DMH Stallard

Examination of the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021–2040

Week 4 Hearings – Matter 7 (continued): Sites added by the draft Main Modifications

HEARING STATEMENT

MM92: West House Farm, Henfield Road, Sayers Common (SHELAA 1124)

Representor	Riverdale Developments Ltd (site promoter)
Prepared by	DMH Stallard LLP
Hearing session	Thursday 5 November 2026 (PM) – Sayers Common
Agenda items addressed	(a) Access and movement; (b) Social and community facilities; (c) Countryside
Submission deadline	5pm, Friday 16 October 2026 (IDJB-13, paragraph 41)
Status	Final

1. Introduction

1.1 This Hearing Statement is submitted by DMH Stallard LLP on behalf of Riverdale Developments Ltd ("Riverdale"), the promoter of West House Farm, Henfield Road (SHELAA 1124), in support of proposed Main Modification MM92. It should be read with Riverdale's representation to the Main Modifications consultation (September 2026), which supports the allocation of 325 dwellings and proposes limited amendments, now being discussed with the Council for inclusion in a Statement of Common Ground ("Riverdale's MM92 representation").

1.2 In accordance with the Inspector's Guidance Note (IDJB-13, paragraphs 28 and 40), the Statement is confined to the three MM92 agenda items in IDJB-15 for Thursday 5 November 2026 (PM). It does not revisit housing need, the spatial strategy or DPSC3 (IDJB-13, paragraph 20).

1.3 The Inspector's interim conclusions (IDJB-12) found the spatial strategy and the principle of DPSC3 sound, while asking for a more holistic approach to masterplanning all the Sayers Common sites. MM92 is part of the Council's response to that request. The Holistic Movement Strategy [S7] and updated IDPs [IV7, IV8] set out the approach across the Sayers Common sites; this Statement provides the site-specific evidence for MM92.

1.4 This Statement addresses the site-specific issues raised on MM92 (matrix at Appendix A). Representations on the overall scale of growth across Hurstpierpoint, Albourne and Sayers Common, in-combination testing and the settlement hierarchy are matters for the Inspector (IDJB-12) and the Council (MS-12 and MS-TP5); Riverdale comments on them only where MM92 contributes to infrastructure timing, connectivity and separation.

DMH Stallard

2. Agenda item (a): Access and movement

Relationship to overall access and movement strategy

Origin of the issues

2.1 Local residents raise car dependence, bus service provision, traffic through Albourne and Hurstpierpoint, and the safety of Henfield Road (B2116). The Ward Councillor seeks a safe walking and cycling link to DPSC3 across the B2116. West Sussex County Council (WSCC) suggests policy wording refinements. Berkeley Latimer (the DPSC3 promoter) supports the MM92 connectivity requirements.

Consistency with the approved strategy

2.2 MM37 brings MM92 within the Vision and Objectives for Growth at Sayers Common (bullet 4), so that it prioritises active and sustainable travel between the sites and to nearby settlements. Those Objectives and DPSC GEN (criterion 2) require active and sustainable travel and a complete, compact and well-connected neighbourhood. MM92 delivers this through criterion 1 (connectivity and phasing with DPSC3, so the site "*is not an isolated development*"), criterion 3 (a shared footway/cycleway on the southern side of Henfield Road) and criterion 6 (prioritised pedestrian and cycle routes to the PRoW network and DPSC3).

The site's role in the Holistic Movement Strategy

2.3 The Sayers Common Holistic Movement Strategy (July 2026), prepared on behalf of Berkeley Latimer with input from the Council and WSCC, identifies three contributions from site 1124, and its illustration on page 33 shows MM92 within the key active travel routes, benefiting the connectivity of DPSC3's western parcel:

- **East–west connectivity.** The site enables active travel links between the main and western DPSC3 parcels, which the emerging Masterplan Framework can accommodate.
- **Henfield Road.** Development of the site could help calm traffic and bring active travel infrastructure to the B2116.
- **The 20-minute neighbourhood.** The site supports and contributes to the 20-minute neighbourhood that DPSC3 enables, as DPSC4–7 do.

2.4 The Strategy also identifies improvements to the Henfield Road route to Albourne C of E Primary School and Albourne, including B2116 crossing facilities near the school, lighting the route through the recreation ground and extending the foot/cycleway network into Albourne. MM92's Henfield Road frontage puts it best placed to deliver these directly (Appendix B).

The B2116 crossing

2.5 A safe, direct crossing of Henfield Road is integral to the 20-minute neighbourhood. Criterion 2 already requires access from the north and east along Henfield Road, and Riverdale is agreeing with the Council and WSCC how the crossing is best secured, for confirmation in the SoCG. This would meet the Ward Councillor's request.

