Statement of Common Ground

MM72: Land East of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint

Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2039 Examination

Between Mid Sussex District Council and Thakeham Homes Limited

Introduction

1. This Statement of Common Ground ("SoCG") has been prepared between Mid Sussex District Council ("the Council") and Thakeham Homes Limited ("Thakeham") in respect of proposed allocation MM72, Land East of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint.

2. The purpose of the SoCG is to identify matters that are agreed between the parties and to clearly identify any matters that remain outstanding, in order to assist the Inspector and narrow the issues requiring consideration at the examination hearing.

3. Since consultation on the Main Modifications, a full planning application has been submitted for the first phase of development. Application reference **DM/26/2433** was validated on 30 September 2026 and seeks permission for 100 dwellings with associated access, car parking, landscaping, infrastructure and works.

Need for the Allocation

4. The parties agree that additional housing allocations are required as part of the Main Modifications to contribute towards meeting the District's housing requirement, including its contribution towards meeting unmet housing needs arising from neighbouring authorities.

5. The proposed Main Modifications identify MM72 as one of the additional housing allocations contributing towards the housing supply of the Plan.

6. The parties agree that the principle of residential development at MM72 is acceptable and that development of the Site will make a positive contribution towards meeting identified housing needs.

7. Hurstpierpoint is identified as a Category 2 Larger Village in the settlement hierarchy. MM72 is located on the edge of Hurstpierpoint and benefits from access to the village's services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport.

8. The parties agree that MM72 has an appropriate role within the spatial strategy and that the principle of allocating the Site for residential development is justified.

Deliverability

9. MM72 is available for residential development and is under Thakeham's control.

10. Delivery of MM72 is progressing, demonstrated by the submission and validation of full planning application DM/26/2433 for the first phase of 100 dwellings.

11. The planning application is accompanied by detailed plans and supporting technical information. The application for planning permission details the acceptability of the Site for housing following extensive pre-application consultation with MSDC, WSCC Highways and the Lead Local Flood Authority.

12. The parties agree that there are no identified infrastructure or utility matters which, in principle, prevent the residential development of MM72. Thakeham is not aware of any utilities constraint which would prevent delivery.

13. MM72 is included within the Council's housing trajectory.

14. The parties agree that MM72 is available and achievable and capable of delivering housing within the Plan period, including contribution to the five-year housing supply.

15. The parties agree that development of the principal parcel will be delivered independently of the future development of the northern parcel.

Access & Highways

16. The parties agree that vehicular access to MM72 can be provided from College Lane. This was also agreed with WSCC Highways as part of pre-application discussions linked to application DM/26/2433.

17. No third-party land lies between MM72 and College Lane. The proposed access comprises a 5.5m wide access road adjoining College Lane, and the submitted Transport Assessment concludes that the proposed priority junction would operate within capacity and that appropriate visibility splays can be provided within highway land.

18. The parties agree that safe and suitable vehicular access to the allocation is capable of being achieved.

19. The Proposed Development provides connections for pedestrians and cyclists between College Lane and Belmont Lane where Bridleway HAS-8C is located on the eastern side of the site. The Council is proposing the following modification to criterion 4 of Policy MM72 for clarity:

    Amend criterion 4:

    4. Provision of cycle connection onto Bridleway HAS-8C.

20. College Lane provides an existing pedestrian connection towards Wickham Hill and onwards towards Hurstpierpoint. Existing bus stops are available on Wickham Hill.

21. The Council's in-combination transport testing has assessed MM72 alongside the other proposed Hurstpierpoint allocations, as well as the other proposed allocations in the Plan, and identifies no severe impact at the junctions serving College Lane.

22. The parties agree in principle that MM72 should make proportionate contributions towards appropriate sustainable transport measures (where justified and aligned with the necessary legal tests).

23. Thakeham does not object in principle to appropriate transport contributions (where justified and aligned with the necessary legal tests).

24. The parties agree that there are no identified access, highway-capacity or highway-safety matters which prevent allocation of the Site.

Relationship to Hurstpierpoint

25. MM72 adjoins the built-up area of Hurstpierpoint on its western and southern sides and is well related to the eastern part of the village.

