

# **MS-16: Site Selection - Response to Fact Check**

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**June 2026**



## Response to fact-checking exercise – June 2026

The Council published its initial list of additional sites for testing on 15<sup>th</sup> May and, in accordance with its updated site selection methodology (MS-12), carried out a two-week fact check with site promoters.

The responses have been summarised into two tables. Table 1 contains a summary of the responses related to the site assessment proformas in Appendix 1 of SSP7. The fourth column, MSDC Action, indicates whether a change is considered necessary to action. Table 2 captures responses in relation to the SSP7 report, Appendix 2 and other general comments.

**Table 1 – Summary of responses to Appendix 1 – Site Assessment Proformas**

SHLAA ID	SITE NAME	COMMENT	MSDC ACTION
19	Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint	Site boundary - Amend to include area to the north.	Change
		Yield - amend to 125 (88 + 37) to reflect Opportunities and Constraints and masterplanning work undertaken and additional parcel of land to the north (Phase 2).	Change
		Area – amend to 7.9ha	Change
		(1) Landscape – Should be ‘Neutral’ not ‘Negative’. There is now substantive and retained planting buffer on the eastern boundary. Initial assessment from landscape consultant does not envisage any harm from protected views. Should be ‘Neutral’.	No change
29	Land off Snowdrop Lane, Lindfield	(5) Listed Buildings – Disagree with commentary. Oldfield is divided from site by modern development and vegetation. Open space is proposed to Pascott’s Farm and Snowdrop Cottage providing suitable mitigation.	No change
		(6) Conservation Areas – Disagree with Less than substantial harm – Mid conclusion. The site lies adjacent to the edge of the Conservation Area	No change

		<p>which is characterised by modern built form which separates the site from historic buildings and areas within the designation.</p> <p>(9) Access – Should be ‘Very Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. There are no known constraints. Access and sightlines lie within public highways or land under Wates control. Access agreed in principle with WSCC highways.</p> <p>(11) Main Service Centre – Should be ‘Positive’ not ‘Negative’. Site is within a 20-minute public transport journey.</p> <p>(12) Primary School – Should be ‘Very Positive’ not ‘Positive’. School is within a 10-minute walk of Northlands Wood Primary Academy.</p>	<p>No change</p> <p>No change</p>
78	Land at junction of Snow Drop Lane / Bedales Hill	Site boundary – amend to match plan submitted.	Change
503	Haywards Heath Golf Course, High Beech Lane, Haywards Heath	<p>Yield – At least 600 dwellings, not 630.</p> <p>(1) Landscape – Should be ‘Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. The site is well screened in all directions with established landscaping and views from the High Weald to the north will not be impacted.</p> <p>(4) Biodiversity – Should be ‘Neutral’ not ‘Negative’. Layout will take account of the LWS. Any impacts can be mitigated.</p> <p>(9) Access – Should be ‘Very Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. No highways objections to previous 2017 outline planning application. There is an existing access and proposed revision has been the subject of previous agreement with HA.</p> <p>(10a) Bus service – Bus service (no. 30) could be extended to serve site.</p> <p>(10b) Train Service – Site is 25-minute walk from train station with regular services to bright, Gatwick and London.</p>	<p>Change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change.</p> <p>No change</p>



	Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down		
818	Land north of the Former Golf House, Horsham Road	(1) Landscape – Concludes “Moderate impact on the AONB due to potential impact on Ancient Woodland”. Masterplan shows a buffer of at least 15m would be retained to Ancient Woodland and so is fundamentally not affected.  (11) Main Service Centre – Crawley centre is easily accessible by bus. (12) Primary School – Woodgate Primary School is less than a 20-minute walk.	No change  No change No change
988	Land to the North of Old Wickham Land, Haywards Heath	(12) Primary School – should be changed from ‘Positive, within 15 minutes walk’ to ‘Very Positive, within 10 minutes walk’.  (14) Retail - should be changed from ‘Positive, within 15 minutes walk’ to ‘Very Positive, within 10 minutes walk’.	No change  No change
1006	Land to the north of Lyoth Lane	(5) Listed Building – Agree with scoring but disagree with commentary. Any harm to Lyoth Cottage and The Old Cottage would be Less than substantial harm - low rather than high.  (9) Access – Should be ‘Very positive’ rather than ‘Neutral’. There are no known constraints. Access and sightlines lie within public highways or land under Wates control. Access agreed in principle with WSCC highways.	No change  No change
1024	Land at Brook House Farm, Turners Hill Road, East Grinstead	(3) Trees – Should be ‘Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. Site is not adjacent to an area of ancient woodland or within a 15m buffer from an area of ancient woodland.	Change
1060	Land Hill Place Farm, Turners Hill Road, East Grinstead	Site boundary - Amend to include the proposed new access.  (5) Listed Building – Disagrees with commentary. Surroundings include numerous buildings and hardstanding, not just open fields.	Change  No change
1075	Land north of Willow Way and Talbot Mead,	(7) Archaeology - A geophysical survey undertaken; no significant archaeological remains or constraints identified on site. The basis for concluding a “Moderate impact” is unclear and should be clarified.	No change

	Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint	(9) Access - Existing gated access points are present from the public highway with access to the western and eastern parcels via the northern end of Cuckfield Road, and access to the eastern parcel via gated access from Danworth Lane. While the proposed development would involve the relocation and enlargement of the access arrangements, there is existing access to the site. West Sussex County Council Highways Authority have confirmed that safe access to the site can be secured.	No change
1124	West House Farm, Henfield Road, Sayers Common	Settlement - Site appears under the 'Albourne' section of SSP7 Appendix 1 – Proformas, but under the 'Sayers Common' section of SSP7 Appendix 2 – Settlement Conclusions.  Site Boundary – amend to include the area which will be open space/landscape buffer (southern section) so that this can be secured in the policy.  (10) Availability of Public Transport, (13) Distance to Health Centre or GP Surgery, (14) Distance to Local Convenience Store – assessments should reflect services, facilities and transport improvements that will be delivered as part of the adjacent DPSC3: Land to the South of Reeds Lane allocation.	Change  Change  No change
1183	Land north of Cobb Cottage North, Ardingly	(9) Access – Commentary associated with Listed Buildings; needs to be reviewed and, where necessary, corrected.	Change
1185	Land north of Glebelands, Lodge Lane	Site map – reference in inset needs correcting.	Change
1188	Land at Pease Field, Pease Pottage	(1) Landscape – Should be 'Neutral' not 'Negative'. Site demonstrates very few of the defined Character Components of the National Landscape and overall, its contribution to the National Landscape is considered to be very small.	No change

		<p>(3) Trees – Should be ‘Neutral’ not ‘Negative’. Highways Technical Note demonstrates how access can be achieved without incursion into Ancient Woodland Buffer.</p> <p>(9) Access – Should be ‘Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. Highways Technical Note demonstrates how access can be achieved without incursion into Ancient Woodland Buffer.</p> <p>(10a) Bus Service – Should be ‘Good’ not ‘Fair’. Bus stops are 800m from site and served by five buses per hour.</p> <p>(10b) Train Service – Should be ‘Good’ not ‘Poor’. Scoring should allow for travel times by cycle and bus, in line with the approach to other facilities. The station is a 14-minute cycle ride or a 19-minute bus ride away.</p> <p>(10) Public Transport – Should be ‘Good’ not ‘Negative’ when taking into account revised scores for criteria (10) and (11).</p> <p>(11) Main Service Centre – Should be ‘Positive’ not ‘Negative’. The site is a 19-minute bus ride to Crawley,</p> <p>(12) Primary School - Should be ‘Neutral’ not ‘Negative’. The site is a 19-minute walk away from Woodgate Primary School.</p> <p>(14) Retail – Should be ‘Very Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. Local convenience retail is provided within a 10-minute walk of the site</p>	<p>Change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change</p> <p>No change</p>
1190	Land north of A272 (smaller parcel)	<p>(3) Trees – Site is a commercial plantation. Loss of trees will occur when timber is harvested, irrespective of development.</p> <p>(9) Access – There is gated access onto the Cuckfield Bypass in south west corner (overgrown).</p>	<p>No change</p> <p>No change</p>
1197	2 Kent’s Farm Cottages	(9) Access – Should be ‘Positive’ not ‘Neutral’. The land has two existing, clear access points from Malthouse Lane. There are no restrictions over	Change

		access and each could be appropriately splayed within the site for safe ingress and visibility.	
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**Table 2 – Summary of responses received in relation to Site Selection initial findings work**

The Council, after careful review, has concluded that the comments received do not impact the overall conclusions reached. Therefore, in-combination testing will now take place based on the 35 additional sites identified in SSP7.

