

# **Mid Sussex District Council**

## **Site Allocations Development Plan Document Major Development in the High Weald AONB Topic Paper**

**December 2020**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the national planning policy on major development in designated landscape areas has been fully considered in the preparation of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 1.2 This paper sets out an approach to assessing if the proposed site allocations included in the Site Allocations DPD and within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) could be regarded as major development. It then also indicates the next steps if the proposed site allocation is determined to be major development. Each proposed site allocation is assessed as a matter of planning judgement taking into account the factors set out and described in national policy.

### Site Allocations DPD

- 1.3 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031, adopted in March 2018, provides a policy framework for the delivery of sustainable development across the district. It sets out the housing requirement for the district up to 2031 and will be complemented by the Site Allocations DPD. The principle of development in the High Weald AONB is set out in Policy DP4: Housing through the spatial distribution of the housing requirement. Policy DP6: Settlement Hierarchy also takes into account local development needs and any significant local constraints to development.
- 1.4 The Inspector's Report (paragraph 53) of the District Plan acknowledges that some settlements in Mid Sussex District 'lie within the AONB and may be appropriate for modest housing schemes'. The Inspector's Report goes on to add that 'there is no evidence that meeting the housing requirement will necessitate major development in the AONB other than that already permitted by the District Council at Pease Pottage' (600 dwellings as allocated through Policy DP10: Strategic allocation to the east of Pease Pottage, now under construction).
- 1.5 The purpose of the Site Allocations DPD includes the allocation of additional development sites to meet the residual necessary to meet the agreed housing and employment requirements for the plan period as reflected in the District Plan 2014-2031. These additional allocations are in accordance with the spatial strategy and strategic policies set out in the District Plan (Figure 1). Further detail on the site selection process is set out in Site Selection Paper 2: Methodology for Site Selection (December 2018), Site Selection Paper 3: Housing Sites (October 2019 and updated February 2020) and Site Selection Paper 4: Employment Sites (September 2019 and updated February 2020).
- 1.6 As part of the site selection process, the impact on the High Weald AONB has been taken into account. Sites within the High Weald AONB were assessed as having high, moderate or low impact based on the advice provided by the High Weald AONB Unit<sup>1</sup>. Those sites assessed as having a high impact on the High Weald AONB were not considered further in the site selection process. Therefore, the High Weald AONB has already been considered in the site selection process and sites with the highest impact filtered out from further consideration (Appendix B). Furthermore, to inform

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<sup>1</sup> It is the AONB as a whole that must satisfy the technical criteria of natural beauty. The weight and importance of factors indicating natural beauty may vary across the designation. The presence of incongruous features or degraded landscapes does not, in itself, detract from the value of the area as an AONB. The emphasis in these cases is on the second part of the designation purpose, that of enhancement of natural beauty (High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024).

this process, the High Weald AONB Unit provided advice on the potential site allocations.

Settlement Type	Settlement	Site Name	Policy Reference	Allocation
Category 3 – Medium Sized Settlement	Pease Pottage	Cedars, Brighton Road	SA7	Employment – B1/ B2/ B8
		Pease Pottage Nurseries, Brighton Road	SA8	Employment – B1/ B2/ B8
	Ardingly	Land west of Selsfield Road	SA25	70 dwellings
	Ashurst Wood	Land south of Hammerwood Road	SA26	12 dwellings
	Handcross	Land at St. Martin Close (West)	SA27	35 (65) dwellings <sup>2</sup>
	Horsted Keynes	Land south of The Old Police House	SA28	25 dwellings
		Land south of St. Stephen's Church	SA29	30 dwellings
	Turners Hill	Withypitts Farm, Selsfield Road	SA32	16 dwellings

Figure 1 - Site Allocations DPD proposed site allocations

## High Weald AONB

- 1.7 An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is an area of land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 for its outstanding natural beauty. The purpose of the landscape designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. There are 34 AONBs in England covering 15% of the land.
- 1.8 The High Weald AONB was designated in 1983. It has an area of 1,461 sq km and covers four counties and 11 districts. Nearly 50% of Mid Sussex District is within the High Weald AONB; there are 163.6 sq km of AONB land within Mid Sussex District which is approximately 11% of the High Weald AONB.
- 1.9 The High Weald AONB is a historic landscape characterised by a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone, with numerous gill streams and woodlands. Small irregularly-shaped and productive fields typically used for livestock grazing are often bounded by hedgerows and woodland. Dispersed historic

<sup>2</sup> The Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan is now made and Land at St. Martin Close (East) for 30 units is now a commitment as at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. Therefore, only 35 units are counted as the allocation in Policy SA11: Additional Housing Allocations to avoid double-counting.

settlements of farmsteads and late Mediaeval villages are characteristics as are historic routeways.

- 1.10 The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 is the strategy for looking after the High Weald AONB in order to achieve the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the High Weald AONB. The Management Plan can be used to guide environmental land management and assess the impact of development or other changes on the High Weald AONB<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.11 The High Weald AONB Statement of Significance sets out what comprises the natural beauty of the High Weald (Figure 2):

**The High Weald AONB Statement of Significance**

The natural beauty of the High Weald comprises:

- **Five defining components of character** that have made the High Weald a recognisably distinct and homogenous area for at least the last 700 years.
  1. **Geology, landform and water systems** – a deeply incised, ridged and faulted landform of clays and sandstone with numerous gill streams.
  2. **Settlement** – dispersed historic settlement including high densities of isolated farmsteads and late Mediaeval villages founded on trade and non-agricultural rural industries.
  3. **Routeways** – a dense network of historic routeways (now roads, tracks and paths).
  4. **Woodland** – abundance of ancient woodland, highly interconnected and in smallholdings.
  5. **Field and Heath** – small, irregular and productive fields, bounded by hedgerows and woods, and typically used for livestock grazing; with distinctive zones of lowland heath, and inned river valleys.
- **Land-based economy and related rural life** bound up with, and underpinning, the observable character of the landscape with roots extending deep into history. An increasingly broad-based economy but with a significant land-based sector and related community life focused on mixed farming (particularly family farms and smallholdings), woodland management and rural crafts.
- **Other qualities** and features that are connected to the interaction between the landscape and people and which enrich character components. Such qualities and features enhance health and wellbeing, and foster enjoyment and appreciation of the beauty of nature. These include locally distinctive features which enrich the character components such as historic parks and gardens, orchards, hop gardens, veteran trees, along with their rich and varied biodiversity, and a wide range of appealing and locally distinctive historic buildings including oast houses, farm buildings, Wealden hall houses and their associated features such as clay-tile catslide roofs. People value the wonderful views and scenic beauty of the High Weald with its relative tranquillity. They appreciate the area's ancientness and sense of history, its intrinsically dark landscape with the opportunity to see our own galaxy – the Milky Way – and the ability to get close to nature through the myriad public rights of way.

Figure 2 - The High Weald AONB Statement of Significance

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.highweald.org/high-weald-aonb-management-plan.html>

## Legislation and policy context

- 1.12 The legal framework for AONBs is set out in the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Section 82 provides for the purposes of AONBs:

82(1) Where it appears to Natural England that an area which is in England but not in a National Park is of such outstanding natural beauty that it is desirable that the provisions of this Part relating to areas designated under this section should apply to it, Natural England may, for the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area, by order designate the area for the purposes of this Part as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

- 1.13 Section 85 places a statutory duty on all relevant authorities, which includes Mid Sussex District Council:

85(1) In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

- 1.14 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; February 2019) provides the Government's policy for conserving and enhancing landscape beauty:

172. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads<sup>54</sup>. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development<sup>55</sup> other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
- b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
- c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

<sup>55</sup> For the purpose of paragraphs 172 and 173, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

- 1.15 There is further advice contained in Planning Practice Guidance:

Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 8-036-20190721

### **How can planning policies conserve and enhance landscapes?**

The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.

Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.

Paragraph 040: Reference ID: 8-040-20190721

### **Do planning policies and decisions need to take account of management plans for National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty?**

Management plans for National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty do not form part of the statutory development plan, but they help to set out the strategic context for development. They provide evidence of the value and special qualities of these areas, provide a basis for cross-organisational work to support the purposes of their designation and show how management activities contribute to their protection, enhancement and enjoyment. They may contain information which is relevant when preparing plan policies, or which is a material consideration when assessing planning applications.

Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 9-041-20190721

### **How should development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty be approached?**

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that the scale and extent of development in these areas should be limited, in view of the importance of conserving and enhancing their landscapes and scenic beauty. Its policies for protecting these areas may mean that it is not possible to meet objectively assessed needs for development in full through the plan-making process, and they are unlikely to be suitable areas for accommodating unmet needs from adjoining (non-designated) areas. Effective joint working between planning authorities covering designated and adjoining areas, through the preparation and maintenance of statements of common ground, is particularly important in helping to identify how housing and other needs can best be accommodated.

All development in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Beauty will need to be located and designed in a way that reflects their status as landscapes of the highest quality. Where applications for major development come forward, paragraph 172 of the Framework sets out a number of particular considerations that should apply when deciding whether permission should be granted.

- 1.16 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 has a policy on the High Weald AONB (Figure 3):

**Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination.*

*Evidence Base: The High Weald AONB Management Plan.*

**Development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), as shown on the Policies Maps, will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan, in particular;**

- **the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;**
- **the traditional interaction of people with nature, and appropriate land management;**
- **character and local distinctiveness, settlement pattern, sense of place and setting of the AONB; and**
- **the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.**

**Small scale proposals which support the economy and social well-being of the AONB that are compatible with the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty will be supported.**

**Development on land that contributes to the setting of the AONB will only be permitted where it does not detract from the visual qualities and essential characteristics of the AONB, and in particular should not adversely affect the views into and out of the AONB by virtue of its location or design.**

Figure 3 - District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

- 1.17 Two neighbourhood plans in Mid Sussex District also include a policy for the High Weald AONB: Ansty, Staplefield & Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, and Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.18 To summarise, the national and local policy position is that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs, and that particular consideration needs to be given to development proposals that could be regarded as major development. This needs to be balanced, however, with the need to meet the adopted housing and employment requirements that are set out in Policy DP4 and DP6 in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031.



