

3.0

Housing Assessment Outcomes

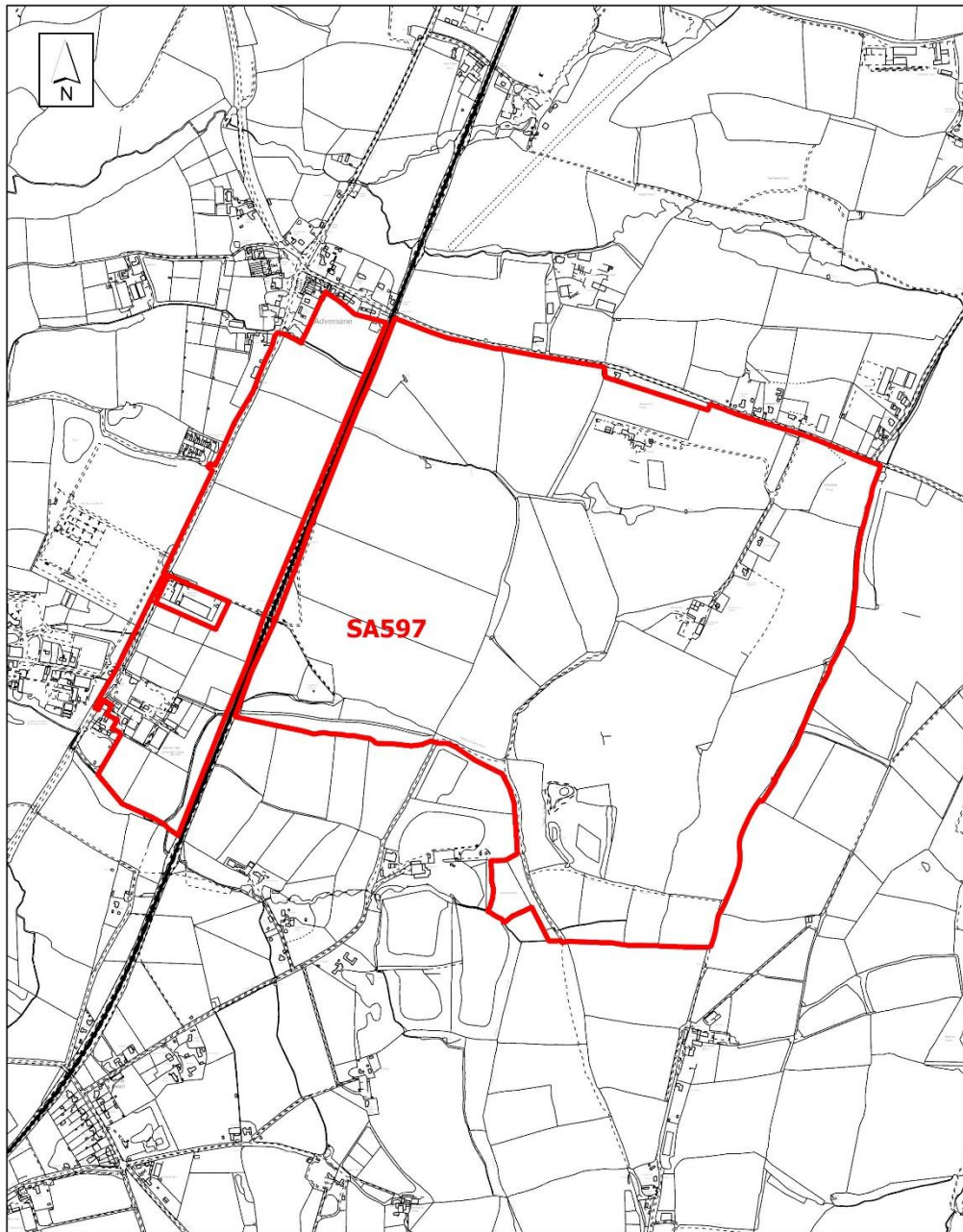
3.01

Strategic Sites Assessments

**Site Name: Land at Adversane
(Kingswood)**

SA597

Site Map:



Horsham District Council

Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex RH12 1RL.
Barbara Childs : Director of Place

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**Local Plan Review 2026
Land at Adversane (Kingswood)**

Reference No :

Date: 25 February 2026

Scale : 1:12,000 at A4

Drawing No :

Revisions :

Site Area:

Approximately 170 hectares

Site Description:

The site is currently greenfield and comprises primarily pasture and arable land interspersed with hedgerows and some smaller areas of woodland. The landscape is gently undulating. The site is more enclosed to the east of the site and is open in nature on the west of the

proposed site close to the A29. The existing settlement of Adversane is located close to the north west corner of the site. Brinsbury College is located to the southwest

Summary of Proposal:

Housing

Since 2024, the proposal has evolved and is being promoted for a strategic scale allocation consisting of a mix of uses, including 3,200 homes. The promoters have indicated that they envisage the site to deliver in the region of 2,000 homes by 2040, meaning that the majority of development would occur during the plan period. A range of different types and sizes would be provided with the promoters suggesting that retirement units and self-build plots could be delivered.

The site promoters indicate the delivery of 35% affordable housing and that 15 gypsy and traveller pitches could be delivered.

Employment

It is envisaged that the majority of the employment provision would be provided on land lying between the A29 and the railway line. Part of this area already had permission for such provision, but has not been built out. Land north of Hepworth Brewery (aka the Harwoods Site) had permission for a car showroom and associated offices and facilities but has not been built out and is now in the ownership of the promoters, who wish to bring forward employment floorspace at this location.

A renewed approach to employment is now being sought through the proposed allocation with an element of mixed uses (including residential) that would link to the education and existing employment at / around Brinsbury college and would continue to draw on these links. Other employment would be generated from other uses on site such as education and retail.

Transport

The proposed development aims to provide day to day facilities together with employment to minimise the need for travel, with the provision of pedestrian and cycle networks. In terms of travel outside the village, although land is to be safeguarded for a new railway station, a railway station is not proposed at this point in time. Bus services are proposed to Billingshurst and Horsham to provide access to the rail network. A range of road upgrades are proposed, this includes a new bridge over the railway removing the need to traverse the level crossing enabling its closure (part of the re-routing of the B2133). Other transport upgrades are proposed offsite including at Five Oaks and the Washington roundabout.

Education and Community

The proposal includes the provision of two primary schools and one secondary school being provided on site. In addition, new retail would be provided on a new high street and in local centres across the site. The proposal also includes open space, community facilities and health care provision.

Net zero carbon

The promoters have previously indicated development would be net zero carbon ready and would seek to introduce renewable energy technology throughout the site and exclude gas boilers and gas mains from the development.

Site Assessment against Criteria

Environmental considerations

Landscape:

<p>Although attractive, the landscape in the area has not been designated as being of landscape importance. Much of the site is also tranquil in nature. Nevertheless, it is recognised that a development of this scale will have significant changes on the settlement pattern and the wider rural character in this area.</p> <p>The landscape in the area is not designated and the Council's Landscape Capacity Assessment (2021) indicates that the majority of the site has a moderate capacity to accommodate strategic scale development without adverse impacts subject to suitable design and mitigation measures.</p> <p>There is considered to be less ability to accommodate development in the far north western corner of the site, adjacent to the existing hamlet of Adversane, which the promoters have proposed to keep largely free from development. Similarly, development within the south west corner of the main part of the site (to the east of the railway line) is not considered to be able to accommodate built development on landscape grounds.</p> <p>The site has potential to impact on the setting of the South Downs National Park and care would need to be taken to mitigate against any harmful views into and out of the South Downs National Park (albeit that these are distant). It would also be necessary to reduce the appearance of coalescence with nearby settlements. The promoters have provided evidence of some work in relation to these matters. A full landscape and visual impact assessment would be required in the event that an application were to be submitted.</p> <p>Overall, due to the scale of development and potential impact on the landscape, unfavourable impacts are concluded. However, it is recognised that the masterplanning framework partially avoids locating development in the most sensitive land parcels, and there is good prospect of mitigating the more significant landscape impacts.</p>	Unfavourable
<p>Biodiversity:</p>	
<p>The site contains a number of biodiversity assets, such as areas of ancient woodland, which are located on the northern edge of the site and in the south west of the site. These would be retained as part of the proposals for green infrastructure on the site.</p> <p>Initial ecological survey work has been undertaken which has identified the</p>	Unfavourable

<p>presence of protected species on the site. This includes the presence of bat species including Barbastelle bats (the site lies within a bat sustenance zone for the internationally protected Mens woodland), birds and badgers. The ecological appraisal also recognises that the Knepp Estate is relatively close to the site and there is also the potential for foraging bats (Barbastelle and Bechstein) to use this site. The site is also close to the Mens woodland which is identified as being of international importance, and there is therefore the potential for development in this location to impact upon the integrity of this site through acid deposition and/or impacts from transport emissions, particularly in the short to medium term. Development in this location would require an Appropriate Assessment to support any application.</p> <p>It is proposed that the application would meet biodiversity net gain requirements. The promoters indicate a commitment to further increasing biodiversity net gain as development plans for the site evolve and have stated they wish to collaborate with the 'Weald to Waves' initiative to maximise biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that there are significant issues with regards biodiversity that need to be addressed in the event that this land is allocated for development. This includes the impact of a new population in an area that does have importance for biodiversity. Subject to further development of the masterplan, it is however considered that there is reasonable prospect of the impacts being mitigated, particularly as the site promoters would be required to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain in accordance with national requirements. Given the uncertainties an unfavourable impact is assessed at this stage.</p>	
<p>Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:</p>	
<p>The north-western part of the site lies adjacent to the Conservation Area that contains the hamlet of Adversane. The currently rural setting informs the significance of this designation. The proposed development has the potential to impact on the significance of this site. There are also 10 Grade 2 listed buildings of which built development is concluded as having a clearly significant impact on one of the properties.</p> <p>Any development will need to take account of the quantum of development in and around the conservation area, heights of development / views, the rural setting and the impact of increased traffic on the A29. Development will need to demonstrate how the rural character and green routes can be retained through the development. However, the presence of the A29 does provide some separation of the site from the existing conservation area.</p> <p>The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval remains. There is potential for archaeological remains from all eras to be found on and around the site. The promoters have undertaken work to investigate the presence of archaeological features. It found that it was unlikely that any features found would need to be preserved in-situ but that further work would be needed to support the submission of a planning application.</p> <p>Development in this location would change the overall settlement character and pattern of the District. Given the sensitivities of the adjoining conservation area and the potential impact on a number of listed buildings an unfavourable impact is concluded at this stage, though it is considered that such impacts could be mitigated through the careful design and layout of any scheme.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>

