculation are subject to annual updates; and that not only was new affordability data released in March 2024 (i.e. post Regulation 19), but additionally the step 1 baseline has changed from 2023-2033 to 2024-2034. As a result, the Standard Method figure has changed since the Plan was published at Regulation 19 stage. The new figure is 1,039dpa (19,741 dwellings over the plan period (2021-2040)). This change is reflected in the proposed modifications (see MM67) (DP2) as referenced above in our response to Q57.

Q59. Are there exceptional circumstances to suggest that an alternative approach be taken? If so, what are they, and how would they impact on housing need? Is the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021 (H1) up to date and justified?

59.1 Paras 17 – 19 of Housing Need and Requirement Topic Paper (H5) and paras 5.18 to 5.49 of the SHMA (H1) consider the circumstances set out in PPG by which the housing need may be higher than the standard method. They conclude that *'there are no circumstances in Mid Sussex District relating to growth funding, strategic infrastructure improvements or affordable housing need which indicate that 'actual' housing need is higher than the standard method indicates.'*

59.2 H5 also explains in para 20 why a lower figure is not justified. Para 21 explains why alternative population and household projections are not justified.

59.3 Having regard to the findings of H1 and H5, we can see no justifiable reason to adopt a different approach to the calculation of the minimum housing need in this instance.

Q60. What are the implications, if any, of the Gatwick Airport's proposed extension and DCO on the demand for housing? Does the OAN set out within the submission Plan of 19,620 remain appropriate?

60.1 The NWS SoCG (Housing (DC4) explains at paras 4.14 and 4.15 that the Horsham and Crawley (O10), and Mid Sussex SHMAs (H1)¹ both consider future growth proposals at Gatwick Airport. To this end it explains that in July 2023, Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) application to bring its northern standby runway into routine use; and that should this be successful, it would increase passenger numbers from 46.6 million passengers per annum (mppa) in 2019, to 75.6 mppa by 2038 and over 80million by 2047, compared to 62.4 mppa by 2038 and 67.2 mppa by 2047 in GAL's base case forecasts which exclude the project. DC4 also explains that the DCO is currently under examination and a decision is not expected until early 2025.

¹ See paras 5.21 to 5.45.

60.2 In the context of the above, H1 indicates at para 5.43 that if one compares the level of jobs growth for the District with the level of workforce growth generated by planning for housing need derived from the standard method it is considered that the additional jobs created as a result of the proposed expansion plans at Gatwick Airport would be captured by the workforce supported under the standard method. As a result, H1 indicates that Gatwick's current expansion plans would not justify an increase in the need for homes in the District over and above what the standard method indicates. That said, H1 acknowledges that its assessment is based on a number of assumptions, and that as and when further proposals come forward in relation to Gatwick Airport's expansion, or new evidence is published, it will have to be reviewed accordingly.

60.2 DC4 goes on to advise that the Authorities, having now reviewed GAL's Housing and Population evidence, have prepared a Joint West Sussex Local Impact Report which accepts GAL's conclusions that the DCO proposals, if approved, would not increase general housing need beyond that already planned for in the wide labour market area for the Airport.

60.3 Para 12.5 of H1 concludes:

'In line with the PPG, the report has considered wider factors in assessing housing need including growth funding and strategic infrastructure improvements (including the expansion of Gatwick Airport) as well as affordable housing need; however, we do not find clear evidence necessitating an uplift in housing need above the standard method derived local housing need figure.'

60.4 Given the above, we do not believe this is an issue to be addressed in the Submission Local Plan. However, if it is considered to be an issue that needs to be addressed longer term, there is no reason why policy DPH1 could not be extended to reference the need for the next local plan update to specifically address this point.

Affordable housing

Q61. Is the figure of 470 affordable homes per annum set out in the SHMA (H1), split between rented and owned homes, subject to S106 control, based on appropriate evidence?
No comment

Q62 – 64 - *Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople*
No comment

Other specialist needs

Q65. How have the needs of other caravan dwellers and houseboat dwellers been considered within the Council's evidence base?
No comment

Q66. 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?

66.1 No comment other than to highlight our comments at Reg 19 on DPH4 (Older Persons' Housing and Specialist Accommodation), DPH7 (Housing Mix) and DPH8 (Affordable Housing).

Housing Requirement

Q67. Is a minimum housing requirement of 19,620 justified and consistent with national policy? What is the status of the 996 dwellings referenced within the table in Policy DPH1 as total under/over supply for resilience and unmet need? Should this figure be included within the annual housing requirement for the district?

