

## Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 Examination: Housing Matters

### 1. Evidence base

1.1 *Do the West Sussex SHMA (2009), the Northern West Sussex SHMA (2012), the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (February 2015), the HEDNA Update (November 2015) and the HEDNA Addendum (June 2016) constitute an adequate evidence basis for the assessment of the District's Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN)?*

The SHMA studies from 2009 and 2012 are too dated to be useful. The latest HEDNA addendum has been released post-consultation and so parties have not had an adequate opportunity to comment on its contents and make representations to the Council. It is necessary to do so through this short statement.

### 2. Calculation of the OAN

2.1 *Are the calculations that have led to the OAN starting point of 714 dpa sound?*

Yes. We agree that it is sensible to update the demographic starting point to reflect the release of the DCLG 2014 Household Projections (714 households per annum). This represents a material change from the previous DCLG 2012 Household Projections (656 households per annum) so it is necessary for the Council to take this into account.

We agree that this household projection should be adjusted by applying the 2.3% vacancy rate (see paragraph 1.36 of the August 2016 Addendum). This results in the dwelling projection of 714 households + 16 = 730 dwellings per annum (dpa).

2.2 *Have appropriate adjustments been made to the starting point of the OAN to reflect market signals? In particular, is the figure of 24 dpa adequate to reflect affordability issues and trends?*

The household projections provide a vital and important starting point, but projections alone will not reflect the effects of past under-supply on household formation rates. Paragraph ID 2a-015-20140306 of the NPPG states that the household projections may require adjustment to reflect factors not captured in past trends, *such as household formation rates having been suppressed historically by under-supply and worsening affordability of housing* (our emphasis). It says that the local authority should take a view based on available evidence of the extent to which household formation rates have been constrained by supply.

We consider that the increase of 24 dpa to account for market signals is too slight an uplift to have any material effect on improving affordability in the district. The 24 dpa increase represents only a 3.5% increase on the demographic starting point

(adjusted for vacancies) of 730 dpa. Local authorities elsewhere in the country confronted by problems of affordability have considered much bigger increases, including some where the affordability issues are not as great as those in Mid Sussex, such as Chelmsford Council's emerging local plan which is applying a 20% uplift (Chelmsford Council is also an authority with a very creditable track record of plan making and delivery). Cambridge Council, where the problem of affordability is acute, like Mid Sussex, has applied a 30% market signals uplift.

It is important to consider the lower quartile measure of affordability. We note that the lower quartile house price to income measure in Mid Sussex has risen from 4.44 in 1997 to 10.75 in 2013 and is now 12.59 in 2015. This is significantly above the national average which is 7.02. The average of West Sussex (reflecting the DCLG grouping together of Adur, Arun, Chichester, Crawley, Horsham, Mid Sussex, Worthing) was 8.88 in 2013. It is 11.79 in 2015. Since Mid Sussex is well above the national average, and above the local average, a market signals increase of much more than the very marginal 3.5% is warranted.

We note that the Council argues that it is incapable of addressing the problem of affordability in England (see page 6 of its response to the inspector dated 29 September 2016). We discussed this issue in our representations dated 13 January 2016. We note that the Council cites the University of Reading report commissioned by the DCLG in 2011 in its response to the inspector. It argues that if supply in Mid Sussex was increased by 50% on the demographic trend this would only reduce the lower quartile ratio from 10.2 to 9. The adjustment, the Council argues, would have no material effect on affordability (although it would help some households). The problem with the Council's argument is that it is essentially ignoring government guidance. The government has determined that local authorities should consider increasing supply above the demographic starting point in order to help improve affordability where prices or rents are rising faster than the national or local average (ID 2a-019-20140306). If the evidence suggests this is an issue in Mid Sussex then the Council ought to make this adjustment irrespective of whether the Council considers this will be efficacious. The national political consensus is that there is a housing crisis in England, and therefore all local authorities need to make a collective effort to try and address this in order to 'boost significantly' the supply of housing in England. Providing a significant boost would suggest the need to lift supply above the level indicated by the trend-based projections since planning on the basis of a trend would imply that one is planning to maintain the status quo and carry forward this state of affairs into the future. As we argued in our representations, if Mid Sussex does not feel obliged to make such an adjustment for affordability then it is hard to see why other districts would.