<p>Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):</p>	
<p>The site is also located in a minerals safeguarding area for brick clay and building stone. These designations cover large parts of the district and are not a significant constraint to the site coming forward.</p> <p>The site is close to the A29 and B2133. There are some limited noise impacts from these roads and the railway which bisects the site north south, but the eastern section of the site is currently very tranquil. The site promoter has, however, undertaken preliminary noise assessments which indicate that the site has the ability to accommodate development without significant adverse impacts.</p> <p>The site is located away from any existing air quality management areas. Preliminary air quality assessments have been submitted which indicate that the site has the ability to accommodate development without significant adverse impacts, although more detail is required in relation to ecological impacts as set out in the biodiversity section above.</p> <p>Overall, a neutral impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Flooding / Drainage:</p>	
<p>The site is located in Flood Zone 1, with a low risk of tidal and fluvial flooding – there are no major water courses on the site. The site is also assessed as being at low risk of flooding from sewer, groundwater, and artificial sources. The site promoters have undertaken a detailed initial flood risk assessment. The majority of flood flow routes through the site originate within the site itself, and the proposed drainage strategy would lead to restricted flows leaving the site, improving the current situation.</p> <p>A range of flood attenuation measures are proposed which take account of climate change and allow for a 40% increase in rainfall intensities due to climate change and would ensure that the rate of run off / attenuation remains as for a greenfield site. A number of large-scale SuDS, including detention basins, ponds, and swales, provide the bulk of the attenuation requirement. Given the limited existing flood risk, and proposed enhancement a small favourable impact is concluded.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p>Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency:</p>	
<p>The site promoters indicate a commitment to be net zero carbon ready and seek to introduce renewable energy technology throughout the site and exclude gas boilers and gas mains from the development.</p> <p>The promoters propose that the design of homes will be highly energy efficient and fitted with modern technologies to create and conserve energy. They indicate that they have engaged with Octopus Energy to incorporate these designs and to guarantee that residents in phase 1 would not pay home energy bills for the first five years.</p> <p>The promoters also indicate that Electric Vehicle charging points would be provided throughout the development. By having a compact, dense development with a number of services and facilities accessible within walking distance of almost all residents, the idea of trip internalisation is promoted. It</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

<p>is thought that this may reduce the use of private vehicles/ increase the amount of trips made by sustainable modes. However, it is expected that some travel outside the new development will take place and this cannot be relied up solely to reduce climate change impacts. It is recognised that improvements to public transport are proposed to help offset this impact. Overall, a favourable impact is concluded at this stage</p>	
<p>Social considerations</p>	
<p>Housing:</p>	
<p>In total, a development of around 3,200 homes is proposed. The promoters suggest that around 2,000 homes would be delivered in the plan period. This would have the potential to deliver a large portion of the Council's housing requirement, albeit some of the housing provision would be provided beyond the plan period. Delivery rates would need to take account of other allocations in the western half of the district, together with any other issues such as the delivery of infrastructure on site Taking these factors into account, and it is considered that the delivery rates indicated by the promoters are somewhat optimistic and that around 1,500 would come forward in the plan period. Nevertheless, development would provide an appreciable contribution to meeting housing needs over the plan period.</p> <p>A range of different types and sizes would be provided with the promoters suggesting that retirement units and self-build plots could be delivered. The promoters indicate a commitment to providing a policy compliant 35% of affordable housing with the mix reflecting local need identified in the SHMA. The promoters indicate that the homes would be delivered on a tenure-blind basis, as has taken place on other developments which they have progressed elsewhere in the country.</p> <p>15 gypsy and traveller pitches would be provided, helping to meet unmet needs.</p> <p>At this stage very positive impacts are concluded.</p>	<p>Very Positive</p>
<p>Education:</p>	
<p>The proposal would seek to meet education needs within the site, with up to two primary schools providing for needs identified by the Local Education Authority. A 6FE secondary school would also be provided, capable of expansion to 8FE. Special Educational Needs (SEN) needs would be met within the proposed schools. The phasing of school provision would be decided at the planning application stage, in liaison with the Local Education Authority.</p> <p>West Sussex County Council, as the education authority, have indicated that the nearby secondary school at the Weald is approaching capacity, which without resolution could result in children having to travel significant distances to reach a site of education. Provision of a secondary school on this site therefore has the potential for this to help ensure the delivery of wider education needs across the District, closest to the area with identified capacity constraints. This is considered to be a very significant benefit of the proposal.</p> <p>The site is also linked with Brinsbury College which provides post-16 education, together with vocational links with the existing businesses. There is therefore opportunity for this to be expanded, and the college has expressed this aspiration. A very positive impact is therefore concluded at this stage.</p>	<p>Very Positive</p>

Health:	
<p>Part of the concept for the proposed development is to prioritise active travel (including walking and cycling) over car borne travel in particular (for example through innovative street and parking design), and encourage 'local living' whereby many trips can be made within the neighbourhood.</p> <p>The promoters would seek to deliver a health centre as part of the proposed development, within the centre of the settlement. This would have the potential to meet some wider needs as well as that from within the settlement. However, in common with other strategic site proposals, the extent and form of future health provision would necessarily be informed through further discussions with the appropriate NHS bodies and discussions with existing providers.</p> <p>Overall, it is recognised that the promoter has a clear commitment to promotion of healthy lifestyles and provision of local healthcare on site. There is however uncertainty over the on-site facilities, and in the short term as a minimum there is likely to be a need to travel to Billingshurst GP practice. At this stage the impact is concluded as favourable.</p>	Favourable
Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities:	
<p>A range of different facilities are proposed to be provided. This would include leisure facilities (gym, spa, pool) provided as part of a proposed hotel, a library and community hall. The promoters also seek the provision of allotments, accessible natural green space, as well as sports playing fields and different types of equipped play space. A previous masterplan shows a slight deficit against some open space requirements and further work would be necessary to address this. It is envisaged that this matter can be resolved.</p> <p>Whilst the provision of these features will help deliver community facilities, the precise role they will play in delivering a cohesive community is less clearly expressed and this together with the more limited provision of open space than some proposed new settlements, leads to a neutral impact at this stage.</p>	Neutral
Transport:	
<p><u>Walking and cycling</u></p> <p>The site promoters envisage active travel forming a large proportion of the trips generated by the development, with a compact settlement including employment and other facilities, and the creation of walking and cycling routes provided both within and beyond the settlement as evidence to support this. In the previous masterplan, it was stated 80% of residents would be within a 5 minute walk from the village centre. The Council has not been made aware of any updates or evidence that suggests this figure would change significantly.</p> <p>The promoter states junctions will be designed for cyclists with clear signage of pedestrian and cycle routes. Other features include cycle parking including facilities for non-standard cycles, safe routes to school and e-bikes for all homes. There is however a lack of certainty as to how pedestrian and cycle routes beyond the site can be clearly delivered at this stage.</p>	Neutral

Public Transport

The site has a railway line which passes through the site roughly north / south. This route (the Arun valley line) which links London to the south coast. The nearest station to the site is in Billingshurst roughly 4km by road from the centre of the site. The relative proximity of the railway station is a potential benefit to the scheme, given that it provides the potential to quickly reach the south coast, Horsham, Crawley, Gatwick and beyond to London by public transport. Whilst the promoters seek to safeguard land to allow for the creation of a railway station for the new settlement, there is no evidence of this being deliverable within the plan period, due to the need to upgrade the line to the north before additional stations can be provided. Any new station is therefore not considered as a potential benefit of the proposal at this stage.

The site promoter states that a bus service would be introduced, including to Billingshurst and Horsham, which would allow for access to the current rail network and access to higher order settlements. The vision ensures that bus stops would be within 400m of all residents. It is envisaged that this would be scaled up as various phases come forward to ensure that sufficient capacity exists.

Road Transport

In road transport terms, the site is relatively well located on the A29 which is an important north-south route through the district with onward links to both the south coast and Horsham.

The site promoter has undertaken extensive surveys to identify key impacts on the road network and necessary upgrades. Evidence of mitigation measures have been costed into the proposals and considered as part of the viability evidence. The site is located on the A29 which provides a north south link to the coast and towards Horsham and Crawley on the eastern side of the District. The B2133 provides south eastern link to the A24 which is the main north south route through the District.

A new road would be created from a new roundabout on the A29 that would link to the B2133 in the north-eastern part of the site. This would form the central thoroughfare of the new settlement and would involve the creation of a bridge over the existing railway line. This re-routing would allow the current B2133/railway line level crossing to be shut, providing safety benefits as well as a more consistent flow of traffic. Network Rail have indicated support for this outcome and have agreed, in principle, the location of the bridge and have committed to working with the promoters to develop proposals for the bridge. Previously it had been understood that the acceptability of any development on this site would be predicated on the delivery of the railway bridge and closure of the existing crossing. More recent communication with Network Rail suggests that some development could come forward ahead of a railway bridge becoming operational and Network Rail is undertaking work to understand the quantum of such development.

