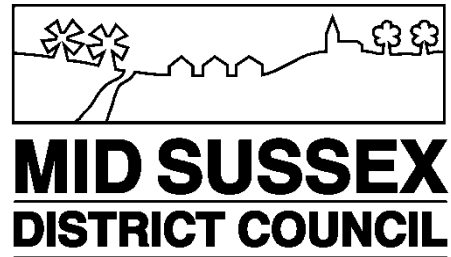


**Mid Sussex  
District Council**



**District Plan 2021 - 2038:  
Site Selection Conclusions Paper**

January 2022

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 District Plan policy DP4: Housing committed the Council to reviewing the plan, starting in 2021, with submission to the Secretary of State in 2023. The review of the District Plan identified the need to update the housing requirement to cover the new plan period to 2038. The District Plan 2021 – 2038 will seek to deliver sufficient housing sites to meet the minimum housing requirement for Mid Sussex and therefore will allocate additional sites for housing.
- 1.2 In order to decide which sites will be allocated for development in the revised District Plan, the Council carried out a robust process to identify, assess and score the potential sites. The first stage of that process was to update the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), which sets out the sites which will be considered through the Site Selection Process. Once established the palette of sites were then assessed against the Site Selection Methodology. This assessment process resulted in a shortlist of sites, that were then tested through the Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Transport Assessment to confirm their suitability for allocation in the District Plan 2021 – 2038.

## 2. Site Selection Process

### Methodology

- 2.1 A Site Selection Methodology was developed for the preparation of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD). This methodology provided a robust and transparent site selection process that has stood up to scrutiny at the SADPD Examination. Therefore, it has provided the basis for the methodology used to select sites for the District Plan 2021 – 2038.
- 2.2 The District Plan Site Selection methodology is broadly similar to the SADPD methodology and reflects the requirements of the NPPF (2021). There are now 14 criteria rather 17, as criteria with a similar focus being merged, such as landscape and AONB and consideration of strategic transport and infrastructure matters no longer an assessment criteria, but assessed through other evidence base documents. The methodology has been subject to consultation with stakeholders including neighbouring local authorities, developers and planning consultants. Comments received during the consultation have been reflected in the assessment criteria applied.
- 2.3 The Site Selection process is a three-stage process, which is summarised below:

#### Stage 1: Site Identification: SHELAA

- 2.4 An updated SHELAA has been prepared, which included a Call for Sites between January and February 2021. The SHELAA contains sites from the following sources:
  - Sites previously considered during preparation of the District Plan and Site Allocations DPD (within previous versions of the SHELAA)

- Sites submitted during the Call for Sites in January/February 2021
- Sites submitted on an ad-hoc basis up until 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Sites submitted after this date have not been included due to the time required to assess and test sites individually and in combination.

2.5 This has resulted in a pool of 268 housing sites, which have been assessed through the Site Selection Process.

## Stage 2: Site Assessment

2.6 The Site Assessment stage is a three-part process, which is explained in more detail in District Plan Review: Site Selection Methodology (January 2022) and can be found at [District Plan Review - Mid Sussex District Council](#)



**2(a) Relationship to Settlements** – Sites that are disconnected from existing settlements and or of a size which means that they cannot provide significant on-site facilities/ services (and are therefore not likely to represent sustainable development as set out in the NPPF) were rejected at this stage. An assessment was made as the degree of separation from an existing built-up area boundary (as defined on the Policies Maps). The assessment was based on the consideration of:

- Proximity of site to defined built up area boundary;
- Physical separation of site from existing built-up area by features such as ancient woodland and watercourses;
- Ability to safely access the site, on foot via existing footpath from nearest settlement.

The sites rejected at this stage were not subject to assessment against the selection criteria at stages 2(b) and 2(c) as they do not represent sustainable development.

