



**woolf bond**  
planning

## **Mid Sussex Local Plan Examination**

### **MSDC Request for Site Information:**

### **Land east of Ansty, Cuckfield Bypass, Cuckfield (Site Ref: 736)**

Prepared for:  
**Fairfax Acquisitions Ltd**

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**March 2026**

**WBP Ref: 9161**



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**WBP1**            Concept Masterplan No. D3012-FAB-00-XX-DR-Y-009-Rev 14

## 1.0 Introduction

### Position Statement

- 1.1. Fairfax Acquisitions Ltd ("Fairfax") has a controlling interest in land east of Ansty (**SHELAA Ref: 736**) that should be allocated as a new garden community for up to 1,450 dwellings (and associated infrastructure) to help address the identified housing need during the plan period.
- 1.2. As identified by Inspector Bore, the Submitted Local Plan fails to plan for sufficient housing growth in seeking to meet identified housing needs during the plan period.
- 1.3. During the Local Plan Hearing Sessions held during weeks 1 and 2 of the Local Plan Examination, Inspector Bore asked the Council to 'test' a higher housing requirement of up to 1,300 dwellings per annum. Together with the concerns raised by the Inspector about some of the components of supply relied upon by the Council (mainly windfall sites), **the expectation is that the Council will need to plan for a significant number of additional site allocations for at least 3,000 additional dwellings (possibly up to 4,000 dwellings) than identified in the submitted Local Plan.** This necessitates a review of the housing sites in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment "SHELAA" (Document Ref: SSP4).
- 1.4. Land east of Ansty, **Site Ref: 736**, affords a suitable location in planning for sustainable patterns of growth in helping to meet the identified housing need during the plan period.
- 1.5. This Statement accompanies the 'Site Promoter Information Request Form' that has been completed online.

### Where to provide for Additional Housing Allocations

- 1.6. Inspector Bore advised the Council to **look again at the conclusions of the Site Selection Paper (SSP4), from which potential allocations could be identified.**
- 1.7. Inspector Bore advised that **the sites to be allocated should be in locations that can assist in meeting MSDC's needs, as well as those arising from Crawley Borough and the City of Brighton & Hove.** That geographical location is focused on the part of the district between the

South Downs National Park and the High Weald National Landscape.

1.8. **Land at Ansty (Site Ref: 736) is in the ideal location to address unmet needs from these neighbouring authorities.**

1.9. Inspector Bore added that the sites to be identified should be in sustainable locations, or locations that could be made to be sustainable (satisfying the approach in the NPPF).

### **Land to the East of Ansty, Site Ref: 736: A New Garden Community**

1.10. **Land controlled by Fairfax at Ansty (SHELAA ref: 736)** affords the most appropriate location in helping to meet needs, situated in a central location between the confluence of the two HMAs.

1.11. The Site has been positively assessed by the Council through the Site Selection process (Document Ref: SSP4) as a suitable option for allocation<sup>1</sup>.

1.12. The suitability of developing a new garden community for 1,450 dwellings and associated supporting infrastructure in this location, along with an integrated public transport strategy, helping to make the wider area more sustainable, was assessed through the relevant outline planning application (LPA Ref: DM/23/2866) where the scheme's location was agreed by the statutory consultees (County Highways and National Highways) as being acceptable in highway and locational sustainability terms.

1.13. **Site 736 should be identified as an allocation for a new garden community for 1,450 dwellings and associated development**, including supporting infrastructure. The development of which will provide for sustainable transport options for existing residents in Ansty and Cuckfield.

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<sup>1</sup> Main Paper, Table 1. Paragraphs 3.3, 3.4, 3.8-3.17 and 3.33 to 3.38 refer.