Transport work submitted by the site promoters and reviewed by WSCC identify that a number of road junctions in and around the site would be over capacity and would require mitigation. This includes proposed junction upgrades at Five Oaks (A29/A264), Washington (A24/A283) and Pulborough (A29/A283). There remain uncertainties as to the extent that the proposed

<p>upgrades at Pulborough will provide the necessary mitigation that meets WSCC requirements.</p> <p>Whilst it is clear that much detailed consideration of transport impacts has taken place, there remain concerns that the rates of trip internalisation are overly ambitious, given that residents are likely to need to access employment opportunities and other services outside of the development, while trips will also be generated by the employment and retail offer encouraging non-residents to travel into the development. Notwithstanding this, the provision of the railway bridge (and related closure of the existing crossing) is likely to have positive impacts to both the road and rail network, while measures should ensure that any harmful impacts on the transport network are appropriately managed. At this stage, it is therefore assessed to have neutral impacts</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p>	
<p>The site promoters identify the importance of superfast broadband and have made enquiries to telecoms providers with positive feedback received.</p> <p>Local upgrades to the electricity network are needed to enable the delivery of early development phases and further provision may be needed to meet the needs of the whole site. SSE have indicated capacity is limited in respect of the electricity supply in the west of the District which may require, once all short-term fixes have been assigned, a major capital scheme for reinforcement works that would take several years to complete. Nevertheless it is considered this issue can be mitigated over the course of the plan period, albeit that discussions on this matter need to continue.</p> <p>Water and sewerage upgrades would be needed to ensure that there is no adverse impacts on service to existing communities and the promoters would be expected to work with statutory bodies to achieve this. While a gas connection is available, the promoters wish to avoid the use of gas within the development in line with their aspirations to achieve zero carbon.</p> <p>Taking account of the potential need to upgrade the electricity supply and the uncertainties around this an unfavourable impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	Unfavourable
<p><i>Economic considerations</i></p>	
<p>Economy:</p>	
<p>It is envisaged that 12,500sqm of E(g) floorspace would be provided throughout the site. The amount of jobs that could be created would depend on the mix and type of employment provision put forward and the other types of uses (including residential) that would come forward as mixed use. There is potential to draw on linkages with employment and training at Brinsbury college.</p> <p>Jobs would be created in other premises, including in schools and other civic buildings, hotel and leisure facilities, as well as in mixed use office and retail buildings located within the centre of the settlement. A number of jobs would also be provided during the construction phases of development.</p>	Favourable

<p>Delivery of this site would provide additional employment land and jobs in the District and it is considered the promoters have a clear vision to achieve this. Overall, favourable impacts are concluded, though the precise amount of jobs cannot be quantified.</p>	
<p>Retail:</p>	
<p>Retail would be concentrated along the High Street, with small amounts provided in three smaller centres, and the potential for some retail as part of a mix of uses with employment provision. The retail elements would be walkable for the majority of residents, reducing the need to travel by private vehicle. The site promoter has stated that the retail offer would build organically during each development phase of the scheme.</p> <p>Residents would have to travel outside of the settlement to access a greater range of retail provision. Retail impact analysis undertaken by the promoters indicate that the scheme could provide additional trade for retail in Billingshurst (or other secondary and local centres) rather than it being a negative impact.</p> <p>Overall, favourable impacts are concluded.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p><i>Further considerations</i></p>	
<p>Deliverability and Viability:</p>	
<p>The land is in the ownership of three landholders with agreements in place for Our Place to promote the site for development. Land ownership is therefore not considered to be a constraint to development. The site promoters have prior experience of working on significant large scale new settlements working for other delivery partners.</p> <p>The promoter has indicated that around 2,000 homes could be delivered within the plan period. Taking into account feedback from the Council's deliverability study evidence and the need to ensure infrastructure delivery, the Council feels that this is overly optimistic and that around 1,500 is a more realistic figure. It is proposed that Our Place would be the master developer but that there would be capacity for other developers to assist in delivering the site. Whilst in the longer term, it is considered a sustainable new community would be delivered, this will (as for any new settlement) take time to emerge. There would be reliance on existing community facilities to some degree, particularly in the early phases of any development.</p> <p>The promoters have submitted viability information which indicates that the scheme would be viable with 35% provision of affordable housing.</p> <p>The promoters have undertaken market absorption work which suggests that the quantum of development sought can be accommodated in the local housing market, taking into account the potential for development in Billingshurst. This matches with the findings of the Council's own deliverability work.</p> <p>At this stage a neutral impact is concluded, given that large scale developments can take many years to establish</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

Development Quality:	
<p>The vision of the site promoters is to create a sustainable new settlement that will grow over a 15 to 20 year period and provide residents with social infrastructure and job opportunities.</p> <p>The promoters wish to create a ‘design exemplar’ taking into account the Sussex vernacular. Development would be relatively dense, with the indicative layout showing the retention of key landscape features and biodiversity assets. This would have the advantage of being an efficient use of land and minimising the amount of rural land required to deliver the number of homes provided. A number of design and landscape plans have been provided to the Council, with detailed consideration of this issue.</p> <p>The promoters wish to establish what they term the ‘Kingswood Legacy Trust’ in order to secure the ownership of land and key buildings for long-term community benefit and to enable facilities and business to be successful. At this stage limited evidence has been provided regarding engagement with existing communities though it is known that stakeholder consultation has recently been undertaken by the promoters.. The promoters indicate a desire to work with residents of the new settlement, particularly in relation to the creation of the Kingswood Legacy Trust. Overall however, the proposed development quality is considered to be favourable.</p>	Favourable
Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation	
<p>Allocation of this site would have benefits in bringing forward a significant level of residential accommodation that would help in meeting identified housing needs including a range of housing types and sizes. Evidence indicates that 35% affordable housing can be provided. The development would also seek to deliver substantial amounts of employment and community uses. The site is relatively well located on the A29, but is relatively distant from the main employment settlements of Horsham and Crawley, which is the key focus of housing demand and economic growth. The site is also relatively distant from the south coast, albeit the B2133 provides a road connection to the south of the district along with the A29.</p> <p>The development would deliver of a range of community, retail, health and recreation facilities, which would help meet the everyday needs of residents. A significant benefit of the scheme is the delivery of land for a secondary school, which would help to address needs created by the development, and address identified capacity issues at the Weald School in Billingshurst. These enhancements are close to the area in which they are generated, therefore having positive benefits for children with shorter travel, which also minimises impacts on the wider transport network and minimising transport emissions.</p> <p>Some provision of community facilities is expected to be delivered early in the build out period to help the formation of a new community. However it is recognised that as a relatively small new settlement will mean it will inevitably take some time to achieve a ‘critical mass’ with reliance on external services and facilities to a greater or lesser extent during the plan period.</p> <p>There is also a clear commitment to delivering a zero carbon and energy efficient development. It is however considered that new residents would still need to travel beyond the site for some of their needs. Whilst the site promoter states that high levels of internalisation could be achieved, this does not reflect current travel patterns in similarly sized settlements in the District, and the extent to which this can be achieved is therefore uncertain.</p> <p>The proposals indicate that they would deliver public open spaces, as well as formal recreation areas would support healthy lifestyles. The compact nature of the site would help to support active modes of travel and reduce the need for internal trips within the settlement to be made by private vehicles. However, the level of open space is proposed is more limited than other</p>	

comparable sized strategic allocations, and there is less clarity on how open spaces would be provided compared with other elements of the development proposal. This would need to be addressed in the evolution of proposals.

Although attractive, the landscape in the area has not been designated as being of landscape importance. Much of the site is also tranquil in nature. Nevertheless, it is recognised that a development of this scale will have significant changes on the settlement pattern and the wider rural character in this area. It is recognised that the masterplanning framework partially avoids locating development in the most sensitive land parcels, and there is good prospect of mitigating the more significant landscape impacts. There are limited risks from flooding with potential enhancements identified.

Development in this location would need to address the impact of development on the nearby Mens woodland, which is of international importance for nature conservation. This includes consideration of both loss of feeding grounds and the transport impacts on air quality. It is however recognised that a 10% biodiversity net gain can be delivered on site through a range of different measures.

In terms of built heritage, this site is close to Adversane Conservation Area. Any development would need to address the impacts on the nearby Conservation Area and emerging designs have taken this into account. It is noted that the proposals are for a relatively dense style of development. This is considered to be a benefit of the scheme as it will deliver a compact new settlement that minimises the use of currently undeveloped countryside.

The development proposals seek to promote walking and cycling and enhancements to public transport. While it is noted that land would be safeguarded for a railway station, there is no certainty this can be delivered due to the need to upgrade the line to the north before additional stations can be provided on this line.

The promoters seek the introduction of a new bus services and links to Billingshurst railway station, with future expansion to Horsham, which has the potential to reduce the reliance on private vehicles. It is considered the proposed bus enhancements and the relative proximity of a railway station is a benefit of new strategic development in this location, as it has potential to provide a greater choice of sustainable travel options to new residents.

A new road would be created from a new roundabout on the A29 that would link to the B2133 in the north-eastern part of the site. This would form the central thoroughfare of the new settlement and would involve the creation of a bridge over the existing railway line. This re-routing would allow the current B2133/railway line level crossing to be shut, providing safety benefits as well as a more consistent flow of traffic. Network Rail have indicated support for this outcome and have agreed, in principle, the location of the bridge and are working with the site promoters to progress this.

Whilst there is a focus on securing sustainable transport solutions, as set out above it is considered that the promoter's views about trip internalisation are somewhat optimistic and residents would still be likely to travel beyond the site using private vehicles to access a wider range of services and employment opportunities. Transport modelling has indicated that a number of road junctions would be overcapacity. The site promoters have provided detail of potential mitigation measures. The Council's transport assessment work has considered the potential impacts of allocation in this location, together with other growth. This has identified that impacts can be mitigated.