**2(b) Showstoppers** – Showstoppers are those environmental constraints and deliverability considerations for which the site assessment can result in very negative impact against the site assessment criteria. This approach is supported by the NPPF which is clear that development in the most environmentally sensitive locations (ie Ancient Woodland/AONB) should be avoided. Sites with the greatest constraints i.e. showstoppers, or where a significant proportion of a site is affected have been excluded from further assessment at this stage. This enabled the

detailed assessment to strictly focus on those sites most likely to be considered reasonable alternatives.

**2(c) Overall assessment** – The sites left in the pool of sites once stage 2(a) and 2 (b) were completed were subject to assessment against the 14 detailed assessment criteria. The assessment criteria are set out in Appendix 1. Sites classified as “Significant” (1,000+ dwellings) were also be subject to additional testing against the criteria/questions set out in the methodology. Sites rejected at this stage were not subject to further assessment and were not included in the ‘Development Scenarios’ that were tested at stage 3.

### Stage 3: Scenario/ In-Combination Testing

- 2.7 All sites that progressed past stage 2(c) have been developed into development scenarios, which have been subject to further assessment through the Sustainability Appraisal. All sites considered to have potential for allocation at the end of stage 2 have been assessed against the Sustainability Framework as set out in the Sustainability Appraisal to consider the sustainability credentials of each site independently and cumulatively. The findings of this work helped to identify potential scenarios to address the housing need in the district and corresponding preferred options.
- 2.8 The SA is applied as an iterative process running parallel to the preparation of the District Plan. Therefore, the findings of the further evidence testing, such as the transport study and Habitat Regulation Assessment will inform the content of the SA, as well as the SA identifying further options that may need to be tested further through the evidence base.
- 2.9 The most sustainable scenario has then been subject to further evidence testing including, transport modelling, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Air Quality Modelling and Viability Assessment.
- 2.10 Stage 3 also identified sites to be rejected on the grounds that they are not suitable/deliverable as a result of additional due diligence (including responses to the Developer Questionnaire – see below).

### Consultation

- 2.11 Once the initial draft site assessments had been completed by the Council, these were then sent to the site promoters/developers/planning agents for fact checking. At the fact checking stage the Council were seeking feedback from the site promoters relating to any factual inaccuracies in the assessment. Any feedback received was reviewed and site assessments were amended where there were any factual inaccuracies, whilst ensuring that assessments were undertaken in a consistent manner. The responses received and the council’s response is set out in Appendix 2.

- 2.12 Site promoters were also asked to complete a Developer Questionnaire, which provided more information about the deliverability of the site covering matters such as timescale for delivery, land ownership, delivery mechanisms and infrastructure requirements. This has informed the Site Selection process in combination with the findings of the assessments against the methodology.

