[redacted]

16th October 2026

Hearing Statement in relation to the Additional Sites with reference to MM 82.

From : Geoff Zeidler, District Councillor for the Downland Villages Ward of MSDC.

This statement supplements the submissions made on 6th September 2026 and which focused on the facts that:

- The inclusion of MM82 was in conflict with the spatial strategy in relation to Albourne as a Category 3 village as it does not represent "proportional development" and does not enhance sustainability. This would make the allocation unsound.
- Sites were selected on their support for the 5 year land supply when the infrastructure plans did not provide the water and waste facilities required in that timescale. As a result there is a high risk MM99 would lead to Grampian conditions being invoked making the plan undeliverable and hence unsound.
- MSDC have failed to "address the issue" of Hurstpierpoint High Street or reasonably consider the traffic impacts on rural lanes. Incremental traffic is likely to lead to exponential issues such that "monitor and manage" cannot be an effective solution.

It also highlighted that the additional sites in Albourne and Sayers Common were not consistent with the direction of the new NPPF.

The issues raised by the Inspector for comment in relation to MM80 & MM82, and my related additional comments are set out below. Where appropriate, these may be assisted by the proposed "Statements of Common Ground" raised to MSDC by WILD which I hope have been agreed in advance as factual, the drafts of which I include for reference. I would also like to reinforce my support for the issues raised by Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council in its letter to MSDC on 12th October. This addresses the effectiveness of DPSC-GEN in ensuring that all the developments in the Sayers Village area, many of which are being brought forward independently, should be co-ordinated to ensure that the overall planning objective is achieved and that the impact on the lives of residents over a very extended construction period can be minimised through effective co-ordination.

Character of the area

- *Compatibility with Albourne in scale & character*

SoCG 3 : *In accordance with the Spatial Strategy, independent Category 3 settlements should only be expected to deliver proportionate development.*

The addition of MM82 would constitute dis-proportionate development creating a village with the majority of its housing on one side of the increasingly busy B2118; and its community facilities and historic core on the other. This separation will ensure that the village will never have a single coherent character; and steps required to be implemented on the B2118 to allow a free and safe passage for residents of all ages across the three way junction will impair traffic flow considerably. In instances where the A23 is closed in the mornings, it will make access to the school and even bus routes very challenging.

- *Effect on heritage assets*

The impact of MM82 and MM80 the heritage assets is best expressed by the London Road Action Group. I have had many representations from residents in this area; and those who regularly use the footpaths in the area for walking dogs, but feel they are best able to reflect these themselves.

Access and movement

- *Movement patterns to and from the site*
- *Bus links and footpath links*
- *The improvements to Hassocks Station*

SoCG 2 : *The Main Modifications do not identify any specific mitigation measures to address impacts on the lanes and Hurstpierpoint High Street.*

MM82 will have an access onto the Albourne Road between Hurstpierpoint and the traffic lights at Albourne as its only significant access. This directly loads a three-way junction which will also have to be engineered to improve safety for significant volumes of residents who will need to cross to access bus services travelling north or east.

Hurstpierpoint is identified as the local retail destination which immediately anticipates increased traffic loading to the high street for which no mitigation measures exist. Monitor and manage cannot be an acceptable strategy for this High Street.

The only improvements to Hassocks station that are indicated is increased cycle rack capacity; reflecting the fact that there is no opportunity for increased car parking. Cycling from MM82 to Hassocks station is over 3 miles, includes hills on both Wickham Hill and Keymer Road, and takes around 15-20 minutes if you are dressed with the intention of travelling to work which is at the limits of acceptability.

Social and community infrastructure and open space

- *Accessibility to social and community services and facilities*
- *Open spaces and sports facilities*

As outlined above, all of Albourne's Community assets are based on the west side of the B2118, at a distance from MM82 and MM80. These include the Albourne Primary School; the Village Hall; the Centenary Garden; the recreation ground; the allotments and St Bartholomews Church. The Inspired Villages retirement home has committed to the provision of a community shop which will also be on the west side of the road. Access to all of these will only be achieved by crossing the B2118. This is neither easy nor safe for older residents; young children; or parents with babies without adjustments to the junction which will slow down the increasing traffic.

Site conditions

- *Habitats*
- *Surface water, ponds and flood risk*
- *Foul drainage*
- *Noise environment*

SoCG 4 : *Given the current state of water supply in the area; the lack of committed infrastructure within the first 5 years of the Plan stated in IV7&8; and the intent to deliver sites (SHELAA Nos) 775,789,1173 and 1178 within the first 5 years, these sites should be scored as a major negative for water resources in the Main Modifications report DP16.*

On 15th October 2026 a severe drought was declared in West Sussex with the Ardingly reservoir operating at 20%. The capacity of this reservoir is 4,773 million litres when full. The average water

usage of an individual in the UK is 144 litres per day (lpd) which has been stable for the last 10 years. Accepting a reduced demand of 130lpd and an average capacity of 3 people per house, the main District Plan's water requirement for 20,000 houses will be a demand of 2,900m lpyear. This is clearly a significant amount and given that reservoir planning and development takes as long as the District Plan period there will be no route to supply mitigation.

The additional 4,000 homes proposed to meet need from outside Mid Sussex would create **incremental demand** of around 580m litres/year; or over 12% of the reservoir's capacity. Every single site that is approved therefore creates incremental risk to the plan that at some point MM99 Grampian conditions will be imposed which would render the plan undeliverable and hence unsound. MM82 is one of the least sustainable, and so most unnecessary additions to this systemic risk

In relation to foul water, as has been stated previously, the recent development of Starley Close (4 houses adjacent to MM82) was undertaken with the foul drainage being linked to mains capacity on the London Road adjacent to Butts Cottages opposite. When Starley Close was inhabited, the impact on the foul drainage created overflows into the Butts Cottage houses which persisted for a couple of years until an additional pump unit was added. This reflects not only the paucity of infrastructure, but also the fragility of capacity. Ensuring adequate foul water infrastructure for MM82; to then be linked to the infrastructure which has (not been) identified in IV7 and IV8 with any confidence given uncertainties around Goddards Green pumping station will not allow for delivery as planned, making the plan unsound.

Conclusion

I believe that MM80 and MM82 fundamentally compromise the scale and character of Albourne as a Category 3 Village and will leave it as a village with a housing estate attached; that the infrastructure capacity does not exist to allow it to be developed as planned; and that it would exacerbate traffic issues in Hurstpierpoint High Street which have no routes to mitigation. The only way to make the Plan sound, is to remove both MM80 and MM82 from the Plan.