26. MM72 is contained by existing trees to the north, east and south.

27. The parties agree that development of MM72 can provide appropriate pedestrian and cycle connections with Hurstpierpoint and the surrounding area.

28. Hurstpierpoint High Street, local schools and GP services can be accessed on foot via College Lane and Hassocks Road, while nearby bus services provide connections towards Hassocks railway station.

29. MM72 requires retention of a landscape buffer along the eastern boundary. Together with existing vegetation, this provides visual separation between Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.

30. The parties agree that development can be designed and landscaped to integrate appropriately with Hurstpierpoint whilst maintaining the separate identity of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.

31. The parties agree that MM72 represents an appropriate and deliverable extension to Hurstpierpoint.

Heritage

32. MM72 lies outside the Hurst Wickham Conservation Area.

33. Relevant nearby heritage considerations include the Grade II listed Wickham Farmhouse and the Archaeological Notification Area opposite the proposed access.

34. The development line is proposed to be set back within MM72, maintaining a green frontage in the vicinity of Wickham Farmhouse. Heritage considerations have informed the proposed layout of the development

35. The parties agree that the relationship between the development and nearby heritage assets will be appropriately addressed through the detailed design, layout and landscaping of the scheme (DM/26/2433).

36. The parties agree that there is no identified heritage constraint which prevents the allocation or delivery of MM72.

Matters Agreed

37. The parties agree that:
    a) There is a need for MM72 as part of the District Plan's housing strategy.
    b) The principle of residential development at MM72 is acceptable.
    c) MM72 is available and achievable and capable of delivering housing within the Plan period, including contribution to the five-year housing supply.
    d) Delivery is progressing, with a full planning application for 100 dwellings on the first phase validated on 30 September 2026.
    e) Safe and suitable vehicular access can be provided from College Lane.
    f) MM72 can provide appropriate pedestrian and cycle connections with Hurstpierpoint and the wider network.
    g) The residual transport effects of development are capable of being appropriately mitigated.
    h) MM72 can integrate with Hurstpierpoint.
    i) Appropriate design and landscaping can maintain the separate identity of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.
    j) Heritage considerations do not preclude the allocation and development of MM72.
    k) MM72 can be served by the necessary infrastructure.
    l) There are no identified technical matters which, in principle, prevent the delivery of the allocation.

Matters Not Agreed / Outstanding

38. Site capacity and allocation boundary:
    1) Thakeham's position is that MM72 should recognise the full development potential of the Site, including the northern parcel, rather than the 75-dwelling capacity identified in the published Main Modification.
    2) The Council's position is that MM72 has been allocated for 75 dwellings. Whilst Thakeham state that the capacity of the proposed allocation could be more, the Council is unable to confirm whether or not the proposed allocation is suitable for an increased yield because MM72 was only tested through the in-combination testing for 75 dwellings. The Inspector has proposed a modification to the Site policies yield box to "*Indicative number of dwellings*" to clarify that the yields are indicative. The suitability of the proposed allocation for a yield over 75 dwellings will be tested at the planning application stage. With regards to the northern parcel identified as part of the allocation, the northern parcel sits within the proposed built-up area boundary of Hurstpierpoint and therefore the principle of development on this parcel is accepted. Any future planning application on this part of the Site would be determined in accordance with planning policies in place at that time. Considering the above, the Council does not consider any amendments to MM72 are required.

Agreed Overall Position

39. The parties agree that MM72 is available, suitable and achievable; can be accessed safely; can be served by the necessary infrastructure; can integrate appropriately with Hurstpierpoint whilst maintaining the separate identity of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks; and can deliver housing within the Plan period. There are no identified highway, heritage, infrastructure or other technical matters which, in principle, preclude the allocation or delivery of MM72.

40. The matter that is not agreed relates to the precise capacity and extent of the allocation, including the treatment of the northern parcel.

Signatures

Signed for Mid Sussex District Council

Name:  (Eric Owens)
Position: Interim Assistant Director of Planning and Sustainable Economy
Date: 22 October 2026

Signed for Thakeham Homes Limited

Name:  (Christopher Brake)
Position: Planning Director
Date: 22 October 2026