## 2.0 MSDC's Site Selection Process: Site Ref: 736

- 2.1. Page 33 of the Submitted Local Plan summarises the District Plan Strategy, which is based on four key principles (or 'pillars').
- 2.2. Pillar 1 seeks to protect the High Weald National Landscape. Pillar 2 seeks to make effective use of land. Pillar 3 provides for growth at existing sustainable settlements where it continues to be sustainable to do so. Pillar 4 relates to 'opportunities for extensions, to improve the sustainability of existing settlements. The development of Site 736 would fall under Pillar 4.
- 2.3. As acknowledged in the Submitted Local Plan, development at Pillar 4 locations would allow these settlements to be more sustainable.
- 2.4. The Council's Site Selection Conclusions Paper (SSP4) (July 2024) lists the strategic sites promoted through the site assessment process in Table 1, on page 9 of the document. The list includes Site ref: 736.
- 2.5. Paragraph 3.36 States as follows:

*"After application of the first three pillars of the Plan Strategy, the Council would not be able to demonstrate that it could meet its housing need. Therefore, a fourth pillar was included – "Opportunities for extensions to improve the sustainability of existing settlements".*

- 2.6. Paragraphs 3.37 and 3.38 consider the suitability of Sites #736 at Ansty, and #799 at Sayers Common.
- 2.7. An assessment of the Site is carried out at paragraphs 3.8 to 3.17.
- 2.8. Paragraph 3.10 confirms in relation to the suitability of developing the Site as follows (Our emphasis in **bold**):

*"There are **no significant constraints on the site** that would impact the deliverability of the site in principle."*

- 2.9. Site #736 was not taken forward solely on account of concerns expressed about highways.
- 2.10. However, and since the Paper was prepared (July 2024), Planning Application DM/23/2866 has been considered by the Council, with County Highways and National Highways confirming the acceptability of developing the Site for a new garden community of up to 1,450 dwellings in highway, locational sustainability and safety terms. This assessment categorically addresses the earlier highway concerns raised by the Council.
- 2.11. In the circumstances, there are no known constraints (or valid technical objections) to allocating the Site through the Local Plan process.

### 3.0 Land East of Ansty, Site Ref: 736 – Suggested Allocation

#### The Site

- 3.1. The Site extends to approximately 100ha. It is located immediately to the east of the settlement of Ansty, between the A272 to the north and northwest and the B2036 to the southwest. Other boundaries are formed by mature trees and hedgerows, with open countryside beyond.
- 3.2. The majority of the Site comprises undulating arable farmland with belts of woodland.
- 3.3. The Site does not fall within a Conservation Area, nor are there any listed buildings within the Site's boundary. However, the Site does surround two listed buildings, "The Place" and "Barns to north of Forsyth's Farmhouse" ("Old Place" and "The Barn House" on some records), which are around 500m east of Ansty and are excluded from the Site boundary. In addition, there are other heritage assets in the vicinity of the site, which are fully detailed in the Application documents.
- 3.4. The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside Map ('MAGIC') and the Proposals Map indicates that the Site is not covered by any statutory designations for landscape character or quality. The High Weald National Landscape lies just to the north of the Site.
- 3.5. Overall, and for the reasons stated, there are no environmental or statutory designations that would otherwise serve to limit the development potential of the Site.

#### Local Context

- 3.6. The area immediately surrounding the Site is primarily rural in character, with the exception of the village of Ansty (a Category 4 "small village" in the District Plan) to the west of the site and a wastewater treatment works to the northeast, just off the A272. As the Site adjoins the Ansty settlement boundary, the Proposal is considered as well-planned extension to Ansty..
- 3.7. To the north of the Site (over 500m north of the Site and the A272 at its closest point) is the larger settlement of Cuckfield (a Category 2 "larger village"), while Haywards Heath (a Category 1 "main service centre") is around 3km to the east of the Site.

3.8. Views into the Site are generally restricted to the immediate vicinity, from where it is seen in the context of its undulating topography and the vegetation/tree belts that break up the site in visual terms. This combination of trees/vegetation and topography continues to diminish and obscure views of the site as the observer moves away from the site. As a result, views between the Site and the High Weald National Landscape are largely limited to areas close to the A272, which forms the boundary between the two.