DMH Stallard

2.6 Riverdale is in active engagement with the Council, WSCC as Local Highway Authority and the WSCC Public Rights of Way team on the access, crossing and PRoW proposals.

2.7 A signal controlled 'Toucan' crossing is proposed on Henfield Road at the proposed DPSC3 access junction legibly linking active modes through MM92 towards the western parcel of DPSC3.

2.8 Observed speeds on Henfield Road (across the site frontages) vary between around 30mph and 40mph. There is clear scope to extend the 30mph speed limit west to include DPSC3/MM92 frontages. This reduced speed limit would be supported by the change in character and other appropriate measures as required. Reducing speeds would improve safety and attractiveness for use by active modes and would reduce visibility requirements. All proposed works would be to appropriate guidance standards and subject to Road Safety Audits at the application stage where applicable.

Public transport and interim services

2.9 As Riverdale's MM92 representation explains, the additional stops required by criterion 4 would not be materially closer to the site than the existing "Traffic Lights" stops. Riverdale's proposed clarification of criterion 4 is being discussed with the Council for inclusion in the SoCG.

2.10 The "Traffic Lights" stops are around 700m walk from the West House Farm access (via Albourne). These are served by bus routes 100 and 273, each offering roughly an hourly frequency. There is opportunity for enhancing access to these stops, as well as the provision of a physical shelter for the southbound stop to mirror the northbound stop. These enhancements would equally serve future routes. New bus stops would be provided on Henfield Road for MM92 to access proposed route 100A.

2.11 The updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan [IV8] schedules bus stop improvements for the short term (under five years), ahead of DPSC3 (5–10 years). It also records MM92 contributions to the diversion of route 273 and a new 100A service to Burgess Hill (both TBC). MM92 can therefore secure interim improvements before DPSC3's mobility hubs operate and contributes to cycle improvements at Hassocks Station.

Wider network effects

2.12 On the rural lanes, the A23 junctions and Hurstpierpoint High Street, the IDP allocates MM92 contributions to the Hickstead junction (£122,704.65), the A23/B2118 northbound on-slip merge (£73,740.74), the A281/B2117/Shaves Wood Lane safety scheme (£27,116.27), and the Rural Road Improvement Fund and Hurstpierpoint High Street interventions (both TBC).

2.13 The Holistic Movement Strategy proposes using the Rural Road Improvement Fund to monitor speeds and implement traffic calming, for example on Twineham Lane. This is the approach Twineham Parish Council seeks, and Riverdale would contribute proportionately, as it would to WSCC's requested Stonepound Crossroads and B2118/M23 schemes.

DMH Stallard

2.14 Modelling scenarios and trip rates were agreed with WSCC through pre-application consultation. Modelling will appropriately assess cumulative impacts of all applicable sites. MM92 assessments will align with those of DPSC3. Proportionate mitigation is identified within the IDP.

3. Agenda item (b): Social and community facilities

Relationship to the overall disposition of uses within Sayers Common

Origin of the issues

3.1 Local residents raise demand on GP, school and community services and the timing of infrastructure. Residents, Albourne Parish Council and Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council ask for a whole-area masterplan, IDP and phasing plan. Albourne Parish Council asks that s106 funds benefit Albourne residents. The Ward Councillor questions MM92's contribution to DPSC3's sustainability.

Disposition of uses

3.2 MM92 significantly enhances the cohesion between the western parcel of DPSC3 and the wider allocation, offering permeable routes for active modes including existing PRoW which would be enhanced.

3.3 The Plan makes DPSC3 the focal point of the village, with its schools, neighbourhood centre, local centre and mobility hubs "*central and accessible to the settlement as a whole*". DPSC3's neighbourhood centre, with its schools, community and health facilities, lies approximately 600m north of MM92, and its local centre approximately 570m west, both within comfortable walking distance. Located between DPSC3's parcels, MM92 complements these uses with its own residential, open space and play uses, and adds catchment that supports their viability. The Council's site selection conclusions (SSP7 Appendix 2) recognise that its location "*offers the opportunity for better place making and supporting infrastructure delivery*". Riverdale's illustrative masterplan, which will be submitted to the examination library, shows where the links to DPSC3 would be made.

Parish location

3.4 The site, like most of DPSC3, lies within Albourne parish, and the Infrastructure Schedule records the parish of both as Albourne. The Council describes the growth area as "Sayers Common" because it adjoins, and is accessed from, that settlement. Albourne Parish Council itself accepts that bringing MM92 into the DPSC master-planning is "*a reasonable approach in the circumstances*". Riverdale would welcome any clarification of the site title the Council considers helpful.