## 2.0 Definition of Major Development

- 2.1 The NPPF does not provide a definition for major development in AONBs, however, there are a number of sources that can be drawn upon to provide some guidelines for determining whether a proposed development is major development.
- 2.2 Footnote 55 of the NPPF is clear that major development is a matter for the decision maker and that the nature, scale and setting of the proposed development is taken into account, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.
- 2.3 The South Downs National Park Authority has sought legal advice on the matter of major development and has published as part of the evidence for its Local Plan what has become known as the ‘Maurici opinions’ – that is, legal advice provided in 2011 and 2014 by James Maurici QC, and then subsequent legal advice provided by Toby Fisher in 2017.
- 2.4 The Maurici opinions provide a useful analysis of major development and set out a series of principles (derived from caselaw, guidance and appeal decisions) to be applied by decision makers when determining whether a proposed development could be regarded as major development:
- It is a matter of planning judgement to be decided by the decision maker.
  - Major development is to be given its ordinary meaning, and it would be wrong to apply the definition of major development contained within the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. It would also be wrong to apply any set or rigid criteria for defining major development, and the definition should not be restricted to development proposals that raise issues of national significance.
  - The decision maker may consider whether the proposed development has the potential to cause a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined, rather than whether there will indeed be a significant adverse impact from the proposed development.
  - The decision maker may consider the proposed development in its local context as a matter of planning judgement.
  - There may be other considerations but which may not determine whether a proposed development is major development. For example, if the proposed development is Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development.
  - The ordinary sense of the word ‘major’ is important and the decision maker should take a common sense view as to whether the proposed development could be considered major development.
- 2.5 In Mr Fisher’s 2017 legal opinion, he was of the view that:
- ‘ ... it would arguably amount to an error of law to fail to consider paragraph [172] at the site allocations stage of plan making for the National Park. The consequence of doing so would be to risk allocating land for major development that was undeliverable because it was incapable of meeting the major development test in the NPPF.’
- 2.6 It is clear then that there needs to be an assessment to consider whether the proposed site allocations in the High Weald AONB could be major development. The assessment will be carried out at the plan-making stage (Site Allocations DPD) in order to reduce the risk of the site allocation later being found undeliverable as a

result of its assessment at the planning application stage. Such an assessment is a matter of planning judgement to be decided by the decision maker and needs to take into account the common sense meaning of the word 'major' and the local context.

## 3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 Taking into account how paragraph 172 of the NPPF is to be applied and how major development is (or is not) defined, an approach has been developed to assess the proposed sites in the Site Allocations DPD. This approach intends to be a clear framework to assess each proposed site allocation in a consistent way and to provide the basis for forming a decision on major development. This is in the context that the determination of whether a proposed development is major development is a matter of planning judgement for the decision maker.
- 3.2 Both the proposed housing and employment site allocations will be subject to this approach.
- 3.3 The methodology has been developed and refined in discussion with the High Weald AONB Unit, Natural England, and other partners across the High Weald AONB and other protected landscapes (Appendix F).
- 3.4 There are two stages to the assessment:
- Stage 1 – Determining major development
  - Stage 2 – Consideration of major development

### Stage 1 – Determining major development

- 3.5 An assessment based on the factors set out in footnote 55 of the NPPF has been used to inform the decision as to whether a proposed site allocation could be regarded as major development (Figure 4). It is an assessment to determine if a proposed site allocation is major development, rather than whether it is a site suitable for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD. The process of determining whether it is acceptable development is through the Stage 2 assessment and the site selection process for the Site Allocations DPD<sup>4</sup>.

Factor (NPPF footnote 55)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
Nature of development	An assessment of the type of proposed development is considered, e.g. housing, employment, mixed use. Consideration is also given to the likely form of the proposed allocation such as the dwelling mix or employment use. Consideration of the characteristics and perceptual qualities of the High Weald AONB will also be taken into account, e.g. scale of landscape,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHELAA</li> <li>• Emerging Site Allocations DPD</li> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> The decision on which sites are allocated in the Site Allocations DPD is a separate decision-making process (see the Site Selection Papers: <https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/development-plan-documents/>).

Factor (NPPF footnote 55)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
	views, tranquillity and dark skies.	
Scale of development	<p>An assessment of the proposed allocation in terms of its own size, e.g. number of dwellings, employment land area, and in relation to the existing settlement, e.g. the increase in the size of the settlement through either land area and/ or number of households.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate to identify thresholds for when the scale of development may be regarded as major, rather each proposed allocation should be qualitatively assessed taking into account the other assessment factors such as the settlement form and type, the proposed density of development, as well as the characteristics of the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>The scale of the wider landscape around the proposed allocation will also be considered – if the proposed allocation is in an open landscape with long distance views or if it has a smaller-scale enclosed form. The scale of the proposed allocation will be assessed to see if it is in keeping with the scale of the surrounding landscape.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSDC GIS</li> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> </ul>
Setting of development	An assessment of the spatial relationship of the proposed allocation in the context of settlement form taking into account the local context, e.g. infilling, extension to existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Sussex Design Guide</li> <li>• High Weald Housing Design Guide</li> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> <li>• High Weald AONB</li> </ul>

Factor (NPPF footnote 55)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
	<p>settlement, farmstead development, land use, topography, heritage assets.</p> <p>The spatial context of the proposed allocation is also an important consideration. This includes looking at the historic settlement pattern in the wider area. For example, if the settlements in the wider area are distinct small villages or have more of a linear form.</p>	<p>research reports on settlements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Area Appraisals</li> <li>• Historical maps</li> <li>• Atlas of Rural Settlement GIS<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Historic England: Medieval Settlements<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• Historic Farmstead Character<sup>7</sup></li> <li>• Neighbourhood plans</li> <li>• Site visit</li> <li>• Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)</li> </ul>
<p>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes (to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB)</p>	<p>An assessment of the proposed allocation against the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five components of character <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Geology, landform and water systems</li> <li>2. Settlement</li> <li>3. Routeways</li> <li>4. Woodland</li> <li>5. Field and Heath</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Land-based economy and related rural life</li> <li>• Other qualities</li> </ul> <p>An assessment of the proposed allocation against the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives.</p> <p>The Statement of Significance defines the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB and the Management Plan objectives advise how to conserve and enhance the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The High Weald AONB Unit has provided a series of GIS layers to the District Council that map the components of character and these will be used to inform the assessment.</li> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> <li>• Site visit to consider the perceptual qualities of the High Weald AONB, e.g. tranquillity.</li> <li>• Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)</li> </ul>

<sup>5</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/heritage-science/atlas-of-rural-settlement-in-england/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/iha-medieval-settlements/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.highweald.org/about-the-high-weald-unit/aonb-team/420-home/research-reports/475-historic-farmstead-character.html>

Factor (NPPF footnote 55)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
	<p>High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Other factors to consider include the time-depth of a site, taking account of its history and heritage, and also how the site supports ecosystem services as this supports the key components of the High Weald AONB. Links to biodiversity net gain should also be made.</p>	
Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB	An assessment of whether the proposed allocation conserves and enhances the High Weald AONB.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> </ul>
The ordinary meaning of the word 'major'	<p>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</p> <p>This may take into account the context of the High Weald AONB.</p>	N/A
District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	An assessment of the proposed allocation against the requirements set out in the District Plan policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031</li> </ul>
Cumulative impacts	<p>An assessment of whether the proposed allocation may lead to cumulative impacts when considered alongside other proposed allocations.</p> <p>This will be used to inform the site selection process for the Site Allocations DPD as this is the process for determining if a site is acceptable development and suitable for allocation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emerging Site Allocations DPD</li> <li>• Sustainability Appraisal</li> <li>• Site Selection Papers</li> <li>• Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)</li> </ul>
Conclusion	<p>Taking all the above factors into account, is the proposed allocation considered to be major development?</p> <p>The proposed allocation could be regarded as</p>	N/A

Factor (NPPF footnote 55)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
	<p>major development as a result of just one factor or it may be a combination of factors that leads to a conclusion of major development.</p> <p>If the proposed allocation is considered to be major development, then proceed to Stage 2 – Consideration of major development.</p>	

Figure 4 - Stage 1 assessment - Determining major development

- 3.6 Whilst each proposed site allocation should be assessed individually to determine if it is major development, the cumulative impact of the proposed site allocations on the High Weald AONB should also be considered particularly those proposed site allocations in the same settlement because together the proposed site allocations may contribute to additional impacts on the High Weald AONB.

### Stage 2 – Consideration of major development

- 3.7 If, at the Stage 1 assessment, a proposed site allocation is considered to be major development, then it proceeds to the Stage 2 assessment which is the consideration of major development.
- 3.8 There needs to be an exploration of exceptional circumstances at the plan-making stage. This is because there is the opportunity at plan-making stage to consider different options for a spatial strategy to meet the housing needs of the District, and this may seek to lessen any potential harm to the High Weald AONB such as selecting alternative locations for development. The principle of development is established through an allocation at the plan-making stage, so an assessment of exceptional circumstances at the plan-making stage should reduce the risk that an allocated site is undeliverable at the planning application stage because it cannot meet the major development test as set out in the NPPF. This assessment (Figure 5) is based on paragraph 172 of the NPPF and includes consideration of:
- Any exceptional circumstances
  - If the development is in the public interest
  - A justification of need
  - Any alternative ways of meeting that need
  - An assessment of harm
- 3.9 The exceptional circumstances for each site allocation that is taken forward should also be reviewed at the planning application stage. This is because there may be changes between the time of the site allocation at the plan-making stage and the planning application. It will also help to meet the requirements of paragraph 172 of the NPPF.

Factor (NPPF paragraph 172)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy	This may include reference to housing land supply and the provision of affordable homes for local people, plus any other relevant NPPF policies. It could also reference infrastructure improvements. Compliance with the development plan is also a consideration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPPF</li> <li>• Development plan</li> <li>• Sustainability Appraisal</li> <li>• Site Selection Papers</li> </ul>
The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way	This may include reference to other known sites and reasonable alternatives, and the potential to deliver these sites. Compliance with the development plan is also a consideration. Any potential cumulative impacts may be taken into account.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development plan</li> <li>• SHELAA</li> <li>• Sustainability Appraisal</li> <li>• Site Selection Papers</li> </ul>
Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated	This may reference the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance and any mitigation measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development plan</li> <li>• Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)</li> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> <li>• Emerging Site Allocations DPD policy wording</li> </ul>
Can it be demonstrated the development is in the public interest?	The public interest test may include reference to the interaction between the landscape and people. This may include the opportunities to enhance health and well-being, and to foster the enjoyment and appreciation of nature. Compliance with the development plan could also be regarded as being within the public interest <sup>8</sup> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development plan</li> <li>• High Weald AONB Management Plan</li> <li>• Public rights of way network</li> <li>• Current land use</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> Appeal decisions APP/D3830/W/19/3231996 and APP/D3830/W/19/3231997 | Land off London Road, Bolney | Decision date: 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019



Factor (NPPF paragraph 172)	Assessment Notes	Potential source(s) of information
Are there any other exceptional circumstances?	This would include any other relevant material considerations, however, exceptional should mean 'rarity' <sup>9</sup> .	

