

## MID SUSSEX DISTRICT PLAN EXAMINATION

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Alice Henstock  
Senior Planning Officer  
Mid Sussex District Council  
Oaklands Road  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 1SS

23 March 2017

Dear Ms Henstock

### **Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031**

Thank you for your letter of 17 March 2017 and the accompanying document MSDC8a.

I shall deal first with the issue of Policy DP26, Accessibility. Thank you for the note regarding evidence of need for optional access requirement M4(2). However, the evidence does not justify the standard required by the policy. Whilst older population age groups are forecast to grow substantially, there is nothing so unusual about the demographics of Mid Sussex to suggest that M4(1) standards should not be adopted for the majority of new housing.

The proportion of the population in Mid Sussex aged 65+ at 2031 is predicted to be 25%, and aged 85+, 4.9%. Of these, only a proportion will require adaptable dwellings and many will occupy existing housing stock. There will be some need for accessible and adaptable dwellings outside these age groups of course. But the evidence does not support the universal use of the optional requirement, which would impose an unnecessary cost over the whole of the new housing stock, as well as potential layout and design difficulties on more awkward and constrained sites. Moreover, one of the objectives of the requirement seems to be to counterbalance over time what the Council sees as a deficiency in the existing housing stock (para 24 of your note), resulting in a disproportionate burden falling on new housing provision. It would however be acceptable to require a proportion of new housing to be built to M4(2) standards. A figure of 20% built to M4(2) standards (in addition to the 4% agreed for M4(3) standards) would be an appropriate reflection of the evidence base, and would have regard to the objective of greater adaptability in a reasonable proportion of the housing stock.

Turning to the other policies, I can confirm that the schedule of policy changes (v2.1) set out in MSDC8a is correct. I am content with the proposed modifications for proposed paragraph 2.13 and Policies DP18, DP20 and DP40. Policy DP19 is now acceptable in substance (including Mr Brown's proposed modification which has been incorporated) but to make the syntax internally consistent you should

replace "It" under the bullets with "The development" or "The scheme". I agree that a definition of a Neighbourhood Centre/Local Centre should be included in the Glossary and, subject to this clarification, no further changes to DP3 or DP9 are required. The proposed modifications to Policy DP39 are sound.

I have taken note the proposed modifications to Policies DP2 and DP9, which are sound.

I look forward to receiving an appropriate modification for Policy DP26.

Yours sincerely

*Jonathan Bore*

INSPECTOR