

Consultation Draft District Plan – Regulation 19

Frequently Asked Questions

January 2024 (updated 12.01.24)

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Plan making / Planning System

What is a District Plan?

The District Plan is a statutory planning document which sets out a vision for the district for at least 15 years. It includes the strategy, proposed level of development and a number of planning policies. The District Plan is the main planning document used by the Council when considering planning applications.

The Council has prepared a short video that explains what the District Plan is and why it is needed to help safeguard future developments. The plan-making process can be challenging and difficult to grasp, and the video breaks down the details to explain the process in creating the plan and how it will benefit the future development of the District.

It highlights key issues such as the housing shortage, affordability challenges, population growth, and the need for essential amenities.

The video can be viewed at www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan

Does the Council have a District Plan already?

Yes. The current District Plan (2014 – 2031) was adopted in March 2018.

Why is the District Plan being updated now?

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (Legislation) require local planning authorities to review Local Plans (such as the District Plan) every five years to ensure policies remain relevant and effectively address the needs of the local community. Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of the Plan, which in our case would be March 2023. It is therefore important to progress with the review of the plan and adopt as soon as possible in order to provide maximum protection to the district.

The adopted District Plan includes a commitment (in Policy DP4: Housing) to commence a review of the Plan in 2021. The review commenced in 2021 as planned.

Why is it important to have an up-to-date District Plan?

The planning system should be plan-led – this is set out in National Planning Policy. An up-to-date District Plan should be in place to provide a vision for the future and address housing needs and other economic, social and environmental policies. An up-to-date plan is crucial in enabling the Council to:

- secure a minimum 5-year supply. Without which, housing policies are deemed 'out of date' and the presumption in favour of sustainable development would apply resulting in speculative unwanted development.
- maintain control of how to address housing need,
- control the location of the proposed sites for development including securing infrastructure to provide certainty to statutory providers so they know where, when and how much development is likely to be delivered,

- place full weight on its policies when determining planning applications,
- impose policy requirements on sites to secure the delivery of site-specific mitigation, infrastructure and facilities required to support housing development

Why is MSDC preparing a Plan when the Government has indicated that it wants to change the Planning System? Why doesn't MSDC wait?

The direction from Government not to delay plan-making is clear.

The Government introduced a Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to Parliament in May 2022. This received Royal Assent on 26th October 2023 thus becoming the "Levelling Up and Regeneration Act" (LURA).

The Act proposes changes to the planning system including a new system for plan making. However, this will require secondary legislation, change to national policy and new guidance. It is not expected that these will be in place until the end of 2024.

For Local Plans currently in progress such as this plan, transitional arrangements are in place. Plans due for submission to the Secretary of State before 30th June 2025 must be prepared and examined under the 'current' system rather than the proposed 'new' system. As the District Plan is scheduled for submission in 2024, it must be prepared against the current system.

The Government has urged local authorities to continue plan-making, and currently Local Planning Authorities must continue to comply with current legislation, which requires Local Plans to be updated where required every 5 years. The same sanctions for not complying, including the consequences of not meeting housing need or maintaining a 5-year housing land supply are still in force. Given this and the need for secondary legislation and changes to national policy and guidance before the new planning arrangements are in place it is crucial that the Council continues to submit the District Plan for examination and does not wait for a new system to be implemented.

How does this Plan relate to the current District Plan and the Site Allocations DPD?

When adopted (anticipated in 2024), the revised District Plan will supersede the current adopted District Plan, apart from 'saved policies' which are set out in Section 18 of the Plan.

In terms of the provision of housing, all current planning permissions and allocations will be 'saved' and contribute to meeting the housing requirement in the revised District Plan. Any new allocations in the revised District Plan will 'top up' the housing supply to meet the new housing requirement (see Housing Need and Requirement below).

Housing allocations from the current District Plan, Site Allocations DPD, Small Scale Housing Site Allocation DPD and Neighbourhood Plans that have not yet being built will be 'saved' and will continue to contribute to meeting the housing requirement.

What is the Plan Period of the new Plan?

The revised District Plan will cover the period from 2021 – 2039. This will ensure that the Plan lasts for at least 15 years from the date of adoption as required by National Planning Policy.

What stage of the Plan preparation process is this?

The District Plan is now at Regulation 19 stage. This is the second formal stage of the process (following Regulation 18 which was held in November/December 2022). This is the version of the Plan that the Council intends to submit to the Secretary of State for examination by an independent Planning Inspector.

