

Mid Sussex District Council

District Plan 2021-2039

Setting of the South Downs National Park

Assessment of SHELAA Sites

DRAFT – Version: 10th October 2022

Contents

1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	South Downs National Park	2
3.0	Legislation and Policy Context	4
4.0	Methodology.....	6
Appendix 1: Example Assessment Template		9
Appendix 2: Map of Assessed SHELAA Sites		10
Appendix 3: Setting of the South Downs National Park Assessment of SHELAA Sites		11

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 was adopted in March 2018. Policy DP4: Housing commits Mid Sussex District Council (the Council) to reviewing the District Plan. National planning policy also requires Local Plans to be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and then updated as required.
- 1.2 The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that the national planning policy on development in the setting of a National Park has been fully considered in the preparation of the District Plan 2021-2039. There will be ongoing work to refine the assessments as further information becomes available.
- 1.3 As part of the review process and preparation of the District Plan 2021-2039, individuals, landowners, developers and site promoters were invited to put forward sites to be considered through the update to the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The SHELAA will be a crucial piece of the evidence base for the District Plan. The sites submitted have been assessed for their potential for allocation as part of the District Plan process.
- 1.4 This paper sets out an approach to assessing the potential impact of the SHELAA sites considered to potentially be within the setting of the South Downs National Park. Eight SHELAA sites have been assessed and this paper records the assessment of these SHELAA sites and has a high-level conclusion as to the potential impact of the site on the setting of the South Downs National Park. Each SHELAA site is assessed as a matter of planning judgement taking into account the legislation and policy context. This assessment forms part of the site selection process and background evidence for the District Plan.
- 1.5 It is important to note that this paper is an assessment of the potential impact of the SHELAA sites on the setting of the South Downs National Park, rather than whether a SHELAA site is suitable for allocation in the District Plan. The process of determining whether it is acceptable development is through the site selection process for the District Plan. The decision on which sites are allocated in the District Plan is a separate decision-making process.

2.0 South Downs National Park

- 2.1 The South Downs was established as a National Park in 2010. The South Downs National Park covers over 1,600km² of the lowland landscape in Hampshire, West Sussex and East Sussex. The chalk ridge of the South Downs is often described as the spine of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.2 The South Downs Local Plan was adopted in July 2019. The Local Plan is landscape-led and seeks to deliver ecosystem services. The Local Plan is based on the statutory purposes and duty for national parks.
- 2.3 Approximately 11% of Mid Sussex District is within the South Downs National Park. The boundary is to the south of Burgess Hill, Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint and includes the downland villages of Fulking, Poynings and Pyecombe (Figure 1).