Figure 5 - Stage 2 assessment - Consideration of major development

- 3.10 The approach indicates what matters could be considered during the assessment and the potential sources of information to inform that assessment. The assessment will consider that if despite giving great weight to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald AONB, there are exceptional circumstances and that the proposed site allocation is in the public interest<sup>7</sup>.
- 3.11 The major development assessment for each proposed site allocation is contained in the appendices to this paper.

<sup>9</sup> *R (Mevagissey Parish Council) v Cornwall Council* [2013] EWHC 3684 (Admin)

## 4.0 Assessment of Regulation 19 Proposed Site Allocations

- 4.1 As part of their Regulation 18 consultation response, both Natural England and the High Weald AONB Unit recommended that the proposed site allocations within the High Weald AONB are assessed to determine if they could be defined as major development based on the requirements set out in paragraph 172 of the NPPF. The major development assessment will also help meet the duty of regard to the High Weald AONB as provided by s85(1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- 4.2 This recommended assessment has been undertaken and the proposed site allocations for the Regulation 19 Site Allocations DPD within the High Weald AONB have been assessed to determine if they are major development. In addition, the new sites submitted during the Regulation 18 consultation that are within the High Weald AONB have also been assessed.
- 4.3 The full assessments for the proposed site allocations are included in Appendix C and Appendix D, however, a summary of the conclusions is shown in the table below (Figure 6).

Policy	Site	Allocation	Conclusion
SA7	Cedars, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	Employment – B1/ B2/ B8	Not Major Development
SA8	Pease Pottage Nurseries, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	Employment – B1/ B2/ B8	Not Major Development
SA25	Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly	70 dwellings	Not Major Development
SA26	Land south of Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood	12 dwellings	Not Major Development
SA27	Land at St. Martin Close (West), Handcross	35 dwellings	Not Major Development
SA28	Land south of The Old Police House, Horsted Keynes	25 dwellings	Not Major Development
SA29	Land south of St. Stephen’s Church, Horsted Keynes	30 dwellings	Not Major Development
SA32	Withypitts Farm, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill	16 dwellings	Not Major Development

Figure 6 - Conclusion of major development assessment

- 4.4 On this basis, none of the proposed site allocations need to be considered further in terms of major development and any exceptional circumstances. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.

### SA25: Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly

- 4.5 At the Regulation 18 consultation stage (October 2019), the proposed site allocation at Ardingly (SA25) was for 100 dwellings with on-site public open space, equipped children’s playspace, scout hut and parking. The Stage 1 assessment for this site concluded that it is major development due to its scale and that development of the

whole site would not fit the historic settlement pattern of Ardingly. This means there would be an impact on the purposes of the High Weald AONB, that is, to conserve and enhance its natural beauty. This assessment took into account advice from Natural England and the High Weald AONB Unit. Consideration was given to this conclusion of major development and the assessment progressed to the Stage 2 assessment which considered if there are any exceptional circumstances for this development in the High Weald AONB. The Stage 2 assessment concluded that there are unlikely to be exceptional circumstances in relation to the need for the development because there are alternative locations outside the High Weald AONB. However, development could be regarded to be in the public interest through the provision of affordable housing and meeting local housing needs. The development may also be of public benefit as it would facilitate improvements at the South of England Showground. Overall, it is not considered there are exceptional circumstances for this scale of development at this location within the High Weald AONB.

- 4.6 There is an alternative proposal for the SA25 proposed site allocation. Whilst the overall size of the site remains the same, built development will be kept to the eastern section of the site with the western section remaining as open space. The single mature oak tree roughly in the middle of the site acts as the boundary between the built form and the open space. This oak tree is what remains of the old field boundary. The number of dwellings on site has been reduced to 70 dwellings. This alternative proposal has been assessed as well using the same approach to determine if it would be regarded as major development.
- 4.7 The conclusion of the second assessment at Stage 1 for the site with a proposed yield of 70 dwellings is that it would not be major development. This is because the physical size of the site where built development would be has been reduced and is now more in keeping with the historic settlement pattern of Ardingly and would seek to retain the identity of the two separate centres of Ardingly. This will also be assisted by the increased area of open space in the western section of the site. An assessment of any exceptional circumstances is not necessary because the revised proposed site allocation is not regarded as major development.
- 4.8 The High Weald AONB Unit has indicated that the alternative proposal for SA25 would significantly reduce the impact of the proposed development on the AONB.
- 4.9 For clarity, the conclusions of the two major development assessments are shown in Figure 7.

<b>SA25: Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly</b>			
<b>Stage</b>	<b>Yield</b>	<b>Site Details</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Regulation 18	100 dwellings	Built development across the entire site with a small section of open space in the far west of the site.	Major Development
Regulation 19	70 dwellings	Built development in the eastern section of the site and open space in the western section of the site.	Not Major Development

Figure 7 - Comparison of the changes to proposed site allocation SA25 at Ardingly

## Appendix A Example pro forma

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19 Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy		SHELAA	
Site address			
Site details			
Allocation			
Units/Use			
Gross site area (Ha)			
Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)			
Nature of development			
Scale of development			
Setting of development			
The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)			
<b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b>			
Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies			
Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features			
Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats			
<b>Character component: Settlement</b>			
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside			

Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	

Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	
<b>Other qualities</b>	
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High</b>	

<b>Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	
<b>Conclusion</b>	
<b>Stage 2 - Consideration of major development (NPPF paragraph 172) (If major development at Stage 1)</b>	
The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy	
The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some way	
Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated	
Can it be demonstrated the development is in the public interest?	
Are there any other exceptional circumstances?	
<b>Conclusion</b>	

## Appendix B SHELAA housing sites within the High Weald AONB and conclusions of the site selection process

The SHELAA sites listed below have not been subject to a major development assessment because they were not taken forward as proposed site allocations.

Further detail on the reasons for why these sites were not taken forward is contained in Site Selection Paper 1: Assessment of Housing Sites Against District Plan Strategy (February 2020) and Site Selection Paper 3: Housing Sites (February 2020).

### SHELAA sites not considered further following the high level site assessment (Site Selection Paper 1)

Settlement	SHELAA ID	Site	Units
Ansty	736	Broad location North and East of Ansty	1825 dwellings
	790	Deaks Manor, Deaks Lane, Cuckfield	400 dwellings
	792	Land at Ansty Farm (Site C), Deaks Lane, Ansty	25 dwellings
	896	Land at Old Beech Farm, Staplefield Road, Cuckfield	10 dwellings
Ardingly	558	Middle Lodge and land to south, Lindfield Road, Ardingly	60 dwellings
	584	Bawtry, Little London, Ardingly	7 dwellings
	831	Gardeners Arms, Selsfield Road, Ardingly	5 dwellings
Ashurst Wood	724	Land at Truscott Manor, Hectors Lane, East Grinstead	120 dwellings
Balcombe	25	The Walled Garden, behind the Scout Hut, London Road, Balcombe	8 dwellings
	28	Area south of Redbridge Lane at junction with London Road, Balcombe	45 dwellings
Bolney	155	Aurora Ranch Caravan Park, London Road, Bolney	100 dwellings
	541	Land adjacent to Packway House, Bolney	150 dwellings
Brook Street	772	Land north of St. Margarets, Brook Street, Cuckfield	9 dwellings
Handcross	662	Dencombe Estate, High Beeches Lane, Handcross	75 dwellings
Horsted Keynes	67	Castle Field, Cinder Hill Lane, Horsted Keynes	25 dwellings
	663	Field 1, Ludwell Grange, Keysford Lane, Horsted Keynes	27 dwellings



Settlement	SHELAA ID	Site	Units
	664	Field 2, Ludwell Grange, Keysford Lane, Horsted Keynes	15 dwellings
	837	Land at Little Oddyness Farm, Waterbury Hill, Horsted Keynes	45 dwellings
Lindfield	586	Buxshalls, Ardingly Road, Lindfield	19 dwellings
Pease Pottage	219	Land at former Driving Range, Horsham Road, Pease Pottage	75 dwellings
	243	Land at Lower Tilgate, Parish Lane, Pease Pottage	1800 dwellings
	574	Land at Hunters Moon, Old Brighton Road South, Pease Pottage	88 dwellings
	603	Land to the west of Woodhurst Farm, Old Brighton Road South, Pease Pottage	660 dwellings
	674	Land north of Pease Pottage, west of Old Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	180 dwellings
	774	Land at Tilgate Forest Lodge, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	33 dwellings
	815	Cedars (Former Crawley Forest School), Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	25 dwellings
	822	Land west of Cedar Cottage, Tilgate Forest Lodge, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	40 dwellings
Sharpthorne	656	Hangdown Mead Business Park, Top Road, Sharpthorne	15 dwellings
	856	Moonwood Barn, Hangdown Mead Farm, Top Road, West Hoathly	30 dwellings
Slaugham	821	Land at Slaugham Garden Nursery, Staplefield Road, Slaugham	10 dwellings
Staplefield	805	Land adjacent to Meadow Woods, Brook Street, Cuckfield	5 dwellings
	820	Land at Stanbridge Farm, Stanbridge Lane, Staplefield	10 dwellings
	903	Land at Meadow Wood and Ashbourne, Brook Street, Cuckfield	21 dwellings
Turners Hill	569	Land rear of Withypitts, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill	45 dwellings
	916	Land on East Street and Withypitts Paddock, Turners Hill	45 dwellings
Warninglid	612	Land south of Warninglid Primary School, Slaugham Lane, Warninglid	240 dwellings
	816	Old Park Farm, Slaugham Lane, Warninglid	12 dwellings
	817	The Old Milking Parlour, The Street, Warninglid	15 dwellings

Settlement	SHELAA ID	Site	Units
	839	Land at Hazeldene Farm, north of Orchard Way, Warninglid	80 dwellings
West Hoathly	721	Philpots Quarry, Hook Lane, West Hoathly	33 dwellings