Ahead of submission, the draft submission District Plan is subject to consultation.



How have comments received during the previous consultation (Regulation 18) been addressed?

Consultation on the Regulation 18 plan took place in November/December 2022. A total of 2,881 comments were received from 1,365 respondents. This includes responses from Town and Parish Councils, neighbouring authorities, infrastructure providers, individuals, developers, site promoters and organisations/action groups. All consultation responses received were published in full on the Council's website at www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-review.

All of the comments have been carefully considered and many have led to proposed changes which are included in the submission draft District Plan.

The Council's Scrutiny Committee for Place and Environment considered the comments received and proposed actions at its [meeting on 22nd November 2023](#) including a 'track change' version that documents all the changes made since Regulation 18.

The Council has produced a Consultation Statement which sets out further detail on the responses received and how the Council has taken these into account when preparing the Regulation 19 version of the Plan. This is available on the Council's website at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-review/>

Has the Regulation 19 plan been discussed and agreed by Councillors?

Yes. The Regulation 19 Plan has been informed by a cross-party Members Working Group which met during Summer 2023. Members of the Working Group were drawn from the Council's Scrutiny Committee for Place and Environment. This committee met on [22nd November 2023](#) to consider the Regulation 19 Plan.

The Regulation 19 plan and accompanying documents were considered by Council at its [meeting on 13th November 2023](#). Council agreed to publish the plan for Regulation 19 consultation, following which the Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.

How can I get involved?

When will this consultation run from and to?

This stage of the District Plan review requires a period of consultation. This will run from 12th January 2024 until 23:59 on the 23rd February 2024.

Why is the consultation running for 6-weeks and not longer?

The legal requirement is for consultations to run for at least six weeks, and this is a standard length of time for consultations the Council has held in the past.

Can anybody submit comments to the consultation?

Yes, all members of the community and stakeholders are encouraged to respond. The consultation will be widely advertised via the following methods:

- Press Release
- Social Media activity
- Documentation available on the Council website, including an on-line response form and interactive map
- Letters or emails to specific consultation bodies and to others listed in the Community involvement plan
- Emails to those subscribed to the planning policy email alert service
- Emails and letters to those who responded at Regulation 18 stage.

A [Community Involvement Plan](#) has been published which sets out full details of the consultation.

What is the scope of the response I can submit?

At this stage of the plan making process, the Council will have published a version of the Plan that it believes meets legal and soundness requirements and is capable of Submission to the Secretary of State for examination. It is a requirement by the Planning Inspectorate that responses are focussed only on legal and soundness matters. A response form and guidance note, available on the Council's website at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-review/> provides more information.

What are the "Tests of Soundness"?

The Tests of Soundness are the tests that the independent Planning Inspector will use to examine the plan. These are set out in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) at paragraph 35.

The four Tests of Soundness are:

- a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs¹⁹; and is informed by agreements with other

authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;

- b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

How can I submit my comments?

Comments can be submitted via the following methods:

- Online via: <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-review/>
 - For online representations, the Council is using consultation software called Inovem; this is our preferred method for comments to be submitted. To submit comments, you will need to register. This method will also allow you to save and return to comments at your convenience before submitting and to sign up for future alerts and updates.
- By e-mail to: policyconsultation@midsussex.gov.uk
- By post to: Planning Policy, Mid Sussex District Council, Oaklands, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1SS

Note that, if responding by email or post, the following response form must be used (as required by the Planning Inspectorate): <https://midsussex.inconsult.uk/gf2.ti/-/1531298/192540101.1/DOCX/-/Reg%2019%20Representation%20Form.docx>

What is the deadline for submitting comments?

The deadline for submitting comments is 23:59 Friday 23rd February 2024.

Will late comments be accepted?

Late comments will only be accepted if agreed ahead with the Council and at the Council's discretion.

Can I attend the examination hearing sessions?

Once submitted, the Inspector will examine the Plan and its evidence. As part of this process, the Inspector will hold examination hearings. These are open to the public to attend. It may also be possible to participate in the examination hearings – however you will need to have made a response to the consultation and indicated that you wish to participate. The decision regarding participation is for the Inspector. More details on the examination will be available on the Council's website following submission (anticipated Spring 2024)

What are the next steps involved in the review?

