Local Plan Hearing Statement

In Respect of Examination of Main Modification 92
to Draft Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039

Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council

Contents Page

1. Introduction 1

2. MM92: West House Farm, Henfield Road, Sayers Common 1

Access and Movement 1

Social and Community Facilities 3

Countryside 5

3. Summary 5

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This Hearing Statement comprises Representations for and on behalf of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council (the 'Parish Council'), to the Examination Hearing in respect of the Main Modifications to the Draft Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039 (the 'Draft Plan').

1.2. These Representations have been prepared following the submission of Representations by the Parish Council in response to the emerging Draft Plan, most recently, to the Consultation on the draft Main Modifications in September 2026.

1.3. These Representations relate to 'Matter 7 Continued: Sites Added by the Draft Main Modifications' and in particular, Site MM92: West House Farm, Henfield Road, Sayers Common (the 'site'), as set out by the Inspector in the Week 4: Hearings Agenda, due to take place on Thursday 05th November 2026. They follow the format of the key matters to be discussed, as identified by the Inspector in the Agenda, and amplified in the associated 'Guidance Note from the Inspector'.

1.4. The Parish Council seek to supplement these Written Representations by attending and participating in the Hearings in relation to this Site.

2. MM92: WEST HOUSE FARM, HENFIELD ROAD, SAYERS COMMON

2.1. Representations in respect of Site MM92 are presented under the following Matters to be discussed, as identified by the Inspector in the Hearing Agenda:

- Access and Movement;
- Social and Community Facilities; and
- Countryside.

2.2. Each of these are addressed in turn below.

Access and Movement

2.3. Site MM92 is one of a number of allocations for extensive residential-led development in and around Sayers Common in the Draft Plan. The site is, in particular, bordered to the north, east, and west by land allocated under Policy DPSC3 (MM44), which is also the subject to the requirements of Policy DPSC GEN (MM36).

2.4. As part of the emerging allocations at Sayers Common, the scheme proponents of DPSC3 have prepared a Holistic Movement Strategy[1]. Section 3 sets out a range of existing 'local movement issues'. In respect of land in proximity of MM92, the document notes that there are currently "*high speeds, lack of active travel infrastructure, and HGV use along Henfield Road (B2116)*"; "*The quality of footway on Henfield Road between London Road and Albourne C of E Primary School is relatively poor and requires pedestrians to cross the road several times*"; and *"concerns apply to Truslers Hill Lane… as a rat run towards Brighton."*

[1] Sayers Common Holistic Movement Strategy - July 2026

2.5. This identifies that site MM92, in isolation, is poorly connected and lacks accessibility by non-car modes of transport to services and facilities in Sayers Common and/or Albourne.

2.6. This lack of accessibility is not addressed in the scheme proponents supporting documentation[2]. This predominantly focuses on access and movement within the site. It fails to demonstrate how the site would be adequately connected to, and accessed from, the wider area. It does not acknowledge or address the absence of footways, high speed traffic and extensive HGV movements along Henfield Road. At present, the nature and character of this road would strongly discourage active travel movements to and from the site.

2.7. This serves to emphasise that, taken in isolation, Site MM92 does not represent a sustainable location for residential development.

2.8. Its suitability for residential development is therefore predicated on its delivery in conjunction with the wider development envisaged in Sayers Common. In particular, the delivery of allocation DPSC3, which envisages the provision of additional community infrastructure.

2.9. It is considered that site MM92 should only be both allocated for development and brought forward for delivery, in conjunction with the wider infrastructure envisaged as part of the delivery of the Masterplan for Sayers Common, in particular through land at Policy DPSC3.

2.10. The Holistic Movement Strategy in support of this wider development acknowledges that Sayers Common is presently an unsustainable small settlement with few services of its own, no trainline connection, and very limited bus services.

2.11. It acknowledges that in order to embed sustainable movement, it will be important for all site allocations in Sayers Common (and not just DPSC3) to deliver active travel connectivity.

2.12. The timing of delivery of Site MM92 in relation to wider infrastructure would have significant implications.

2.13. A delay in the provision of improvements to public transport as part of the Sayers Common development is a particular concern given the existing difficulties with local traffic movements, including through Hurstpierpoint High Street, and towards Hassocks railway station. A failure to deliver the timely upgrade in public transport to align to development is likely to undermine the step change in modal shift of transport movements that have been identified as required in order to minimise and mitigate the impact of development at Sayers Common generally, and to maximise the prospect of the community embracing sustainable travel movements.