Infrastructure funding, direct delivery and front-loading

3.5 The Infrastructure Schedule attributes £8,744,738 of live contributions to MM92, about £26,900 per dwelling. This includes £706,102 (early years), £1,649,936 (primary), £2,026,856 (secondary), £518,063 (sixth form), £482,886 (SEND), £537,275 (towards the 1,000 sq m Sayers Common GP facility), £463,604 (community buildings), £330,906 (local community infrastructure, to be delivered

DMH Stallard

by the Town or Parish Council) and £178,249 (library). The local community infrastructure contribution meets Albourne Parish Council's request that funds benefit its residents.

3.6 MM92 will also directly deliver benefits for existing and new residents:

- Significant public open space on the southern part of the site, secured by criterion 5 and shown on the Policies Map, as part of the natural, semi-natural and amenity green space the Infrastructure Table requires on site. The Schedule also records £514,201 for other outdoor provision and an on-site LEAP (£160,000).
- Links to Albourne (paragraph 2.4): the criterion 3 footway/cycleway, a contribution to the foot/cycleway extension into Albourne (TBC), on-site PRoW improvements (direct, medium term) and recreation ground lighting to Albourne primary school (£3,287.90).
- Henfield Road crossings, identified in the Holistic Movement Strategy, which Riverdale will deliver directly or fund in agreement with WSCC, for inclusion in the updated IDP [IV8].

3.7 Several MM92 items are scheduled for direct delivery in the short term (under five years): both phases of the Sayers Common to Burgess Hill cycle route (£41,257.02 and £215,635.71) and bus stop improvements (paragraph 2.11). Riverdale's MM92 representation confirms that the site can deliver housing within the first five years, consistent with SSP7 Appendix 2, which recognises the site's potential to contribute to the five-year housing land supply. Early completions would bring these works and pooled contributions forward ahead of the main DPSC3 phases, so that infrastructure keeps pace with homes.

Masterplanning and joint working with Berkeley Latimer

3.8 Riverdale and Berkeley Latimer signed a Statement of Common Ground on 19 March 2026. Both support DPSC3 and the spatial strategy and record the Regulation 18 Plan's recognition that including land on DPSC3's southern boundary could improve east–west connectivity, provided significant open space keeps Sayers Common and Albourne separate. They agree any such allocation should enhance that connectivity, contribute to shared infrastructure under the Sayers Common SoCG [S1] and deliver within the plan period, and commit to coordinating technical work and a masterplan that supports the trajectory.

3.9 Joint working has continued, including a coordinated approach to the Council's Design Review Panel process, and the parties have agreed to update the SoCG before the hearing. This responds to the Inspector's request for a holistic approach (paragraph 1.3) and to the Parish Councils' requests that additional sites join the master-planning. Riverdale supports moving outdoor sports to a financial contribution (£460,724 in the Schedule).

DMH Stallard

4. Agenda item (c): Countryside

Impact on landscape and the separate identity of settlements

Origin of the issues

4.1 Local residents and both Parish Councils raise the Albourne–Sayers Common gap. Albourne Parish Council cites DP13 (to be replaced by DPC2), and Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council seeks a continuous landscape buffer on the Policies Map. Some residents refer to a 2023 appeal on land south of Henfield Road, Albourne (APP/D3830/W/23/3319542).

Landscape character

4.2 Riverdale's landscape consultant (Green Landscape Studio, GLS/240/202) describes the site as pasture, paddocks and equestrian buildings within a well-established framework of mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees, shaws and tree groups. It is experienced alongside nearby homes, farmsteads, roads and PRoWs, as part of the dispersed settlement pattern between Sayers Common and Albourne. It makes a modest contribution to, but is not a defining or extensive component of, the Eastern Low Weald (LW10, West Sussex) or Hickstead Low Weald (LCA 4, Mid Sussex) character areas, whose key characteristics its allocation would not materially alter.

4.3 MM92 is, as Riverdale's MM92 representation states, a landscape-led allocation. The landscape consultant confirms that the layout has evolved through an iterative design process informed by topography, vegetation structure and the PRoW network: existing trees, hedgerows and PRoWs are retained within a framework of structural planting, open space and landscape corridors, with a central linear green space and a habitat creation area. Criterion 5 keeps the southern part of the site, its most open and elevated land, as public open space, and the Infrastructure Table specifies on-site natural, semi-natural and amenity green space, so that this land remains open and in keeping with the surrounding Low Weald. Together these measures establish a strong and permanent transition between the allocation and the countryside, and effects on landscape character will reduce over time as the structural planting matures.