The site promoters have highlighted that they have experience of delivering large scale urban extensions / new settlements. Overall, evidence provided to the Council to date indicates that this site would be able to deliver homes in the plan period, and that the proposals are viable. Whilst the site promoters indicate that 2,000 homes could come forward in the plan period, this is considered to be optimistic taking account of the lead-in times for strategic scale

development such as the provision of a new railway bridge to facilitate delivery of the full scheme. An update to the Council's own Housing Delivery study indicates that the housing market is able to accommodate growth should this site come forward with other sites in the vicinity. Rates of growth commensurate with the market in the western portion of the district would need to be taken into account.

Officer Recommendation:

Though adjacent to the Hamlet of Adversane, the site is largely detached from any existing established settlement. It would ultimately deliver a village-size settlement which is likely to have some reliance on onward travel to reach higher order services and facilities. The Sustainability Appraisal does assess the site to be more sustainable than many other options considered in the recent update.

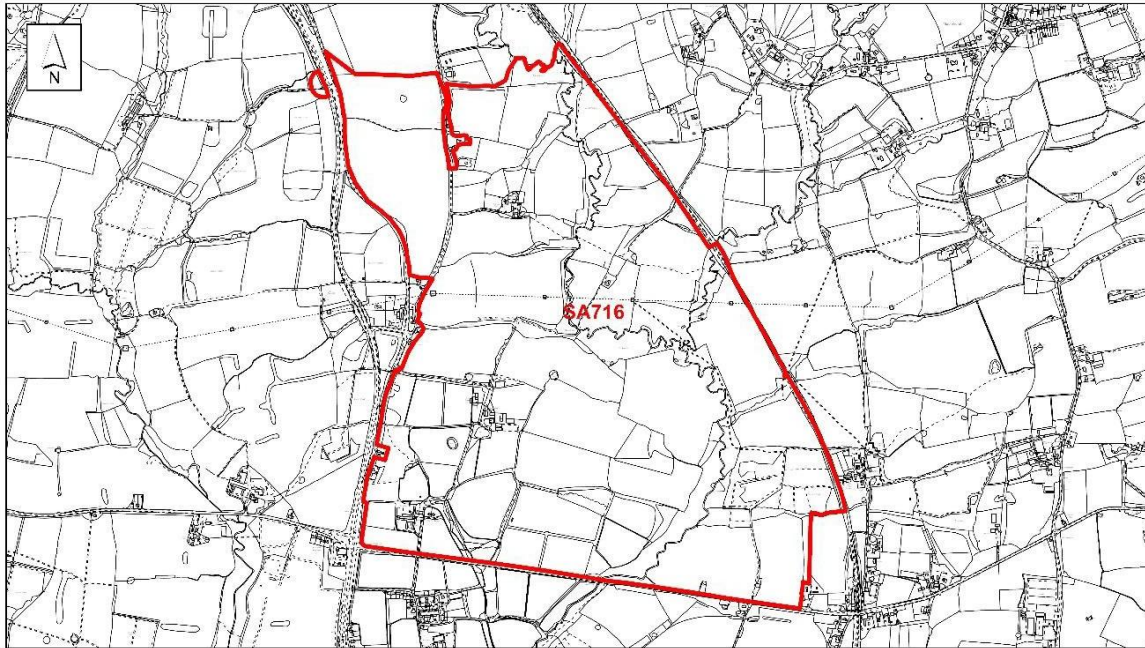
Taking account of the issues set out in this assessment, it is considered that this site has a number of positive qualities that would help contribute to meeting identified housing and other development needs subject to mitigation of transport, landscape, biodiversity and heritage impacts. In particular, it is considered that the provision of a secondary school close to an area of existing capacity would be a significant benefit to the scheme. The location of the site relatively close to Billingshurst railway station together with enhanced bus services will provide residents with a choice of public transport options. A further benefit of the scheme is the relatively compact design and layout which will help minimise the quantum of greenfield land which is required to bring forward a significant level of new housing. Evidence work indicates that the housing market could accommodate development of the site alongside other commitments and proposed allocations.

Accordingly, and given the need to meet updated housing expectations across the district, it is considered that the site should be allocated, with policy wording included to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated as far as is possible

Site Name: Land at Buck Barn

SA716

Site Map:



Horsham District Council

Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex RH12 1RL
Barbara Childs : Director of Place

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**Local Plan Review 2023
Land at Buck Barn**

Reference No :	Date : 15 November 2023	1:15,000 at A4
Drawing No :	Drawn :	Checked :
		Revisions :

Site Area:

Approx. 245 hectares

Site Description:

The site comprises arable and pasture fields bounded by hedgerows and mature trees. Some isolated mature trees are present within some of the fields. The northern section of the site slopes down towards a mature belt of trees, which bisects the site. The western boundary of the site is the A24. The north-western part of the site is bound by the A24 to the west. High voltage power lines carried by pylons cross between the northern and southern areas. The southern boundary of the site adjoins the A272 east of the Buck Barn crossroads junction with the A24. The Downs Link (a strategic recreation route between Guildford and Shoreham-by-Sea) adjoins the site to the east. Although adjacent to the busy road network, the area is predominantly rural in character although there are some urban influences including the power lines that run east to west through the site.

Summary of Proposal:

Housing

The site is proposed for a development of around 3,300 homes. The site promoter has indicated that the development could provide 35% affordable housing and elderly care provision. Affordable homes would be tenure blind. Potential to deliver accommodation for 15 Gypsies and Traveller pitches has also been identified by this promoter.

Employment

The promoter has indicated that 30,000 sqm of employment floorspace (4,000m² of B2, 20,000m² of B8 and 6,000m² of E employment use classes) could be provided. This would include start up units, office space and light industrial units. The promoters outline that this together with employment generating uses onsite, could generate around 1,250 jobs on site 80 offsite, together with construction to build out the scheme.

Transport

Access to the site would be obtained from the A272 and the promoters have indicated that they would provide enhancements to the A24; including upgrades to the to the Buck, and a new junction at or near the B2135 Steyning Road to allow traffic to safely access the northbound carriageway of the A24. The promoters outline that the scheme would be underpinned by active travel with priority afforded to walking and cycling and upgrades to local bus services.

Education & Community

Two new primary schools and a secondary school would be provided as part of the development. The proposer states they would provide a 49 acre country park and a community hub with an ability to include a community café, pharmacy library and health care centre. The site would also provide a retail centre and a family pub-restaurant.

The development would also provide open space and sports pitches, including a central 'village green', as well as enhancements to the Downs Link.

Environment

The site promoters have stated that they will provide a policy compliant 10% biodiversity net gain, and that woodland and hedgerows would be retained wherever possible. The promoters state that over 50% of the site would be dedicated to green infrastructure, and includes one swift brick per home, preservation of hedgerows and trees and other upgrades.

Net Zero Carbon

The most recent vision document is silent on exact proposals for net zero carbon. The promoter of the site has previously indicated that Electric Vehicle charging points would be provided for all dwellings, and that all buildings would be built to a high standard following fabric-first approach and will achieve zero-carbon and energy positive technology.

Site Assessment against Criteria

Environmental considerations

Landscape:

Although attractive, the landscape in the area has not been designated as being of landscape importance. Nevertheless, it is recognised that a development of this scale will have significant changes on the settlement pattern and the wider rural character in this area.

The land falls within both the Low Weald and High Weald Fringes landscape character areas. The area overall has a strongly rural landscape character albeit there are some urban influences in the area including pylons carrying high voltage power lines, and some scattered farmsteads

Unfavourable

<p>The Landscape Capacity Assessment (HDC, 2021) indicates that some parts of the site have no/low capacity for development, whilst other parcels have a moderate to high capacity. This reflects that the site contains some sensitive areas, particularly to the north. The site is close to some listed buildings and the design of any development would need to take account of the setting of these buildings to minimise any potential harm to their setting.</p> <p>The proposals do not intend to remove the power lines across the site, leading to potential implications for the layout of any scheme.</p> <p>The masterplan submitted to the Council demonstrates that most areas assessed as having no or low landscape capacity for development are proposed as undeveloped green infrastructure. However there are some areas to the north where development is proposed in the most sensitive landscape areas and would therefore potentially have an adverse impact on the integrity of landscape character. Any scheme would also have to consider any potential for actual or perceived coalescence with nearby settlements, and Southwater in particular.</p> <p>Overall, due to the scale of development and potential impact on the landscape, unfavourable impacts are concluded. However it is recognised that the masterplanning framework partially avoids locating development in the most sensitive land parcels, and there is good prospect of mitigating the more significant landscape impacts.</p>	
<p>Biodiversity:</p>	
<p>The site has a number of ecological sensitivities. There is an area of ancient woodland on the western edge of the site (alongside the A24), and most of the 'Downs Link, Nutham Wood & Greatsteeds Farm Meadow' Local Wildlife Site falls within the site boundaries – this land is designated as 'semi natural woodland, plantation wood, streams and neutral meadow with high wildlife and recreational value'. A baseline (primarily desktop) ecological assessment has identified the possible presence of a number of protected species on or close to the site.</p> <p>The site is also close to the Knepp Estate, albeit separated by the A24. This land is an area that has been part of a rewilding project and has seen significant biodiversity gains in recent years. It is now recognised as an important location for biodiversity and nature conservation. It also supports rare Barbastelle and Bechstein bat species.</p> <p>The site promoter indicates that the proposal would deliver biodiversity net gain in line with national policy commitments. Biodiversity enhancements identified in the most recent vision document include one swift brick per home, bat boxes, foraging corridors, enhancements to wetlands and improved habitat connectivity.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>