### SHELAA sites not considered further following the detailed site assessment

#### (Site Selection Paper 3)

Settlement	SHELAA ID	Site	Units
Ardingly	495	Butchers Field, south of Street Lane, Ardingly	30 dwellings
	691	Land east of High Street, Ardingly	75 dwellings
Ashurst Wood	186	Land east of Beeches Lane, Ashurst Wood	210 dwellings
	634	Land west of Dirty Lane, Ashurst Wood	15 dwellings
	207	Land at Dirty Lane/ Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood	9 dwellings
Balcombe	165	Land south of Oldlands Avenue (Vintens Nursery), Balcombe	90 dwellings
	929	Land to the west of the Rectory, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe	15 dwellings
Cuckfield	420	Land north of Brainsmead, Cuckfield	93 dwellings
	550	Land east of Whitemans Green, Cuckfield	36 dwellings
	803	Land west of Ockenden Manor, Ockenden Lane, Cuckfield	255 dwellings
	806	Land west of London Road, Cuckfield	105 dwellings
East Grinstead	17	Land adj Great Harwood Farm House off Harwoods Lane, East Grinstead	300 dwellings
	145	Land east of Fairlight Lane, Holtye Road, East Grinstead	13 dwellings
	198	Land off West Hoathly Road, East Grinstead	45 dwellings
	598	Land south of Edinburgh Way, East Grinstead	60 dwellings
	615	Land east of Stuart Way, East Grinstead	150 dwellings
	733	Land between 43 and 59 Hurst Farm Road, East Grinstead	11 dwellings
	850	Land to the east of Russetts, Holtye Road, East Grinstead	150 dwellings
851	Fairlight Lodge and 2 Fairlight Cottage, Holtye Road, East Grinstead	150 dwellings	
Handcross	181	Land west of Truggers, Handcross	130 dwellings

Settlement	SHELAA ID	Site	Units
	670	Land at Coos Lane, Horsham Road, Handcross	35 dwellings
	823	Land at Hyde Lodge, London Road, Handcross	65 dwellings
Horsted Keynes	68	Farm Buildings, Jeffrey's Farm, Horsted Keynes	6 dwellings
	69	Jeffrey's Farm Northern Fields (Ludwell Field adj Keysford and Sugar Lane), Horsted Keynes	22 dwellings
	748	The Old Rectory, Church Lane, Horsted Keynes	30 dwellings
	781	Land to the south of Robyns Barn, Birchgrove Road, Horsted Keynes	45 dwellings
	893	Land west of Church Lane, Horsted Keynes	38 dwellings
	945	Lucas Farm, Birchgrove Road, Horsted Keynes	30 dwellings
	971	Jeffrey's Farm Southern Fields, Horsted Keynes	20 dwellings
Pease Pottage	581	Woodhurst Farmhouse, Old Brighton Road South, Pease Pottage	150 dwellings
	731	Land to the west of 63 Horsham Road, Pease Pottage	5 dwellings
	818	Land north of the Former Golf House, Horsham Road, Pease Pottage	41 dwellings
Staplefield	641	Tanyards Field, Tanyard Lane, Staplefield	6 dwellings
	642	Land south of Village Hall, Cuckfield Road, Staplefield	26 dwellings
	659	Tanyards Field, Tanyard Lane, Staplefield	9 dwellings
	660	Tanyards Field, Tanyard Lane, Staplefield	9 dwellings
Warninglid	819	Land north of The Hollies, Slaugham Lane, Warninglid	5 dwellings
West Hoathly	653	Webbs Mead, Land west of Broadfield, West Hoathly	60 dwellings

**SHELAA sites not considered further following the further evidence testing  
(Site Selection Paper 3)**

Settlement	SHELAA ID	Site	Units
Horsted Keynes	216	Land at Police House Field, Birchgrove Road/ Danehill Lane, Horsted Keynes	10 dwellings
Turners Hill	474	Land adjacent to 18 East Street, Turners Hill	12 dwellings

## Appendix C Major development assessment for Regulation 19 proposed employment sites

### SA7 | Cedars (Former Crawley Forest School), Brighton Road, Pease Pottage

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19 Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA7	SHELAA	888
Site address	Cedars, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage		
Site details			
Allocation	Employment		
Units/Use	B1/B2/B8		
Gross site area (Ha)	2.3Ha		
Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)			
Nature of development	This is an employment allocation for B1/B2/B8 employment.		
Scale of development	<p>The site is 2.3Ha and it is previously developed land. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Pease Pottage and because it is previously developed land.</p>		
Setting of development	<p>The site is adjacent to the A23 and other employment uses. There is an existing large building on the site so any redevelopment of the site would be on previously developed land. The site is situated on the Weald Forest Ridge, which is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (328km<sup>2</sup> in the north and west of the AONB). The landscape character of the Weald Forest Ridge is defined by the remnants of four mediaeval hunting forests.</p>		
	High Weald National Character Area; Worth Forest Landscape Character Area		
	<p>According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>		
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits</p>		

	<p>obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat with no watercourses.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is adjacent to the A23 south of the main settlement of Pease Pottage, and part of the linear development along the old A23. There is an old nursery site to the south (SA8) and a vehicle scrap yard to the north.</p>
<p>Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside</p>	<p>The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.</p>
<p>Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide.</p>
<p>Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the</p>

Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	There is a historic PROW running east-west along the southern boundary of the site.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is ancient woodland to the east of the site but separated by the vehicle scrap yard.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is previously developed land and is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective on-site, however, the site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective because it is previously developed land.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	Whilst the site is an employment allocation, it is considered not likely to support the land-based economy

	and rural life.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective due to its location.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site may contribute to local communities and community services once it is occupied.
<b>Other qualities</b>	There are limited views of the site and it is not considered tranquil due to the proximity of the A23 and vehicle scrap yard. Use and enjoyment of the PROW is already affected by the adjacent land uses.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	The site should consider lighting and noise in its design taking into account planning policies and best practice.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Low impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the</b>	No

<b>ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process because it is on previously developed land and due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one other employment site allocation in Pease Pottage, however, due to the location and setting of the two sites, it is considered unlikely there are any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b>
	The site allocation is on previously developed land adjacent to the A23 and other employment uses. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is low. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA7 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site.



## SA8 | Pease Pottage Nurseries, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA8	SHELAA	192
Site address	Pease Pottage Nurseries, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Employment		
Units/Use	B1/B2/B8		
Gross site area (Ha)	1Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is an employment allocation for B1/B2/B8 employment use.		
Scale of development	The site is 1Ha. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Pease Pottage.		
Setting of development	The site is adjacent to the A23 and other employment uses to the north. There is linear development to the south of the site along Brighton Road. However, the eastern boundary of the site is next to ancient woodland and there are fields and mature trees to the south of the site. The site is situated on the Weald Forest Ridge, which is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (328km <sup>2</sup> in the north and west of the AONB). The landscape character of the Weald Forest Ridge is defined by the remnants of four mediaeval hunting forests.		
	High Weald National Character Area; Worth Forest Landscape Character Area		
	According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i> , the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.		
	The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the		

	products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.
<b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b>	
<b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b>	The site is relatively flat with a watercourse and several springs to the south-east.
Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.
Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features	Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.
Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats	The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.
<b>Character component: Settlement</b>	The site is adjacent to the A23 south of the main settlement of Pease Pottage, and part of the linear development along the old A23 (Brighton Road). There is an existing residential institution (SA7) and a vehicle scrap yard to the north, and dwellings to the south of the site.
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside	The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.
Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual

Weald in its scale, layout and design	impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	There is a historic PROW running east-west along the northern boundary of the site.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeways are protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is ancient woodland to the east of the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	The site should protect the ancient woodland to the east of the site and there may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	There should be a minimum 15m buffer zone for the ancient woodland. The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	Whilst the site is an employment allocation, it is considered not likely to support the land-based economy

	and rural life.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective due to its location and because it is previously developed land.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site may contribute to local communities and community services once it is occupied.
<b>Other qualities</b>	There are views of the site from the PROW to the north of the site, however, use and enjoyment of the PROW is already affected by the adjacent land uses. The site is not considered tranquil due to the proximity of the A23 and vehicle scrap yard.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	The site should consider lighting and noise in its design taking into account planning policies and best practice.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Moderate impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation</b>	No

<p><b>be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b></p>	
<p><b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b></p>	<p>It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.</p>
<p><b>Cumulative impacts</b></p>	<p>In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one other employment site allocation in Pease Pottage, however, due to the location and setting of the two sites, it is considered unlikely there are any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p><b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The site allocation is adjacent to the A23 and other employment uses. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate. Development should be outside a buffer zone for the ancient woodland. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA8 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site.</p>

## Appendix D Major development assessment for Regulation 19 proposed housing sites

### SA25 | Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly (Regulation 18)

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19 Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA25 (Reg 18)	SHELAA	832
Site address	Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	100 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	5.17Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
<b>Nature of development</b>	This is a housing allocation for 100 dwellings with on-site public open space, equipped children's playspace, scout hut and parking.		
<b>Scale of development</b>	Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 18% in the built-up area of Ardingly and an increase of 21% in the number of dwellings. Taking the settlement as a whole (i.e. the built-up area boundary plus the properties that might be regarded as being in the settlement of Ardingly) to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 10% in the area of Ardingly and an increase of 18% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would not be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Ardingly, even though the South of England Showground to the north of the site is a more open landscape.		
<b>Setting of development</b>	The site forms part of the South of England Showground and provides overflow parking. The site is to the north of Ardingly between the two village centres: the older Saxon settlement in the west around the church and the later mediaeval trading settlement around the intersection of two routeways in the east. The continued separation between the two centres is part of the character of the settlement and its historic settlement pattern. This includes how the settlement relates to the immediate landscape context. Development of the site		

	<p>would result in a part infilling of the area between the two village centres, between settlement to the south and the Show of England Showground to the north.</p>
	<p>High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area</p>
	<p>According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat and used as parking for the South of England Showground.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component:</b></p>	<p>The site is to the north of Ardingly and south of the main South of England Showground, with the recreation</p>

<b>Settlement</b>	ground to the east. The western end of the site is adjacent to the Ardingly Conservation Area.
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside	The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.
Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	Built development on the entire site would not be in keeping with Ardingly's settlement pattern, in particular the development of the two village centres which should be retained in order to protect its historic settlement pattern and its character. The site would effectively merge the two village centres. A Planning Inspector in a 2014 appeal decision for a development of 35 dwellings at a different site in Ardingly gave weight to the historic settlement pattern in Ardingly and the character of built development in the village in dismissing the appeal (Land known as Butcher's Field, South of Street Lane - APP/D3830/A/12/2172335). The same Planning Inspector in a separate 2014 appeal decision for a development of 37 dwellings at a different site in Ardingly said that character of the scheme and its dispersed settlement pattern would not harm key characteristics of the High Weald AONB and allowed the appeal (Standgrove Field (land south of Lodgelands) - APP/D3830/A/12/2173625). The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	There are PROW to the north and south of the site. Selsfield Road (and the High Street) to the east of the site is a historic lane and Street Lane to the south of the site is a historic drove route.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.