4.4 In combination with the wider growth of Sayers Common, the defining characteristics of the Eastern Low Weald, including its landform, vegetation structure, rural lanes and wider landscape framework, would remain appreciable, and the southern open space would form a positive interface with the countryside as an integral part of the landscape strategy for the settlement's growth. This evidence meets the expectation in DPC1 and DPC2 that proposals are informed by landscape assessment and accords with DPB1 (sensitivity to the countryside and topography). Riverdale's preliminary landscape impact assessment and development framework will be submitted to the examination library.

Separate identity of settlements

4.5 Separation is secured in three ways.

DMH Stallard

- **Containment.** The site adjoins DPSC3 to the north and part of the west and lies between DPSC3's western and eastern parcels (SSP7 Appendix 2, site 1124), within the envelope already established by the allocated growth area.
- **A policy-protected southern edge.** Criterion 5 requires the southern part of the site to remain as public open space, identified on the Policies Map, specifically "*to maintain separation between the site and Albourne*". This open space adjoins the farmland between Albourne and the southern edge of the Sayers Common growth area, retaining the most open and elevated part of the site as long-term green infrastructure between the settlements.
- **Visual and perceptual separation.** Views between the settlements continue across open land, green infrastructure and intervening countryside, so the visual break between Sayers Common and Albourne remains clearly evident. Structural planting along the southern development edge, reinforced boundary vegetation and the habitat area strengthen that break. The site would be understood as part of the planned extension of Sayers Common rather than giving rise to physical, visual or perceptual coalescence, so that people continue to sense they have left one settlement before arriving at the next, as DPC2 requires.

4.6 MM92 lies wholly outside the Local Gap between Albourne and Sayers Common designated in the Albourne Neighbourhood Plan (Policy ALC3), so the allocation does not encroach on the gap the community has defined. Criterion 5 then adds a policy-protected area of public open space at the site's southern edge, accessible to existing as well as new residents.

4.7 For MM92, criterion 5 already requires the southern open space to be shown on the Policies Map, providing the buffer that Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Parish Council seeks. Riverdale would support this open space forming part of a coherent, continuous green edge with the DPSC3 and MM81 buffers, secured through long-term stewardship.

4.8 The 2023 appeal concerned an unallocated site immediately adjoining Albourne, whose landscape effects were experienced from close receptors on the edge of the village. MM92 is a plan-led allocation lying between DPSC3's parcels, with its most open land secured as public open space, so the appeal findings on landscape do not transfer to it.

5. Alignment with the Council and Statements of Common Ground

5.1 Riverdale supports the Council's site selection, in-combination and infrastructure evidence for MM92. This Statement complements it with site-specific evidence on movement, infrastructure delivery and landscape. Riverdale and the Council have agreed to work together towards a Statement of Common Ground on the MM92 agenda topics, to be submitted by 23 October 2026 (IDJB-13, paragraph 49).

DMH Stallard

6. Conclusion

6.1 MM92 completes the planned form of Sayers Common between DPSC3's parcels, strengthens east–west connectivity in line with the Holistic Movement Strategy, secures separation from Albourne through policy-protected public open space, and brings infrastructure forward early. Riverdale considers MM92 sound and invites the Inspector to recommend it, with any refinements agreed with the Council set out in the SoCG.

DMH Stallard

Appendix A – Schedule of representations by agenda item and Riverdale's response

Source: Council analyses of MM92 representations (site-specific and cumulative).