There are three other factors that would justify a more significant increase above the demographic starting point. These are the influences of a) London; b) Brighton; and c) the influence of significant past under-delivery against the South East Plan.

#### a) The influence of London

The Mayor of London's migration assumptions plus the unmet need in London is another reason why an OAN that is essentially just the household projection plus a market signals adjustment of only 3.5% will prove inadequate as a measure of future

housing needs in the district. We have discussed this in our representations. The Mayor of London in his new Plan for London (examined in 2014 as the Further Alterations to the London Plan) assumes that outward migration from London will increase by 5% and inward migration will decrease by 3% from 2017 to 2036. This is his Central Variant demographic projection (see paragraph 1.10C of the London Plan). The effect of the Mayor applying this assumption is to reduce considerably the demographic starting point in London to a level that is much lower than the official DCLG household projections (the Mayor assumes that 39,500 households will form per year compared to 52,000 households per year suggested by the 2011-interim household projections which was the DCLG projection available at the time when the new London Plan was being formulated. The OAN only goes up to 49,000 to reflect London's severe historic backlog). This is described in paragraphs 3.60 and 3.69 of the Mayor of London's *2013 Strategic Housing Market Assessment*.

The inspector examining the London Plan had referred to these migration assumptions as being material to the preparation of plans outside of London.

*“The SHMA, which includes assumptions relating to migration, is also likely to be material to the preparation of local plans outside London.”* (paragraph 8)

The Mayor of London's migration assumptions will be material to Mid Sussex. The Local Plan acknowledges the district's links to London (for example paragraph 2.8). The district will experience more relatively affluent incomers moving to Mid Sussex who will out-compete established residents for access to the scarce housing stock. The consequences will be felt in the increased need for affordable housing and rising homelessness.

London is a significant exporter of population into Mid Sussex. The Mid Sussex HEDNA 2015 attempts to evade this fact by only considering moves into and out of the district in terms of other districts in Sussex although in paragraph 2.59 of the HEDNA 2015 report the Council does acknowledge the external influence of London. The tables below from the ONS show the net flows into and out of the area. The London boroughs are heavily represented among those exporting population into the district. The link with Brighton & Hove is also striking. It is noticeable that London does not feature in any of the places where people from Mid Sussex move to, confirming the relevance of the Mayor of London's assumption about decreased levels of inward migration to London.

Table 1: Net flows into area	2010-11 net flow: number of people	Projected household growth in 'sending' LA
MID SUSSEX		
Brighton and Hove UA	350	20%
Croydon	90	28%
Tandridge	80	30%
Sutton	60	36%
Lambeth	50	24%
Reigate and Banstead	50	37%
Crawley	50	33%
Adur	40	25%

Haringey	30	21%
Lewisham	30	32%
Wandsworth	30	19%
Bromley	30	29%
Greenwich	30	23%
Hammersmith and Fulham	20	9%
Southwark	20	41%
Ealing	20	22%
Merton	20	37%
Richmond upon Thames	20	37%
Elmbridge	20	27%
Waverley	20	23%

Table 2: Net flows out of area	2010-11 net flow: number of people	Projected household growth in 'sending' LA
MID SUSSEX		
Wealden	130	27%
Horsham	80	31%
Lewes	60	30%
Eastbourne	40	38%
Bristol, City of UA	40	47%
Cornwall UA	40	30%
Southampton UA	30	28%
Arun	30	35%
Chichester	30	33%
Manchester	20	37%
Nottingham UA	20	36%
Cambridge	20	26%
Dover	20	24%
Tunbridge Wells	20	28%
Oxford	20	13%
South Somerset	20	29%
Wiltshire UA	20	28%
Stockton-on-Tees UA	10	23%
County Durham UA	10	22%
North Tyneside	10	27%

In terms of London being able to meet its OAN of 49,000 dwellings per year, it is also important to understand that the London Boroughs are showing themselves incapable of achieving this. The Mayor has only identified a ‘theoretical’ capacity for 42,000 dpa (we emphasize the word *theoretical* because the London-wide SHLAA is not as rigorous a study of the deliverability, suitability, and developability of land in the manner required of SHLAAs produced by local authorities outside of London. It is a very high level study). The Mayor has asserted that the London boroughs will close the gap by identifying more supply. The new Borough Plans that have or are being prepared to date to reflect the new benchmark targets in the London Plan (that total

to 42,000 dpa – as set out in table 3.1 of the London Plan) have shown themselves incapable of doing this. The table below shows the results to date of the new London Borough plans that have been examined or are being prepared and how many homes they are planning for:

Table 3

	<b>Borough Plan</b>	<b>London Plan</b>	<b>Increase/Shortfall</b>
Bromley	641	641	0
Camden	1120	889	231
Croydon	1592	1435	157
Enfield	798	798	0
Ham' & Ful'm	1100	1031	69
Haringey	1502	1502	0
Hounslow	822	822	0
Lambeth	1195	1559	-364
RBKC	535	733	-198
Southwark	2000	2736	-736
Tower Hamlets	2885	3931	-1046
Wandsworth	1812	1812	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>16002</b>	<b>17889</b>	<b>-1887</b>

The results to date show that the London boroughs are failing to lift supply above the 42,000 dpa benchmark baseline. Indeed, there is a shortfall of 1887 dpa against the benchmark baseline. The scale of the undersupply in London against the OAN of 49,000 dpa will fuel the pace of outward migration and discourage people from moving to London as suitable accommodation will not be available in the capital.

In paragraph 1.2.8 of the *Mayor of London's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance* the Mayor urges the London Boroughs to work with local authorities outside London to identify and assess housing need and capacity particularly where there are strong links identified in terms of housing demand and commuting patterns. Policy 3.8B of the London Plan stresses the importance of Local Plans to take account of housing requirements at different spatial scales, including regional, sub-regional and local levels. It is becoming perfectly apparent that this is not working and that no one is taking responsibility for planning for the Mayor's migration assumptions. Nonetheless, whether a local authority has contacted another under the duty to cooperate to discuss the implications of cross-boundary flows, will need to be examined.

The effect of London's inability to accommodate its own OAN – even an OAN that is heavily discounted compared to the official projections to reflect the Mayor's alternative migration assumptions – will affect future levels of housing demand in Mid Sussex. The increase in the cost of housing in London as a consequence of scarcity will mean that there are more opportunities for relatively more affluent households in London to trade in their flats that they have bought in Lambeth or Lewisham, for houses in Mid Sussex.

### b) Brighton & Hove's unmet need

Brighton & Hove is another district with a strong commuting and migration relationship with Mid Sussex. Brighton & Hove has a large unmet (established following the examination of its Local Plan). The City Council is facing a 16,920 dwelling shortfall over the 20 year life of its plan. This equates to an 846 dpa shortfall.

Brighton & Hove is not part of the North West Sussex Housing Market Area, but it is a neighbour and one with whom there is a very strong migration and commuting link with Mid Sussex. The commuting link is illustrated in the HEDNA 2015 report, table 10. Mid Sussex avoids showing its migration links with Brighton in order to try to confine its duty to cooperate obligations to the Northern West Sussex HMA. However, the table we have provided above from the ONS, taken from the 2011 Census, shows that Brighton & Hove is the chief exporter of population into Mid Sussex. Table 9 of the HEDNA 2015 report also shows this (page 21). Paragraph 2.59 of the HEDNA 2015 report acknowledges the external influence of Brighton & Hove.

We consider that the Council should plan for these uncertainties. It should do so by making an adjustment of 10% to its demographic projection.

### c) Past under-supply against the South East Plan

The past under-supply in the district compared to the South East Plan target is also another reason why a large market signals increase is warranted. We will address this in question 7 below.

We consider that an increase of 25% overall should be applied by the Council to its demographic starting point. This increase would take the form of a market signals adjustment plus the need to account for the uncertainties relating to London migration and its unmet need plus the unmet need elsewhere in the sub-region especially Brighton, but also Lewes and Reigate & Banstead. A specific allocation must also be made for Crawley which is a partner HMA authority.

This would be:

Demographic starting point	714 households per annum
Adjust for vacancies (2.3%)	730 dpa
Add 25% for market signals and London and Brighton uncertainties	

OAN = 876 dpa (730 + 146)

Add 100 dpa for Crawley's unmet need (as a partner HMA authority)

Overall requirement = 1,012 dpa

For the Local Plan requirement this could be rounded down to 1,010 dpa.