67.1 As per our response to Q57 and Q58, we believe the minimum housing requirement to be 19,741 for the period 2021- 2040, as set out in MM67 (DP2). This figure is in our opinion justified and consistent with national policy as set out in H5. Using the updated figures in MM67, the total oversupply increases from 996 to 1,042. MSDC in policy DPH1 refer to this oversupply being for resilience and unmet need (see also para. 3.9 of the Housing Supply and Trajectory Topic Paper (H4), which advises that: *This oversupply will provide some resilience for the District Plan and, subject to meeting Mid Sussex housing need as the first priority, any excess will serve as a contribution to the Northern West Sussex HMA unmet need in accordance with the Northern West Sussex Housing Statement of Common Ground.*

67.2 In our opinion the oversupply cannot by definition be both – either it is for resilience or to help address unmet need.

67.3 The Housing Need and Requirement Topic Paper (H5)) suggests that the over supply is for resilience i.e. to address any changes to site yields/ allocations that may arise during the examination process, not to address any non-implementation or lapses in permissions. The council consider that, to this end, they are confident that the over-supply is, at 13% of the residual figure, sufficient, there being no requirement in national policy to include an over-supply for resilience. Para 101 goes on to indicate that any provision over and above meeting Mid Sussex housing needs will serve as a contribution towards unmet needs. Thus, we assume that if for argument's sake the oversupply is reduced to 750 because of changes in site yields during the examination process, this 750 would then be set aside to meet the unmet needs of the NWS HMA, as no further resilience would be required, and the text within policy DPH1 would be amended accordingly.

67.4 As to whether the figure should be included in the annual housing requirement, we consider that it should be. Such an approach would be consistent with that adopted in the current local plan (policy DP4 (DB1)) i.e. for the plan to provide for 19,741 dwellings over the Plan period, and provision to also be made for 1,042 dwellings to help address the unmet need in the Northern West Sussex Housing Market Area. This would result in there being a minimum District housing requirement of 20,783 dwellings between 2021 – 2040, an average of 1,094dpa.

Q68. Are there other considerations that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally, such as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas namely the 30,000 dwellings of unmet need identified up to 2050 in the Coastal West Sussex and Greater Brighton authorities, Housing Need and Requirement Topic Paper (HNRTP) (H5), and the more immediate housing needs of Crawley, Brighton and Horsham?

68.1 Whilst we acknowledge that the unmet needs of the surrounding area are significant, being in excess of 9,800 dwellings within the NWS HMA and in excess of 30,000 dwellings in the Coastal West Sussex HMA (which includes Brighton and Hove), the question is the extent to which MSDC can and should look to meet part of this need. It is clearly unreasonable to look to them to meet all of it and Paragraph: 022 Reference ID: 61-022-20190315 of PPG is clear in that local authorities are not obliged to accept needs from other areas where it can be demonstrated that it would have an adverse impact when assessed against policies in the Framework. The issue is thus whether MSDC have demonstrated that the extent to which they have sought to address the unmet need of the NWS HMA / the Coastal West Sussex HMA is as far as they can go given the findings of the SHLAA and site assessment methodology, or whether there are additional sites that could help address the unmet needs that would not tip the balance.

68.2 In our response to matter 2 Q23, Q26 and Q27 we address the issue of prioritisation, and MSDC's prioritisation of the NSW HMA. We also address the issue of the tipping point and MSDC's position on why given the supply led approach the council have adopted to their housing land supply, the site sifting exercise undertaken basically arrived at a point where no further sites were thought to be suitable and the oversupply was fixed at what is now 1,042 dwellings. As set out in our earlier response, CBC, HDC and B&HBC were party to the site selection methodology². The table set out within para 5.20 of the NSW Housing SoCG (DC4) is clear in that '*Authorities are given the opportunity to scrutinise and comment on each other's methodologies and high-level outcomes through ongoing engagement at the earliest opportunity, in addition to and without prejudice to each LPA's statutory consultee roles as part of the formal plan-making stages.*' And '*The work of each respective authority has been carried out diligently and there is broad cross-authority support for the principles underpinning the respective site assessments.*'

68.3 In the context of the above the table within para 6.41 of DC4 concludes that '*There are no further suitable and/or deliverable sites on or close to administrative boundaries which could contribute towards increasing housing supply within this plan period*'; and para 9 of DC5 concludes '*There are currently insufficient available, suitable and developable sites in the southern area of Mid Sussex (within the Coastal West Sussex HMA) to meet unmet needs from Brighton and Hove beyond those already proposed for allocation*'.