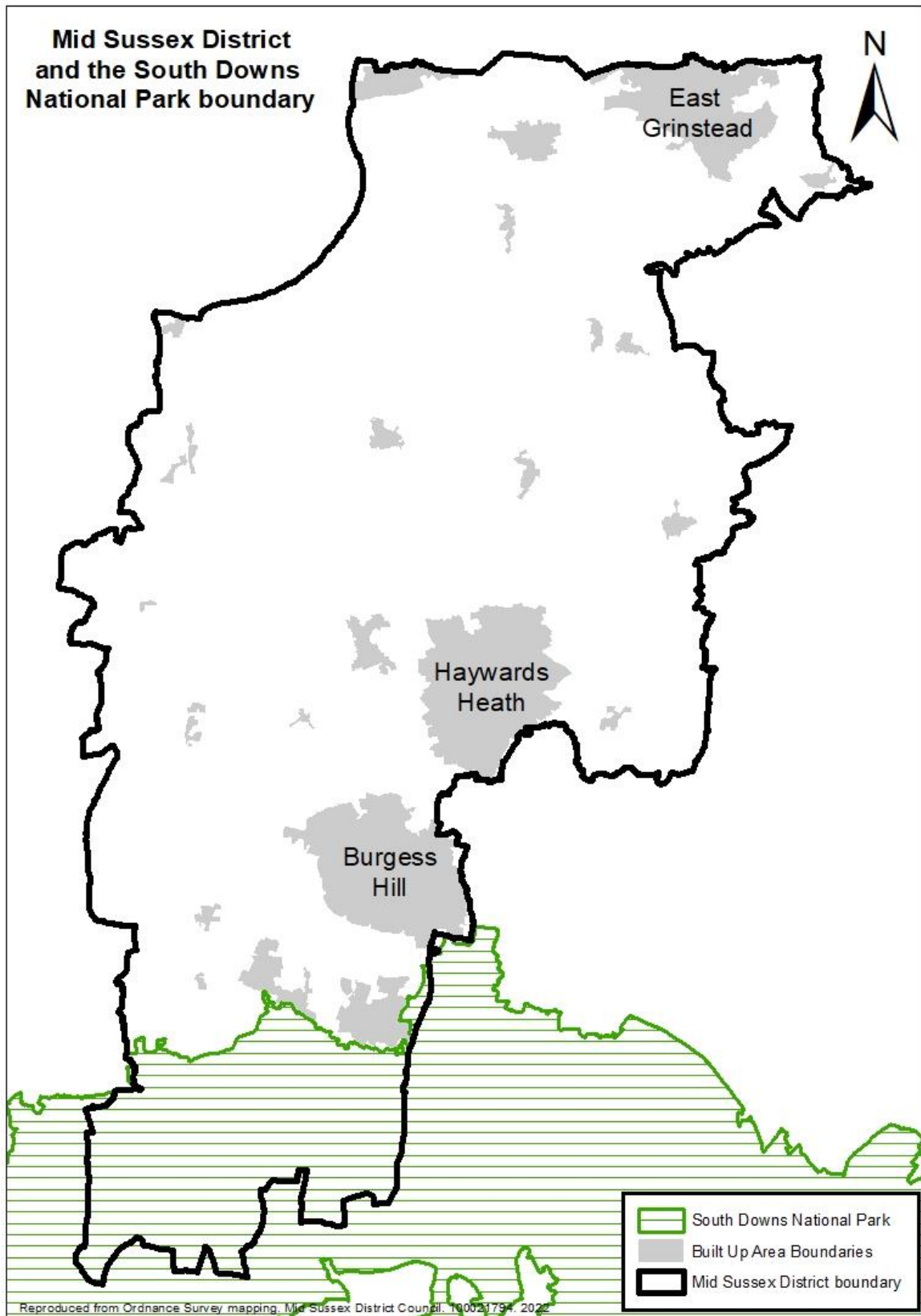


Figure 1 - The location of the South Downs National Park within Mid Sussex District.

3.0 Legislation and Policy Context

3.1 The statutory purpose for National Parks is set out in the Environment Act 1995. Section 61 provides for the two purposes of National Parks:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

3.2 Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 provides a duty for relevant authorities, including a local authority, to have regard to the purposes for which National Parks were designated.

3.3 The Government has published the English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010. This purpose of this document is to provide policy guidance and sets out a vision for National Parks to guide long-term planning and strategic decision-making. The vision should also be used by relevant authorities to inform their decisions on how to meet their statutory duty to have regard to the purposes for which National Parks were designated.

Vision for the English National Parks and the Broads

By 2030 English National Parks and the Broads will be places where:

- There are thriving, living, working landscapes notable for their natural beauty and cultural heritage. They inspire visitors and local communities to live within environmental limits and to tackle climate change. The wide-range of services they provide (from clean water to sustainable food) are in good condition and valued by society.
- Sustainable development can be seen in action. The communities of the Parks take an active part in decisions about their future. They are known for having been pivotal in the transformation to a low carbon society and sustainable living. Renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, low carbon transport and travel and healthy, prosperous communities have long been the norm.
- Wildlife flourishes and habitats are maintained, restored and expanded and linked effectively to other ecological networks. Woodland cover has increased and all woodlands are sustainably managed, with the right trees in the right places. Landscapes and habitats are managed to create resilience and enable adaptation.
- Everyone can discover the rich variety of England's natural and historic environment, and have the chance to value them as places for escape, adventure, enjoyment, inspiration and reflection, and a source of national pride and identity. They will be recognised as fundamental to our prosperity and well-being.

3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; July 2021) provides the Government's policy for development within the setting of a National Park. It confirms that development within the setting of a National Park should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the National Park (emphasis added):

176. 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 Broads⁵⁹. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, **while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.**

⁵⁹ English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 provides further guidance and information about their statutory purposes, management and other matters.

3.5 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: 042 Reference ID: 8-042-20190721

How should development within the setting of National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty be dealt with?

Land within the setting of these areas often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Development within the settings of these areas will therefore need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account.

- 3.6 The Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031 has a policy on the setting of the South Downs National Park. This policy has been reviewed and it is considered to still be suitable with no amendments required other than to update the reference to the South Downs Local Plan. Policy DP18 will be included within the District Plan 2031-2039 as Policy DPC5.

Policy DPC5: Setting of the South Downs National Park

Development within land that contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park will only be permitted where it does not detract from, or cause detriment to, the visual and special qualities (including dark skies), tranquillity and essential characteristics of the National Park, and in particular should not adversely affect transitional open green spaces between the site and the boundary of the South Downs National Park, and the views, outlook and aspect, into and out of the National Park by virtue of its location, scale, form or design.

Development should be consistent with National Park purposes and must not significantly harm the National Park or its setting. Assessment of such development proposals will also have regard to the South Downs Partnership Management Plan and South Downs Local Plan and other adopted planning documents and strategies.

4.0 Methodology

- 4.1 Taking into account the legislation and policy context, an approach has been developed to assess the SHELAA sites for their potential impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park. This approach intends to be a clear framework to assess each SHELAA site in a consistent way and to inform the site selection process for the District Plan.
- 4.2 A template (Appendix 1) has been prepared to record the assessment of each SHELAA site and it provides basic information about the SHELAA site, landscape details and an assessment of the potential for an adverse impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park. A high-level conclusion of the potential impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park has been made based on a planning judgement. Should any of these sites progress and are proposed to be allocated within the District Plan, further more detailed work on landscape character and visual impact will need to be undertaken, for example, through a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) undertaken by the site promoter.
- 4.3 Various sources have been drawn on to inform the assessment of SHELAA sites. These sources include:
- South Downs Local Plan¹
 - South Downs Local Plan evidence base including
 - Tranquillity and dark night skies maps²
 - Landscape character assessments including
 - Natural England National Character Area Profiles
 - Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex

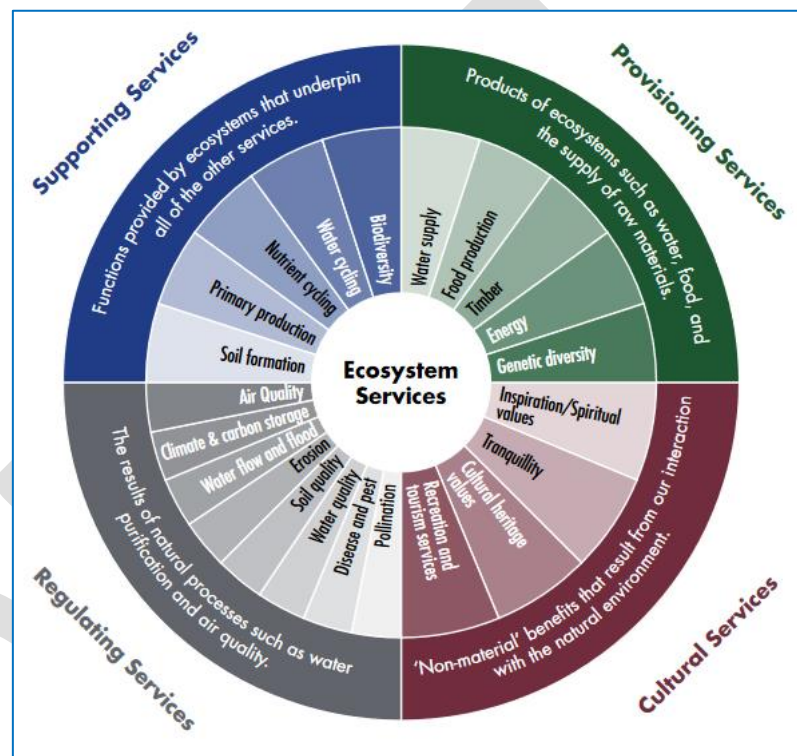
¹ <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/south-downs-local-plan/local-plan/>

² Tranquillity and dark night skies maps:

<https://sdnpa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=eb8954a17baa4745bcd4f91503858af2>

- Local Distinctiveness Study of West Sussex
- South Downs Landscape Character Assessment (2020)
- Historic environment record/ Sussex Historic Landscape Characterisation
- Mid Sussex District Council GIS data

4.4 The South Downs Local Plan has a landscape-led approach and its policies seek to ensure that the benefits and services people and wider society get from the natural environment are recognised and enhanced. These benefits are called ecosystem services (Figure 2). As both landscape and ecosystem services are embedded in the South Downs Local Plan and function across administrative boundaries, it is considered appropriate to take these into account when assessing if a SHELAA site may have a potential impact of the setting of the National Park.



Source: South Downs Local Plan (Adopted 2019).

Figure 2 - The range of ecosystems services.

- 4.5 The setting of the South Downs National Park assessment of the SHELAA sites has been undertaken as a desk-top exercise, however, the sites have been visited as part of the SHELAA and site selection assessment process and information recorded from these site visits has been taken into account. Site visits specifically to inform this assessment have not been undertaken and so specific details about the landscape and potential visual impact that may arise if a site is developed have not been included in the assessment tables.
- 4.6 If any of the SHELAA sites are considered suitable for allocation in the District Plan 2021-2039, it is recommended that the site yield should be identified taking a landscape-led approach. A landscape-led masterplan for the site should be developed and it is recommended that the

site promoter undertakes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) post design of the site.

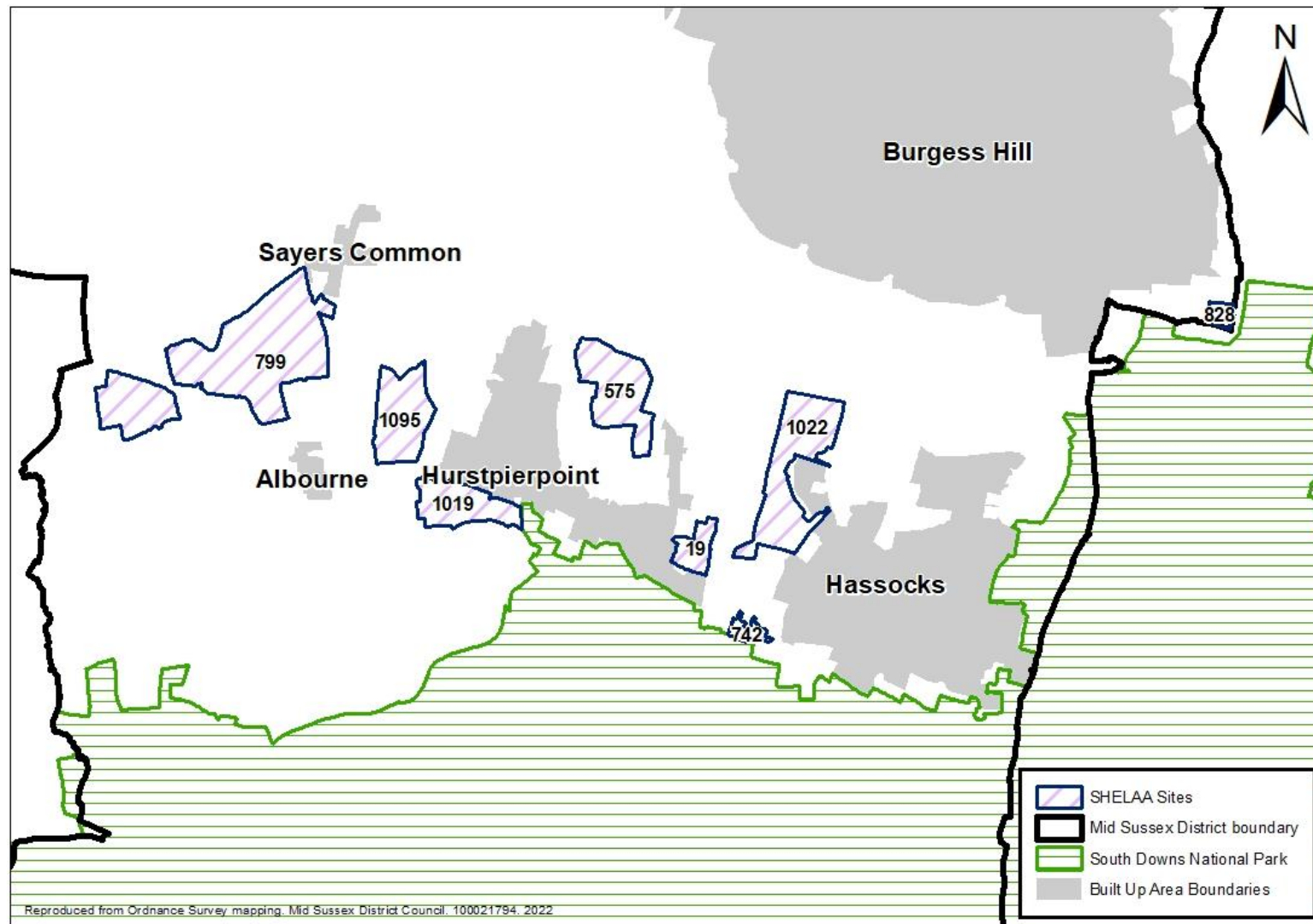
- 4.7 The full assessments of the SHELAA sites considered to potentially be within the setting of the South Downs National Park are included in Appendix 3.