The next steps are as follows:

- Following close of the consultation, the Council will collate the responses and prepare a summary report for the Inspector. Note that all responses are provided to the Inspector in full.
- Submit to Planning Inspectorate for examination in Spring 2024.

- Examination – anticipated Summer 2024.
- Subject to the Planning Inspector's Examination and the Council's approval – Adoption end 2024

Plan Strategy

Has the strategy changed since the adopted District Plan? Why?

The adopted Plan focused development at the towns with proportionate growth at smaller settlements. Following a review of the sites promoted to the Council, it was deemed that this strategy cannot continue because :

- Towns will not be able to deliver sufficient development
- AONB settlements now have very limited potential for growth following government guidance
- Some smaller settlements do have potential for growth

What is the revised strategy? How will it be enforced?

There are four strands to the revised strategy:

- Protections of designated landscapes (e.g. AONB)
- Making effective use of land (e.g. development on previously developed sites)
- Growth at existing sustainable settlements where it continues to be sustainable to do so
- Opportunities for extensions, to improve sustainability of existing settlements

Further detail on the Plan Strategy is set out in Sections 5 and 6 of the revised District Plan.

The strategy plays a key role in determining the most suitable and sustainable sites for allocation. The strategy will guide future growth proposed within the District Plan. Sites that do not comply with the strategy will not be progressed for allocation.

What is the 20-minute Neighbourhood principle?

The Town and County Planning Association (TCPA) has produced a 'Guide to 20-minute Neighbourhoods' (March 2021) which provides guidance and information on the features which make up a 20-minute neighbourhood and how to successfully implement in existing places and when planning new large-scale developments.



The concept is not new and has been implemented in diverse places across the world and provides the framework to support a holistic and transformational approach to place-making, with significant potential to improve people’s health and wellbeing. Research has shown that 20 minutes is the maximum time that people are willing to walk to meet their daily needs.

The 20-minute neighbourhood is about creating attractive, interesting, safe, inclusive, walkable environments in which people of all ages and levels of fitness are happy to travel actively for short distances from home to services and destinations they need to support their day to day lives; these include shopping, school, green spaces and more. One of the core principles is to ensure places are accessible by everyone on foot, wheeling, by cycle, by public transport and without having to use a car.

Policies

Why have some policies in the adopted District Plan been revised?

In undertaking the review of the adopted District Plan policies, some policies needed to be updated to ensure they reflect changes in national policy or updated evidence. However, not all policies need updating and remain up to date. Chapter 7 of the revised District Plan outlines the review process and status of the policies.

How did the Council decide which policies should be revised?

The Council undertook a scoping exercise that determined which, if any, policies needed to be updated.

National policy and guidance set out the considerations and process of reviewing Local Plans. These considerations include:

- Changing circumstances affecting the area, such as changes in housing, employment or other needs;
- Relevant changes in national policy;
- Whether the authority has a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites;

- Success of policies against indicators as set out in the Authority Monitoring Report;
- Plan-making by other authorities, such as whether they can meet their housing need;
- Any new social, environmental and economic priorities that may have arisen.

Each policy in the adopted District Plan was considered in turn and given a judgement of no update, minor update or major update required.

Typically, if national policy had introduced new requirements/ standards and/ or updated evidence around levels of need was required (e.g. housing, retail etc) then a major update was required. Minor updates were required to provide clarity to policies. The conclusions of the scoping exercise can be viewed on the Council's [District Plan Review](#) webpage and in Appendix 1 of the revised District Plan.

The consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on the review status of each policy who may suggest (with evidence) that policies concluded as requiring 'no update' should be updated.

What weight will the draft policies have?

National Planning Policy sets out how much weight emerging policies have in decision making. As this version of the District Plan has not yet been examined by an independent Inspector and there are likely to be unresolved objections, they have only minimal weight. The policies will gain more weight once the Inspector has provided their report, and will gain full weight once adopted by the Council.

Housing Need and Requirement

How does the Council determine how many additional homes are required? Will more housing be required?

Housing need is determined by the Standard Methodology for Housing Need formula, which is Government policy. This identifies an annual housing need of 1,090 dwellings for Mid Sussex.

As the plan covers the period 2021-2039 (18 years), this equates to a total housing need of 19,620 dwellings.

The District Council has already planned for 12,161 of these. This includes allocations in the current District Plan, Site Allocations DPD, Neighbourhood Plans and planning permissions as well as homes completed in years 2021/22 and 2022/23.