2.14. As identified by the Inspector in his earlier Post Hearing Letter[3], in relation to other site allocations At Sayers Common in the Draft Plan, there are concerns at the effect of development on Hurstpierpoint High Street. This concern goes beyond matters of junction capacity.

[2] Pre-Application Document - November 2025 - Reference CB_28_379
[3] IDJB-12: Inspector's Post Hearing Letter

2.15. This part of the local highway network is already the subject of significant traffic volumes. Approximately 6,700 vehicles a day travel through Hurstpierpoint High Street[4]. This includes significant numbers of HGV's despite the presence of a weight restriction.

2.16. Endeavours to ease long-standing congestion within Hurstpierpoint High Street has been the subject of extensive appraisal.

2.17. The key constraint of the High Street, is that it is of historic form with numerous listed buildings, and contains a number of 'pinch-points' where two-way flow of traffic is not practically possible. These constraints are a result of road width, geometry and buildings, not the layout of parking and unauthorised parked cars. The pinch points require vehicles to await clearance of vehicles travelling in the opposite direction to be able to pass. The High Street sets out priority signage, to control flows and minimise congestion within the High Street.

2.18. All practical measures to mitigate congestion and ease traffic flow have been investigated and implemented, as far as is practically possible, within the limitations of the extent of the public highway.

2.19. It is therefore submitted that any allocation of land at MM92, should be accompanied by a requirement to deliver improvements in non-car modes of transport in and around Sayers Common.

2.20. A failure to deliver the timely upgrade in public transport to align to development is likely to undermine the step change in modal shift of transport movements that have been identified as required in order to minimise and mitigate the impact of development at Sayers Common generally, and to maximise the prospect of the community embracing sustainable travel movements.

2.21. Increased congestion, would adversely impact the existing resident community, and harm the vitality and viability of Hurstpierpoint High Street; an important local centre serving the resident community.

Social and Community Facilities

2.22. The Parish Council consider that the significant growth envisaged in and around Sayers Common should be designed to foster the creation of a nucleated settlement and that this should be predicated on growth that respects the existing layout of the settlement and delivers expansion that will positively contribute to the existing settlement form, character and layout, and existing services and facilities.

2.23. In order to achieve this, it is considered that the land allocations should be brought forward in parallel with a Masterplan, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, and associated Phasing Plan, and that these should all be an integral component of the Draft Plan allocations. It is considered that the allocations at Sayers Common should not be endorsed ahead of such documents, given that they are fundamental components of achieving suitable and successful growth at the settlement.

2.24. Policy DPSC GEN: Significant Site Requirements relates to, amongst others, land allocated for development at Sayers Common to the south of Reeds Lane through Policy DPSC3.

2.25. It is submitted that the Masterplan and associated documents for the development of Sayers Common should be considered as part of the site allocation through the Local Plan. The extent of change for the area is of such

[4] Traffic and Transport Assessment - Obtrada Ltd - attached at Appendix 1 of the Parish Council's Main Modifications Representations - September 2026

scale and significance, with delivery anticipated over an extensive time period, that to maximise the prospects of successful evolution of the community for the benefit of both the existing and future residents, it should be delivered through a Masterplan and associated documents that are embedded in the Development Plan process.

2.26. In the alternative, it is submitted this should be required to be prepared and approved as a formal Development Plan document (such as a Supplementary Plan).

2.27. A requirement for the Masterplan and associated documents to be approved as part of the Development Plan would deliver the requisite certainty with control managed by the LPA with appropriate community engagement.

2.28. It is considered that the scope of the Masterplan and associated documents should not be limited to the allocation at DPSC3. There is a requirement for co-ordination and collaboration between all of the sites allocated in and around the area. On this basis, it is considered that the Masterplan should relate to all sites in and around Sayers Common, including MM92, and that the Masterplan should be approved prior to the determination of any associated planning application.

2.29. A Sayers Common Infrastructure Delivery Plan (July 2026) (SCIDP) was published as part of the associated evidence base of the Main Modifications to the Draft Plan.

2.30. This provides a more detailed assessment of infrastructure needs arising from the proposed development at Sayers Common, including scale, timing, delivery responsibilities, and funding arrangements. It notes that infrastructure planning and masterplanning are closely interrelated processes.

2.31. The SCIDP notes that the majority of infrastructure is to be secured by contributions that are 'pooled' from the sites allocated for residential development and/or through on-site provision on DPSC3 (e.g. the provision of a new primary and secondary school).