DRAFT

Appendix 1: Example Assessment Template

SHELAA ID		Settlement		Parish	
Site address					
Yield		Site area		Allocation	
Landscape details					
National Character Area	<i>Source: Natural England National Character Area Profiles</i>				
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Land Management Guidelines <i>Source: Landscape Character Assessment of West Sussex</i> Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: <i>Source: Local Distinctiveness Study of West Sussex</i>				
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	<i>Source: A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (2005)</i>				
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment	<i>Source: South Downs Landscape Character Assessment (2020)</i>				
Assessment					
Settlement pattern	E.g. Does the site relate to the settlement pattern in terms of location and scale? What features comprise the settlement edge?				
Landscape character	E.g. Topography, scale, landscape capacity <i>Source: Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development (2014)</i>				
Visual impact	E.g. from surrounding countryside, wider viewpoints within the National Park				
Tranquillity	E.g. Is the site affected by significant road or rail noise? <i>Source: South Downs National Park tranquillity map</i>				
Dark night skies	<i>Source: South Downs National Park dark night skies map</i>				
Ecosystem services	Any Provisioning, Regulating, Supporting or Cultural services				
Green infrastructure	E.g. ecological corridors, fragmentation, on-site green infrastructure, opportunities for enhancement				
Historic environment	Historic landscape character, listed buildings, conservation areas, archaeology, other non-designated heritage assets				
MSDC conclusion					
South Downs National Park Authority comments					

Appendix 2: Map of Assessed SHELAA Sites



Appendix 3: Setting of the South Downs National Park Assessment of SHELAA Sites

DRAFT

SHELAA ID	19	Settlement	Hurstpierpoint	Parish	Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common
Site address	Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint				
Yield	80	Site area	7.8Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area		NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.			
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Land Management Guidelines LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Scarp Footslopes east of the Adur Valley comprise an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.			
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes The key characteristics of this landscape are an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.			
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment		The site does not abut the South Downs National Park boundary but the closest landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.			
Assessment					
Settlement pattern		The site is currently open countryside outside of the built-up area but there is residential development to the south and west of the site. The site is on the eastern edge of Hurstpierpoint and development would extend the settlement eastwards eroding the gap between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks contributing to coalescence for the settlements of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.			

Landscape character	<p>66: Hurstpierpoint Low Weald – Low landscape capacity</p> <p>The site has substantial landscape sensitivity and substantial landscape value.</p> <p>A stream runs across the centre of the site leading to two small ponds on the east of the site. There are mature trees on the site boundaries.</p>
Visual impact	<p>The site could be visible from the surrounding countryside and potentially from the South Downs National Park, however, given the site's relationship to the existing settlement of Hurstpierpoint and proximity to Hassocks, any adverse visual impact may be limited. Careful landscaping may still be needed for other reasons should the site be developed.</p>
Tranquillity	<p>The site is unlikely to be affected by significant road or rail noise.</p> <p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site has been given a score of between -24.98 and -45.30. Hurstpierpoint has a score between -33.11 and -57.98. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.</p>
Dark night skies	<p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Hurstpierpoint has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment.</p> <p>Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.</p>
Ecosystem services	<p>The site is agricultural land with mature trees on the site boundaries. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.</p>
Green infrastructure	<p>The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to create new habitat to link the two parcels of woodland in the north of the site and to enhance the stream and pond habitats. Any development of this site should incorporate ecological corridors to the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.</p>