### **3. The Duty to Cooperate**

*3.1 Can it be demonstrated that active cooperation has taken place on strategic cross boundary issues, especially in respect of the assessment of wider and unmet housing need?*

When Mid Sussex consulted upon its *Focused Amendments to the Pre-Submission Draft* in November 2015 (regulation 19) it had proposed to provide 105 dpa to assist with the needs of neighbours (paragraph 3.18). This was reduced to 46 without consultation in the *Schedule of Further Modifications to the Pre-Submission Draft and Focused Amendments* in August 2016 (paragraph 3.18). It is hard to see how this change could have been the result of effective cooperation for the mutual benefit of neighbouring authorities as nobody was allowed the opportunity to submit representations on this matter to try and persuade the Council to reconsider its approach.

We had considered that the provision of 105 dpa to meet the unmet needs of neighbouring authorities to have been a very positive feature of the Focused Amendments of November 2015. The reduction was very disappointing.

It is hard to know what Crawley and Brighton & Hove think about this decision to reduce the level of assistance, since as far as we were aware, there was no duty to cooperate discussion paper produced to support the Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation. One has been produced in August 2016. We have noted the Northern West Sussex Authorities Position Statement (revised March 2016) in this document. This suggests that Crawley and Horsham accepted that the provision of 105 dpa by Mid Sussex would be acceptable to meet the needs of the HMA, but the position statement does suggest that this provision will serve any unmet needs beyond the HMA. It is unclear if Crawley and Brighton & Hove have made any observations since the publication of the August 2016 changes and whether Crawley in particular is concerned about the reduction.

The provision of 105 dpa would have made a substantial contribution towards meeting the unmet needs of Crawley assuming it was all earmarked for Crawley (and probably none at all for Brighton & Hove). If the 105 had been intended to address other needs, and not just those of Crawley, there would need to have been a discussion about the apportionment of the 105 dpa and this would have needed to be clarified in the Mid Sussex Plan. This is also the case with the figure of 46 dpa: how many of the 46 would assist Crawley and how many would help to alleviate Brighton & Hove's problems.

It also needs to be clarified whether Mid Sussex will also be providing some homes to assist with the needs of the South Downs National Park.

### **4. Unmet need**

4.1 *What factors should determine the amount of provision that should be made in Mid Sussex to accommodate the unmet needs of other authorities, notably Brighton & Hove, and Crawley?*

4.2 *What calculations have taken place on a cross-boundary basis to arrive at that provision?*

### Crawley

The HMA consists of the local authorities of Mid Sussex, Horsham and Crawley. As a partner authority, Mid Sussex is under an obligation to assist with accommodating Crawley's shortfall.

The situation with regard to Crawley is uncertain. The total unmet need is 5,000 homes. Horsham will accommodate some of the Crawley's unmet need – 3,000 homes, although the land for 1,000 of these is still to be identified and this depends on a review of the Horsham Plan. Mid Sussex is the other partner authority in the North West Sussex HMA, but the Council has recently decided to revise its plan and says it can now accommodate only 920 homes of Crawley's shortfall, or just 46 dpa.

On the basis that Horsham has agreed to accommodate 3,000 dwellings to assist with Crawley's shortfall (Horsham will provide 150 dpa over the plan period 2011-2031 – see paragraph 43 of the inspector's report) in the same spirit Mid Sussex should accommodate 100 dpa to assist with Crawley's residual shortfall.

### Brighton & Hove

As discussed above, the unmet need in Brighton is 16,920 dwellings over the 20 year plan period (2010-2030). This equates to a shortfall of 846 dpa.

Brighton & Hove is not part of the HMA but has a very strong migration and commuting relationship to Mid Sussex. Migration from Brighton is second only to the combined migration effect of London. Brighton is also a neighbouring authority. Even if there is no agreement or commitment in place to assist with Brighton's unmet need, the scale of the undersupply will exert a powerful influence on the housing market in Mid Sussex. The chronic shortfall in Brighton will make housing even more expensive in Mid Sussex, with the affordable housing need increasing. We consider that the most pragmatic way to compensate for the shortfall in Brighton if not through a direct allocation is to increase the market signals adjustment in Mid Sussex.