of woodland at a landscape scale	
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows the existing field boundary.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the fields to the south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as provision of affordable housing. The site may help to foster rural community life by the provision of a replacement scout hut.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase. There may be opportunities to promote the land-based economy and related rural life through the adjacent South of England Showground.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services such as through the replacement scout hut. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as

that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site can be viewed from adjacent roads and PROW, as well as from the South of England Showground. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Moderate impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	Yes
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB

	<p>to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. However, the Site Allocations DPD does not propose any other site allocations in Ardingly so there are unlikely to be any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p><b>MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The site allocation can be considered to be large-scale when taking into account the existing settlement. Development of the whole of this site would also not fit the historic settlement pattern of Ardingly. For these reasons it is considered to be major development. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA25 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site. For example, there may be opportunities to provide for the needs of land-based workers by providing space to store vehicles and materials.</p>
<p><b>Stage 2 - Consideration of major development (NPPF paragraph 172) (If major development at Stage 1)</b></p>	
<p>The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy</p>	<p>The District Plan 2014-2031 sets out the housing requirement for the district for the plan period of 16,390 dwellings. It is important that the housing requirement is met to ensure the District Council can maintain a five-year housing land supply. It will be necessary to ensure that housing needs at settlements in the High Weald AONB are met where possible, including the provision of affordable housing. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District. The site will also make a contribution to infrastructure improvements. However, as the Site Allocations DPD includes an over-supply of 455 dwellings to provide flexibility and resilience, this means it may be difficult to justify the need for this development in the High Weald AONB.</p>
<p>The cost of, and scope for,</p>	<p>The Site Selection Papers set out the robust process</p>

<p>developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some way</p>	<p>that has been undertaken to identify and assess sites to inform the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD. This has involved multiple stages of assessment to systematically test site options against a range of criteria and remove the lowest scoring options from further consideration at each stage. One of these criteria was consideration of the impact on the High Weald AONB. However, as the Site Allocations DPD includes an over-supply of 455 dwellings to provide flexibility and resilience, this means it may be difficult to justify the need for this development in the High Weald AONB.</p>
<p>Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated</p>	<p>It is considered that the main impact on the High Weald AONB will arise from the scale of the development. This may be able to be mitigated through the design process and masterplan for the site. The site needs to be developed in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA25 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p>
<p>Can it be demonstrated the development is in the public interest?</p>	<p>The site allocation will provide affordable housing and a replacement scout hut. The site allocation is making a significant contribution towards meeting the housing needs of Category 3 settlements. The site allocation is in compliance with the development plan.</p>
<p>Are there any other exceptional circumstances?</p>	<p>The site allocation may help to facilitate improvements at the South of England Showground, which would be a benefit to the public. This may also create opportunities for the local economy, including the land-based economy and related rural life.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p>There are unlikely to be exceptional circumstances in relation to the need for the development because there are alternative locations outside the High Weald AONB. However, development could be regarded to be in the public interest through the provision of affordable housing and meeting local housing needs. The development may also be of public benefit as it would facilitate improvements at the South of England Showground. Overall, it is not considered there are exceptional circumstances for this scale of development at this location within the High Weald AONB.</p>

## SA25 | Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly (Regulation 19)

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA25 (Reg 19)	SHELAA	832
Site address	Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	70 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	5.17Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
<b>Nature of development</b>	This is a housing allocation for 70 dwellings with on-site public open space, equipped children's playspace, scout hut and parking.		
<b>Scale of development</b>	<p>Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 18% in the built-up area of Ardingly and an increase of 15% in the number of dwellings. Taking the settlement as a whole (i.e. the built-up area boundary plus the properties that might be regarded as being in the settlement of Ardingly) to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 10% in the area of Ardingly and an increase of 12% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Ardingly, even though the South of England Showground to the north of the site is a more open landscape.</p>		
<b>Setting of development</b>	<p>The site forms part of the South of England Showground and provides overflow parking. The site is to the north of Ardingly between the two village centres: the older Saxon settlement in the west around the church and the later mediaeval trading settlement around the intersection of two routeways in the east. The continued separation between the two centres is part of the character of the settlement and its historic settlement pattern. This includes how the settlement relates to the immediate landscape context. Development of the site would result in a part infilling of the area between the two village centres, between settlement to the south and the Show of England Showground to the north.</p>		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald		

	<p>Landscape Character Area</p> <p>According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p> <p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat and used as parking for the South of England Showground.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is to the north of Ardingly and south of the main South of England Showground, with the recreation ground to the east. The western end of the site is adjacent to the Ardingly Conservation Area. This western end of the site would remain undeveloped as open space, so all the built development (70 dwellings)</p>

	would be in the eastern section.
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside	The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.
Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	Built development on the eastern section of the site and open space on the western section of the site would enable the two village centres to remain separate and thus protect the historic settlement pattern of Ardingly and its character. Reducing the area of built form would be beneficial when considering the impact on the High Weald AONB. A Planning Inspector in a 2014 appeal decision for a development of 35 dwellings at a different site in Ardingly gave weight to the historic settlement pattern in Ardingly and the character of built development in the village in dismissing the appeal (Land known as Butcher's Field, South of Street Lane - APP/D3830/A/12/2172335). The same Planning Inspector in a separate 2014 appeal decision for a development of 37 dwellings at a different site in Ardingly said that character of the scheme and its dispersed settlement pattern would not harm key characteristics of the High Weald AONB and allowed the appeal (Standgrove Field (land south of Lodgelands) - APP/D3830/A/12/2173625). The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. Careful design and layout of the site will help to ensure it protects the historic settlement pattern of Ardingly.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	There are PROW to the north and south of the site. Selsfield Road (and the High Street) to the east of the site is a historic lane and Street Lane to the south of the site is a historic drove route.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.

Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows the existing field boundary.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the fields to the south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as provision of affordable housing. The site may help to foster rural community life by the provision of a replacement scout hut.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase. There may be opportunities to promote the land-based economy and related rural life through the adjacent South of England Showground.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing),	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services



and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	such as through the replacement scout hut. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site can be viewed from adjacent roads and PROW, as well as from the South of England Showground. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Moderate impact on AONB. The High Weald AONB Unit has indicated that the alternative proposal for SA25 (development in the eastern area of the site) would significantly reduce the impact of the proposed development on the AONB and in particular on the settlement pattern of Ardingly.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	No
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will

	provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. However, the Site Allocations DPD does not propose any other site allocations in Ardingly so there are unlikely to be any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<p><b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The site allocation can be considered to be an appropriate scale when taking into account the existing settlement. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA25 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site. For example, there may be opportunities to provide for the needs of land-based workers by providing space to store vehicles and materials.</p>

## SA26 | Land south of Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA26	SHELAA	138
Site address	Land south of Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	12 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	1.71Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a housing allocation for 12 dwellings.		
Scale of development	<p>Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 6% in the built-up area of Ashurst Wood and an increase of 2.4% in the number of dwellings. Taking the settlement as a whole (i.e. the built-up area boundary plus the properties that might be regarded as being in the settlement of Ashurst Wood) to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 3% in the area of Ashurst Wood and an increase of 1.7% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Ashurst Wood.</p>		
Setting of development	<p>The site is to the south of Ashurst Wood and adjacent to a fairly recent development to the east. Ashurst Wood lies at the junction of a trackway linking two old Manors - Shovelstrode and Brambletye, and on the route of a ridgeway track (Hammerwood Road-Cansiron Lane). Ashurst Wood dates back to mediaeval times and the name refers to an area of common or waste land at the top of Wall Hill. The village grew further following the arrival of the railway in East Grinstead in the mid-19th century. The site is situated on the edge of the Weald Forest Ridge, which is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (328km<sup>2</sup> in the north and west of the AONB). The landscape character of the Weald Forest Ridge is defined by the remnants of four mediaeval hunting forests.</p>		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural</i>		

	<p><i>Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat with no watercourses, however, the ground slopes steeply downwards to the south of the site, so there are long-ranging views.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is to the south of Ashurst Wood and adjacent to a fairly recent development to the east.</p>
<p>Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside</p>	<p>The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.</p>
<p>Objective S2 - To protect the</p>	<p>The site is small-scale and reasonably well-related to the</p>

historic pattern and character of settlement	village of Ashurst Wood. The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	Hammerwood Road along the northern boundary of the site is a historic lane.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There are trees on the site and a TPO area adjacent to the south-east, however, there is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows the existing field boundary. Opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the land to the south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.

Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy. The site will need to meet policy requirements for the provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site is fairly well-screened along the northern boundary. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Low impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve

<b>Weald AONB</b>	and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	No
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. However, the Site Allocations DPD does not propose any other site allocations in Ashurst Wood so there are unlikely to be any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b>
	The site allocation is small-scale and reasonably well-located to the village of Ashurst Wood. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is low. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA26 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site.

## SA27 | Land at St. Martin Close, Handcross

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA27	SHELAA	127
Site address	Land at St. Martin Close (West), Handcross		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	35 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	1.9Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a housing allocation for 35 dwellings and open space.		
Scale of development	Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 9% in the built-up area of Handcross and an increase of 8% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Handcross.		
Setting of development	The site is to the south-west of Handcross, which is a village split by the A23. The eastern part of the village is older than the western part of the village, and the village lies on the route of the old A23. There are fields and countryside to the south and west of the site. The site is situated on the edge of the Weald Forest Ridge, which is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (328km <sup>2</sup> in the north and west of the AONB). The landscape character of the Weald Forest Ridge is defined by the remnants of four mediaeval hunting forests.		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i> , the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.		
	The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland.		