<p>Overall, it is considered that there are significant issues with regards biodiversity that need to be addressed in the event that this land is allocated for development including the impact of new residents in an area that does have importance for biodiversity. However, this is balanced against a degree of willingness by the promoter to fully understand these sensitivities. In any allocation it is important that the integrity of ancient woodlands is protected, bearing in mind recreational pressures and the potential for fragmentation due to new or upgraded thoroughfares. Subject to further development of the masterplan, it is considered that there is reasonable to good prospect of the impacts being mitigated. Given the uncertainties an unfavourable impact is assessed at this stage.</p>	
<p>Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:</p>	
<p>There are fourteen Grade II listed buildings within 250m of the site boundary. Because of their proximity to the site, the setting of some of these buildings may be affected by development of the site. Tuckmans Farmhouse, a 17th Century house, would be especially affected as it is surrounded on all sides by the proposed development, and was historically associated with the surrounding fields. The emerging masterplan would need to ensure that the setting of these listed buildings be protected and enhanced.</p> <p>The site is not in an Archaeological Notification Area. Due to there being a number of post medieval and modern farmsteads within the site, there is widespread potential for archaeological finds or features across the site.</p> <p>Other heritage assets close to the site include the Medieval Moated Site in Grinstead Park (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) and Knepp Castle Registered Park and Garden located 400m south west of the site. Both are separated from the proposed site by the A272 / A24 and direct impacts are therefore less likely.</p> <p>Development in this location would change the overall settlement character and pattern of the District. Given the sensitivities of the nearby listed buildings, an unfavourable impact is concluded at this stage, although it is considered that such impacts could be mitigated through the careful design and layout of any scheme.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
<p>Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):</p>	
<p>A geo-environmental survey has been carried out on behalf of the site promoter. This has concluded that there is a generally low to very low risk to human health as a result of contaminants on the site.</p> <p>The site is also located in a minerals safeguarding area for brick clay and building stone. These designations cover large parts of the district and are not a significant constraint to the site coming forward.</p> <p>Following the recent de-designation of Cowfold as an Air Quality Management Area, the site is not located close to any areas where air quality is identified as an issue. It is considered that the site has the potential to accommodate development without significant adverse impacts in relation to these matters. Overall, a neutral impact is concluded.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

Flooding / Drainage:	
<p>The land contains some watercourses, although no land at risk from flooding is proposed for development, with all development being proposed in Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding). A scoping exercise carried out on behalf of the site promoter has highlighted the need to address surface water issues through sustainable drainage systems (SuDs), and with respect to fluvial flood risk, to ensure generous buffers when locating development close to flood zones and watercourses.</p> <p>Given that the emerging masterplan limits development to Flood Zone 1, and on the basis of good prospect of a comprehensive SuDs strategy being implemented, a neutral rating is concluded.</p>	Neutral
Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency:	
<p>The site promoter have previously indicated a commitment to sustainable construction and has stated that all homes would be net zero carbon emissions over their lifetime, and would be carbon neutral in production. It is however noted that the most recent vision document received from the site promoter is silent on the most recent aspirations, which has introduced some uncertainty as to what standards may be achieved as part of these proposals. It is however also noted that the site promoter does have a strong track record in sustainable design and technologies.</p> <p>In terms of personal travel, the promoter has previously committed to providing every home with an electric vehicle (EV) charging point, although this is again not re-iterated in the most recent vision documentation. A key masterplan concept is to design streets, parking and movement networks to encourage use of active (zero carbon) travel modes over the car for short local journeys, and to maximise the convenience of bus travel for longer journeys. However it is expected that some travel outside the new development will take place by car, and these mitigations cannot be solely relied upon to reduce climate change impacts.</p> <p>Overall, there are promising indications that a development with high sustainability credentials could be delivered. A favourable impacts rating is concluded.</p>	Favourable
Social considerations	
Housing:	
<p>In total, a development of around 3,300 is proposed. Delivery rates would however need to take account of the need to deliver supporting infrastructure on site. The Council has also taken account of the housing delivery study and the capacity of the market to deliver cumulative development across the district. Overall, it is considered that of the total proposed homes, around 1,500 would come forward in the plan period. Nevertheless, development would provide an appreciable contribution to meeting housing needs over the plan period.</p> <p>The site promoters state they will provide a policy compliant housing mix and level of (tenure blind) affordable housing, provide housing for retired people, and will include at least one elderly care form of accommodation. However a</p>	Very Positive

<p>detailed breakdown has yet to be provided. The site promoters have also committed to land being provided for self-build housing and have included in the emerging masterplan a Gypsy and Traveller site for up to 15 pitches.</p> <p>Overall, there are strong prospects that should the site be allocated, a significant amount of housing which addresses the needs of the housing market area would be delivered. A very positive impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	
<p>Education:</p>	
<p>The site promoter is proposing to provide two primary schools (1- and 2-form entry respectively), and a secondary school (6-form entry). The site promoters have indicated that they could build the education facilities if required. Early years provision would also be made by way of two nursery schools, and special educational needs (SEN) could be provided on-site.</p> <p>West Sussex County Council have indicated that the additional new development levels outlined by the Local Plan inspector would require an additional secondary school. The provision of a secondary school would therefore meet other education needs in the district as well as those generated by the development. It is however recognised that the immediate need for school places arises in the west of the District, given that the Weald is at or approaching capacity. Provision of a school in this location may require additional travel from its immediate source, and the location of this site is not best suited to meeting that need.</p> <p>On current evidence, the proposed nursery provision is only around half of what would be required for a development of this size and additional land would need to be allocated to meet the necessary requirements.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that there are strong prospects of educational facilities being provided that benefit existing as well as the new community should the site be allocated. However, the wider benefits are lessened due to the location of the site which does not align with where the unmet need mostly arises i.e. in the west of the District.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p>Health:</p>	
<p>The site promoters are one of twelve organisations that are members of the Healthy New Towns Network – a collaboration between Public Health England, housing developers and housing associations seeking to prioritise health and wellbeing in new settlement and strategic urban extension developments. Part of the concept for the proposed development is to prioritise active ways of travel (including walking and cycling) over car borne travel in particular (for example through innovative street and parking design). The proposals also seek to encourage 'local living' whereby many trips can be made within the neighbourhood.</p> <p>The site promoters indicate that their proposals include space for the provision of healthcare facilities that could include a surgery as well as a pharmacy. However, in common with other strategic site proposals, the extent and form of future health provision would necessarily be informed through further discussions with the appropriate NHS bodies and discussions with existing providers. It is currently understood that the preferred NHS solution to meet additional health care needs would be an expansion of the Southwater GP practice. At this stage it is considered that if the site is allocated for</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

<p>development land should be safeguarded for health care provision to ensure flexibility over time</p> <p>Overall, it is recognised that the promoter has a clear commitment to promotion of healthy lifestyles and provision of local healthcare on site. There is however uncertainty over the NHS Integrated Care Board supporting on-site facilities, and in the short term there is likely to be a need to travel to Southwater GP practice. The impacts are concluded as favourable.</p>	
<p>Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities:</p>	
<p>The site promoters state one of their core principles is to create a sense of place by introducing and enhancing the ability to use the green space around them. It has set out specific provisions of outdoor and indoor recreational facilities and spaces. These are areas for allotments; a country park; and community sports facilities. A village hall, further neighbourhood hall and indoor sports hall are proposed. Around 50% of the site area is proposed as green infrastructure including a linear park following the river and a country park area alongside the Downs Link strategic cycle route.</p> <p>A community hub is also proposed to be provided in partnership with the Plunkett Foundation, to accommodate a community shop, community café, and 'We Work' community workspaces. Other hub features have been indicated as light-touch laboratory space, gym, private nursery, healthcare provision/pharmacy, pub/hotel and library.</p> <p>The emerging masterplan also proposes a pedestrian/cycle 'river corridor', woodland walk paths, and enhancement of existing public rights of way, including improved connections from the site to the Downs Link strategic leisure route.</p> <p>Overall, there is considered to be strong prospects for significant community provision and benefits, and a very positive rating is concluded.</p>	<p>Very Positive</p>
<p>Transport:</p>	
<p><u>Walking and Cycling</u></p> <p>The site promoter states that one of the key principles of the masterplan is sustainable travel. The development proposal seeks to encourage walking and cycling and makes it difficult for car-borne road users to move around within the development. The concept is for streets to be designed so that cycle and pedestrian routes have clear priority over vehicular roads by means of segregated paths and shared surfaces. Earlier proposals for this site have indicated that there is an option is for some parts of the development to provide residential parking zones away from homes rather than allow residents to drive up to and park at their houses, whilst providing sustainable transport options, such as mobility hubs including cycle parking/hire, adjacent to homes. It is unclear as to whether this would be implemented. The preference of the promoter is to limit access to and from the site to the south, at Buck Barn junction, to buses, emergency vehicles and non-motorised traffic only. The access for most other traffic would be via a new site access to the north. Direct connectivity to the adjacent Downs Link cycle way could be readily achieved.</p> <p><u>Public transport</u></p> <p>The site does not have direct access to a railway station, with the nearest</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