Therefore, to meet Mid Sussex housing need, a minimum 7,459 additional dwellings need to be allocated in the revised District Plan.

How does this relate to the current housing requirement in the District Plan?

The adopted District Plan has a housing requirement of 876 dwellings per annum until 2023/24 and then 1,090 from 2024/25 to 2030/31. The housing requirement for Mid Sussex set by the Standard Method has therefore increased since the District Plan was adopted.

The Government has indicated that it may review the Standard Methodology – shouldn't the Council wait until this has been reviewed?

There is no confirmation on proposed changes to the Standard Methodology or any timeframe for implementing an alternative approach. The revised District Plan will therefore be examined against current national policy. The Council has considered the recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and conclude that the changes are not likely to impact the Standard Method figure.

The Government is clear that plan-making should continue and not be delayed due to any forthcoming changes to the planning system.

How does this plan relate to the recently adopted Site Allocations DPD? I thought the Site Allocations DPD was allocating sites to meet need?

The Site Allocations DPD allocates sufficient sites to meet the housing requirement in the adopted District Plan (up to 2031). Effectively it is topping up the number of sites already allocated in the adopted District Plan.

All sites within the Site Allocations DPD count towards meeting the overall requirement. However it must be noted that the new plan period is for the period to 2039, therefore 8 years beyond the current District Plan and Sites DPD plan periods, so the additional housing need within these additional years needs to be met.

Does MSDC have to take into account the unmet housing need from Crawley and the coastal authorities, particularly Brighton?

Yes, legislation requires us to work with neighbouring authorities so that unmet need is accommodated, where it is practical and consistent with sustainable development. Decisions regarding the extent that Mid Sussex can contribute towards meeting unmet need from our neighbouring councils will be evidence based. A Duty to Co-Operate Statement has been prepared and is available on the Council's website.

What is meant by the "five-year supply"?

The five-year supply refers to the need to demonstrate a specific minimum amount of housing that will be delivered within the next five years. The amount of housing is calculated against the adopted housing requirement figure, or the identified housing need figure when a District Plan is out of date (i.e. more than five years old). The requirement to have a five-year supply of housing is set out in national planning policy.

If the Council cannot demonstrate it has a five-year housing land supply, the presumption in favour of development applies resulting in speculative, unplanned development.

At present the Council can demonstrate a five-year housing land supply however given the increase in housing need it is vital to keep this 'topped up' to reduce the risk of speculative development occurring.

Revisions to National Planning Policy in December 2023 confirm that, provided the District Plan has a 5-year supply at the point it is adopted, this will be 'fixed' for 5 years.

Does the Council have to allocate sites for the full plan period?

National Policy requires Local Plans to identify a supply of specific deliverable sites for years 1-5 of the plan; specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth for years 6-10 and, where possible, 11-15 of the plan.

Given the extent of sites promoted to this Council and the outcome of the assessment of their suitability, availability and deliverability in accordance with the site selection methodology, and with the inclusion of a windfall allowance, the Council is able to allocate sufficient developable sites for the full plan period. This allows the Council to provide certainty to the local community on future growth locations, but also to infrastructure providers who need to plan for growth.

What are the benefits to allocating sites compared to speculative development?

Allocating sites enables the Council and stakeholders to properly plan for growth over the plan period which will run until 2039. This means we can identify and secure the infrastructure necessary to support the development and the accompanying demands on local services and facilities. Allocating housing enables the Council to outline specific needs from the outset so that developers properly design any requirements into the development creating a higher quality scheme.

In addition, allocations can provide some understanding and certainty to local communities on the level and type of change that is to occur, as well as offering the opportunity to input into the allocation through the early plan-making process.

Housing Site Selection/ Housing Strategy

How will you find the extra 7,459 homes required?

The Council has published a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) – this is available to view at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/strategic-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment> This documents the sites that have been promoted to the Council for consideration.

These sites are then assessed against a Site Selection Methodology to determine the most suitable sites for allocation. This is available to view in the online evidence library <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-2021-2039-evidence-base/>

Site Selection is an evidence-based process that helps the Council determine the extent to which it can meet its housing need, or the extent it can contribute to unmet needs from our neighbours.

The revised District Plan includes an allowance for housing that will come forward on previously developed sites, within existing towns and villages.

How many sites were promoted for housing allocation to MSDC?

A total of 270 sites, totalling over 30,000 dwellings, were submitted to the Council for consideration.