	<p>The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat with no watercourses.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is at the south-western end of Handcross to the west of the A23. It is adjacent to a neighbourhood plan housing allocation to the east for 30 dwellings.</p>
<p>Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside</p>	<p>The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.</p>
<p>Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. Careful consideration should be given to the site's southern boundary which adjoins fields.</p>
<p>Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual</p>

design	impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	Coos Lane adjacent to the western boundary of the site is a historic drove route with a rural character.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway and its character is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways, particularly of the PROW running across the site.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There are mature trees on the western boundary of the site along Coos Lane. There is no ancient woodland adjacent to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site comprises a field, however, is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows the existing field boundary. Opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the fields to the south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy. The site will need to

	meet policy requirements for the provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site is on the edge of Handcross. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Moderate impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the</b>	No

<b>ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. However, the Site Allocations DPD does not propose any other site allocations in Handcross so there are unlikely to be any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The adjacent Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan allocation for 30 dwellings has been considered as part of this cumulative impact assessment. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<p><b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The site is adjacent to an existing housing allocation in the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA27 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site. Furthermore, the Examiner for the Slaugham Neighbourhood Plan considered that the development of the proposed neighbourhood plan allocated site [St. Martin Close (East)] or the allocated site and the reserve site [St. Martin Close (West) - the proposed site allocation SA27] would not constitute major development in the AONB. The Examiner went on to conclude that development of the allocated site would be modest in scale and well-related to the existing built-up area of the village.</p>

## SA28 | Land south of The Old Police House, Birchgrove Road, Horsted Keynes

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA28	SHELAA	807
Site address	Land south of The Old Police House, Birchgrove Road, Horsted Keynes		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	25 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	1.23Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a housing allocation for 25 dwellings.		
Scale of development	<p>Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 4% in the built-up area of Horsted Keynes and an increase of 6% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Horsted Keynes.</p>		
Setting of development	<p>The site is on the eastern edge of Horsted Keynes, which is an early mediaeval dispersed settlement with origins in trading or droving. The village has a remnant common in the centre of the village around which the settlement grew, as well as scattered historic farmsteads. The site is at the junction of two drove routes leading to the village common. Lucas Farm on the opposite side of Birchgrove Road to the north of the site is a historic farmstead.</p>		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	<p>According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>		
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the</p>		

	products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.
<b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b>	
<b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b>	The site slopes downwards to the south and there are no watercourses.
Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.
Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features	Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.
Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats	The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.
<b>Character component: Settlement</b>	The site is on the eastern edge of Horsted Keynes. There is a historic farmstead (Lucas Farm) on the north side of Birchgrove Road opposite the site.
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside	The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.
Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. Careful consideration should be given to the setting of the adjacent historic farmstead of Lucas Farm. The impact on the High Weald AONB would be lessened if the access to the site is from Birchgrove Road and development focused in the northern part of the site.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of

reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	Birchgrove Road on the northern boundary of the site is a historic drove route and Danehill Lane to the east of the site is a historic lane. There is a historic PROW running through the western part of the site.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway and its character is protected. The route of the historic PROW running across the site should be protected and not developed, and any views from that PROW particularly to the south should be retained and taken into account in the design and layout of the site.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There are mature trees on the site boundaries, but there is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is part of a mediaeval field system, however, the historic field boundary may no longer be in place.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows an existing field boundary. Opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the fields to the south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology

of field and heath	found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site can be viewed from Birchgrove Road and PROW. The site is on the edge of Horsted Keynes. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Moderate impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High



<p><b>enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b></p>	<p>Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.</p>
<p><b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b></p>	<p>It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.</p>
<p><b>Cumulative impacts</b></p>	<p>In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one other site allocation in Horsted Keynes, however, the two allocations are not adjacent to each other and so it is considered unlikely there are any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p><b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The site allocation would represent an extension to the village of Horsted Keynes. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate due to the location of the development and how it relates to the settlement pattern of Horsted Keynes. This may be able to be mitigated through the design process and masterplan for the site, including the location of the access. The impact on the High Weald AONB would be lessened if the access to the site is from Birchgrove Road and development focused in the northern part of the site. If careful attention is paid to the design and masterplan for the site, then it is considered that the site allocation is not major development. For example, the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide should be followed. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed</p>

as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA28 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site. For example, there may be opportunities to provide for the needs of land-based workers by providing space to store vehicles and materials.

## SA29 | Land south of St. Stephen's Church, Hamsland, Horsted Keynes

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA29	SHELAA	184
Site address	Land south of St. Stephen's Church, Hamsland, Horsted Keynes		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	30 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	1.13Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a housing allocation for 30 dwellings.		
Scale of development	Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 3% in the built-up area of Horsted Keynes and an increase of 7% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Horsted Keynes.		
Setting of development	The site is on the southern edge of Horsted Keynes, which is an early mediaeval dispersed settlement with origins in trading or droving. The village has a remnant common in the centre of the village around which the settlement grew, as well as scattered historic farmsteads. The site is reasonably well-located to the main area of the village and is adjacent to more recent 20 <sup>th</sup> century development.		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i> , the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.		
	The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber		

	and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.
<b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b>	
<b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b>	The site is relatively flat with no watercourses.
Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.
Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features	Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.
Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats	The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.
<b>Character component: Settlement</b>	The site is on the southern edge of Horsted Keynes, but reasonably well-located to the main area of the village.
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside	The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.
Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. Careful consideration should be given to the site's western and eastern boundaries when it adjoins fields and the wider countryside.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.

<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	Hamsland along the northern boundary of the site is a historic drove route and PROW.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway and its character is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There are mature trees on the site boundaries, but there is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is part of a mediaeval field system, however, the historic field boundary may no longer be in place due to the development along Hamsland.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows an existing field boundary. Opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the fields to the south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as

	provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site is fairly well-screened on the western and southern side due to the mature trees, and there may be limited views into the site from Hamsland. The site is on the edge of Horsted Keynes. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Low impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.

<p><b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b></p>	<p>It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.</p>
<p><b>Cumulative impacts</b></p>	<p>In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one other site allocation in Horsted Keynes, however, the two allocations are not adjacent to each other and so it is considered unlikely there are any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p><b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The site allocation would represent an extension to the village of Horsted Keynes. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is low. This may be able to be mitigated through the design process and masterplan for the site, including the location of the access. If careful attention is paid to the design and masterplan for the site, then it is considered that the site allocation is not major development. For example, the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide should be followed. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with the site allocation policy criteria (SA29 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site. For example, there may be opportunities to provide for the needs of land-based workers by providing space to store vehicles and materials.</p>

## SA32 | Withypitts Farm, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19			
Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	SA32	SHELAA	854
Site address	Withypitts Farm, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	16 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	1.7Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a housing allocation for 16 dwellings.		
Scale of development	<p>Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the site allocation represents an increase of 7% in the built-up area of Turners Hill and an increase of 4% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Turners Hill, however, there is the potential for the site to be seen as encroachment into the AONB.</p>		
Setting of development	<p>The site is to the south of Turners Hill, a village located on a steep ridge line at the junction of two historic routes. Withypitts is a historic farmstead. The site is surrounded by fields and open countryside with dispersed development towards the main village centre of Turners Hill. The site is situated on the Weald Forest Ridge, which is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (328km<sup>2</sup> in the north and west of the AONB). The landscape character of the Weald Forest Ridge is defined by the remnants of four mediaeval hunting forests.</p>		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	<p>According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>		
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for</p>		



	<p>example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat with no watercourses, although there are two small ponds to the north of the site and others nearby.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is to the south of Turners Hill and development is more dispersed than the village to the north of the site. Withypitts is a historic farmstead. Natural England advises this site allocation is an encroachment into the AONB.</p>
<p>Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside</p>	<p>The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.</p>
<p>Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. Development should be high quality with a farmstead character and utilising any existing buildings which are capable of being retained. The site should be carefully designed to take into account the views of the site when</p>

	approaching from the north (from Turners Hill on the Selsfield Road).
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	Selsfield Road on the eastern boundary of the site is a historic ridgeway route and there is a historic track on the southern boundary of the site.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway and its character is protected, particularly the track to the south of the site.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is no ancient woodland in close proximity to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, the site is almost entirely surrounded by mediaeval field systems.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, the site boundary follows the existing field boundary. Opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features in order to maintain the boundary features of the adjacent mediaeval field systems.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the

heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	fields to the north, south and west. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective because there is existing development on the site.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	There may be views of the site from Selsfield Road and the PROW to the south of the site. The site is on the edge of Turners Hill. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.

<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Moderate impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	No
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site allocation is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. However, the Site Allocations DPD does not propose any other site allocations in Turners Hill so there are unlikely to be any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b>  The site allocation is on previously developed land and considered to be small-scale, however, it would represent an extension of the village to the south. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate. This may be able to be mitigated by careful design of the site to reflect the historic farmstead and landscape setting. Development should be high quality with a farmstead character and utilising any existing buildings which are capable of being retained. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. This may help to alleviate Natural England's concerns that the site is an encroachment into the AONB. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance

with the site allocation policy criteria (SA32 in the Site Allocations DPD) and District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site. For example, there may be opportunities to provide for the needs of land-based workers by providing space to store vehicles and materials.

## Appendix E Major development assessment for new sites submitted during the Regulation 18 consultation

None of these sites were taken forward to the Draft Submission (Regulation 19) version of the Site Allocations DPD.

Further detail on the reasons for why these sites were not taken forward is contained in Site Selection Paper 3: Housing Sites (February 2020).

Site Allocations DPD   Regulation 19 Major Development in the High Weald AONB			
Policy	N/A	SHELAA	984
Site address	The Paddocks, Lewes Road, Ashurst Wood		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	27 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	0.84Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a proposed housing site for 27 dwellings.		
Scale of development	Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the proposed housing site represents an increase of 3% in the built-up area of Ashurst Wood and an increase of 5% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Ashurst Wood.		
Setting of development	The site is on the western side of Ashurst Wood to the west of the A22 (Lewes Road). Ashurst Wood lies at the junction of a trackway linking two old Manors - Shovelstrode and Brambletye, and on the route of a ridgeway track (Hammerwood Road-Cansiron Lane). Ashurst Wood dates back to mediaeval times and the name refers to an area of common or waste land at the top of Wall Hill. The village grew further following the arrival of the railway in East Grinstead in the mid-19th century.		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural</i>		

	<p><i>Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat with no watercourses.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is to the west of Ashurst Wood and adjacent to development along the A22 (Lewes Road).</p>
<p>Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside</p>	<p>The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.</p>
<p>Objective S2 - To protect the</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles</p>

historic pattern and character of settlement	set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. Consideration should be given to the southern boundaries where the site adjoins woodland.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	There are no historic routeways in the immediate vicinity of the site.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure any nearby historic routeways are protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is woodland to the south of the site, some of which is ancient woodland although this is not adjacent to the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	There may be opportunities to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, it is not expected that the site will affect woodland archaeology.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.



Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy. The site will need to meet policy requirements for the provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective due to its location.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site is fairly well-screened on the western and southern side due to the mature trees, and there may be limited views into the site from the A22 (Lewes Road). The site is on the edge of Ashurst Wood. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site</b>	Moderate impact on AONB.

