

Mid Sussex District Plan Examination

Hearing Statement – Matter 5: The Spatial Strategy

On behalf of B.Yond Homes Ltd (formerly Rydon Homes)

(Response ID: 1189677)

February 2026

5. The Spatial Strategy

The effectiveness and soundness of the proposed distribution of new development in meeting social, economic and environmental objectives, whether it will achieve more than the sum of its parts and whether it will amount to positive planning.

a) Whether the plan's apportionment of development to larger and smaller settlements and freestanding allocations, and to different sizes of site, is effective in ensuring delivery and in meeting community needs

1. No – the scale and level of growth attributed to existing settlements and freestanding allocations is not effective.
2. The settlement hierarchy set out at Page 40 of the Submission draft Regulation 19 District Plan is clear, but how the scale of growth which has been allocated to each of these settlements in accordance with the hierarchy is not justified and is fundamentally flawed.
3. Our representations submitted at both the Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 consultation stages explained why we consider that the methodology for site selection, which has determined the level growth at existing settlements, is unduly reliant on, in particular, Landscape Character Assessments that are not site specific. Higher order settlements in the settlement hierarchy, including Hurstpierpoint, are considered to have greater sustainability merits and growth potential than the outputs of the Council's site selection process would suggest. As such, potential sources of housing supply at sustainable settlements across the district, such as Little Park Farm at Hurstpierpoint, have been unnecessarily and inappropriately excluded.
4. Notwithstanding the general acceptability of the principle of strategic scale developments, it is considered that there is, as a result of the ineffective site selection process followed by the Council, an overreliance on strategic scale development in the Plan, in order to meet housing needs. The sources of housing supply set out in Policy DPH1: Housing (and updated in the January 2026 Housing Topic Paper (ref: MS-TP2)) result in some 73% of all new housing needed in the Plan (Sustainable Communities, housing allocations and windfall), over and above the commitments from existing permissions and allocations, is proposed to come from three strategic locations of Burgess Hill, Crabbet Park and Sayers Common.
5. Whilst the NPPF does not allude to an appropriate proportion of development that could be delivered by such strategic scale development, in relying on this provision to such a great an extent as proposed by the Submission Plan, it has had unnecessary implications for housing delivery in the Plan - the housing trajectory for the Plan is skewed towards delivery in the mid and late years of the Plan period, resulting in the need for a stepped housing requirement; this is something that Planning Practice Guidance is clear there are limited circumstances whereby this would be justified (our response to Matter 1 confirms that we do not consider the justification to be met).

6. The Housing Topic Paper (ref MS-TP2) itself identifies that the biggest risks to housing needs being met are the strategic allocations, specifically DPSC2 and DPSC3, but yet the Council has, unnecessarily, chosen to ‘put all their eggs in one basket’ beyond the first 5 years of the Plan with all other allocations being anticipated to have been largely or entirely completed.
7. As such, in order to reduce the reliance on strategic scale development, particularly those in less sustainable locations i.e. DPSC3 Sayers Common, and for the apportionment of growth to more closely reflect the defined settlement hierarchy, the Plan should maximise the level of growth that can be provided at Principle 3 of the Spatial Strategy – the existing sustainable settlements of the District – before considering Principle 4 options.

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