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>		
<b>SHLAA ID</b>	<b>SITE NAME</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
219	Land at Former Driving Range, Horsham Road, Pease Pottage	Summarises conclusions of site assessment.
503	Haywards Heath Golf Course, High Beech Lane, Haywards Heath	Inconsistency with scoring. 503 scores negative on criterion (11) but site 1136 scores ‘Neutral’ whilst also more than 20-minute walk.
603	Land to the west of Woodhouse Farm, Pease Pottage	Reiterated preparation of a Landscape Advice Note which should assist the further landscape work.  Shared the most recent masterplan and clarified / highlighted a number of points including proposed access arrangements, connectivity to Pease Pottage village and Woodgate and confirmation of community facilities to be provided on site.
673	Land north of Butlers Green Road, Haywards Heath	<b>Appendix 2</b> Listed Building – conclusion that 20 homes would not outweigh the harm to nearby heritage assets is at odds with conclusions in submitted Heritage Statement; Less than substantial harm - low.
674	Land north of Pease Pottage, West of Old Brighton Road, Pease Pottage	Summarises conclusions of site assessment.

683	Land between Jasmine Cottage and the Copse, Furnace Farm Road, Furnace Wood, Crawley Down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The nearest settlement is Felbridge not Crawley Down. No assessment appears to have been made of the site's proximity to Felbridge.</li> <li>• A recent appeal decision has been granted consent for 8 self-build homes on the same road as Site 683 (AP/25/0049). This demonstrates that the Inspectorate has recently confirmed that residential development in Furnace Wood / Felbridge can be acceptable in principle.</li> <li>• Inconsistent treatment of Furnace Wood sites. In Appendix 1 of MS-TP4 (Housing Post-Hearings Update), the property: Greenhedges, Felcot Road, Furnace Wood (DM/23/1927) is listed as being within Worth, Crawley Down and East Grinstead.</li> <li>• Omission of Felbridge as a settlement within MSDC's responsibility. Felbridge is a recognised settlement within the District Plan area. However, the long list does not appear to include any assessment of sites in relation to Felbridge.</li> <li>• Yield – change to range of 5 to 10 dwellings, including at least one self-build.</li> </ul>
800	Land west of The Grange, Hurstpierpoint	Site not mapped in Appendix 2 of SSP7.
812	Land at Oakfields Farm, Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down	Site is contiguous with site 813 and under the same ownership and promotion, warrants reconsideration as part of a combined 686, 812 and 813 allocation, given that the connectivity concerns underpinning its stage 2a rejection are materially resolved by that combination.
813	Land to south of Oakfields Farm buildings, Hophurst Lane, Crawley Down	Site is available and controlled by a Developer and therefore available. Site 813 should be re-instated for in-combination testing alongside site 686.
825	Land at Paygate Cottage, Folders Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reason for the different conclusions between Stage 1 and subsequent assessment is unclear.</li> </ul> <p><b>Appendix 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yield should be 50 not 80.</li> <li>• Access - Transport Report (2017) concludes access would be taken from Folders Lane; not reflected in justification. Transport Planning drawing (2025) shows two potential access options from Folders Lane. It should be acknowledged that the promoter has prepared specific technical access material; access issues have been resolved.</li> <li>• SSSI impact and mitigation – Redstone Ecology / Tyler Grange Technical Note proposes a mitigation strategy for a 50 dwelling scheme which seeks to avoid potential development impacts during both construction and post construction phases, and that financial</li> </ul>