How were the proposed allocations selected? What criteria were used?

A Site Selection Methodology has been prepared and used to assess each site. There are 14 criteria, covering Environmental constraints, Developability considerations and Accessibility Factors.

The Site Selection Conclusions paper documents each of the site's performance against the criteria. It draws conclusions on the most suitable sites for allocation, and reasons for rejecting sites.

The Site Selection papers published on the Council web site

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-2021-2039-evidence-base/>

It appears as if there is an unfair distribution of houses to certain settlements, how was this determined?

The selection of sites is based on the availability of sites and how sites perform against the 14 site assessment criteria.

It is important to remember that this version of the District Plan is 'topping up' housing supply, so previous allocations (known as commitments) must be also considered. Chapter 6 and tables 2a and 2b in the revised District Plan show the distribution of sites, noting that it is the towns and larger villages that represent the most sustainable location for growth due to their facilities and services.

Why can't Mid Sussex locate all development on brownfield sites?

Mid Sussex is made up of three towns and a number of smaller villages. It does not have large areas of former industrial land or large areas of old housing estates that are viable for regeneration. It does not have a pool of brownfield land that can be re-developed for housing.

The revised District Plan includes an allowance for housing that will come forward on previously developed sites. An Urban Capacity Study has reviewed the development potential of our urban areas to fully explore opportunities for development. This work has informed the allowance included in the Plan. This is available to view in the online evidence library <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-2021-2039-evidence-base/>

The viability of development on brownfield sites is also an important consideration. The cost of developing brownfield sites is higher than on greenfield sites. Very often development on brownfield sites is not viable if they are also providing full contributions towards infrastructure and affordable housing. In many cases it is the on-site affordable housing that is not viable on brownfield sites.

Environmental Issues

How is this Plan sustainable?

The policies in the Plan have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal, which is a document that the Council is legally obliged to produce. It has been considered by Council and is one of the consultation documents.

The Sustainability Appraisal sets out environmental, economic and social objectives and considers how the policies of the Plan perform against these. This ensures that the Plan overall contributes towards sustainable development.

The revised District Plan also sets out a number of policies that support sustainable development. These are set out in the Sustainability section. In addition, the overall strategy is based on the principle of sustainable development (including the 20-minute neighbourhood principle) and housing site policies include requirements related to this.

What level of protection is there for the AONB and other protected landscapes?

National planning policy and guidance is clear that AONBs and National Parks have the highest status of protection. As such, the revised District Plan places great importance on protecting the High Weald AONB such as through Policy DPC4. This approach is also in line with national policy which makes clear that the scale and extent of development in protected landscapes should be limited.

What are the proposals for Biodiversity Net Gain?

The requirement for mandatory biodiversity net gain was introduced by the Environment Act 2021 and is scheduled to come into force in January 2024. The revised District Plan includes a policy on biodiversity net gain which sets out how developments should meet the requirements as they are currently known.

Biodiversity net gain seeks to deliver measurable improvements for biodiversity by creating or enhancing habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be delivered on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures, however, the implementation of biodiversity net gain should align with the local objectives and priorities for biodiversity improvements and nature recovery.

Infrastructure

There is insufficient infrastructure to be able to support this level of housing growth. Where will people go to school? Where are the GPs surgeries?

The Council is engaging with key infrastructure providers to understand what and where services and facilities will be needed to support the level of growth identified in the revised District Plan. Where there is insufficient capacity to support the identified growth, sites will need to contribute to new provision. This new provision will be delivered either onsite, as

part of the site's development, or offsite, potentially as improvements to an existing facility. The Council collects contributions towards infrastructure from developers.

The outcomes of discussions between the Council, infrastructure providers and site promoters to date are reflected in the draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and infrastructure requirements set out in each of the housing site allocations in the revised District Plan. The IDP is available on the Council's website at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-2021-2039-evidence-base/>

The road network will not cope. How can you guarantee that any new development will come with the necessary highway improvements?

Congestion on the local transport network is a significant local issue and increases in the number of homes and jobs could make it worse.

The Council is undertaking detailed transport modelling to understand the impacts that the housing and employment growth will have on our roads. When the potential impacts have been identified, assessment of the necessary improvements to roads and transport will be carried out to ensure the current situation is not made worse.

As well as providing road upgrades, if needed, the revised District Plan expects that new development is designed to minimise the need to travel and to promote non-car methods of transport in the first instance, including improving and creating walking and cycling routes.