Historic environment	The Hurst Wickham Conservation Area lies to the north-west of the site and there is a Grade II listed building to the west of the site on College Lane approximately opposite the proposed site access. The south-east corner of the site is adjacent to a WSCC Archaeological Notification Area.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is not directly within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the site and the National Park are separated by the B2116 Wickham Hill with a single row of residential development either side of the road. However, this site may be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	575	Settlement	Hurstpierpoint	Parish	Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common
Site address	Land north east of Hurstpierpoint				
Yield	150	Site area	19Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area		NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.			
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Land Management Guidelines LW10: Eastern Low Weald Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Low Weald comprises a lowland mixed pastoral and arable landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.			
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Hickstead Low Weald (the majority of the site) The key characteristics of this landscape are a lowland mixed arable and pastoral landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes The key characteristics of this landscape are an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.			
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment		The site does not abut the South Downs National Park boundary but the closest landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.			
Assessment					
Settlement pattern		The site is some way away from the built-up area boundary and development would alter the settlement pattern by eroding the gap between Hurstpierpoint and Hurst Wickham. Development here			

	would completely alter the setting of Hurstpierpoint College, removing it from the countryside and bringing residential dwellings to the border of the school.
Landscape character	66: Hurstpierpoint Low Weald – Low landscape capacity The site has substantial landscape sensitivity and substantial landscape value. There would be loss of trees and hedgerows which are an important feature of this landscape character area. Development of this site would represent a sizeable extension to the north-east of Hurstpierpoint in open countryside and where there is currently limited development.
Visual impact	The site could be visible from the surrounding countryside and potentially from the South Downs National Park, however, given the site's proximity to the existing settlement of Hurstpierpoint any adverse visual impact may be limited. Careful landscaping may still be needed for other reasons should the site be developed.
Tranquillity	The site is unlikely to be affected by significant road or rail noise. According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site lies to the north of an area that has been given a score of -12.48. Hurstpierpoint has a score between -33.11 and -57.98. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.
Dark night skies	According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Hurstpierpoint has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment. Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.
Ecosystem services	The site is mostly agricultural land with a small area of ancient woodland to the north of the site. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.
Green infrastructure	The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB. Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to create new habitat to link the two parcels of ancient woodland to the west and north-west of the site. Any development of this site should

	incorporate ecological corridors to the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.
Historic environment	The Hurstpierpoint Conservation Area is to the south of the site and the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area is to the south-east of the site. Part of Hurstpierpoint College is a Grade II listed building. The site lies within a WSCC Archaeological Notification Area.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is not directly within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the site and the National Park are separated by open countryside, the B2116 High Street and residential development either side of the road. However, as a large site, this site may be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	742	Settlement	Hassocks	Parish	Hassocks
Site address	Russell Nursery, Brighton Road, Hassocks				
Yield	30	Site area	3.46Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area		NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.			
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Land Management Guidelines LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Scarp Footslopes east of the Adur Valley comprise an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.			
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes The key characteristics of this landscape are an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.			
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment		The western part of the southern site boundary forms a boundary with the South Downs National Park. The landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.			
Assessment					
Settlement pattern		The site is a former nursery and is to the rear of residential properties on Hurst Road with residential development also on its eastern boundary. It is outside of the built-up area for Hassocks. Development of this site would extend the settlement of Hassocks to the south-west.			
Landscape character		71: Hurstpierpoint Southern Fringe – Low landscape capacity			

	<p>The site has substantial landscape sensitivity and substantial landscape value.</p> <p>There are fields to the south of the site and a small woodland to the west of the site. The South Downs National Park is immediately to the south of the site.</p>
Visual impact	<p>The site is on the south side of Hurst Road to the rear of existing residential development and is to the west of the Hassocks. Part of the southern boundary of the site abuts the South Downs National Park and there is a public right of way to the west and south of the site, so the site may be visible from these routes. As the site is on the south side of Hassocks, the site may also be visible from wider viewpoints in the South Downs National Park.</p>
Tranquillity	<p>The site is unlikely to be affected by significant road or rail noise.</p> <p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site has been given a score of between -23.25 and -27.32. The Stonepound Crossroads and A273 London Road has been given a tranquillity score between -23.25 and -47.03. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.</p>
Dark night skies	<p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Hassocks has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment.</p> <p>Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.</p>
Ecosystem services	<p>The site is a former nursery with two areas of trees to the north and south of the of the western part of the site. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.</p>
Green infrastructure	<p>The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to create new habitat to link the parcels of woodland in the site with the woodland to the west of the site. There may also be opportunities to enhance the pond on the site. Any development of this site should incorporate ecological corridors to</p>

	the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.
Historic environment	There are no conservation areas or listed buildings close to the site. The site lies within a WSCC Archaeological Notification Area.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the site and the National Park share a boundary. The site could potentially be regarded as transitional open space between the existing residential development and the National Park to the south of the site. The site is on the southern side of Hassocks and this site may also be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	799	Settlement	Sayers Common	Parish	Albourne
Site address	Land to the south of Reeds Lane, Sayers Common				
Yield	2,000 (plus other uses)	Site area	88.5Ha	Allocation	Yes
Landscape details					
National Character Area	NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.				
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Land Management Guidelines LW10: Eastern Low Weald Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Low Weald comprises a lowland mixed pastoral and arable landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.				
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Hickstead Low Weald The key characteristics of this landscape are a lowland mixed arable and pastoral landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams.				
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment	The site does not abut the South Downs National Park boundary but the closest landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.				
Assessment					
Settlement pattern	The site lies between Sayers Common in the north and Albourne in the south and it is west of the A23. The site comprises two distinct parcels of land, north and south of the B2216 Henfield Road. It stretches from Sayers Common in the east to Trusler’s Hill Lane in the west, and to Albourne village in the south. There are a few isolated rural properties on the site boundaries. Apart from the most north-eastern tip of the site, the remainder lies wholly in open countryside, outside the built-up area boundaries. Development of this site would represent a significant incursion into the countryside.				