### Lewes

There is also an unmet need in Lewes which is another neighbouring authority. We referred to this in our representations. Lewes Council has determined that the objectively assessed housing need over the plan period of 2010 to 2030 is for at least 9,200 dwellings (460 dpa) and may be higher at 10,400 dwellings (520 dpa). Following the hearings held in January 2015, the inspector gave his initial view that the need probably lies nearer to the upper end of the end of the range and in view of the size of the unmet need and the implications this would have for employment growth (there would be no employment growth on the basis of the submitted housing

requirement). The Council has now allocated more land to help close the gap between the need and supply by increasing the supply from 5,700 dwellings to 6,900. Despite the increase of the requirement to 6,900 dwellings, there will still be an unmet need of circa 2,300 dwellings in Lewes when measured against the lower end of the SHMA range. This amounts to an average of 115 dpa.

### Reigate & Banstead

Mid Sussex Council will also be aware that Reigate & Banstead has adopted a plan that assumes much lower inward migration than projected by the 2011-interim projections (the set of DCLG projections available at the time when the plan was formulated). R&BC's housing requirement is for 460 homes per year for the period 2012 and 2027. This is much lower than the level of need indicated by its SHMA which suggested a need for 828 affordable homes per year and the 2011-interim household projections which indicated that 933 households would form over the ten year period 2011 to 2021. The inspector, however, deliberating on the OAN in a period pre-dating the NPPG, concluded that it was legitimate for Reigate & Banstead to plan to meet primarily natural change only, and not cater for the full weight of migration. Paragraph 19 of his report concludes on the OAN:

*“The evidence leads to the conclusion that the full, objectively assessed need for housing over the plan period is an annual average of between about 600 and 640 dwellings, giving a total of 9,000-9,600 dwellings over the plan period. This broadly aligns with the total demand for market and affordable housing taken from the SHMAs (644 dpa) which, despite being somewhat dated, represents a useful sensitivity test. Approximately 330-370 dwellings would be required each year to accommodate natural change, the remainder being needed to cater for net in-migration.”*

Paragraph 31 of Reigate's Local Plan clarifies that this was the Council's reasoning. We have underlined the most important parts:

*“The RBCS adopts the SEP target of 10,000 houses over the period 2006-2026. Because the NGP initiative led to a high level of dwelling completions in the early years, the residual requirement (rolled forward by one year) is 6,900 dwellings between 2012 and 2027, an annual average of 460. This would meet the full numeric need arising from the existing population and allow some continued migration into the borough from other parts of the housing market (and wider) area. However, the analysis above indicates that it would only cater for part (approximately 40%) of the level of in-migration included in the objectively assessed housing need.”*

The requirement in Reigate's Plan is only for 460 dpa, (and this is largely derived from the South East Plan as paragraph 31 quoted above indicates), and this reflects an assumption about 60% lower in-migration. Reigate & Banstead is not an authority that is planning to accommodate the Mayor's migration assumptions. Indeed, it is assuming the very opposite. It is assuming that more people will remain in London or move elsewhere in the south east. Mid Sussex may bear the brunt of this.

Reigate & Banstead's SHMA and the DCLG 2011-interim projections had pointed to levels of need almost double the 460 per annum that is being planned for. Since London is not planning to provide for these needs, it is highly likely that Mid Sussex

will be subject to increased levels of demand. Reigate & Banstead was an exporter of population to Reigate & Banstead as table 1 above shows.

## **6. The ability of the market to deliver**

### *6.1 What would be the implications of a higher housing requirement for market deliverability?*

Perceptions about the market to deliver should not influence the OAN. The purpose of the OAN exercise is to establish the 'objective' need irrespective of perceptions about the ability of the market or the public sector to deliver the homes needed. This point is made by the NPPG. The Kirklees Local Plan examination also clarified this principle back in 2013 when Kirklees Council's Plan was rejected for attempting to constrain new supply to the ability of people to obtain mortgages. If one took this approach in Mid Sussex then the Council would only be serving the needs of those who could afford to buy in Mid Sussex – i.e. the wealthy. We do not think that this was the intention behind the foundation of the 1947-based planning system.