<b>assessment conclusion</b>	
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst development of this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	No
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one site allocation in Ashurst Wood, however, the proposed allocation and this site are not adjacent to each other and so it is considered unlikely there are any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b>  The site would extend the settlement beyond the A22 (Lewes Road). It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is moderate. This may be able to be mitigated by careful design of the site. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site.

**Site Allocations DPD | Regulation 19**  
**Major Development in the High Weald AONB**

Policy	N/A	SHELAA	987
Site address	Land to the east of Park Road, Handcross		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	80 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	4.85Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
<b>Nature of development</b>	This is a proposed housing site for 80 dwellings.		
<b>Scale of development</b>	Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the proposed housing site represents an increase of 23% in the built-up area of Handcross and an increase of 18% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would not be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Handcross.		
<b>Setting of development</b>	The site is to the south-west of Handcross, which is a village split by the A23. The eastern part of the village is older than the western part of the village, and the village lies on the route of the old A23. There are fields and countryside to the south and west of the site. The site is situated on the edge of the Weald Forest Ridge, which is the highest ridge of the High Weald AONB (328km <sup>2</sup> in the north and west of the AONB). The landscape character of the Weald Forest Ridge is defined by the remnants of four mediaeval hunting forests.		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i> , the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.		
	The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland. The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services		

	that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.
<b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b>	
<b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b>	The site is relatively flat with no watercourses.
Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.
Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features	Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.
Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats	The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.
<b>Character component: Settlement</b>	The site is to the west and south-west of Handcross to the west of the A23. It is adjacent to an existing housing allocation to the west and north.
Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside	The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.
Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. The scale of the site may mean that it would affect the historic settlement pattern of Handcross.
Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design	The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual impact of the site.
<b>Character component:</b>	Park Road running along the eastern boundary of the

<b>Routeways</b>	site is a historic lane with a rural character.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway and its character is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	Most of the site comprises woodland, although none is ancient woodland.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	Opportunities should be taken to retain all or some of the existing trees on the site, however, this will significantly impact on the yield of the site.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	Any woodland archaeology present on the site should be protected.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as provision of affordable housing.

Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	There may be views of the site from existing development where it backs onto the site and the surrounding countryside to the south, as well as the PROW on the eastern boundary of the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	High impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst development of this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	No

<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site is not in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This may provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one site allocation in Handcross. The site allocation is to the west of the site, however, separated by one line of dwellings in St. Martin Close. It is considered there could be cumulative impacts when the site and the proposed allocation are both taken into account. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<p><b>MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>Development of the site would result in a significant loss of woodland. For this reason it is considered to be major development. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is high. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site would need to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site.</p>
<b>Stage 2 - Consideration of major development (NPPF paragraph 172) (If major development at Stage 1)</b>	
The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy	The District Plan 2014-2031 sets out the housing requirement for the district for the plan period of 16,390 dwellings. It is important that the housing requirement is met to ensure the District Council can maintain a five-year housing land supply. It will be necessary to ensure that housing needs at settlements in the High Weald AONB are met where possible, including the provision of affordable housing. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for

	<p>delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District. The site would also make a contribution to infrastructure improvements. However, as the Site Allocations DPD includes an over-supply of 455 dwellings to provide flexibility and resilience, this means it may be difficult to justify the need for this development in the High Weald AONB.</p>
<p>The cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some way</p>	<p>The Site Selection Papers set out the robust process that has been undertaken to identify and assess sites to inform the preparation of the Site Allocations DPD. This has involved multiple stages of assessment to systematically test site options against a range of criteria and remove the lowest scoring options from further consideration at each stage. One of these criteria was consideration of the impact on the High Weald AONB. However, as the Site Allocations DPD includes an over-supply of 455 dwellings to provide flexibility and resilience, this means it may be difficult to justify the need for this development in the High Weald AONB.</p>
<p>Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated</p>	<p>It is considered that the main impact on the High Weald AONB will arise from the loss of the woodland and scale of the development. This may be able to be mitigated through the design process and masterplan for the site. The site needs to be developed in accordance with District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p>
<p>Can it be demonstrated the development is in the public interest?</p>	<p>The site would provide affordable housing, however, loss of the woodland and views from the PROW would be affected.</p>
<p>Are there any other exceptional circumstances?</p>	<p>It is considered there are no other exceptional circumstances.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p>There are unlikely to be exceptional circumstances in relation to the need for the development because there are alternative locations outside the High Weald AONB. There would also be loss of woodland which would have an adverse impact on the High Weald AONB. Overall, it is not considered there are exceptional circumstances for this scale of development at this location within the High Weald AONB.</p>



**Site Allocations DPD | Regulation 19**  
**Major Development in the High Weald AONB**

Policy	N/A	SHELAA	997
Site address	Ivy Dene Industrial Estate, Ivy Dene Lane, Ashurst Wood		
<b>Site details</b>			
Allocation	Housing		
Units/Use	30 dwellings		
Gross site area (Ha)	1.10Ha		
<b>Stage 1 - Determining major development (NPPF footnote 55)</b>			
Nature of development	This is a proposed housing site for 30 dwellings.		
Scale of development	<p>Using the built-up area boundary to assess the size of the settlement, the proposed housing site represents an increase of 4% in the built-up area of Ashurst Wood and an increase of 6% in the number of dwellings. The High Weald AONB is a small-scale landscape of small fields, small woodlands and dispersed historic farmsteads and hamlets. The landscape also has perceptual qualities such as tranquillity, dark skies, views and a sense of naturalness. It is considered that the scale of the site would be in keeping with the landscape characteristics due to its size in relation to the existing settlement of Ashurst Wood.</p>		
Setting of development	<p>The site is on the northern side of Ashurst Wood just outside the main settlement. It has an industrial building and yard on the majority of the site and woodland in the northern part of the site. Ashurst Wood lies at the junction of a trackway linking two old Manors - Shovelstrode and Brambletye, and on the route of a ridgeway track (Hammerwood Road-Cansiron Lane). Ashurst Wood dates back to mediaeval times and the name refers to an area of common or waste land at the top of Wall Hill. The village grew further following the arrival of the railway in East Grinstead in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.</p>		
	High Weald National Character Area; High Weald Landscape Character Area		
	<p>According to Roberts and Wrathmell's <i>An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England</i>, the High Weald AONB is classified as South-Eastern Province: Weald Sub-province (Western Weald). It has a medium to high density of settlement dispersion mainly formed of historic farmsteads and hamlets with later villages.</p>		
	<p>The High Weald AONB contributes to ecosystem services. It provides Regulating Services (the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem services), for example, in the form of carbon storage by woodland.</p>		

	<p>The High Weald AONB has Provisioning Services (the products obtained from ecosystems) including timber and food production. Supporting Services (the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services) are present such as soil formation, nutrient cycling and water cycling. The landscape also provides Cultural Services (the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems) in the form of cultural heritage, recreation and tourism opportunities and aesthetic experience. Together these ecosystem services are an important part of the High Weald AONB landscape and its natural beauty.</p>
<p><b>The potential for significant adverse impact on AONB purposes for which the area has been designated (as set out in the High Weald AONB Statement of Significance)</b></p>	
<p><b>Character component: Geology, landform and water systems</b></p>	<p>The site is relatively flat with a watercourse to the west of the site within the woodland that is adjacent to the site.</p>
<p>Objective G1 - To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies</p>	<p>There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, the site should be designed to protect river catchments taking into account planning policies and best practice. For example, it may be appropriate to have SuDS on-site.</p>
<p>Objective G2 - To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features</p>	<p>Best practice should be complied with to protect soils during construction from compaction, pollution and erosion. Undisturbed soils should be protected and measures should be taken to minimise sterilisation of soils by permanent impermeable surfaces.</p>
<p>Objective G3 - To help secure climatic conditions and rates of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald's valued landscape and habitats</p>	<p>The site should seek to achieve sustainable construction and contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption through its design and in accordance with planning policies and best practice. The site should encourage sustainable transport.</p>
<p><b>Character component: Settlement</b></p>	<p>The site is to the north of Ashurst Wood although separate to the main settlement.</p>
<p>Objective S1 - To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside</p>	<p>The site should achieve biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, planning policies and best practice. There should be consideration of how the site supports ecosystem services which should be taken into account in the design of the site.</p>
<p>Objective S2 - To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide. The site would extend the settlement of Ashurst Wood to the north, however, some of the site is previously developed land.</p>
<p>Objective S3 - To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and</p>	<p>The site should be designed according to the principles set out in the High Weald Housing Design Guide and the High Weald AONB Colour Study. Appropriate use of colour for the buildings may help to reduce the visual</p>

design	impact of the site.
<b>Character component: Routeways</b>	Ivy Dene Lane is a historic routeway and leads into a historic PROW.
Objective R1 - To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways	The site should be designed to ensure the historic routeway and its character is protected.
Objective R2 - To enhance the ecological function of routeways	The site should seek opportunities in its design to improve the ecological function of routeways.
<b>Character component: Woodland</b>	There is woodland on the northern part of the site and woodland to the west and east of the site. There is no ancient woodland in the immediate vicinity of the site.
Objective W1 - To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland	The woodland on the site should be retained.
Objective W2 - To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale	The site should use locally grown and local provenance stock for tree planting and avoid imported stock or soil.
Objective W3 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands	Any woodland archaeology present on the site should be protected.
Objective W4 - To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets	The site should seek opportunities to use local wood in its construction, and for any fencing and gates.
<b>Character component: Field and heath</b>	The site is not part of a historic field system although current boundaries on land to the west and east of the site match historic field boundaries.
Objective FH1 - To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, there may be opportunities to support local food producers once the site is occupied.
Objective FH2 - To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands	The site is not part of a historic field system, however, opportunities should be taken to retain hedges, ditches and other boundary features.
Objective FH3 - To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats	Connectivity for wildlife should be maintained between the site and its associated boundary features with the fields to the north and east, and woodland to the west and south. The site should achieve biodiversity net gain.
Objective FH4 - To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath	There may be limited opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective, however, any archaeology found during construction should be investigated in line with standard requirements.
<b>Land-based economy and related rural life</b>	It is unknown at this stage if the site will contribute towards the land-based economy, however, there may