### Accessibility

3.9. The Site is well located in relation to the nearby settlements. The large village of Cuckfield is within walking and cycling distance of the site and currently provides key services, including, a secondary school, shops, public houses, and places of worship. It should also be kept in mind that the proposed development includes its own primary school and other key services, such that the two settlements would be mutually supporting.

3.10. The larger settlement of Haywards Heath is nearby, and it is proposed that new bus stops and bus services would be delivered as part of this development. The bus services would serve the existing settlements of Ansty and Cuckfield, as well as the new Garden Community. In addition, development of the Site would provide improvements to existing footpath and cycle connections to Haywards Heath.

3.11. Accordingly, the Site affords a sustainable location in which to meet identified housing needs.

### Development Proposals

3.12. An outline planning application was submitted to the LPA in November 2023, proposing development of the Site as follows:

***“outline planning permission for the redevelopment of land to the east of Ansty to create a new Garden Community, comprising of the erection of up to 1,450 homes (including 30% affordable housing), up to 90 residential care units (C2 class), a primary school, a SEND school, health hub, sports facilities including all weather hockey pitches and tennis centre, allotments, retail, community and employment uses together with ancillary and associated***

***development including new and enhanced pedestrian/cycle routes, open spaces, and landscaping. (All matters reserved except for access)."***

- 3.13. The Application was registered under LPA Ref: DM/23/2866.
- 3.14. The Concept Masterplan is included at **WBP1**.
- 3.15. The Scheme proposes a new Garden Community connected to the village of Ansty, comprising:
- Up to 1,450 dwellings
  - Including 30% affordable housing (435 dwellings)
  - Also including up to 30 self-build plots
  - Up to 90 residential care units (Use Class C2)
  - A primary school
  - A Special Educational Needs School
  - A health hub, with a new GP surgery
  - A village centre with retail, employment and community uses
  - Sports and recreational facilities
  - Public open space and with landscape buffers around sensitive areas
  - Enhanced bus services
  - Connections to existing pedestrian and cycle routes
  - Allotments
  - Associated infrastructure works including vehicular access points
- 3.16. Access will be taken from the A272 at two locations (one to the north, the other to the west) and one point on the B2036 to the southwest.
- 3.17. The Application was reported to Planning Committee in October 2025, with an officer recommendation to grant planning permission. However, and Officers are aware, the Application was nevertheless refused by Members. It is now subject to an Appeal (PINS Ref: 6002030)

### Technical Considerations

- 3.18. Paragraph 2.14 of the Officer report states in relation to the acceptability of the Scheme in highway/accessibility and safety terms as follows (Our emphasis in **bold**):

***"In terms of transport matters, the vehicular access arrangements are acceptable.** On the basis of the submitted evidence and the formal responses from the relevant highway authorities, the application would comply with Policy DP21 and the relevant provisions of national planning policy, which require that development should not result in a severe impact on the transport network. Subject to the recommended conditions and mitigation, no such severe impact has been identified. **Furthermore, the application incorporates appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport and in particular the proposed bus services provide public transport improvements that will benefit existing residents in Ansty and Cuckfield villages.** These improvements will be secured with a s106 Legal Agreement, and it is considered that this is a benefit of the scheme that should be afforded significant positive weight."*

3.19. Paragraph 2.36 states in relation to the benefits to be provided as follows (Our emphasis in **bold**):

*"The proposal would provide up to 1,450 new dwellings (including specialist units and self/custom build plots) at a time when the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. There would be economic benefits from the proposal from the increased spend within the local economy once the development is occupied. There would be social benefits through the provision of a primary school, land for a SEND school, the provision of an on-site sport facility and pitches, provision of local centre including a Health Hub, the provision of allotments and the creation of public open space. Furthermore, the provision of an improved bus service that will also serve the existing villages of Ansty and Cuckfield is also a social benefit of the scheme. The proposal would also result in a net gain in biodiversity. **These benefits, each of which are considered to be significant, would accord with the economic, social and environmental objectives as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF.**"*

3.20. Importantly, **the Application Scheme was assessed as being appropriate in relation to all technical matters**, including, but not limited to, highways, locational sustainability, flooding/drainage, ecology and heritage.