### Other considerations

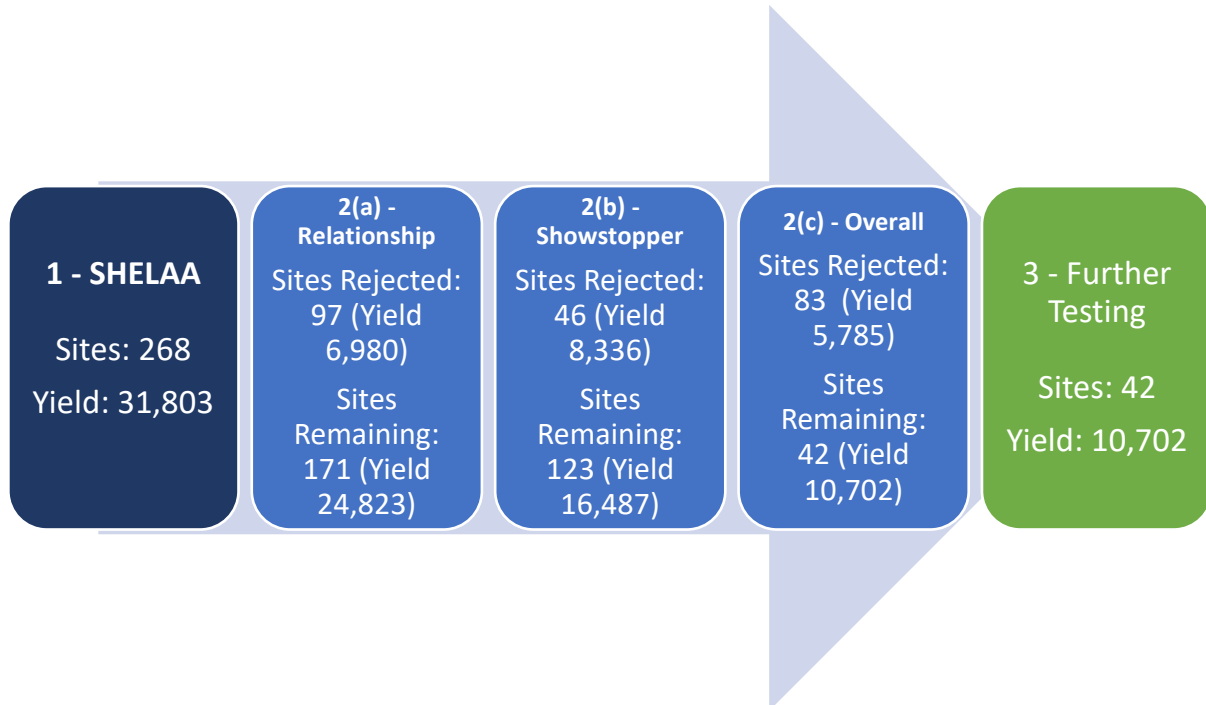
- 2.13 The assessment has included consideration of sites against 'Made' Neighbourhood Plans, if applicable. There is not a specific criteria for this within the assessment criteria due the differences in content of the various Neighbourhood Plans, and the need to be consistent when assessing sites. The assessment has taken into account any land use designations in the Neighbourhood Plans on the site and consideration will be given to how this designation may impact on the delivery of the site for housing uses. However, it is important to note that the objective of the District Plan will be to, as a minimum, meet the housing needs of Mid Sussex and this may result in conflict with policies in Neighbourhood Plans (noting the legal position that the latest adopted plan takes precedence).

### Site Assessment Proforma

- 2.14 The final site assessment pro-forma for each site is included in Appendix 3. The final assessment reflects the findings of the 'fact check' exercise.

### 3. Site Selection Conclusions

3.1 Following application of the Site Selection methodology, the initial 268 sites were refined to 42 for further testing at Stage 3 as set out in the diagram below:



3.2 Appendix 4 sets out each site considered through the Site Selection Process on a settlement-by-settlement basis, the stage it was rejected at, and the reasons for rejection.

### Significant Sites

3.3 The Site Selection Methodology defined Significant Sites as those proposing greater than 1,000 dwellings. These have been subject to additional scrutiny as described in the methodology. Because of the more challenging nature of delivering larger scaled sites, due to their infrastructure requirements, constraints, on-site provision of facilities and services, land assembly/ delivery mechanisms, and likely phasing (including potential continued development beyond the plan period), additional considerations and due diligence are required.

3.4 Significant Sites are of a scale that would deliver infrastructure and community facilities on-site, such as:

- Primary School
- GP surgery
- Retail
- Employment
- Village Centre
- Community Facilities (e.g. community hall)
- Allotments

- Country Park
- Sport, recreation and leisure uses
- Open Space

As such, the detail provided within Developer Questionnaires and information submitted to the Council as part of the submission to the SHELAA (e.g. indicative masterplans and visioning documents, as well as detailed technical evidence. This can be viewed at [District Plan Review - Mid Sussex District Council](#)) has also been used to determine the most appropriate sites for allocation; given that sites of this size have the potential to be self-sustaining as well as have the ability to improve sustainability of existing settlements that have deficiencies in services and facilities.