Landscape character	<p>62: Hickstead – Sayers Common Low Weald – Medium landscape capacity</p> <p>63: Albourne Low Weald – Low/ Medium landscape capacity</p> <p>80: Trusler's Hill Lane Footslopes – Low/ medium landscape capacity</p> <p>The site has moderate/high – substantial landscape sensitivity and slight – moderate landscape value.</p>
Visual impact	<p>Development of this site would have a significant landscape impact partly due to its size. The site could be visible from the surrounding countryside, particularly from the public rights of way network, so careful landscaping is likely to be required.</p> <p>The site is approximately 2.7km from the nearest part of the South Downs National Park boundary measured from the centre of the site and approximately 2.2km from the nearest part of the South Downs National Park boundary measured from the southernmost part of the site. Although the site is not likely to be visible from the nearest areas of the South Downs National Park due to intervening topography and screening, as a large site in open countryside, any development on the site may be visible from wider viewpoints within the South Downs National Park.</p>
Tranquillity	<p>The site is unlikely to be affected by significant road or rail noise.</p> <p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site lies to the north of an area that has been given a score of -9.99 to 10.77. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park, however, it is more tranquil than areas close to existing settlements such as Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.</p>
Dark night skies	<p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area to the south of Albourne has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment. Areas to the south of Albourne are also within dark night sky zone E1a: Intrinsic Rural Darkness and 2km Buffer Zone. This classification is generally given to most rural locations outside of the central area of the South Downs National Park. This zone has dark skies and includes areas vulnerable to light pollution.</p> <p>Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.</p>
Ecosystem services	<p>The site is predominantly agricultural land with field boundaries of trees and hedgerows. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.</p>

Green infrastructure	<p>As a site of significant size, there are many opportunities to enhance the current green infrastructure and create new green infrastructure. The public rights of way running through the site provide opportunities to connect to the wider countryside.</p> <p>Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to retain the existing trees and hedgerows, and provide connectivity to the ancient woodland to the west of Trusler's Hill Lane. Any development of this site should incorporate ecological corridors to the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.</p>
Historic environment	<p>There are no conservation areas close to the site. There are several listed buildings in close proximity to the site.</p>
MSDC conclusion	<p>Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is not directly within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the site and the National Park are separated by open countryside. However, as a large site in a currently rural area, this site may be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.</p>
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	828	Settlement	Burgess Hill	Parish	Burgess Hill
Site address	Land east of Fragbarrow House, Common Lane, Ditchling				
Yield	5	Site area	2.8Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area		NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.			
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Land Management Guidelines LW10: Eastern Low Weald Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Low Weald comprises a lowland mixed pastoral and arable landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.			
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Hickstead Low Weald The key characteristics of this landscape are a lowland mixed arable and pastoral landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams.			
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment		The site does not abut the South Downs National Park boundary (the B2112 Common Lane to the east of the site forms the boundary) but the closest landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.			
Assessment					
Settlement pattern		The site is outside of the built-up area of Burgess Hill and development of the site would not be immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area boundary. The site is some way from Burgess Hill town centre and not well connected to local services.			
Landscape character		68: Furze field Low Weald – Medium landscape capacity The site has moderate landscape sensitivity and moderate landscape value.			

	The site comprises two fields with trees on its boundaries.
Visual impact	<p>The site is set back from the B2112 Common Lane which forms the boundary with the South Downs National Park. Due to the site's proximity with the South Downs National Park, the site is likely to be visible and as it is on the south side of the Burgess Hill, the site may also be visible from wider viewpoints within the South Downs National Park, so careful landscaping may be required.</p> <p>There is a public right of way along the southern boundary of the site which is within neighbouring Lewes District and there are also public rights of way to the east of the B2112 Common Lane in neighbouring Lewes District that are within the South Downs National Park.</p>
Tranquillity	<p>The site is unlikely to be affected by significant road or rail noise, although the railway line between Burgess Hill and Lewes is to the north-east of the site.</p> <p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site lies in an area that has been given a tranquillity score of -9.33. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.</p>
Dark night skies	<p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Burgess Hill and to the north of Ditchling has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment.</p> <p>Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.</p>
Ecosystem services	The site is agricultural land with a small area of ancient woodland to the north of the site. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.
Green infrastructure	<p>The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to retain and enhance the trees on the site boundaries as well as the hedgerow separating the two fields. Any development of this site should incorporate ecological corridors to the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.</p>

