

HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (Bill Hatton, Ian Weir, Frances Gaudencio, Nick Owens, Emma Wood, Mark Higgins, Judith Foot, Victoria Standfast, Virginia Pullen and David Withycombe)

Dowsett Mayhew Consultants: Dale Mayhew and Laura Bourke, with copies to all other Councillors for information.

A meeting of the NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WORKING GROUP will be held on Thursday 14th March 2019 at 7.30pm in the Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Hassocks.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

To deal with any disclosure by Members of any disclosable pecuniary interests and interests other than pecuniary interests, as defined under Hassocks Parish Council's Code of Conduct and the Localism Act 2011, in relation to matters on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To accept Minutes of the Meeting held 29th November 2018.

4. REPORTS

- 4.1 To consider the advice from Mid Sussex District Council on the Regulation 14 Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan as set out in the email of the 18th February 2019, attached as Appendix 1, relating to:-

- a) Policy 1 Local Gaps
- b) Policy 2 Local Green Space Designation
- c) Policy 7 Development in Conservation Areas
- d) Policy 15 Hassocks Golf Club
- e) Policy 17 Land West of London Road
- f) Policy 18 Affordable Housing

- 4.2 To consider the responses received to the Regulation 14 Consultation from Statutory Authorities and Service Providers, Members of the Community and other Interested Parties. (papers to follow) Appendix 2.

- 4.3 SDNP SHELAA – Two parcels of land in Hassocks are currently under consideration as part of this process and were initially considered as part of the 2016 initiative.

- 23 Streamside
- Southdown Farm

Members are requested to consider these potential sites set out in Appendix 3

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28th March 2019

Parish Clerk Ian Cumberworth, Parish Centre, Adastra Park, Keymer Road, Hassocks BN6 8QH
Tel: 01273 842714, email: info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk

Extract from email 18/02/19 – Mid Sussex District Council Representation.

Dear Parish Clerk,

Thank you for consulting Mid Sussex District Council on the Hassocks Regulation 14 (Pre-submission) Neighbourhood Plan.

Mid Sussex DC welcome the preparation of a new Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for Hassock Parish that takes into account the revised housing requirement for Hassocks village; makes reference to the Clayton Mills strategic housing allocation set out in the adopted Mid Sussex District Plan; as well as acknowledging the planning permissions for housing development that have recently been granted.

For the Hassock NP to be successful at Examination, it will need to meet the Basic Conditions tests set out in para 8 (2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. These state that the "neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the strategic policies contained in the development plan".

The Council provided informal comments on the draft Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan in November last year. The Council is pleased to see that many of our comments have been taken into account in the Plan that is now out for consultation and, in particular, those relating to the Local Gap policy criteria as well as allowing for windfall development, for up to 10 dwellings, to come forward outside the settlement boundary. However, there are still some outstanding issues which need to be addressed for the Neighbourhood Plan to meet to the Basic Conditions tests and therefore to be successful at Examination. These are set out below:

Hassocks Neighbourhood Plan Proposals Map – Policy 1 – Local Gaps

Mid Sussex District Plan Policy DP13: Preventing Coalescence explains that Local Gaps can be identified in Neighbourhood Plans, in accordance with the criteria laid out in Policy DP13, and supported by robust evidence.

The purpose of a Local Gap policy is to ensure the perception and appreciation of the separate identity and amenity of settlements are protected. In seeking to preserve a gap between settlements, this does not necessarily mean that all of the land within the gap, in its entirety, needs to be protected to achieve this purpose.

The Council notes that the Local Gap boundary designation in the Hassocks NP is, essentially, contiguous with the settlement boundary and includes some land that is surrounded by development or has been identified in the recent appeal decision at Friars Oak (appeal reference - APP/D3830/V/17/3166992) as not necessary to preserve settlement identity and prevent coalescence.

While the Neighbourhood Plan Background Paper 'Review of Policy 1 Burgess Hill Gap and Policy 2 Ditchling Gap and Hurstpierpoint Gap' provides a general assessment of the character and sensitivity of the landscape that is proposed to be included in the Local Gap, the detail of where the boundary should be drawn in light of this work has not been clearly justified. For instance, the Background Paper explains that some land is well contained and views are enclosed. In order for this policy designation to be robust and have credibility in its application, the Council recommends that further assessment is carried out or conclusions

provided to identify the areas of land that are entirely necessary to preserve the integrity of the Local Gap and maintain the separate identity of settlements. This can then be used to support where the Local Gap Boundary should be drawn.

Local Green Space (LGS) designation: LGS 1 (Land to the north of Shepherds Walk); LGS 2 (Land at the Ham); and LGS 4 (Land to the east of Ockley Lane)

Local Green Space designation is a way to provide special protection for green areas of particular importance to local communities. The concept was introduced in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012.

The revised NPPF 2018 allows communities to identify and protect Local Green Spaces (LGS) of particular importance to them (paragraphs 99 and 100). The NPPF explains that those areas that are designated should be demonstrably special to a local community and hold a particular local significance, because of their beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) includes further guidance on the LGS designation. The guidance addresses many common questions about the LGS designation, particularly relating to what sort of sites would be suitable for designation and what the designation means in practice.

The following paragraphs in the NPPG are of particular relevance for the evaluation of sites for LGS designation.

- Designation should not be proposed for extensive tracts of land and should not be proposed as a 'back door' way to achieve what would amount to a new area of Green Belt by another name (para 015 of the Practice Guide).
- Para 015 also highlights that blanket designation of open space adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate.
- Para 018 explains that LGS should not be designated simply to protect rights of way (which are already protected under other legislation).

