

Examination of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021-2039

Inspector's comments and questions concerning the proposed main modifications and the site allocations

Please will the Council respond to the following questions by Friday 23 October 2026.

If changes to the text of the submitted plan or main modifications are needed in response to any of the questions below, the Council are encouraged to propose a simple alteration to the policy or explanatory text that does not change the effect or force of the policy.

Policy comments and questions

MM7, Policy DPN1: Nature Recovery: it is not clear why the Council are proposing to delete the two sentences about nature recovery.

MM11, Policy DPN8: the proposed reference to specific numbered Institute of Lighting Professionals documents is not required for soundness so I cannot recommend this change to the policy. However, I suggest that the numbered documents are instead referred to in for information in the supporting text; this would not be a main modification.

MM29 and MM34, Policies DPH4 and DPH8: this question is directed to the submitted policies rather than the proposed main modification. Please can the Council consider whether the policies adequately reflect the needs, costs and purpose of specialist accommodation. Certain types of C2 accommodation provide very specialist needs and, for reasons of management, format or viability, may not be capable of providing affordable housing. Please can the Council take note of the position in Horsham District, where this issue is being addressed through main modifications, and come back with suitable wording, preferably as a minor policy modification.

MM33, Policy DPH7: having regard to Crawley Borough Council's representation, please can the Council consider (for the sake of clarity) whether a minor alteration is required to the first paragraph of the explanatory text by deleting "is provided within the district" and replacing it with "is provided to meet the district's needs and, where appropriate, provides support for needs arising in neighbouring districts". Similarly can the Council consider whether the MM to the policy itself should state "...location, identified need (including, where appropriate, need arising in a neighbouring district) and viability".

MM98: Policy DPI6: please can the Council consider the additional wording in the representation from NHS Property Services, which I believe should be added. The policy must have the flexibility to allow large organisations to rationalise their estates, modernise and invest in the public interest.

Site allocation comments and questions

The following comments and questions only concern sites that are not going to be the subject of the forthcoming hearings.

General points

- (i) The sustainable communities have an "indicative yield" but most of the site allocation policies have very specific numbers of dwellings. In practice, the number

delivered on a site will depend on a variety of factors, including site conditions and the nature of the development itself, and it may well vary from the figure given in the policy, so the plan needs to recognise this. It is suggested that the box that contains the number of dwellings should say "Indicative number of dwellings" and the text of the plan needs to explain why the figure may vary.

(ii) The County Council have made representations asking for additional contributions towards a number of facilities in several policies. They do not appear in the MMs. I am not convinced about the addition of some of these to the list, particularly where they appear to concern undefined revenue funding rather than a capital cost related specifically to the development. "Waste management" is an example. Please can the Council comment.

(iii) I am also concerned about the potential for requirements to seek contributions for facilities that are in excess of those directly related to the development. See for example MM43 / Policy DPSC2 below, but the same point applies to all site allocations. I note that the requirements of the CIL regulations are mentioned in the explanatory text to DPI2, which is helpful, and my concerns would be addressed if the first line of Policy DPI2 were amended to read "Planning obligations will be sought where they meet the statutory test set out in the CIL Regulations, in order to: ..."

Financial contributions are required of some very small sites including MM64 (20), MM65 (9), MM68 (14), MM73 (9), MM80 (10), MM84 (15), MM85 (20), MM86 (20), MM87 (13). Can the Council explain why it is seeking identify contributions from these small sites? Can it also explain what it means by financial contributions to "emergency services" and "health"? Is there a need for additional capital investment in emergency services and health relating directly to these sites?

Site specific points

MM38: Policy DPSC1: what is the Council's position regarding the County Council's additional request for contributions?

MM41: Policy DPA3, Burgess Hill Station: I do not think this issue has been entirely resolved. I note that in the MMs the housing number on this site has increased, and the MMs also propose additional homes on the edge of Burgess Hill, at Sayers Common and at Hurstpierpoint. The accessibility of Burgess Hill by rail is a major sustainability advantage (and there is limited parking capacity at Hassocks station). In these circumstances, I do not believe that the plan can simply require "an appropriate level" of parking at Burgess Hill station. The Council should have a realistic concept of how parking needs would be reconciled with any proposed development on this site, taking into account viability. Is there any criterion or objective that should be inserted here? Is there a numerical bottom line? Such as "sufficient to provide for the needs of ..."

MM43: Policy DPSC2, Crabbet Park: a similar point on contributions to the general point referred to above. What are the "financial contributions for education provision" and what are they intended for? It needs to be made clear in the policy that any contributions will be proportionate and must be related specifically to the identified needs arising from the development – for example, DPSC2 would not give rise to the need for a full SEND facility or 4FE expandable to 6FE secondary school. In addition, what does the policy mean when it seeks land for a 4FE (expandable to 6FE) secondary school? Does this mean that sufficient land has to be found in the masterplan for a 6FE school? Please can the Council comment.

MM52: Policies DPA5 and DPA6: whilst not directly related to the MMs, should the Council insert into the background text as a minor modification some acknowledgement of the proposed development in Lewes District?

MM62, MM63 and MM64: the County Council have made representations seeking improvements for sustainable travel through B2110/B2028 Turners Hill Crossroads. This is not in the MM schedule. Does the Council know what is in mind here and is there an identifiable project for such improvements? Does the scale of development on these sites and the likely number of people passing through the crossroads using “sustainable travel” merit the need for such works?

MM66: see MM77 / MM78 below.

MM67: Land to the North of Old Wickham Lane, Haywards Heath: (i) Is Gatesmead a suitable access? (ii) What value does the existing site have for existing recreational space? (iii) How would the policy requirement for on-site semi-natural green space be reconciled with the development?

MM70: Land rear of The Martins (south of Hophurst Lane), Crawley Down: (i) What does the Council have in mind for the buffers to priority habitats and ancient woodland mentioned in criteria 4 and 5? (ii) Should the policy recognise that some of the hedge, verge and trees along Hophurst Lane would need to be removed or altered to gain access? (iii) In criterion 10, this is not a normal criterion for a site allocation policy. Any reinforcement of the gas network is a matter for the statutory provider.

MM66 / MM77 / MM78, Lindfield: (i) Please can the Council explain more clearly what is proposed in the way highway works, pedestrian facilities and bus stops / laybys in the locality of sites MM66 MM77 and MM78 and how these sites are intended to provide for them. (iii) What are the “improvements” sought at Haywards Heath station; is there an identifiable project for them; and are they justified by the nature and scale of these developments? (iv) Criterion 6 will not be effective as regards enhancements to the ancient woodland and priority habitat if (as understood) these areas are outside the site owner’s control.

MM86 / MM87 Foxhole Farm: is it the case that an extant planning permission provides for improvements to footpath BOL-44BO – if that is the case, is it necessary to include the criteria in both policies to that effect?

Jonathan Bore

INSPECTOR

24 September 2026

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