<p>stations some distance away in Christ's Hospital, Horsham, Billingshurst or Pulborough. The promoters are however proposing upgrades to bus services to the major employment centres of Horsham, Crawley, Worthing and Brighton, with interchange opportunities for accessing Gatwick Airport. Further details would be required in consultation with bus companies to understand the detail of this provision. Whilst bus upgrades are welcome, this site provides less immediate choice for public transport solutions.</p> <p><u>Road transport</u></p> <p>The site promoters recognise that the development will give rise to some additional vehicle journeys. In road transport terms, the site is well located on the A24 which is the main north-south route through the district with a dual carriageway connection to Crawley and to Worthing in the south.</p> <p>The site promoters have outlined that they could carry out infrastructure upgrades to the A24. The Buck Barn junction (A24/A272) to provide access to the site as well as improving traffic flow. Proposals include traffic light-controlled crossroads to a 'hamburger' style roundabout (or 'through-about') . A new roundabout would be created 600m south of the Mill Straight roundabout which would provide the main access into the development. Safety improvements would be made to the B2135 Steyning Road junction with the A24 just south of the development. It should be noted that WSCC is seeking to bring forward upgrades to the A24 without development, and there is therefore potential for these enhancements to have a wider benefit. However, development in other locations in the District would also be required to provide financial contributions (CIL / S106) which would also contribute to necessary junction improvements.</p> <p>There is a potential traffic impact on Cowfold village centre towards the end of the Plan period. A range of measures have been explored. These included looking at increasing capacity on the A24 route to 'draw' traffic away from the A272; restrict the southern access to the site to bus and emergency vehicle access only; 'gating' traffic through Cowfold to relocate traffic queues to outside the village, or prioritising traffic flow on the A272 through Cowfold through changing the road layout in the village.</p> <p>Overall, the assessment against the transport criterion is balanced between the site promotor's forward-thinking approach to sustainable travel on the one hand (albeit the take-up of such opportunities is uncertain), and the significant challenge of how to realistically and effectively achieve required mitigation measures at Cowfold, taking account of the creation of a new settlement, on the other. A neutral impact is concluded.</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p>	
<p>The site promoter has submitted a Utilities Assessment, which includes analysis of the capacity to support the development. HDC has also consulted the relevant bodies. It is also stated that it is anticipated superfast broadband will be provided by Openreach in accordance with Openreach's current policies.</p> <p>Overall, there are likely to be neutral impacts on other infrastructure.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

<i>Economic considerations</i>	
Economy:	
<p>The proposal is for a residential-led mixed use development that includes various commercial and non-residential uses, and flexible workspace, as well as new homes. Proposals include up to 30,000 m² of employment space (offices/research & development, light industrial and storage) as well as 3,300 m² of retail space, two pubs/restaurants, a community hub with library, and provision of three schools. The site promoter provide an estimate of the likely number of jobs that this would deliver, although it is considered that the exact level would ultimately depend on the precise mix and type of employment that eventually comes forward.</p> <p>The site promoters have indicated that there is the potential to achieve the aspiration of one job per home from both the new employment land and design of homes that takes into account increases in flexible home working and the opportunities presented by the employment and community uses on the site.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that there would be favourable impacts arising from the development of this site.</p>	Favourable
Retail:	
<p>The emerging masterplan for the site envisages a modest sized food store (2,500 m²) and some smaller, traditional shop units concentrated in the village and neighbourhood centres. The promoters have emphasised the desire to make adequate provision to discourage new residents making trips outside the site to meet their day-to-day shopping needs.</p> <p>Residents would have to travel outside the settlement to reach some higher order retail needs. Overall, it is considered that the proposals for retail are proportionate to the size of population proposed for the new development, whilst not being of a scale that is likely to undermine existing centres in other nearby settlements. A favourable impacts rating is concluded.</p>	Favourable
<i>Further considerations</i>	
Deliverability and Viability:	
<p>The site promoters have confirmed that they have agreed options on all land required to deliver the development. Whilst in the longer term, it is considered a sustainable new community could be delivered, this would (as for any new settlement) take time to emerge. There would be reliance on existing community facilities to some degree, particularly in the early phases of any development.</p> <p>The site promoter is a locally-based, medium-sized house builder with experience of building within the Sussex area, including Pease Pottage, near Crawley. This development provides evidence that key infrastructure can be delivered in the early phases of development. However the site promoter has no direct experience of delivering much larger schemes or a new settlement. The Housing Delivery Study has concluded that, considering the scale of the scheme and the complexities of delivering a new settlement, a peak build out rate of 200 units per annum is more likely. It is considered that during the plan period development of around 1,500 homes is more realistic.</p> <p>The promoters have submitted viability information which indicates that the site</p>	Neutral

<p>would be viable with 35% affordable housing.</p> <p>Overall, a neutral rating is concluded for this criterion at this stage. Whilst it is clear the land is available for development, this is balanced against the level of delivery expected during the plan period, given that large scale developments can take many years to establish, together with the more limited experience of the site promoter in delivering developments of this scale.</p>	
<p>Development Quality:</p>	
<p>The site promoters have provided an ambitious vision for a new garden village built around the core principles of healthy living, active travel, and connection with green spaces.. This is a strong and clear vision. It is however considered that the overall scale of the development is less compact than some strategic scale proposals, increasing the amount of greenfield land required to bring forward the scheme.</p> <p>The emerging masterplan is reasonably well-developed, which demonstrated that a reasonable rationale has been applied to proposed layout and design concepts. The site promoter, is working with a number of design specialists. This indicates a variety of styles would likely come forward, and would be designed to high standards.</p> <p>The promoter has undertaken public consultation at the early stages of masterplanning and attended parish council meetings. In addition, the promoter has highlighted its plans to work in partnership with a charity that partners with local communities who run community businesses and steward local woodlands. The promoter has also highlighted its strong legacy role on its developments. Overall impacts are assessed as favourable.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p>Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation</p>	
<p>Allocation of this site would have benefits in bringing forward a significant level of residential accommodation that would help in meeting identified housing needs including a range of housing types and sizes. Evidence indicates that 35% affordable housing can be provided. The development would also provide additional land for employment. Locationally the site is situated centrally within the District on A24 and A272. The A24 is the only dual carriageway in the District and provides road links to Horsham, Crawley and the south coast.</p> <p>The development would deliver of a range of community, retail, health and recreation facilities, which would help meet the everyday needs of residents. This would include a new secondary school and two new primary schools which would help to address needs created by the development as well as needs for the wider area. However the evidence before the Council is that the need for secondary school provision is particularly acute in the west of the District. This site is less well related to meeting those needs, potentially increasing travel times for children, and increasing transport emissions from longer journey times.</p> <p>Some provision is expected to be delivered early in the build out period to help the formation of a new community. However, it is recognised that as a relatively small new settlement, it will inevitably take some time to achieve a 'critical mass' with reliance on existing community facilities to some degree, particularly in the early phases of any development.</p>	

Although attractive, the landscape in the area has not been designated as being of landscape importance. The site at Buck Barn is rural in character but with some obvious urban influences, namely the A24 and A272 primary roads, and high voltage power lines carried by pylons through the site. Nevertheless, it is recognised that a development of this scale will have significant changes on the settlement pattern and the wider rural character in this area. The capacity of the landscape to accommodate development is variable across the site, but it is considered there is good prospect of mitigating the more significant landscape impacts. There are limited risks from flooding on the proposed development area.

The site does have a number of ecological sensitivities. The site contains an area of ancient woodland, and separately, a local wildlife site. The site is also close to the Knepp Estate which is renowned for its rewilding initiative and the delivery of significant biodiversity net gains. This land however does not directly adjoin the site separated by the A24 and A272. The landowners have stated that they would deliver 10% biodiversity net gain in line with national requirements. This is a reduction in earlier iterations of the masterplan. Any development would however need to be carefully designed to avoid key areas with importance for biodiversity and to maximise biodiversity net gain.

In terms of built heritage, the setting of existing listed buildings and particularly Tuckman's Farm would need to be taken into account as part of any design and layout of the scheme, to minimise unfavourable impacts.

The development proposals seeks to promote walking and cycling, and enhancements to public transport. The site is relatively distant from any railway station, and while enhanced bus services to higher order settlements are proposed, the physical location of the scheme will practically limit the choice of public transport options in relative proximity to the site. The site will provide a development linked to the rural setting through the provision of green infrastructure. This is however a less compact development than some proposals, potentially urbanising or suburbanising a larger quantum of greenfield land.

The site promoters recognise that development will give rise to some additional vehicle journeys. The site promoters have proposed significant changes to provide access to the site as well as improving traffic flow on the A24. This includes upgrades to the Buck Barn and Steyning Road junctions and a new roundabout south of Mill Straight providing access to the new development. WSCC has identified a need to bring forward upgrades to the A24 without development, and there is therefore potential for these enhancements to have a wider benefit to District residents. However, given the need for these upgrades in any event, other development proposals also have some potential to contribute the required upgrades through CIL / S106 as necessary.

The site promoter is locally based in Horsham District and has experience of delivering urban extensions. Evidence provided to the Council to date indicates that this site would be able to deliver a significant number of homes in the plan period, and that the proposals are viable. Whilst the site promoters indicate that peak delivery of 300 homes per year can be achieved, this is considered to be optimistic taking account of the lead-in times for strategic scale development such as the provision of transport upgrades. The Council's own Housing Delivery study indicates that around 1,500 homes is more realistic.

Officer Recommendation:

The site is largely detached from any existing established settlement, with the only urbanising influences currently at the Buck Barn crossroads and adjacent roads. It would ultimately deliver a village-size settlement which is likely to have some reliance on onward travel to reach higher order services and facilities. The Sustainability Appraisal does assess the site to be more sustainable than many other options considered in the recent update.