The Council notes that land proposed for designation as LGS1, LGS2 and LGS4 comprise fields of pasture and are part of the wider countryside adjacent to the built up area boundary, all in private ownership. Public footpaths run across or close to the sites; however there is no statutory public access to the proposed LGS areas. The sites appear to be used unofficially, mostly by local dog walkers. The Council notes that LGS 1, 2 and 4 cover fairly large areas of countryside surrounding Hassocks.

The Council has considered the supporting Local Green Space Policy Review Background Paper and does not judge that this sufficiently demonstrates why LGS 1, 2 and 4 are particularly special over and above other areas of countryside in the vicinity, nor does it judge that they are the type of green space the Government had in mind that should be protected when introducing this designation. These particular LGS designations are therefore not in general conformity with the Government's policies in the NPPF nor the advice set out in the NPPG and they should be removed.

Policy 7 - Development in Conservation Areas

We previously provided advice that in order to make this policy more locally distinctive, that the special features of the Clayton Conservation Area, as set out in the Conservation Area Appraisal, should be included. While this advice has been taken on board, as a result of the way the policy is drafted, it could be read that development is encouraged in these areas. We therefore suggest that the policy is redrafted to identify the special features of the

conservation area first and then follow this with a sentence that says "any development in the conservation area must conserve and enhance these features."

Policy 15 – Hassocks Golf Club

The supporting text to this policy acknowledges the recent planning consent for the redevelopment of this site. However, the residential application is predicated on the relocation of some of the golf facilities. We note that criterion 1 states that the proposal should not extend into land in the Local Gap. We therefore advise, for clarity, that this criterion specifically refers to the residential development not extending into the Gap.

Policy 17 – Land west of London Road (Saxon Mills)

Planning permission for this site has been granted and development has already commenced. Therefore Policy 18 is not required as it has no statutory planning control over this site. The identification of this area should also be deleted from the Proposals Map.

Policy 18 – Affordable Housing

This has been revised to take into account the Mid Sussex Housing Allocation Scheme. However, some inconsistencies still remain as the local connection criteria on the Council's Allocation Scheme only relate to first lettings and also they do not apply to strategic allocations. We recommend the following changes to the policy:

The second paragraph should be amended to say:

"When allocating the first letting of a home within a new development of general needs housing, priority will be given to bids from applicants who have a Local Connection to the parish of Hassocks. In order to establish a local connection, the applicant(s) must meet one of the following criteria:

After the fourth criterion, the following sentence should be added:

"Larger new developments containing 250 homes or more in total are intended to meet the housing needs of the whole District and are therefore exempt from the local connection criteria above."

The Council would urge you to reflect the aforementioned comments in the Submission Version of the Neighbourhood Plan. As you are aware this Council works proactively with Neighbourhood Planning groups to give Neighbourhood Plans the best chance of success at examination.

Regards,

Sally Blomfield
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Economic Promotion and Planning
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South Downs National Park
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2016


Appendix D

Sites with potential by settlement

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Site: MI003

Land at Southdowns Farm

2016 Recommendation

 Has Potential



Site Reference
MI003

Area

Mid Sussex

Site Address	Settlement
Land at Southdowns Farm	Hassocks
	Parish
	Hassocks

Source	Current Use
Previously assessed by Borough/District Council	Agricultural/Grazing

Summary of Landscape Assessment
Medium Sensitivity
Medium sensitivity to development which matches surrounding density and layout. The public right of way which passes the north of the site provides a significant local connection to the south downs.

Summary of Suitability	Is the site suitable?
There are protected trees on the eastern boundary, along Lodge Lane. A public right of way runs along the northern boundary of the site.	Yes

Summary of Availability	Is the site available?
The site is considered to be available for development.	Yes

Summary of Achievability	Is development on the site achievable?
There is no reason to indicate why development on the site is not achievable.	Yes

Assessment Recommendation	Has Potential
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Reason for Rejection


Site Area (Ha)	Estimated Yield	0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years
0.7	8	8	0	0

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

Site: MI009

Streamside, 23 The Crescent

2016 Recommendation

 Has Potential



(30f3)

Site Reference

MI009

Area

Mid Sussex

Site Address

Streamside, 23 The Crescent

Settlement

Hassocks

Parish

Hassocks

Source

Submission

Current Use

Residential (1 dwelling) within large grounds

Summary of Landscape Assessment

The site has Medium High Sensitivity to large scale housing estate development owing to the sensitive entrance within the Keymer Conservation Area together with the edge of settlement location, existing trees and proximity to the SNCI along the northern boundary which is fed by the watercourse along the northern boundary.

Summary of Suitability

The site is assessed as having Medium High landscape sensitivity. There is scope for a modest size housing development focused on the existing built footprint to improve the quality of the built form to the benefit of the landscape.

Is the site suitable?

Yes**Summary of Availability**

Site considered available for development.

Is the site available?

Yes**Summary of Achievability**

No reason to indicate why site is not achievable.

Is development on the site achievable?

Yes**Assessment Recommendation****Has Potential****Reason for Rejection**

Development on the whole site would have a potential adverse impact on the character and appearance of the landscape. However development on the existing built footprint could provide for a development of modest size family homes or specialist housing, to meet identified needs in a sustainable location.

Site Area (Ha)

2.2

Estimated Yield

6

0-5 years

6

6-10 years

0

11-15 years

0