Historic environment	There are no conservation areas or listed buildings close to the site.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the National Park boundary is in close proximity to the site's eastern and southern boundaries. The site could potentially be regarded as transitional open space between the existing residential development of Burgess Hill and the National Park to the south of the site. The site is on the southern side of Burgess Hill and this site may also be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	1019	Settlement	Hurstpierpoint	Parish	Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common
Site address	Grange Farm, Bullfinch Lane Hurstpierpoint				
Yield	150	Site area	23Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area		NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.			
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Land Management Guidelines LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Scarp Footslopes east of the Adur Valley comprise an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.			
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment		Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes The key characteristics of this landscape are an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.			
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment		The eastern site boundary is the B2117 Brighton Road which also forms a boundary with the South Downs National Park. The landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.			
Assessment					
Settlement pattern		The site abuts the built-up area boundary for Hurstpierpoint but would represent a sizeable amount of development south of the B2116 where there is generally only currently a single line of development fronting the B2116 High Street and Albourne Road.			
Landscape character		65: Wanbarrow Foothills – Low/ Medium landscape capacity			

	<p>The site has moderate landscape sensitivity and substantial landscape value.</p> <p>Development of this site would represent a sizeable extension to the south of Hurstpierpoint in open countryside and where there is currently limited development.</p> <p>The character of the B2117 Brighton Road that forms the boundary of the South Downs National Park changes as it leads out of Hurstpierpoint into the countryside.</p> <p>Any development of this site should be carefully designed to avoid suburbanisation of the landscape especially as Hurstpierpoint is a historic settlement and there are two adjacent conservation areas.</p>
Visual impact	<p>As the site is on the southern boundary of Hurstpierpoint, development here is likely to be visible from the South Downs National Park and the site could also be visible from the surrounding countryside, so careful landscaping may be required.</p>
Tranquillity	<p>The site is unlikely to be affected by significant road or rail noise.</p> <p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site lies in an area that has been given a tranquillity score of -18.76. Hurstpierpoint has a score between -33.11 and -57.98. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.</p>
Dark night skies	<p>According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Hurstpierpoint has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment.</p> <p>Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.</p>
Ecosystem services	<p>The site is mostly agricultural land with two small areas of ancient woodland to the west of the site. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.</p>
Green infrastructure	<p>The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Cutlers Brook on the southern boundary of the site acts as a linear ecological corridor to the South Downs National Park to the east of the site.</p>

	Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to create new habitat to link the two isolated parcels of ancient woodland to the west of the site and to create ecological connections to the wider countryside. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.
Historic environment	The site abuts the Hurstpierpoint Conservation Area and the Langton Lane Conservation Area. Holy Trinity Church to the north-east of the site is a Grade II* listed building. The north-west corner of the site lies adjacent to a WSCC Archaeological Notification Area.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is within the setting of the South Downs National Park as the boundary is the B2117 to the east of the site. The site is on the southern side of Hurstpierpoint and this site may also be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	1022	Settlement	Hassocks	Parish	Hassocks
Site address	Former Hassocks Golf Club, London Road, Hassocks				
Yield	500	Site area	39.9Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area	NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.				
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Land Management Guidelines LW10: Eastern Low Weald Land Management Guidelines LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Low Weald comprises a lowland mixed pastoral and arable landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. The Eastern Scarp Footslopes east of the Adur Valley comprise an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.				
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Hickstead Low Weald The key characteristics of this landscape are a lowland mixed arable and pastoral landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes The key characteristics of this landscape are an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.				
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment	The site does not abut the South Downs National Park boundary but the closest landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp				

	which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.
Assessment	
Settlement pattern	The central section of the site abuts the built-up area boundary at the development currently under construction opposite the Friar's Oak public house. The site would represent a significant extension to the west of Hassocks beyond the development under construction opposite the Friar's Oak public house. It would represent linear development along the A273 London Road where there is currently limited development. This would continue to alter the existing settlement pattern and erode the gap between Hassocks and Hurst Wickham and Hassocks and Burgess Hill.
Landscape character	66: Hurstpierpoint Low Weald – Low landscape capacity The site has substantial landscape sensitivity and substantial landscape value. Development of this site would represent a sizeable extension to Hassocks on its north-eastern side to the west of the A273 London Road where there is currently limited development although there are a couple of sites currently under construction, however, this site would extend beyond the permitted sites into open countryside, albeit a former golf course.
Visual impact	Although the site is not likely to be visible from the nearest areas of the South Downs National Park, as a large site in open countryside to the west of Hassocks, any development on the site may be visible from wider viewpoints within the South Downs National Park.
Tranquillity	Whilst the site may be affected by some road or rail noise, this unlikely to be significant. According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site lies to the north of an area that has been given a score of -17.67. The Stonepound Crossroads and A273 London Road has been given a tranquillity score between -23.25 and -47.03. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.
Dark night skies	According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Hassocks has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment. Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.