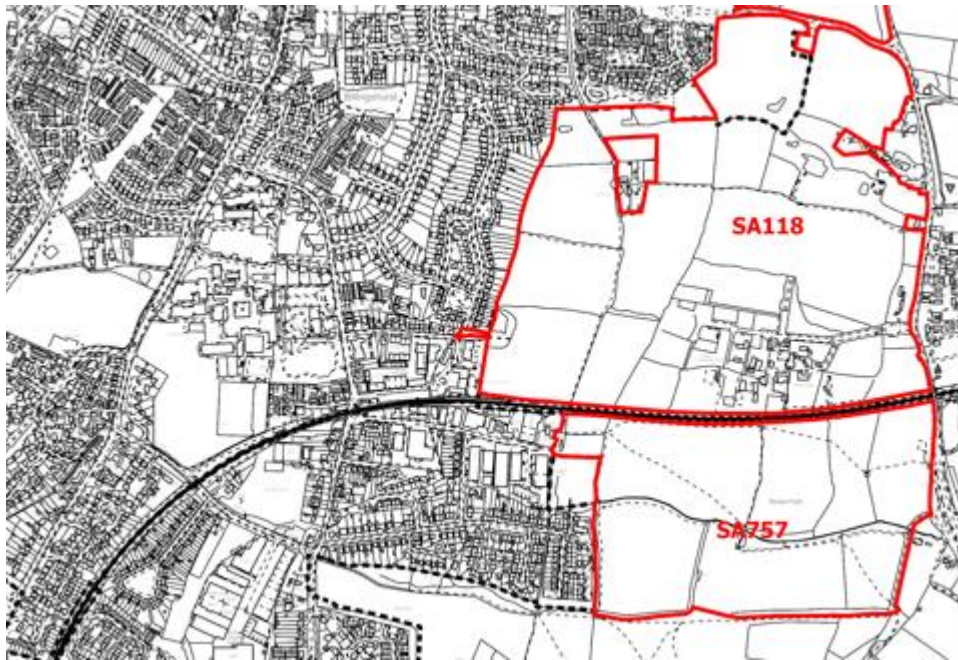
Taking account of the issues set out in this assessment, it is considered that this site has a number of positive qualities that would help contribute to meeting identified housing and other development needs subject to mitigation of transport, landscape, biodiversity and heritage impacts. Evidence work indicates that the housing market could accommodate development of the site alongside other commitments and proposed allocations. However, it is considered that the provision of a secondary school would be further away from areas of existing capacity constraints and would be less effective in meeting the existing needs close to their source. It is noted that the site promoter indicates that they would provide enhanced bus services. However the site is not close to any railway station, and irrespective of the upgrades residents will have a more limited choice of public transport options close by. Finally, whilst the scheme seeks to provide a well landscaped development with a high quantum of open space, it is a less compact scheme overall, therefore increasing the amount of greenfield land within the overall development boundary.

Taking these factors into account it is this site is not recommended for allocation

Site Name: Land East of Billingshurst (Little Daux)

SA118 and SA757

Site Map:



Site Area:

North of the railway: 44 hectares

South of the railway: 23.5 hectares

Site Description:

This assessment incorporates two parcels of land as follows:

North of the railway: The site lies within the countryside to the east of the village of Billingshurst. The site comprises agricultural fields bounded by hedgerows and trees, which contains a number of paths used by residents of Billingshurst for informal recreation. A tree belt largely screens the site from residential properties to the west which lie within the built form of Billingshurst. The site's southern boundary is defined by the railway line except where it wraps around Rosier Business Park. The site is bounded to the east by the A272. To the north is a new residential neighbourhood of around 475 homes, known as Amblehurst Green, and Wilden's Meadow Local Wildlife Site. The northern part of the site encircles a small group of existing dwellings.

South of the railway: The site lies within the countryside to the east of the village of Billingshurst. The site comprises agricultural fields bounded by hedgerows and trees, which contains a public right of way through the middle of the site (west to east), with others along or near, in full or part, the southern, western and eastern borders. These offer informal recreation facilities for residents of Billingshurst. A tree belt largely screens the site from the industrial estate and residential properties to the west which lie within the built form of Billingshurst. The site's northern boundary is defined by the railway line and some of the eastern boundary is defined by the A272. To the south lies Ancient Woodland.

Summary of Proposal:

North of the railway: The site is proposed for around 650 dwellings as an urban extension of Billingshurst. A range of densities, housing types, sizes and tenures are proposed (35% affordable currently anticipated, compliant with policy) Provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation will be provided subject to a proven need.

South of the railway: The site is promoted for around 500 dwellings as an urban extension of Billingshurst. The constraints and infrastructure requirements is likely to reduce the developable area to around 350-450 dwellings. A range of densities, housing types (including retirement living), sizes and tenures are proposed (affordable housing to be policy compliant). Provision for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation will be explored subject to a proven need.

Employment

North of the railway: The site adjoins the existing Rosier Business Park. Some additional employment or commercial floorspace near this site is proposed.

South of the railway: The site would not provide any employment.

Transport

North of the railway: Access to the site would be obtained from the A272 and the promoters have indicated that they would enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity with the existing village centre and the train station. A new additional station car park is also being offered subject to need and stewardship.

South of the railway: Access to the site would be obtained from the A272 to the east and the promoters have indicated that they would enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity with the exiting village centre and the train station. A new additional station car park is also being offered of around 30 spaces with maintenance and management to be determined.

Education and Community

North of the railway: Proposals for the site include 2.2 hectares of serviced land for a primary school, 1 form entry expandable to 2 form entry with SEND and early years. The intent (subject to appropriate agreement between landowners and WSCC including transport links) is to relocate a proposed school on land in the north of the site currently set aside for this purpose, which is a location having more level ground within the proposed allocation site. Also proposed is a community hub area offering facilities such as retail, café, hall, co-working space, community bike club and possibly an Ambulance Community Response Post (ACRP).

South of the railway: No educational facility is proposed by the promoters so the site is reliant upon the additional facilities coming forward north of the railway (or as amended). No built community facilities are proposed other than the station car park.

Environment

North of the railway: A high proportion of the site will be accessible natural greenspace / amenity greenspace potentially including a trim trail, several parks with equipped play, allotment, picnic tables, outdoor gym and enhancements to Wilden's Meadow Local Wildlife Site and retention of the existing framework of trees and hedgerows. The site promoter indicates 10% or more biodiversity net gain could be achieved.

South of the railway: A high proportion, of the site will be accessible natural greenspace / amenity greenspace with play area with a minimum 15 metre buffer to the Ancient Woodland.

Net Zero Carbon

North of the railway: The promoter is only able to commit to complying with building regulations, consistent with the national approach to low carbon homes. They will take a fabric first approach and seek to develop a strategy to optimise electric vehicle charging points for households and visitor spaces.

South of the railway: The promote will comply with building regulations and will optimise electric vehicle charging points for households and visitor spaces.

Site Assessment against Criteria

Environmental considerations

Landscape:

<p><u>North of the railway:</u> The site adjoins the eastern boundary of Billingshurst and is located south of the recent eastern extension of Billingshurst mostly to the north of the A272 which delivered around 475 homes. A key positive is that the site would form a natural extension to the settlement within the defined physical boundary of the A272 to the east. The site does not lie within or near a protected landscape.</p> <p>The site undulates with gentle to medium slopes but also includes large areas of relative flat land. In general, notwithstanding a dip toward the north-western corner, the site slopes down from north to south. The site’s agricultural fields are predominantly surrounded by hedgerows with mature trees. A number of mature trees also fall within some of the fields. A known Ancient / Veteran tree lies within Rosier Business Park which lies within the southern border of the allocation site, others may exist within the site.</p> <p>The site falls within Landscape Character Area 48 in the Landscape Capacity Study 2021 and is considered to have moderate capacity for medium and large scale housing and low / moderate capacity for large scale employment. A Landscape Consultant has informed the promoter’s masterplan to help ensure development is capable of enhancing the local landscape and retain sensitive landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows. This has also led to the removal of the field north of the Local Wildlife Site from the development site.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The site adjoins the eastern boundary of Billingshurst. A key positive is that the site would form a natural extension to the settlement within the defined physical boundary of the A272 to the east. The site does not lie within or near a protected landscape, though a strip of land to the west of the A272 and over 320 metres south of the site is a SSSI.</p> <p>The site undulates with gentle to medium slopes but also includes large areas of relative flat land. The site’s agricultural fields are predominantly surrounded by hedgerows with mature trees. A number of mature trees also fall within some of the fields.</p> <p>The site falls within Landscape Character Area 47 in the Landscape Capacity Study 2021 and is considered to have no / low capacity for medium and large scale housing and no / low capacity for large scale employment. Due to the areas high landscape character sensitivity, which arises from the area’s unspoilt rural and heavily wooded character in good condition, together with its moderate to high landscape value, it is considered that there is very limited capacity for large scale development in this area. The promoter seeks to take a landscape led approach.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
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<p>Given the large scale of development, unfavourable landscape impacts have been concluded, albeit it is considered these can be mitigated.</p>	
<p>Biodiversity:</p>	
<p><u>North of the railway:</u> The majority of the site is unconstrained in terms of protected habitat. Most of the site is dominated by arable land together with species of poor semi-improved grassland which is assessed as being of low ecological and nature conservation value. There is however a Local Wildlife Site (H14 – Wilden’s Meadow) adjacent to the development site, which contains ponds, and wraps around a traditional orchard. The site also contains scattered trees and hedgerows. The site is within the bat sustenance zone for The Mens SAC woodland, and a limited presence of Barbastelle bats has been recorded on the site. An appropriate assessment would be required as part of any development in this location.</p> <p>Common reptiles (slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake) are present on the site for which the promoter suggests some relocation and some enhancement of on-site habitat.</p> <p>The promoters have undertaken both an ecological and a tree survey and there is potential to retain and enhance the Local Wildlife site and for on-site net biodiversity gain such as retention of hedgerows and trees with additional native planting and open on-site attenuation features (detention basins / SuDs). The available evidence concludes that 17% biodiversity net gain could be achieved on habitats and 12% on hedgerow features, but this would need to be updated to reflect any changes to the masterplan and delivery may require the inclusion of the field to the north of the Local Wildlife Site.</p> <p>Whilst it is considered that it is likely that the ecological impacts of development in this location could be mitigated, the potential impact on Barbastelle bats and The Mens SAC woodland cannot be fully ruled out at this stage and an unfavourable impact is concluded.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The majority of the site is unconstrained in terms of protected habitat. Most of the site is dominated by arable land. The site includes a water course along a similar line to the public right of way that crosses the site west to east. The watercourse is subject to flooding and the promoter seeks to provide a linear park / water meadows along a similar line. The aim is to meet the 10% biodiversity net gain requirements on site</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
<p>Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:</p>	