In total, 5 Significant Sites were submitted to the Council for consideration:

SHLAAID	Site	Settlement	Total Yield	Plan Period Yield
736/793	Land at Ansty Farm, Cuckfield Road, Ansty	Ansty	1,600	1,600
740	Broad location to the West of Burgess Hill	Burgess Hill	1,400	1,400
18	Crabbet Park, Old Hollow, Near Crawley	Copthorne	2,300	2,300
799	Land south of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common	Sayers Common	2,000	1,850
678	Broad location West of A23	Twineham	2,000	900
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,300</b>	<b>8,050</b>

- 3.5 Due to the scale of these sites, there is a difference between the total yield proposed, and the amount that could be delivered (according to the Site Promoter) within the plan period to 2038. Note that, where Significant Sites are to be allocated, they will be allocated for their total yield with the expectation that some dwellings will not be delivered until after 2038.
- 3.6 The conclusions reached on each of these sites is as follows (with further details in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4).

#### Land at Ansty Farm, Cuckfield Road, Ansty

- 3.7 The site has been proposed for 1,600 dwellings and proposed on-site infrastructure includes:
- Primary School
  - Leisure
  - Village Centre
  - Community Facilities
  - Self/Custom Build
  - Sports Pitches
  - Allotments and Community Orchard
  - Village Park



- Country Park

3.8 The village of Ansty does not contain a Primary School, GP surgery or village centre with convenience retail. No current residents are within a 15-minute walk of these facilities or services. Provision of such facilities on a site of this scale will have the potential for existing residents to be able to travel sustainably for their day-to-day needs and reduce reliance on the private car. The proposal includes a new road along the southern boundary of the site which will act as a relief road for Ansty village linking Burgess Hill with Cuckfield. The provision of this road will be subject to further detailed transport testing and modelling.

3.9 There are no significant constraints on the site that would impact the deliverability of the site. The site is not within flood zone 2/3, there are no biodiversity designations within or close to the site. The areas of ancient woodland within the site can be protected, as can the setting of the listed building. An area of 99 hectares of land within the AONB will be managed as a country park, whilst ensuring any future management plan is consistent with the objectives of the High Weald AONB management Plan.

**Conclusion:** Propose for allocation

#### Broad location to the West of Burgess Hill

3.10 The site has been proposed for 1,400 dwellings and proposed on-site infrastructure includes:

- Primary School
- Leisure
- Retail

3.11 This site is located on the edge of Burgess Hill, the district's largest town where a range of services and facilities and public transport exist. In order to be self-sustaining, the site also proposes on-site infrastructure to serve day-to-day needs.

3.12 The site is also adjacent to a previous District Plan employment allocation (at the Northern Arc and 'The Hub') which is currently under construction, with some elements complete. It is also within walking distance of the proposed Science and Technology Park, a 50ha broad location identified in the adopted District Plan and allocation defined within the Site Allocations DPD (at examination). There are therefore numerous opportunities for future residents of this site to be able to work close to where they live, without relying on the private car.

3.13 There are no significant constraints on the site that would impact the deliverability of the site. Small parts of the site lie within flood zone 2/3, these areas are outside the developable area of the site. There are no biodiversity designations within or close to the site. The areas of ancient woodland within the site can be protected and impacts of development mitigated.