The other problem of conflating 'need' with 'delivery' is that this will tend to depress planned supply in the medium to long term. If targets are not met, then this would justify setting lower targets in the future (as the inspector examining Bath and North East Somerset's Local Plan observed in 2013) and we would then enter a downward spiral. Therefore, rather than helping to create the conditions to optimise competition which would hopefully allow for more entrants into the house building industry thereby helping to increase long-term capacity, the Council would be contributing to the creation of a monopoly that would only benefit established builders, quite apart from ignoring the needs of those households who can't afford expensive homes.

It would be legitimate for the Council to consider whether it is necessary to 'backload' its housing trajectory to allow time for certain infrastructure obstacles to be removed that currently prevent sites from coming forward.

## **7. Past under-delivery**

### *7.1 Should the housing requirement be adjusted to compensate for a degree of under-provision against the South East Plan prior to 2014?*

The effect of past undersupply compared to the previous target set by the South East Plan (SEP) is another factor that the Council ought to consider. The effect of this significant under-delivery would be picked up in the Census dated and then reflected in the official projections. The DCLG projections, although vital for providing the demographic starting point, must be considered to provide a very conservative projection of future needs in Mid Sussex.

As we have discussed in our representations of 13 January 2016 in response to the Focused Amendments Consultation, the Council's reluctance to produce a local plan to reflect the SEP figure of 855 dpa has resulted in very low levels of delivery compared with the SEP target – an average of just 457 dpa according to the Council's data (figures in the April 2016 trajectory). This will have contributed to the suppression of household formation and a deterioration in affordability in Mid

Sussex. Unsurprisingly, the district now ranks in the top 30 of the least affordable local authorities in the country on the basis of the lower quartile measure. The NPPG in the section of market signals advises that where the historic rate of development shows that actual supply falls below planned supply, then future supply should be increased to reflect the likelihood of under-delivery of a plan.

We consider that compensation for the past undersupply relative to the SEP should be made through a market signals adjustment of 20%.

## **8. Site selection and housing distribution**

### *8.1 Are the methodologies described in the Strategic Site Selection Paper and the SHLAA sound?*

The HBF raised questions about the capacity of the district by referring to the *Sustainability Appraisal* and the *Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development* reports. We consider that the Council has attributed too much weight to local and secondary designations and has, consequently, ruled out the potential contribution of new settlements and extensions to settlements in the primary protection areas.

We note in Figure 2 of the SHLAA methodology that Sites of Nature Conservation Interest – sites that are wholly designated as Local Nature Reserves - have been excluded from the assessment of potential housing land supply.

We also note in Figure 2 that sites “wholly outside and unrelated to existing settlement built up area boundaries” have been excluded unless they can provide a) 100% affordable housing; or b) where the scale of development proposed would result in a self-sufficient community. The NPPF also allows rural exception sites to include an element of enabling market housing (paragraph 54). The NPPF also allows for the planning of new settlements (paragraph 52). It is unclear how many sites, and their total dwelling capacity, may have been judged to fall within these two exception categories and why they were discounted. Consideration of Figure 4.2 in the *Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development* report indicates a lot of potential development land in the middle of the district (to the west of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill).

### *8.2 Is there any value in the concept of ‘environmental capacity’ and the ‘tipping point’ in the context of the whole district? What would the environmental implications be of raising the housing requirement? How far have the SHLAA and site selection methodologies taken into account the ability of development impacts to be mitigated through local landscape and infrastructure measures?*

The NPPF advises that distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status and gives appropriate weight to their importance and the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks (paragraph 113). Assessing the ‘environmental capacity’ of the district would require the Council to consider the extent to which the district is constrained by international and national designations and development in these locations would need to be limited, unless a

finer grain assessment identified specific small locations which could be safely developed without compromising the wider designated area. The Council could probably accommodate a greater scale of development if it reassessed its locally designated areas, especially if this was combined with agreed mitigation measures.

While we consider that there is legitimacy in the notion of 'environmental capacity' because this approach appears to be supported by the NPPF, we are wary of the term 'tipping point'. This implies that there is an absolute limit to the number of homes that could be eventually be accommodated in Mid Sussex irrespective of the character/nature of the land. This 'limits to growth' notion is not supported by the NPPF. As the NPPF states in paragraph 8, the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development ought not to be undertaken in isolation *"because they are mutually dependent. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards...economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions."*

We consider that the Council must explore the capacity of its secondary constraints. Figure 6.1 of the *Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development* suggests that there is room on the edge of the main settlements outside of the South Downs National Park and the Wealden AONB where it would be possible to allow these settlements to grow.