	be local employment opportunities and opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers, such as space to store vehicles and materials, as well as provision of affordable housing.
Objective LBE1 - To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute towards land management activities, for example, through the construction phase.
Objective LBE2 - To improve amenities, infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing), and skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty	The site will provide affordable housing and there may be opportunities to provide suitable housing for land-based workers. The site should seek opportunities to contribute to local communities and community services. The site may help support rural services and amenities such as bus services, village shops and the post office through the additional people that the housing will bring.
<b>Other qualities</b>	The site is fairly well-screened on all sides due to the woodland and mature trees. The site is on the edge of Ashurst Wood. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies need to be considered through the design process and masterplan for the site.
Objective OQ1 - To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ2 - To increase the contribution of individuals and communities to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB.
Objective OQ3 - To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty	There may be opportunities for the site to contribute to this objective through promotion of the High Weald AONB. The site should seek opportunities to improve access to the countryside and the PROW network.
Objective OQ4 - To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value	Consideration should be given to dark sky-friendly lighting, protect tranquillity and protect valued views.
<b>High Weald AONB Unit site assessment conclusion</b>	Low impact on AONB.
<b>Conservation and enhancement of the High Weald AONB</b>	Whilst development of this site will lead to development in the High Weald AONB, there are also opportunities to conserve and enhance the AONB as described above when considering the High Weald AONB Management Plan objectives. At a local scale, built development would lead to changes in the landscape and potential

	changes to its character.
<b>Can the proposed allocation be described as 'major' in the ordinary meaning of the word?</b>	No
<b>District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</b>	It is considered that the site is in accordance with Policy DP16 at this stage of the plan-making process due to its nature, scale and setting. It is recommended that the design and layout of the site takes into account the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan which have been considered above. This will provide opportunities to conserve and enhance the High Weald AONB. This will be assessed further at the time of the planning application and prior to its determination.
<b>Cumulative impacts</b>	In line with the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy set out in the District Plan, it is recognised that there will be an element of development in the High Weald AONB to meet the needs of those settlements within the AONB. There is also likely to be development across the High Weald AONB in other districts and boroughs. The Site Allocations DPD does propose one site allocation in Ashurst Wood, however, the proposed allocation and this site are not adjacent to each other and so it is considered unlikely there are any cumulative impacts at a local scale. The Site Selection Papers detail the process by which the housing sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocations DPD have been identified, tested and found to be the most suitable for delivering housing growth to meet the residual housing need of the District.
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>NOT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT</b>  The site would extend the settlement of Ashurst Wood to the north, however, some of the site is previously developed land. It is considered that the potential for a significant adverse impact on AONB purposes is low. This may be able to be mitigated by careful design of the site. Opportunities to protect tranquillity and dark skies should be taken. The site needs to be developed as a landscape-led approach in accordance with District Plan Policy DP16: High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The High Weald AONB Management Plan, High Weald Housing Design Guide and associated documents such as the High Weald AONB Colour Study also need to be taken into account when designing the site.

**Appendix F      Natural England representation submitted during  
the Regulation 19 consultation**

Date: 28 September 2020  
Our ref: 324095



Planning Policy  
Mid Sussex District Council  
Oaklands  
Oaklands Road  
Haywards Heath  
West Sussex  
RH16 1SS

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Sir / Madam

**Planning consultation: Mid Sussex District Council Site Allocations DPD - Regulation 19 Consultation**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 03 August 2020 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England welcomes the approach taken by your authority to consult with Natural England at various stages in the preparation of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. We are pleased that our engagement has resulted in our comments/concerns being addressed in this version of the plan. In particular, we welcome the positive engagement by Mid Sussex District Council with both Natural England and the High Weald AONB Unit in the assessment of the Regulation 19 proposed site allocations within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

From this assessment, we recognise and welcome that a conclusion has been reached that none of the proposed site allocations (Policies SA7, SA8, SA25, SA26, SA27, SA28, SA29, SA32) constitutes major development within the AONB.

Our comments on your Regulation 19 Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) Site allocations and development policies, followed by general comments are as follows.

**Comments on specific allocations**

**SA 7 - Cedars, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage**

We support the requirement of this allocation to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

**SA 8 - Pease Pottage Nurseries, Brighton Road, Pease Pottage**

We support the requirement of this allocation to undertake a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

We also support the requirements regarding nearby ancient woodland in line with Natural England's [standing advice](#).

**SA 18 - Former East Grinstead Police Station, College Lane, East Grinstead**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

**SA 19 – Land south of Crawley Down Road, Felbridge**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

We support the requirement of this allocation to provide suitable SuDS and greenspace to address potential impacts on the Hedgecourt Lake SSSI.

**SA 20 – Land south and west of Imberhorne Upper School, Imberhorne Lane, East Grinstead**

We support the requirements of this allocation to provide an appropriately managed strategic Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to mitigate increased recreational disturbance on Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC); such a SANG proposal must be considered in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

We also support the requirement for potential impacts of development on Hedgecourt Lake SSSI to be understood and adequately mitigated.

We also support the requirements regarding nearby ancient woodland in line with Natural England's [standing advice](#).

**SA 22 – Land north of Burleigh Lane, Crawley Down**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

**SA 25 – Land west of Selsfield Road, Ardingly**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

We support the requirements of this allocation to undertake a LVIA to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

**SA 26 – Land south of Hammerwood Road, Ashurst Wood have**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

We support the requirements of this allocation to undertake a LVIA to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

**SA 27 – Land at St. Martin Close, Handcross**

We support the requirements of this allocation to undertake a LVIA to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

**SA 28 – Land South of The Old Police House, Birchgrove Road, Horsted Keynes**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

We support the requirements of this allocation to undertake a LVIA to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

**SA 29 – Land south of St. Stephens Church, Hamsland, Horsted Keynes**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.



We support the requirements of this allocation to undertake a LVIA to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

### **SA 32 – Withypitts Farm, Selsfield Road, Turners Hill**

We recommend a requirement be included for this development to contribute to the existing strategic solution in accordance with District Plan Policy **DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC**.

We support the requirements of this allocation to undertake a LVIA to consider potential impacts on the special qualities of the High Weald AONB.

## **Comments on Development Policies**

### **SA38: Air Quality**

Whilst we support the requirement of this policy for applicants to demonstrate there is not an unacceptable impact on air quality resulting from their proposals we recommend the following change in wording to strengthen the protection of designated sites.

*“Development proposals that are likely to have an impact on local air quality, including those in or within relevant proximity to existing or potential Air Quality Management Areas (AQMs) or **designated nature conservation areas sensitive to changes in air quality**, will need to demonstrate measures/ mitigation that are incorporated into the design to minimise any impacts associated with air quality.*

We recognise there is specific wording established for air quality impacts for Ashdown Forest and this suggestion is additional for any other relevant sites which could be potentially impacted by changes to air quality.

## **General comments**

### **Biodiversity net gain**

We strongly support the requirements of all allocations to ensure there is a net gain to biodiversity as well as the general principle for site allocations to: *“Conserve and enhance areas of wildlife value and ensure there is a net gain to biodiversity, using the most up-to-date version of the Biodiversity Metric. Avoid any loss of biodiversity through ecological protection and enhancement, and good design. Where it is not possible, mitigate and as a last resort compensate for any loss. Achieve a net gain in biodiversity (measured in accordance with Government guidance and legislation), for example, by incorporating new natural habitats, appropriate to the context of the site, into development and designing buildings with integral bat boxes and bird nesting opportunities, green/brown roofs and green walling, in appropriate circumstances in accordance with District Plan Policy”.*

We would still however recommend that your DPD should include requirements to monitor biodiversity net gain. This should include indicators to demonstrate the amount and type of gain provided through development. The indicators should be as specific as possible to help build an evidence base to take forward for future reviews of the plan, for example the total number and type of biodiversity units created, the number of developments achieving biodiversity net gains and a record of on-site and off-site contributions.

We recommend that Mid Sussex District Council works with local partners, including the Local Environmental Record Centre and Wildlife Trusts, to share data and consider requirements for long term habitat monitoring. Monitoring requirements should be clear on what is expected from landowners who may be delivering biodiversity net gains on behalf of developers. This will be particularly important for strategic housing allocations, and providing as much information on monitoring upfront as possible will help to streamline the project stage.

## **Water efficiency**

Your Authority contains areas of Serious Water Stress as designated by the Environment Agency. For developments in Southern Water Services drinking water supply area Natural England recommends water efficiency policies should be developed to support Southern Water's "Target 100".

This target, of 100 litres per person per day by 2040 has been identified by Southern Water to avoid the need for water supply options that are likely to damage biodiversity or/and effect protected landscapes. For development in other companies' supply areas Natural England supports the Environment Agency's recommendation of a maximum of 110 litres per person per day.

Water efficiency measures will help reduce the current impact of water resources on the natural environment and thereby contribute to more resilient landscapes and seas, one of the aims in Natural England's 'Building partnerships for nature's recovery: Action Plan 2020/21'<sup>1</sup>. Reducing the water we use will also contribute to the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan aspirations for clean and plentiful water and to restore sustainable abstraction.

### **Soil**

Soil is a finite resource, and fulfils many roles that are beneficial to society. As a component of the natural environment, it is important that soils are protected and used sustainably.

The DPD should recognise that development (soil sealing) has a major and usually irreversible adverse impact on soils. Mitigation should aim to minimise soil disturbance and to retain as many ecosystem services as possible through careful soil management during the construction process.

Soils of high environmental value (e.g. wetland and carbon stores such as peatland) should also be considered to contribute to ecological connectivity, as such these soils should be conserved and protected from negative impacts.

We recommend that allocation policies refer to the [Defra Code of practice for the sustainable use of soils on construction sites](#).

### **Comments on HRA**

Natural England notes that your authority, as competent authority, has undertaken an appropriate assessment of this DPD in accordance with regulation 63 of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Natural England is a statutory consultee on the appropriate assessment stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process.

Your appropriate assessment concludes that your authority is able to ascertain that the implementation of this DPD will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of any of European sites in question.

Having considered the assessment, and the measures proposed to mitigate for all identified adverse effects that could potentially occur as a result of the proposal, chiefly changes in air quality and increased recreational disturbance, Natural England advises that we concur with the assessment conclusions, providing that all required mitigation measures are appropriately secured in any future planning permissions given.

### **Comments on SA**

We have no specific comments to make regarding our statutory remit and your sustainability appraisal.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me on 07554226006 OR 02080266551.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/906289/natural-england-action-plan-2020-21.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906289/natural-england-action-plan-2020-21.pdf)

Should the DPD change significantly, please consult us again.

Yours faithfully

Nathan Burns  
Area Team 14 - Kent and Sussex