Agenda item	Issue	Origin	Response (paragraph)
(a)	No safe B2116 crossing to DPSC3; not part of 20-minute neighbourhood	Ward Councillor	Crossing to be secured via SoCG; HMS site role (2.3–2.8)
(a)	Car dependence; bus stops do not guarantee services	Local residents (site-specific)	Short-term bus improvements; criterion 4 clarification via SoCG (2.9–2.11)
(a)	Henfield Road safety; traffic through Albourne/Hurstpierpoint	Local residents; Ward Councillor	HMS Henfield Road calming; crossing; speed limit; engagement with WSCC (2.3–2.8, 2.12-2.13)
(a)	Rural lanes and A23 traffic; Hickstead; High Street	Twineham PC; Albourne PC; HSCPC; Ward Councillor; local residents (principle/scale of growth)	Proportionate contributions; Rural Road Improvement Fund (1.4, 2.12–2.14)
(a)	Bus frequency, Stonepound and B2118/M23 contributions	WSCC (statutory – wording)	Proportionate contributions (2.13)
(b)	Services arriving after homes; GP and school demand	Local residents (principle/scale of growth)	£8.74m contributions; direct delivery; short-term items (3.5–3.7)
(b)	Whole-area masterplan, IDP and phasing	Albourne PC; HSCPC; local residents	SoCG with Berkeley Latimer; joint working; DPSC GEN (3.8–3.9)
(b)	Site mislabelled (Albourne parish)	Albourne PC; HSCPC; Ward Councillor; local residents	Factual context given; clarification of the title welcomed (3.4)
(b)	s106 funds should benefit Albourne	Albourne PC	LCI £330,906; Albourne footway, footpath and crossing works (3.5–3.6)
(b)	Waste management contribution missing	WSCC (statutory)	Schedule includes £32,500 (Appendix B)
(b)	Foul drainage assessment	Environment Agency (statutory)	Supported; Albourne sewerage upgrade in Schedule (Appendix B)
(c)	Gap erosion and coalescence with Albourne	Local residents; Albourne PC (DP13); HSCPC	Outside the Local Gap; containment; criterion 5 (4.5–4.6)
(c)	Continuous buffer on the Policies Map	HSCPC	Already met for MM92; stewardship offered (4.7)
(c)	Setting of listed buildings	Local residents (site-specific)	Not an agenda item; criterion 5 protects the setting of West House

DMH Stallard

Agenda item	Issue	Origin	Response (paragraph)
			Farm. Response available at the hearing if required
(c)	2023 appeal APP/D3830/W/23/3319542	Local residents	Distinguished on plan status and landscape (4.8)
(c)	Habitats and wildlife corridors	Local residents	Not an agenda item; criteria 10-11 and BNG. Response available at the hearing if required
All	Overall scale of growth; in-combination testing; settlement hierarchy	Parish Councils; Ward Councillor; local residents	Principle questions for Inspector and Council (1.4)
All	Support for connectivity to DPSC3 and Henfield Road access	Lichfields for Berkeley Latimer	Welcomed (2.1, 3.8-3.9)

Appendix B – Extract from the Sayers Common Infrastructure Schedule (September 2026): site 1124 (MM92)

Project	Funding / delivery	Timescale	Contribution
Early years	s106 / WSCC	Medium term	£706,102
Primary education	s106 / WSCC	–	£1,649,936
Secondary education	s106 / WSCC	–	£2,026,856
Sixth form	s106 / WSCC	–	£518,063
SEND	s106 / WSCC	–	£482,886
GP facility (1,000 sq m) – Sayers Common	s106 / Developer	–	£537,275
Community buildings	s106 / MSDC & Parish Council	–	£463,604
Local community infrastructure	s106 / Town or Parish Council	–	£330,906
Library provision	s106 / WSCC	Medium term	£178,249
Outdoor sports	s106 / MSDC	–	£460,724
Other outdoor provision	s106 / MSDC	–	£514,201
LEAP (on-site)	Direct provision	–	£160,000
Cycle route – Langton Lane phase	Direct provision	Short term (<5 years)	£41,257.02
Cycle route – A23/A2300 phase	Direct provision	Short term (<5 years)	£215,635.71

DMH Stallard

Project	Funding / delivery	Timescale	Contribution
Hassocks Station cycle storage and access	s106 / Network Rail	Medium term	£82,607.12
Parks and gardens (off-site)	s106 / MSDC	–	£0 (on-site provision)
PRoW improvements and integration into wider network	Direct provision	Medium term	Not costed
Crossing points on Henfield Road	Not yet scheduled	–	To be added
Hickstead Junction intervention	s106	Long term	£122,704.65
A23/B2118 NB on-slip merge	s106	Long term	£73,740.74
A281/B2117/Shaves Wood Lane safety	s106	Long term	£27,116.27
Bus stop/shelter improvements	s106	Short term (<5 years)	Not costed
273 diversion; new 100A service; Rural Road Improvement Fund; extension of foot/cycleway network into Albourne; High Street interventions	s106	–	TBC
Lighting – footway to Albourne primary school	s106	–	£3,287.90
Sewerage network upgrades – Albourne	Direct provision	–	Not costed
Police, fire and rescue	s106	Medium term	£117,087
Burgess Hill HWRS / transfer site	s106 / WSCC	–	£32,500
Total live contributions (Projects per site)			£8,744,738.41

Note: the parks and gardens line is recorded at £0 ("*not currently collecting as no identified projects*"), consistent with on-site natural, semi-natural and amenity green space provision. Police and fire figures combine £48,380, £5,741, £10,660 and £52,306. Crossing points on Henfield Road are identified in the Holistic Movement Strategy but do not yet appear in the Schedule.