2.32. The SCIDP highlights the longstanding concerns of the Parish Council that delivery of key infrastructure is unlikely to occur for many years and well after a significant quantum of development in and around Sayers Common has either begun or been delivered.

2.33. The lived experience of local residents is that there are existing problems and failures of the water supply and wastewater treatment systems in the area. The former includes low pressure and supply outages, whilst the latter includes an inability of the wastewater treatment works at Goddards Green to manage existing wastewater levels. There are frequent occurrences of queues of waste tankers within the parish being used to remove wastewater from the local system and transported out of the area for processing elsewhere.

2.34. The Parish Council consider that the delivery of infrastructure should occur early in the implementation of development at Sayers Common. This includes access improvements in non-car modes of transport. It is also considered that additional clarity should be provided on the terms of controls on phasing of occupation in relation to infrastructure provision for all residential development allocations.

2.35. This concern relates to site MM92 in particular, given its current isolated location in relation to existing services and facilities in Sayers Common or Albourne, and its absence of connectivity to these settlements by non-car modes of transport.

Countryside

2.36. The Parish Council have consistently raised concerns at the proposed expansion of Sayers Common and its effect on the spatial separation of Sayers Common and Albourne, resulting in, or significantly contributing to, the coalescence of the two settlements.

2.37. The scheme proponents of DPSC3 in their Landscape and Visual Appraisal acknowledge that this area is the most visually sensitive part of their allocation.[5]

2.38. It is considered that this issue applies with equal validity to land allocated under MM92, and in particular its eastern part.

2.39. It is acknowledged that the Illustrative Masterplan for the development[6] details the intent for the southern part of the allocation to be reserved as undeveloped, public open space. This is reflected in the Policies Map that accompanies MM92 and reflects Clause MM92(5), that it will remain as public open space to maintain the separation between the site and Albourne.

2.40. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that the combination of the southern limb of the allocation of DPSC3 and the allocation of MM92 would result in, or significantly contribute to, the coalescence of Albourne with the expanded Sayers Common.

2.41. The Parish Council consider that Albourne should remain a physically and visually separated settlement from Sayers Common in the interests of the character of both communities.

2.42. It is therefore considered that a larger part of the southern section of MM92 (together with the southern limb of DPSC3) should remain undeveloped and be identified as part of a landscape buffer, that would continue and extend east to connect to the landscape buffer identified to the land north of MM81 (Phase 1, Swallows Yard, London Road, Albourne).

2.43. It is considered that the identification of this increased robust landscape buffer, to maintain the separate identity of the existing settlements, is an important spatial objective and should be identified in the Local Plan as part of the policy allocation of MM92 and on the associated Policies Map. It is considered as a result, only a smaller part of the northern area of Site MM92 should be identified as suitable for development in conjunction with the wider development at Sayers Common.

3. SUMMARY

3.1. It is considered that Site MM92, in isolation does not represent a sustainable location for development. Its suitability is predicated on delivery in conjunction with the wider development envisaged at Sayers Common, in particular through land at Policy DPSC3.

3.2. It is considered that delivery of MM92 should be linked to delivery of wider infrastructure improvements in and around sayers Common. This in particular relates to improvements in non-car modes of transport, given the currently isolated and poorly connected setting of the site.

[5] Figure 8 of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal, Stantec, October 2023
[6] Drawing Number CB_28_379_PARAM_AI01 - Revision B - November 2025

3.3. A delay in delivery of infrastructure improvements in relation to the development of Site MM92 would be likely to result in an exacerbation of local traffic problems, including, but not limited to congestion in Hurstpierpoint High Street. It would also undermine the prospect of securing a step change in modal shift of transport movements by future residents, which has been identified as required to minimise and mitigate the impact of the development.

3.4. It is considered that the delivery of wider infrastructure at Sayers Common should be approved as part of the/ a Development Plan, with controls imposed on phasing and timing of development, including at MM92.

3.5. It is considered that, in combination with other development, the proposed extent of works at MM92 would result in, or significantly contribute to, the coalescence of Albourne with the expanded Sayers Common.

3.6. To prevent this, in the interests of settlement identity, it is submitted that greater part of the southern area of MM92 should be designated as reserved as a landscape buffer (together with the southern limbo of DSCP3). The land identified as suitable for residential development within the MM92 should be accordingly reduced.