68.4 SSP3 (the Site Selection Conclusions Paper) provides a detailed review of the site selection process, starting with the SHELAA, the Site Selection Methodology, the three stages of the site assessment process (relationship to settlements, showstoppers, and overall assessment against the 14 detailed assessment criteria set out in Appendix 1 of SSP3), the in-combination testing (including, transport modelling, habitats regulations assessment, air quality modelling and viability assessment), and fact checking with the site promoters. It is clear that this was a detailed and iterative process. Furthermore section 3 of SSP3 provides a detailed review of the process undertaken by the council in determining which sites were to be taken forward as Significant Sites, and why those which were not chosen were rejected. In this context we note of the competing sites the land at Ansty was discounted given the cumulative impacts on the local highway network, which para 3.11 of SSP3 suggests are likely to be generated by the Ansty site alone (and could not be

² See para 7 of the B&H SoCG (DC5), and section 5 of the NSW Housing SoCG (DC4)

addressed by additional sustainable mitigation or physical works to the junctions involved)³. A lower yield removed two of the four junction impediments, but two remained and whilst the site promotor suggested they could be addressed they have not been approved by the highway authority. Para 3.17 concludes:

‘The Council is therefore still concerned that there are significant uncertainties in transport terms regarding this site. Due to its location, opportunities for sustainable transport mitigation are not likely to be as effective as other sites promoted for inclusion.’

68.5 In addition, the land at Hangman’s Acre Farm and Little Walstead, Lindfield was dismissed given concerns over its availability and deliverability as well as uncertainty regarding the quantum and uses for the site⁴; and the Broad location West of A23 was also dismissed given doubts about its availability, and concerns about its potential impact on the setting of the Souths Down National Park.

68.6 Given the above it is clear that not only did MSDC review a significant number of sites through the SHLAA process (270 sites with a yield of 32,283), but at stage three (further testing) they still had 49 sites yielding 14,654 dwellings – see diagram below taken from p10 of SSP3.



68.7 It was only through the final sifting stage that the council arrived at the 24 sites they have looked to allocate, yielding 6,832 dwellings, 4,850 being derived from the three significant sites.

68.8 The evidence base would, having regard to the above, suggest that MSDC have done all they reasonably can to try to address the unmet needs of the NWS and Coastal West Sussex HMA’s, but given the supply led approach and various constraints have not been able to identify any further sites at this stage.

68.9 If in the context of the above it is concluded that more homes are needed to address the unmet needs of the wider area, we would suggest that as some of the current applications could be said to meet some of the unmet needs of the wider area already, that additional allocations could be made elsewhere within the district to meet Mid Sussex needs/

³ see paras 3.12 – 3.14 of SSP3.

⁴ see para 3.29 of SSP3.

help bolster the unmet needs of the wider area; and that if the assessment criteria were amended this exercise could help identify additional allocations in a relatively short timeframe. Likewise, the capacity of certain sites, such as the proposed allocation at Turners Hill Road Crawley Down (DPA9), could be reviewed, as, as per our Reg 19 reps, this site has the capacity to accommodate more than it is currently identified to deliver.

Q69. If so, are there any policies within the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance that provide a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of housing, within the plan area; or would any adverse impacts of meeting the Council's OAN and the unmet needs of others significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework as a whole?

69.1 MSDC's sifting process, in particular the stage 2 site assessment is set out in detail in para 2.7 of SSP3. Stages 2a and 2b were in particular related to the aims and objectives of the NPPF as far as these correlate to: the relationship to settlements and thus a site's accessibility by non-car modes / sustainability; environmental constraints i.e. National Parks, SPA's, Ancient Woodland/AONB etc; deliverability considerations.

69.2 Section 1.2 of the SA (DP7) explains that nearly 50% of the district is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (National Landscape), and over 10% is within the South Downs National Park. The SA also explains that Mid Sussex is the tenth most wooded district in the South East and two-thirds of this woodland is classified as 'ancient woodland'; whilst the HRA at appendix A shows the extent to which the district falls within the 7km recreational zone of influence of the Ashdown Forest. The Submission Draft Local Plan advises that the heritage assets of the district include over 1,000 Listed Buildings, 25 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 36 conservation areas and over 500 sites of archaeological interest. The Submission Draft Local Plan also advises that whilst the district is generally an area of low flood risk, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies areas that are at risk from flooding from a range of sources and has been used to inform the preparation of the District Plan.

69.3 Whilst no comprehensive constraints plan is provided within the evidence base, it is clear when reading through the various reports that there are a significant number of constraints that between them influence the scale of housing the district can deliver having regard to the aims and objectives of national policy, and that MSDC have concluded that what is proposed is the tipping point beyond which the adverse impacts of further growth would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Q70. 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?

No comment

Q71. What is the housing requirement for each designated neighbourhood area?

No comment

Q72. Are any main modifications necessary for soundness, if so, why?

No comment