The Mid Sussex Transport Study is available to view on the Council's website at <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/mid-sussex-district-plan/district-plan-2021-2039-evidence-base/>

How can the Council ensure development is supported by infrastructure? Who pays?

The Council works closely with infrastructure providers such as the County Council, water and utility companies to ensure that they are kept informed of future development. This enables them to account for additional growth in Mid Sussex when formulating their own investment plans and programmes.

Developers make financial contributions to infrastructure costs in accordance with the tariffs set in the Development and Infrastructure SPD and those set by WSCC.

How does the Council know what infrastructure is required to support development?

The Council is engaging with key infrastructure providers to understand what and where services and facilities will be needed to support the level of growth identified in the revised District Plan. This information feeds into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which is available to view on the Council's [District Plan 2021 – 2039 Evidence Base](#) webpage.

The IDP identifies what and where infrastructure is needed, as well as timescales for delivery and how it will be funded. The IDP is currently in draft format. As the revised District Plan progresses and there is greater certainty on the housing sites, including yield and when it will come forward, the infrastructure providers will provide more detailed requirements.

The outcomes of discussions between the Council, infrastructure providers and site proponents to date are reflected in the draft IDP and infrastructure requirements set out in each of the housing site allocations within the revised District Plan.

Can Town and Parish Councils, and other stakeholders, input into the Infrastructure Delivery Plan?

The Council has carried out considerable engagement with the Town and Parish Councils since Regulation 18. This includes a series of engagement sessions to discuss local infrastructure, with an opportunity to inform the IDP.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is available to view on the Council's website and comments on it can be submitted as part of the Regulation 19 consultation. The IDP is considered a 'living document' and will be updated as the revised District Plan progresses. The Council will continue to have discussions with key stakeholders to ensure the IDP is up to date and will remain a 'live' document to reflect future needs.

Neighbourhood Plans

What does this mean for our Neighbourhood Plans? Do we have to review them?

Unlike local plans, there is no requirement to review or update a neighbourhood plan.

A neighbourhood plan must set out the period for which it is to have effect. Neighbourhood plan policies remain in force until the plan policy is replaced.

However, policies in a neighbourhood plan may become out of date, for example if they conflict with policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area that is adopted after the making of the neighbourhood plan,

Will the District Plan Review be in conformity with our neighbourhood plan?

There is no requirement for the District Plan Review to be in conformity with neighbourhood Plans. The District Plan is required to meet housing, employment and other social needs in full and it is not possible to do this without allocating land for development in areas with adopted Neighbourhood Plans.

Will the District Plan Review supersede the policies within our neighbourhood plan?

If there is a policy conflict between the District Plan and a Neighbourhood Plan it is the most recently adopted Plan i.e. the revised District Plan that will take precedence. The NPPF provides clear guidance on this.

Evidence Base

Where can I view the evidence base that supports the draft Plan?

The studies which form the Evidence Base can be found on the Council's [District Plan 2021 – 2039 Evidence Base](#) webpage.

Why is there less information than I normally see for a planning application e.g. detailed transport/ecology/heritage assessments for sites?

In accordance with National Policy, the evidence required to support a site allocation is less than that required to support a planning application. This is because an allocation simply determines that the principle of development is accepted and sets out a policy framework for any future application to be determined against. Applicants will need to provide detailed technical information at planning application stage.

However, a number of site promoters have presented some of this information up-front to support an allocation – even though this is not a requirement. The number and detail of studies undertaken to date is likely to vary depending on the size of the site and how far advanced it is in its promotion. The larger the site the greater complexity and potential impact it may have; it is therefore necessary to understand these potential impacts as early as possible. If the Council has any concerns regarding the deliverability of a site, the site proponent will be expected to undertake the necessary work to address these concerns.

Where supporting technical studies have been submitted these are available to view on the Council's [District Plan 2021 – 2039 Evidence Base](#) webpage. Note that in publishing these, the Council does not necessarily agree with all the findings.

Will the evidence base be updated? Can I suggest/submit additional studies for the Council to consider?

Elements of the evidence base (e.g. transport, infrastructure delivery plan) may be updated as further supporting work is undertaken by site proponents, the Council and key stakeholders. Some evidence may need to be updated or carried out in response to the comments received from the consultation. Participants to the consultation are welcome to suggest/ submit additional studies in their comments.