3.21. Although refused by Members for reasons largely relating to landscape impact, the landscape reasons for refusal contradicts the advice from the LPA's professional officers, with the Update Report to the Planning Committee on 16 October 2025 stating as follows (Our emphasis in **bold**):

***“While the site is located within the setting of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (also known as National Landscapes) it is not located within it. Given this and having consideration of the assessment of the impact the proposed development would have on the setting of the HWAONB (set out in subsequent paras 12.85 - 12.105 of the report and clarified as moderate by your Planning Officer), it is not considered that there is a strong reason for refusal. As such it is not considered para 11(d)(i) is engaged. Therefore para 11(d)(ii) is considered relevant in the determination of this application.’***

*Officer comment - For the benefit of the Committee, the requirements of para 189 of the NPPF (wording set out in para 12.90 of report) are set out in two parts, the first requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing scenic beauty in National Landscapes (AONB's) and identifies the conservation and enhancement of wildlife in these areas as important considerations. The second part (and final sentence of para 189 of the NPPF) is expressly concerned with the development in the setting and the test is whether it avoids or minimises adverse impacts. **Your Officers are satisfied that the development complies with the final part of the para 189 of the NPPF, as set out in the assessment section of the report, and in light of this it would not provide a strong reason for refusal, meaning that the tilted balance in para 11(d)(ii) of the NPPF should be applied.”***

- 3.22. As would be the case with the allocation and development of any greenfield site, there will undoubtedly be a change to the receiving landscape. However, **MSDC is constrained by national landscape designations. Accordingly, it is important to consider locations, such as the one afforded by Site 736, that are not constrained by these designations which approach would accord with the requirements at paragraph 187 of the NPPF.**
- 3.23. **This positive assessment of the technical merits of developing the Site for up to 1,450 dwellings and supporting infrastructure will undoubtedly assist Officers in their consideration of sites to be identified as allocations through modifications to be made to the emerging Local Plan.**
- 3.24. As explained, **the allocation of Site 736, could secure a range of benefits, helping to create a ‘place’ that will assist in meeting housing needs, whilst contributing to a sustainable pattern of development.**

## Benefits

3.25. A range of benefits can be secured by allocating the Site as a new garden community, including:

- **Education facilities**, to include the construction, delivery and transfer of a 2.5FE primary school, as well as the transfer of land for a future SEND school.
- **A Village centre**, to include a local convenience store, Class E uses (café/retail/offices), a health hub and a community hall.
- **Sports facilities**, to include a pavilion building, 2 x Hockey Pitches, 4 x Outdoor Tennis Courts, 4 x Covered Padel Courts; and 4 x Indoor Tennis Courts.
- **Allotments** (0.65ha/1.55 Acres) to be made available to a local Parish Council.
- **The potential for a Parkland Reserve** which could extend to approximately 87Ha (215 Acres), of publicly accessible recreational open space, including areas of woodland and meadow.
- Delivery of **1,450 energy efficient dwellings, including 435 affordable homes** (30%).
- Securing the delivery of **residential care (C2 Use)** comprising up to approximately 90-beds.
- A range of **highway benefits**, including:
  - i) On-site **Car Club** provision
  - ii) New **cycle lane** leading back to Haywards Heath to facilitate multimodal access to mainline railway station, shops and services
  - iii) **Off-site junction/roundabout upgrades**
  - iv) **Bus service provision** – At least 2 services per hour to Haywards Heath, one of which would be extended to Burgess Hill
  - v) **Travel Plan package of benefits for residents**
  - vi) **Public rights of way upgrades**

## Site Delivery

3.26. Table 4 of the Council's Matter 2 Statement (Feb 2026) states, for schemes of 1,000 or more dwellings, that the average number of years between receipt of a planning application and first completions is 4.4 years.