The protection of the countryside 'for its own sake' (DP10: Protection and enhancement of countryside) is unjustified and contrary to national policy. The protection of best and most versatile agricultural land is not a primary constraint to development. The maintenance of Local Gaps, and the encouragement the local plan gives to identification of more of these gaps (policy DP11: Preventing Coalescence) is unjustified in the circumstances, especially in view of the very considerable housing shortfall in the sub-region.

*8.5 Does the Plan need an expressly stated spatial strategy for the District with target figures for each area to provide guidance for neighbourhood plans and for any future site allocations plan? What are the implications of not having such a strategy?*

The *Focused Amendments to the Pre-Submission Draft Plan* in DP5: Housing seeks to deliver 1,730 homes through Neighbourhood Plans or Site Allocations documents (see pages 16 and 18). We argued in our representations that the likelihood of this was compromised by the wording of Policy DP10: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside, not least because the policy refers to agricultural land as a primary constraint. The ability, therefore, of the other smaller settlements to deliver the residual 1,730 homes appears to be in doubt. We consider that the Local Plan must apportion these numbers and make specific allocations to enable these 1,730 homes to be built. The Plan cannot rely on the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans or a Site Allocations document to provide these homes. There can be no guarantee that the plans will be produced in time, or at all, to provide the homes required. Given the Council's very poor track record to date in housing delivery (and having an up to date local plan to facilitate this), the Council is unjustified in delegating this responsibility to second tier plans.

## 9. Trajectories

9.1 *What are the housing delivery trajectories overall and a reasonable estimate from the neighbourhood plans?*

We note in appendix 3 of the SHLAA April 2016 that the residual NP and/or Site Allocations Plan will be responsible for providing 194 dpa from 2021 to 2025 and 210 dpa for the last five years of the Plan. This would require NPs and the Site Allocation Plan to be prepared, examined and adopted, and this assumes that sufficient housing numbers will be apportioned and land allocated to ensure that this will happen. The second step would require planning permissions for all the allocations to be secured, conditions discharged and then the sites built out. All this by 2031. This is a tall order. The Council's track record is a poor one and so its approach is unjustified. The Council will need to: a) apportion a number of homes to each settlement; and b) make specific allocations through this Local Plan.

9.2 *What are the reasons for the proposed timing of the site allocations plan?*

There is no justification for a Site Allocations Plan. The Council has forfeited this right owing to its poor track record of delivery and its failure to produce a new local plan since 2004. It is necessary to apportion the housing numbers and allocate sites in this Local Plan.

## 10. Five year housing land supply

10.1 *Given the advice in the PPG, what reason does the Council have for favouring the Liverpool method?*

The Council's poor track record of delivery with a very large undersupply against the SEP target, means that there is no justification for the Council not addressing the shortfall accrued since 2014 as quickly as possible.

10.3. *What is the level of under-provision from the start date of 2014?*

On the basis of the housing requirement figure of 800 dpa the undersupply accumulated since the start of the plan in 2014/15 would be 102 dwellings according to the housing trajectory in appendix 3 of the SHLAA April 2016.

10.4 *With regard to the 'buffer' what is the District's record of housing provision over the economic cycle?*

The Council has provided an average 457 dpa since 2006 based on the figures in the SHLAA April 2016 trajectory. This is considerably below the SEP target of 855 dpa. It is essential therefore that a 20% buffer is applied to ensure that the planned supply in the new Plan of 800 dpa is delivered in full by 2031.

10.5 *Having regard to the above, what is the five year housing supply using the Sedgefield methodology?*

Annual requirement = 800

Multiplied by 5	= 4,000
Shortfall since 2014/15	= 102
Total	= 4,102
Plus 20% buffer	= 820
Five year land supply	= 4,922

*10.6 Will the plan's strategic allocations and policies, together with allocations from neighbourhood plans and any future site allocations plan, ensure that sufficient sites are available for a 5 year supply of deliverable land to be maintained into the future? What adjustments might be made to the plan to ensure a reliable supply?*

See our response to questions 8.5, 9.1 and 9.2 above.

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