		<p>contributions could assist in securing long term grassland restoration and management within the SSSI. SSSI issue has been specifically assessed and a mitigation pathway identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site 825 should not be rejected on ‘an urbanising impact on SSSI’. The Council’s own evidence base identifies a mitigation pathway, and the adjacent Land East of Kings Way scheme provides the most relevant precedent for that pathway.</li> <li>• Should not be assessed in isolation. The assessment should take into consideration the planned infrastructure of the adjacent development; Land East of Kings Way.</li> <li>• Site 825 sits within the same Folders Lane growth corridor as other recent developments. The area is capable of supporting residential growth in sustainability, access and highways terms. The sustainability assessment should reflect this.</li> <li>• The justification does not reflect the positive aspects of the site assessment.</li> <li>• Justification relies on the proximity to a listed building as a principal reason for rejection despite the assessment states less than substantial harm, with potential for suitable mitigation.</li> <li>• The comparative spatial assessment should reflect that site 825 lies outside the HWNL.</li> </ul> <p>Only one additional site has been taken forward for in-combination testing at Burgess Hill, a Category 1 settlement and one of the most sustainable locations in the district for additional housing growth.</p>
1019	Grange Farm, BullFinch Lane Hurstpierpoint	Legal constraint needs to be taken into consideration.
1022	Former Hassocks Golf Course, London Road, Hassocks	<p><b>Appendix 2</b></p> <p>Coalescence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LVA prepared; concludes no physical or visual coalescence.</li> <li>• Not a sound reason to discount site from further in-combination testing.</li> <li>• Revised Concept Development Plan pulls development back from the northern boundary to respond to coalescence concerns.</li> <li>• Inconsistent approach to judgement on matters related to coalescence and sites located within the Local Gap.</li> </ul> <p>Highways (Stonepound Crossroads)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic Impact Note prepared; concludes impact of 300 dwellings on has a minimal impact on the operation of the Stonepound Crossroads.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruling out the site from further in-combination testing on ‘potential impacts’ is premature.</li> <li>• Conclusions are inconsistent with ‘Very Positive’ score against criteria (9) Access in Appendix 1. Site also scores ‘Positive’ in relation of public transport; there is a likelihood that more trips will be taken by public transport.</li> </ul>
1075	Land north of Willow Way and Talbot Mead, Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint	Inconsistencies in scoring for criteria 7 and 9 (table of examples provided in response).
1105	Land west and east of Malthouse Lane, Burgess Hill	<p>Legal constraint and land availability needs to be taken into consideration.</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> Description of the extent of the site needs to be corrected: ‘land at the eastern end of site 1105 is part of Hammonds Mill Farm land, not as the description states ‘the eastern end of site 1105 extends to Hammonds Mill Farm’.</p> <p>Additional land (Hammonds Mill Farm) is identified for inclusion in 1105 (as woodland, local green space and upwards of 70 dwellings).</p>
1124	West House Farm, Henfield Road, Sayers Common	Site 1124 should not be assessed in isolation. The site is adjacent to the proposed allocation DPSC3: Land to the south of Reeds Lane. The planned infrastructure associated with DPSC3 should be taken into account.
1135	Challoners, Cuckfield Road, Ansty	Clarification sought regarding mapping and status of site.
1152 & 1171	Land north of Chart Cottage, Crawley Down & Land at Pescotts, Crawley Down	<p>The Council's SSP7 assessment treats sites 1152 and 1171 as two independent parcels: should be one combined site. Site 1152 should not be assessed for a separate 43 dwellings. Site 1152 should be removed from the Snow Hill cluster of sites as it is unrelated.</p> <p><b>Appendix 2</b> Site 1152 is stated as being “disconnected from the built-up area and settlement boundary of Crawley Down to the south”. When assessed as a single scheme it is contiguous with DPA10: Hurst Farm, Turners Hill Road and, in turn, DPA9: Land to the west of Turners Hill Road. Once built out, this</p>