Ecosystem services	As a former golf course with an area of ancient woodland to the south-east of the site, the site provides Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.
Green infrastructure	<p>The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>There is a risk that the area of ancient woodland to the south-east of the site could become surrounded by residential development and isolated. Any development of this site should incorporate ecological corridors to the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation.</p>
Historic environment	Friar's Oak House is a Grade II listed building that fronts the A273 London Road and is approximately at the centre of the eastern boundary of the site. The site lies within a WSCC Archaeological Notification Area.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is not directly within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the site and the National Park are separated by open countryside and the B2116 Hurst Road with a single row of residential development either side of the road. However, as a large site, this site may be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	

SHELAA ID	1095	Settlement	Hurstpierpoint	Parish	Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common
Site address	Land at West Town Farm, Hurstpierpoint				
Yield	500	Site area	24.8Ha	Allocation	No
Landscape details					
National Character Area	NCA 121: Low Weald The Low Weald NCA is a broad low-lying clay vale that wraps around the northern, western and southern edges of the High Weald. It is predominantly agricultural and is essentially rural in character with small-scale villages. Woodland and ponds are common.				
West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Land Management Guidelines LW10: Eastern Low Weald Land Management Guidelines LW11: Eastern Scarp Footslopes Character Guidelines Local Distinctiveness: Low Weald Character Area The Eastern Low Weald comprises a lowland mixed pastoral and arable landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. The Eastern Scarp Footslopes east of the Adur Valley comprise an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault Clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp. The landscape is small-scale, intimate and tranquil with a medieval pattern of small irregular pasture fields enclosed by a strong network of shaws and tall thick species rich hedgerows.				
Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment	Hickstead Low Weald (the majority of the site) The key characteristics of this landscape are a lowland mixed arable and pastoral landscape with a strong hedgerow pattern. It lies over low ridges and clay vales drained by the upper Adur streams. Hurstpierpoint Scarp Footslopes The key characteristics of this landscape are an undulating relief of low sandstone ridges and gentle clay vales. Areas of ancient woodland have survived on the heavier soils of the Gault clay. Views south are dominated by the steep downland scarp.				
South Downs National Park Landscape Character Assessment	The site does not abut the South Downs National Park boundary but the closest landscape type is J2: Adur to Ouse Scarp Footslopes. The Scarp Footslopes landscape comprises the lowland shelf that lies at the foot of the steep northern scarp of the South Downs east of the Arun Valley. This landscape type is dominated by the chalk scarp				

	which forms a dramatic backdrop. The footslopes themselves form a transition between the steep chalk scarp to the south and the Low Weald to the north.
Assessment	
Settlement pattern	The site is between Albourne in the west and Hurstpierpoint to the east and whilst development of this site would erode the gap between the two settlements, the A23 forms the site's western boundary. The site is not adjacent to the built-up area boundary of Hurstpierpoint. Langton Lane is between the site and the main built-up area of Hurstpierpoint; it is a rural lane with low density residential development running north from the B2116 Albourne Road and is also a conservation area.
Landscape character	66: Hurstpierpoint Low Weald – Low landscape capacity The site has substantial landscape sensitivity and substantial landscape value. The site is agricultural land with a small area of woodland and a pond in the south-west of the site. There are mature trees and hedgerows throughout the site and on its boundaries. Development of this site would represent a sizeable extension to the west of Hurstpierpoint in open countryside and where there is currently limited development.
Visual impact	Although the site is not likely to be visible from the nearest areas of the South Downs National Park, as a large site in open countryside between the A23 to the west and Hurstpierpoint to the site, any development on the site may be visible from wider viewpoints within the South Downs National Park.
Tranquillity	The site may be affected by road noise as the A23 is immediately to the west of the site, however, the site is unlikely to be affected by significant rail noise. According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of tranquillity prepared as part of the South Downs National Park Authority Tranquillity Study (2017), the site lies to the north of an area that has been given a score of -18.47. Hurstpierpoint has a score between -33.11 and -57.98. The tranquillity score ranges from 113 for most tranquil to -123 for least tranquil. On this scoring system, the site is in an area that is less tranquil than other parts of the South Downs National Park.
Dark night skies	According to the South Downs National Park Authority map of dark night skies, the area immediately to the south of Hurstpierpoint has been assessed as E1b: Transition Zone. This classification is generally given to rural environments on the edge of the National Park or near to urban areas. This zone forms the transition between dark zones and the urban environment. Any development of this site should take opportunities to reduce light pollution (including sky glow, glare and light spillage) to minimise adverse impacts on the South Downs National Park in accordance with policy requirements.

Ecosystem services	The site is agricultural land with a small area of woodland and a pond in the south-west of the site. The site provides Provisioning, Regulating and Supporting Services. For example, food production, climate regulation, soil quality, pollination and biodiversity.
Green infrastructure	The site lies within the South Downs National Park Natural Capital Investment Area 6: Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill as identified in the People and Nature Network (March 2020). Opportunities for green infrastructure in this area include creating ecological and access links from the South Downs National Park to the High Weald AONB. Should the site be developed, it would be beneficial to retain and enhance the existing trees, streams and pond. Any development of this site should incorporate ecological corridors to the wider countryside to avoid fragmentation. The site should also incorporate new green infrastructure in accordance with policy requirements.
Historic environment	Parts of the eastern site boundary are adjacent to the Langton Lane Conservation Area. The Langton Lane Conservation Area includes a few listed buildings. The south-east corner of the site lies adjacent to a WSCC Archaeological Notification Area.
MSDC conclusion	Taking into account the factors considered as part of this assessment, it is considered that this site is not directly within the setting of the South Downs National Park since the site and the National Park are separated by open countryside of approximately 850m as the crow flies (the closest part of the site to the nearest part of the National Park boundary). However, as a large site area, this site may be visible from long views within the National Park and so should this site be developed, it should be carefully designed to avoid any adverse impacts. Regard should be had to the purposes for which the National Park was designated. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is recommended to inform the site's design and any mitigation.
South Downs National Park Authority comments	