

Draft Mid Sussex District Plan (2021-2039)

Housing Site Allocations (DPH5-25)

Site Allocation Reference:	DPH20
Agent Name:	Planning Potential
On behalf of:	Welbeck Strategic Land II LLP

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity net gain (BNG) will deliver measurable improvements for biodiversity by enhancing or creating new habitats in association with development. Biodiversity net gain can be delivered on-site, off-site or through a combination of on-site and off-site measures, however, the implementation of biodiversity net gain should align with the local objectives and priorities for biodiversity improvements and nature recovery.

From November 2023, all planning permissions granted in England, with a few exemptions, will have to deliver a minimum of 10% BNG under the Environment Act 2021.

Draft Policy DPN2: Biodiversity Net Gain will identify and set out local requirements for BNG. It is currently intended that the minimum requirement for the site allocations will be 10% BNG except for the Significant Sites which will be required to provide a minimum 20% BNG.

The Council also intends to issue further guidance on BNG over the coming months.

Biodiversity Net Gain	
1. Have you undertaken any work on assessing whether your site can deliver the required BNG? <i>If yes, please describe the nature of this work.</i> <i>If no, proceed to question 6.</i>	Yes. PEA in 2017, 2021 and a review of the habitats in line with condition assessment in 2022. The baseline condition assessments were detailed in the BNG assessment report 2022, submitted as part of the Regulation 18 Consultation in December 2022. This followed the DEFRA metric 3.1 condition assessment method. The grassland was modified poor condition due the dominance of perennial rye grass and approximately 5 species per meter squared. NVC assessment identified as MG6 modified grasslands dominated by rye grass and white clover. The BNG report provides the baseline habitats and condition assessment of these habitats and shows these to

	<p>corresponding maps. Post development areas are also shown on maps with new planting proposals as per masterplan design.</p> <p>The DEFRA metric 3.1 identified a 22.43% increase. However, this may change dependent on the masterplan.</p>
<p>2. What percentage of BNG is the proposed development achieving?</p> <p>Is this percentage of BNG solely for the proposed development?</p>	<p>Circa 22% increase</p>
<p>3. Will the BNG be delivered on-site, off-site or a combination?</p>	<p>On site</p>
<p>4. If off-site or combination of on-site and off-site, has suitable land been identified to deliver the required BNG?</p> <p><i>If yes, please state where and if this is within or outside Mid Sussex District. Please also state if the off-site BNG is land within the control of the site promoter or if it is within another land ownership.</i></p>	
<p>N/A</p>	
<p>5. If the answer to question 4 is 'No', what steps are you taking to identify suitable land? How do you intend to source off-site BNG?</p>	
<p>N/A</p>	
<p>6. Do you have baseline ecology information for the site?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>7. Would you find it helpful to discuss BNG requirements with MSDC?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

It would be helpful if you could submit the following documents (if available and for internal use) to support the site allocation and for further assessment work:

- A completed Biodiversity Metric in Excel (spreadsheet) form
- Raw flora data for each parcel type
- Completed condition assessments
- Photographs to illustrate the Biodiversity Metric
- Soil type and condition information

Self- and Custom-Build Housing

Draft Policy DPH30: Self and Custom Building Housing recognises that the Council has a role in delivering this type of housing to meet the demand. DPH30 currently contains a requirement for

developments of 100 or more dwellings to provide 5% as serviced plots. For other sized schemes, a facilitative approach is taken. However, the housing allocations offer an opportunity to deliver a choice of housing. We are therefore asking promoters of the proposed housing allocations whether there is scope to secure serviced plots within the individual allocations.

Self- and Custom- Build Housing

Providing that there is a demand, could your site deliver Self- or Custom-Build plots?

Yes, the site could potentially deliver self-build / custom build plots, in line with emerging policy.

Site Allocation - Developable Area

Currently, within each housing site allocation we have included the Site Area (ha) which reflects the extent of the red-line boundary. Alongside this we would like to include the developable area to provide clarity to those reading the Plan.

Please can you provide the developable area of your site below, even if at this stage it is an estimate, taking into account any constraints (i.e. Ancient Woodland and buffers) and policy requirements (i.e. BNG and green/ blue infrastructure, play space, where applicable)

Developable Area (ha):	5.8ha
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Setting of the South Downs National Park

Draft Policy DPC5: Setting of the South Downs National Park outlines that development within land that contributes to the setting of the South Downs National Park will need to meet certain requirements and should be sensitively located and designed.

Setting of the South Downs National Park

Do you consider that the site is within the setting of the South Downs National Park?

The site forms part of the distant setting of the SDNP as it is a component of panoramic views that are available from the SDNP escarpment. These views comprise an expansive array of agricultural fields, woodlands, tree belts and scattered settlements within the Low Weald. In views from the nearest part of the escarpment at Wolstonbury Hill (approximately 3.5km south of the site), settlements such as Sayers Common, Hurstpierpoint and Albourne Green may be seen as part of a visual mosaic of buildings and trees. Houses are well integrated into these distant views by settlement edge woodland and trees. The site is difficult to perceive in the wider visual mass of woodland and mature trees in and around Sayers

	<p>Common. Views of the site from the escarpment to the southwest are even more difficult to perceive (e.g. from the escarpment near Steyning approximately 12km from the site) due to the greater effects of distance.</p>
<p>Have you undertaken any work in relation to the setting of the South Downs National Park?</p> <p>E.g. landscape and visual impact assessments, landscape-led masterplan for the site</p>	<p>The development proposals have been informed by a detailed analysis of existing landscape and visual conditions. The landscape analysis has included a review of landform, topography, vegetation, land use, connectivity, designations and landscape character. The special qualities of the South Downs National Park and the key characteristics of its component landscapes, as identified in the South Downs Landscape Character Assessment (October 2020), have also been reviewed. One of the key characteristics associated with the escarpment to the south and southwest of the site is the availability of panoramic views across the Low Weald and the role of the escarpment as a distinctive backdrop to views from the Low Weald. An appraisal has been undertaken of (1) the contribution of the site to these panoramic views and (2) the visibility of the escarpment from the site and from nearby areas of the local landscape. This appraisal has been informed by a review of the South Downs National Park Views Characterisation and Analysis Report (November 2015).</p> <p>The landscape and visual baseline work has informed the quantum and distribution of housing and greenspace on the site, as set out on the Indicative Masterplan. The areas of proposed built development have been set back from retained trees and woodlands and supplementary native tree planting has been provided to help conserve the visual mosaic of trees and buildings that are a characteristic part of these elevated SDNP views.</p>

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal has also been undertaken for this proposed housing allocation. This study has identified that there would be negligible effects on the key characteristics and special qualities of the SDNP. The strong rural character and scenic beauty of the panoramic views from the escarpment would be conserved. The allocation would not result in any obstruction of views of the escarpment from public rights of way surrounding the site. Some distant glimpsed views of the escarpment from within the site would be retained to help create an attractive high-quality residential area that reflects the intrinsic character of the Low Weald.

Any additional lighting associated with this settlement edge housing allocation would have no perceptible effect on dark skies of the SDNP, which is designated as an International Dark Sky Reserve.

There would be no conflict, in the context of the above, between the housing allocation and the purposes of the SDNP, which include the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

Please return the form to us by Friday 29th September 2023.

Many thanks,

Planning Policy Team

If you have any questions, please email planningpolicy@midsussex.gov.uk or call the Team on 01444 477053