		<p>site will be immediately adjacent to the new western and northern extent of Crawley Down built up area.</p> <p>Access - Access strategy proposes vehicular access from northern frontage of land on Turners Hill Road rather than along southern boundary. As such, the potential “significant loss of trees” is avoided.</p> <p>Distance to village services and bus service – figure was calculated based on the Pescotts parcel in isolation and does not reflect the geography of the scheme, which adjoins DPA9 and DPA10 to the south. Distances are materially shorter when measured from the southern part of the scheme rather than the midpoint.</p> <p>Infrastructure – Commentary does not reflect the proposed onsite infrastructure. Proposed (open space, BNG, SuDS, buffers and active travel routes).</p> <p>Crawley Down is a category 2 settlement, lies outside the High Weald National Landscape and is close to Crawley, the principle source of the unmet housing need that the additional sites are required to address. The land at Turners Hill Road sits comfortably within that spatial context.</p>
1182	Land at Friars Oak Farmhouse, Hassocks	Site should be further tested rather than treated as potential windfall. Allocating the site, if considered suitable, would provide certainty over delivery and the ability to secure appropriate site-specific requirements.
1183	Land north of Cobb Cottage North, Ardingly	<p><b>Appendix 2</b></p> <p>Landscape – The conclusion that the harm would not be outweighed by the benefits of new housing therefore appears to be insufficiently justified at this stage. The assessment does not appear to consider whether a suitably designed, landscape-led scheme could be accommodated without unacceptable harm to the special qualities of the HWNL.</p> <p>Ancient Woodland – The assessment assumes direct harm to ancient woodland. However, the existing woodland buffer can be retained and enhanced. No trees or ancient woodland is required to be removed.</p>

		The assessment does not give sufficient consideration to the scope for additional native planting, biodiversity enhancement, strengthened woodland edge treatment and sensitive mitigation as part of a future scheme.
1188	Land at Pease Field, Pease Pottage	<p><b>Appendix 2</b></p> <p>Landscape - Site's location within the High Weald National Landscape is identified as a constraint. However, Landscape Technical Note concluded that the site demonstrates very few of the defined Character Components of the HWNL and overall, its contribution to the HWNL is considered to be very small. Site has a high level of visual containment. Development also offers opportunities to deliver enhancements to strengthen the identified Core Components. Subject to appropriate design and mitigation measures, it is likely that potential adverse landscape and visual effects of development on the site could be reduced to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Ancient Woodland – Highways Technical note demonstrates that the AW does not prevent safe and suitable access (20m buffer can be avoided).</p> <p>Ecological Impact – Ecological Technical Note identifies surveys undertaken to date. Identified features of ecological value can be effectively managed through mitigation and design measures. Strengthened boundary planting will further protect and reinforce habitats.</p> <p>Site Accessibility – Disagree with how the Council have assessed the site's sustainability credentials. Highways Technical Note demonstrates that the site is in as sustainable location. This representation and additional supporting information demonstrate that the identified impacts can be appropriately mitigated or addressed, and that the site is suitable for development.</p>
1197	2 Kent's Farm Cottages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is not adjacent to the built up boundary but does sit very close between two proposed major allocations; DPSC1 and site 1105.</li> <li>• A current application for 7 new build houses on land directly adjacent to this site is being considered by the Council (DM/25/1921). A design led scheme for a lesser number of units could blend well with the development next door. This site with DM/25/1921, if approved, and site 1105 would form a broad location for development.</li> </ul>
<b>OTHER</b>		

General	High Weald National Landscape	<p>In the context of ‘fact-checking’ of <i>SSP7: Site Selection Review – Initial Conclusions</i>, we do have a number of significant concerns regarding the lack of full and accurate reference in the SSP7 Covering Report and the Appendices, to the relevant NPPF context and policy requirements.</p> <p>Paragraph 25 of <i>SSP7: Site Selection Review – Initial Conclusions</i>.; regarding the balancing exercise under Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.</p> <p>Major development – NPPF is clear that there is a presumption against major development in National Landscapes. Three sites on the long list are considered to be major development. Justification given is not the NPPF test (paragraph 190).</p> <p>Unmet need – NPPG includes clear advice that National Landscapes are “unlikely to be suitable areas for accommodating unmet needs from (non-designated) areas”. Needs to be taken into account in considering any further allocations.</p>
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