**Conclusion:** Propose for allocation

## Crabbet Park, Old Hollow, Near Crawley

- 3.14 The site has been proposed for 2,300 dwellings and proposed on-site infrastructure includes:
- Primary School
  - Leisure
  - Retail
  - GP
- 3.15 This site has previously been promoted to the District Council during preparation of the adopted District Plan. The site was rejected during that process due to concerns over landownership / assembly and sewerage / transport capacity.
- 3.16 The site has been re-promoted for inclusion within the updated District Plan. Whilst work is underway by the site promoter to address previous concerns, this has not yet been completed. However, there is confidence that a solution can be found, and the site can be delivered. Based on the evidence submitted to date, it is concluded that significant infrastructure improvements required to enable delivery to commence on the site (subject to allocation) and this will take time to be delivered. Therefore, it has been concluded that it is likely that only 1,000 dwellings of the total 2,300 dwellings are deliverable within the plan period to 2038.
- 3.17 Based on the analysis of constraints, connectivity to adjoining settlements (in this case Crawley) and potential delivery, it is proposed to allocate this site. Further work will be required ahead of Submission to demonstrate the precise yield and the trajectory for delivery.
- 3.18 There are no significant constraints on the site that would impact the deliverability of the site. Small parts of the site lie within flood zone 2/3, these areas are outside the developable area of the site. There are no biodiversity designations within or close to the site. The areas of ancient woodland within the site can be protected and as can the setting of the listed building within the site boundary.

**Conclusion:** Propose for allocation

## Land south of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common

- 3.19 The site has been proposed for 1,800 dwellings and proposed on-site infrastructure includes:
- Primary School
  - Leisure
  - Retail (2,000-4,000 sqm)
  - Commercial (5,000-9,000 sqm)
  - GP
  - Community Hall

- 3.20 The village of Sayers Common does not contain a Primary School, GP surgery or village centre with convenience retail. No current residents are within a 15-minute walk of these facilities or services. Provision of such facilities on a site of this scale will have the potential for existing residents to be able to travel sustainably for their day-to-day needs and reduce reliance on the private car.
- 3.21 There are no significant constraints on the site that would impact the deliverability of the site. There are no areas of the site affected by flood zone 2/3. There are no biodiversity designations, areas of ancient woodland within or close to the site. There are no heritage assets within the site.

**Conclusion:** Propose for allocation

### Broad location West of A23

- 3.22 The site has been proposed for a total of 2,000 dwellings, 900 in the plan period, (within Mid Sussex – as part of a new settlement scheme crossing into Horsham district) and the proposed on-site infrastructure includes:
- Primary School
  - GP
  - Retail
  - Employment
- 3.23 The Broad location West of A23 has been submitted to both Horsham and Mid Sussex as part of a wider scheme within both authority areas (approximately 8,000-10,000 dwellings total). The site promoter has indicated that 900 dwellings would be deliverable within Mid Sussex in the plan period.
- 3.24 The Horsham Local Plan review is in progress, with Regulation 18 consultation completed. Horsham District Council is awaiting approval to consult on a Regulation 19 version of the Plan. The proposed Regulation 19 document was approved by Cabinet in July 2021 and did not include the element of this site within Horsham District. This ultimately rules out the comprehensive scheme of 8,000 – 10,000 dwellings as it is not supported cross-boundary.
- 3.25 Whilst the site promoter has identified on-site infrastructure, a smaller scheme comprising just the Mid Sussex element would not be sustainable and would not benefit existing communities within the district. It is detached from existing Mid Sussex settlements.
- 3.26 The site is not sustainably located in relation to existing services and facilities and provision of only 900 dwellings within the plan period is not likely to provide sufficient facilities and services to be self-sustaining. In addition, delivery is uncertain, and no detail has been provided to demonstrate infrastructure issues relating to transport and sewerage can be resolved. A site of this scale, at this location would need significant investment in the highway network including link roads to and junctions on the A23. This means that deliverability of the site cannot be demonstrated.

- 3.27 There are no significant environmental constraints on the site that would impact the deliverability of the site. Small parts of the site lie within flood zone 2/3, these areas are outside the developable area of the site. There are no biodiversity designations within or close to the site. The areas of ancient woodland within the site can be protected. The site would be visible from the South Downs National Park, the Council is not satisfied that there would be no adverse impact on the setting of the Souths Down National Park.