- 3.27. The Council’s Trajectory includes annual completion rates for the proposed strategic allocations (Crabbet Park, Sayers Common and Land West of Burgess Hill) in excess of 200dpa.
- 3.28. As the outline planning application was submitted in November 2023, applying the 4.4 year lead time between receipt of a planning application and first completions, could result in first completions being achieved in 2028/29.
- 3.29. Taking a more conservative approach to delivery at Ansty, retaining scope for accelerated delivery as explained below could readily result in the following site trajectory:

Monitoring Year	Completions
2023/24	0
2024/25	0
2025/26	0
2026/27	0
2027/28	0
2028/29	50
2029/30	100
2030/31	150
2031/32	150
2032/33	150
2033/34	150
2034/35	150
2035/36	150
2036/37	150
2037/38	150
2038/39	150
2039/40	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,450 dwellings</b>

- 3.30. **This trajectory would see the allocation being wholly delivered during the plan period, with 1,450 completions achieved by the end of the 2039/40 monitoring year.**
- 3.31. The Masterplan proposals for the Site are to be served by three points of access. This enables the Site to be developed from each of these with multiple sales outlets readily achievable<sup>2</sup>. The fact that the Site can support development from numerous distinct and separate outlets

<sup>2</sup> Reflecting the approach underway at Burgess Hill, Northern Arc.

simultaneously, means the 150dpa is a cautious assumption.

3.32. In addition, the Site can secure the early delivery the supporting community infrastructure (education and health hub) to ensure the creation of a sustainable community.

## 4.0 Summary and Conclusion

- 4.1. **Identifying land to the east of Ansty (Site Ref: 736) as an allocation to provide for a new community for approximately 1,450 dwellings, together with associated supporting infrastructure, will assist in meeting identified housing needs in a location that can contribute towards achieving a sustainable pattern of growth during their lifetime of the plan.**
- 4.2. The Site affords an **opportunity for the Council to secure a lasting legacy in sustainable development, with supporting infrastructure provision, helping to create a high-quality, sustainable place.**
- 4.3. We welcome the opportunity to work with the Council to realise the delivery of a high-quality sustainable garden community on land to the east of Ansty.

SB/6191

16MARCH2026

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**WBP1**



- LEGEND**
- ANSTY GARDEN COMMUNITY BOUNDARY
  - PARKLAND RESERVE BOUNDARY
  - DEVELOPMENT BLOCK
  - EXISTING WOODLAND
  - PROPOSED TREES AND WOOLAND
  - PROPOSED BUSH
  - SITE ACCESS
  - TREE LINED DRIVE FIRST
  - TREE LINED SECONDARY LOOP
  - TERTIARY STREET
  - FEATURE ROADS WITH BUS STOP
  - LOCAL DRIVE
  - RETAINABLE LIVING/CAR HOME
  - SIX PRIMARY & SEND SCHOOLS
  - EXISTING ACCESS ROAD TO MACKERELL'S FARM COTTAGE RETAINED
  - RETAINED WOODLAND WITH BUFFER
  - RETAINED ANCIENT WOODLAND WITH BUFFER
  - RETAINED HEDGEBOW
  - PARKLAND RESERVE
  - RETAINED FLOW
  - NEW FOOTCYCLE LINE
  - SPORTS FACILITY, INCLUDING HOCKEY, FOOTBALL PITCH, BOWLS GREEN AND PABLO COURTS
  - PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
  - FORMAL CHILDREN'S PLAY
  - ALLEGWAYS
  - BUSH ACCESS WOODS VALLEY
  - MOBILITY HUB

NO.	DESCRIPTION	DATE	BY
01	Preparation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
02	Production of this plan for consultation	10/08/24	MM
03	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
04	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
05	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
06	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
07	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
08	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
09	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
10	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
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18	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
19	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
20	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM
21	Finalisation of this plan	10/08/24	MM

**fbik**

PROJECIT: LAND AT ANSTY, HAYWARDS HEATH

REVISION: CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

ISSUED BY: London T: 020 7850 1453

DATE: SEP 2025 DRAWN: SD

SCALE: 1:2,500 CHECKED: ID

STATUS: FINAL APPROVED: BS

DWG. NO.: 0001-FAB-00-KX-DR-V-009

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