**Conclusion:** Do not allocate

## Housing Allocations

- 3.28 The following sites (fewer than 1,000 dwellings) progressed through stages 2a/2b/2c and were subject to further evidence base testing. These sites performed best against the methodology and evidence base as a whole (including Sustainability Appraisal) and are therefore concluded as the most sustainable and deliverable sites given all reasonable alternatives. Reasons for rejecting sites at all stages are set out in Appendix 4.
- 3.29 These sites are therefore proposed for allocation within the Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) District Plan 2021 – 2038:

DP Ref	SHLAA ID	Site	Settlement	Yield
DP9	573	Batchelors Farm, Keymer Road	Burgess Hill	33
DPH10	198	Land off West Hoathly Road	East Grinstead	45
DPH11	858	Land at Hurstwood Lane	Haywards Heath	55
DPH12	508	Land at Junction of Hurstwood Lane and Colwell Lane		30
DPH13	556	Land east of Borde Hill Lane		60
DPH14	688	Land to west of Turners Hill Road	Crawley Down	350
DPH15	743	Hurst Farm, Turners Hill Road		37
DPH16	13	Land west of Kemps	Hurstpierpoint	90
DPH17	984	The Paddocks Lewes Road	Ashurst Wood	8
DPH18	617	Land at Foxhole Farm	Bolney	100
DPH19	543	Land West of London Road (north)		81
DPH20	1040	Land rear of Daltons Farm and The Byre, The Street		50
DPH21	526	Land east of Paynesfield		30
DPH22	1026	Land at Chesapeake and Meadow View, Reeds Lane	Sayers Common	33
DPH23	601	Land at Coombe Farm, London Road		210
DPH24	830	Land to the west of Kings Business Centre, Reeds Lane		100
DPH25	1003	Land to South of LVS Hassocks, London Road		120
DPH26	1020	Ham Lane Farm House, Ham Lane	Scaynes Hill	30
DPH27	1013	Land at Hoathly Hill	West Hoathly	18
DPH28	631	Challoners, Cuckfield Road	Ansty	37
DPH29	784	Land to west of Marwick Close, Bolney Road		45
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,562</b>

## Distribution

3.30 The updated District Plan period is 2021 – 2038. There is therefore an overlap with the current District Plan (2014 – 2031), within which growth is already planned. This includes future anticipated completions on District Plan allocations, Sites DPD

allocations, 'Made' Neighbourhood Plan allocations and sites with extant planning permission. The following table sets out the future growth distribution within the district from all sources, for the plan period to 2038.

Settlement	Commitments (at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021)	District Plan 2021 – 2038 Allocations	Total Housing Supply 2021 - 2038
Albourne	6	0	6
Ansty	18	1,682	1,700
Ardingly	44	0	44
Ashurst Wood	108	8	116
Balcombe	50	0	50
Bolney	63	261	324
Burgess Hill	5,521	1,433	6,954
Copthorne	447	1,000	1,447
Crawley Down	179	387	566
Cuckfield	83	0	83
East Grinstead	1,829	45	1,874
Handcross	66	0	66
Hassocks	845	0	845
Haywards Heath	1,092	145	1,237
Horsted Keynes	56	0	56
Hurstpierpoint	28	90	118
Lindfield	104	0	104
Pease Pottage	423	0	423
Sayers Common	181	2,313	2,494
Scaynes Hill	231	30	261
Sharpthorne	45	0	45
Slaugham	17	0	17
Staplefield	0	0	0
Turners Hill	61	0	61
Twineham	10	0	10
Warninglid	5	0	5
West Hoathly	7	18	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,519</b>	<b>7,412</b>	<b>18,931</b>

## **Appendices** *(see separate documents)*

Appendix 1 – Assessment Criteria

Appendix 2 – Response to ‘Fact checking’ exercise

Appendix 3 – Site Assessment Proformas

Appendix 4 – Site Assessment Conclusions by Settlement