<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area (ANA). According to County Council records the land adjoins a Late Iron Age and Roman settlement and field system, on the south side of the A272. Any development proposals would require further archaeological assessment to determine the potential of the site, and the results of the field assessment used to inform the design of any development.</p> <p><u>North of the railway:</u> There are no listed buildings within the proposed developable area, but a Grade II Listed Building, Little Daux Farmhouse, is surrounded by the site and another, Rosier Farmhouse, lies within Rosier Business Park between the area to be developed and the railway. In addition to this, across the railway to the south lies the Grade II Great Daux Farmhouse so the impact on its setting would have to be taken into account especially if the pedestrian railway crossing were replaced with a footbridge. The site is also close to the Billingshurst conservation area, with potential for views to key historic buildings to be impacted. The promoters indicate the layout and design of buildings will take into account the listed buildings and their settings. In addition, any development would need to consider the impact of any development on the views to St Mary's Church, the interaction between the site and the conservation area, and the rural setting. The impact of increased traffic on the historic character of the conservation area would also require consideration.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The Grade II Great Daux Farmhouse lies to the west of the north western corner and as raised above the impact on its setting would have to be taken into account especially if a footbridge, instead of an underpass, replaces the level pedestrian railway crossing. In addition to this the setting of the Grade II Listed Building, Rosier Farmhouse, to the north of the railway track would have to be taken into account.</p> <p>Given this range of potential impacts, an unfavourable impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
<p>Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):</p>	

<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> The site is located in a minerals safeguarding area for brick clay. This designation covers large parts of the district and is unlikely to be a significant constraint to the site coming forward. The site is not within a Source Protection Zone but does lie within a Drinking Water Safeguarded Zone (Surface Water) which would have to be taken into account. Air quality and land contamination have not, to date, been identified to be an issue in or near this site. Electric vehicle charging points are proposed.</p> <p><u>North of the railway:</u> An intermediate pressure gas pipeline crosses the site north-south which has a 50m buffer that would need to be taken into account within the layout and design of any development. The site is considered relatively tranquil except for some road noise and the area near the railway line, which is affected by noise and vibration from passing trains. SuDS are proposed which the promoter suggests will improve water quality within the ponds in/near the Local Wildlife Site and watercourse/drainage ditches.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> An intermediate pressure gas pipeline runs through much of the western border which has a 50m buffer that would need to be taken into account with the layout and design of any development. The site is considered relatively tranquil except for some road noise and the area near the railway line, which is affected by noise and vibration from passing trains. SuDS are proposed which will alleviate the risks of flooding/watercourse.</p> <p>At this stage a neutral impact is concluded.</p>	Neutral
<p>Flooding / Drainage:</p>	
<p><u>North of the railway:</u> The site does not lie within an area identified as at risk of flooding (Flood zone 1). Some parts of the site are shown to be at risk from surface water flooding. The promoters have undertaken a flood risk assessment which finds the majority of the site has negligible risk from most forms of flooding. Development will be located outside areas identified as at medium to high risk of surface water flooding. The promoter proposes a Sustainable Drainage approach, such as integrating swales into street verges, the retention and enhancement of the existing corridors for surface water conveyance, detention basins / attenuation ponds, and a 40% allowance for climate change is to be taken in respect of the surface water drainage network. The promoters note that soakaway drainage is unlikely to be feasible due to underlying geology. As the site would achieve the same runoff as greenfield conditions a neutral impact is concluded.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> Part of the site that follows the watercourse which runs through the middle of the site (west to east) is at risk of flooding (Flood zone 2 and 3). With an additional section of the site to the north of this falling with flood zone 2). A wider area than this is shown to be at risk from surface water flooding with a couple more arms extending north and south of the water course area. The promoters have undertaken some exploratory work and are proposing a water meadow approach which will provide a Sustainable Drainage System, and therefore help mitigate this issue.</p>	Neutral
<p>Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency:</p>	

<p><u>North of the railway:</u> At present, the promoter is only able to commit to complying with building regulations, consistent with the national approach to low carbon homes. They will take a fabric first approach and seek to develop a strategy to optimise electric vehicle charging points for households and visitor spaces. The promoter will assess the suitability of low carbon technology and renewable energies on the site such as ground and air source heat pumps and photovoltaics given there are no existing heat distribution networks in the vicinity of the site. The promoter considers the site has ample opportunity for solar gain and is sustainably located adjacent the settlement of Billingshurst. Sustainable travel will be made attractive to use and a bike club will be investigated and key green infrastructure is being retained. Measures to minimise water usage through low fittings and water recycling will be investigated. Non-domestic floorspace will seek to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' if not 'Excellent'.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The promoter has not provided clarity as to whether their scheme would go beyond but as a minimum it will comply with building regulations, consistent with the national approach to low carbon homes.</p> <p>Whilst both parts of the site will conform with relevant standards, it is more limited than most other proposals in terms of these aspirations and there is not a clear commitment to zero carbon. Although any allocation would be required to conform to the Local Plan policies which make this a requirement, the lack of an active commitment to meeting the significant impacts leads to an unfavourable impact being concluded at this stage.</p>	Unfavourable
Social considerations	
Housing:	
<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> The site is promoted as a residential-led development extension to an existing large village/small town. and . A range of densities, housing types, sizes and tenures are proposed (35% affordable currently anticipated).</p> <p><u>North of the railway:</u> The promoters seeks to deliver around 650 dwellings. This will be predominantly two storey with some three storey key buildings. It is however noted that the site promoter indicates that viability will be affected by tenure mix of the affordable housing especially if the split is more in favour of social or affordable rent. This raises some questions as to the level of commitment to delivering affordable housing which meets the District's overall requirements. It is also noted that the site promoters would provide a greater number of market dwellings earlier in the build owing to site start up and infrastructure costs.</p>	Favourable

<p>They seek to make provision for Gypsy and Travellers if there is a proven need in this location, indicating this could impact the wider viability of the site. Given that there is a clear need for Gypsy and Traveller sites identified as part of the Council's evidence base this would remain a policy requirement, jointly with any allocation south of the railway line. No provision is made for accommodation for older or disabled people according to the site assessment submission (although mention of the former has been verbally given). The site may offer an opportunity to deliver some self-build homes.</p> <p>The site is of strategic scale and would help to meet housing needs. It would be necessary for land to be allocated for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation within the wider site and it is noted that an unequivocal commitment has not been given. The site does not make as significant a contribution to boosting housing as other promoted strategic-scale sites and there are also some outstanding concerns as to the timing and level of delivery of affordable homes.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> the promoter seeks to deliver around 500 dwellings including retirement living. An average density of around 30 dwellings per hectare has been explored (25-40dph range) with lower densities near the Ancient Woodland and higher near the railway. The promoter is open to exploring the provision of some Gypsy and Traveller pitches but based on a proportionate provision of pitches to dwellings comparative to strategic allocations, this may not be an effective offer. It is considered that given the mitigations which may be required on site, an 350 - 400 homes is a more realistic prospect for housing delivery in this land parcel</p> <p>Taking these factors into account, a favourable impact is concluded at this stage, noting that requirements can be set in an allocation to require delivery to meet the identified needs for the District.</p>	
<p>Education:</p>	
<p><u>North of the railway:</u> The promoters propose a 2.2 hectare serviced land centrally within the site for a primary school. This meets the current minimum requirements especially as the site proposed lies over the intermediate gas pipeline and its buffer which will impact operations and configuration of school structures. This would potentially resolve issues affecting the ability to deliver a second primary school in the village on the sloping land formerly secured and set aside for community use via the development to the north of the site. A contribution commensurate to the impact of the development is also offered, predicted to equate to 1 form entry (other funding sources would be required for expansion to 2FE as and when appropriate). It is known that the Weald Secondary school is reaching capacity, something which WSCC are reviewing the options for the best resolution.</p> <p>The timeframe of the primary school land is subject to further exploration to help ensure school places are available to meet the generated needs. The land offer is appropriate for a strategic allocation which would only generate demand for a 1FE primary school, however, 2FE primary schools are normally the smallest supported by the education authority therefore it enables wider needs to be met.</p> <p>Greater assurances over the contribution and also the delivery of the</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

<p>primary school within the site and access to secondary places would need to be obtained before securing any housing development on the site. However, it is considered these matters can be resolved and a favourable impact is therefore concluded.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The promoter is not proposing any educational facilities on this site and would be dependent upon the primary school coming forward to the north of the railway (or as amended). Contributions towards education provision would be necessary.</p>	
<p>Health:</p>	
<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> The proposed open space including the accessible pedestrian and cycle routes, trim trail etc will provide some health and wellbeing benefits, but consideration of healthy lifestyles is more limited than for some other proposals.</p> <p>No on-site health facility is proposed. The promoters indicate the existing health facilities within the village have capacity to meet the sites generated demand. However, if the position changes they are willing to explore how the proposal can assist. Further assurances over the capacity of existing facilities and if any contribution is necessary will therefore need to be obtained before securing any housing development on the site.</p> <p>Overall health needs of the new community are considered able to be met, and a neutral impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	Neutral
<p>Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities:</p>	
<p><u>North of the railway:</u> The promoters propose a community hub. A high proportion of the site will be open space comprising accessible natural greenspace, amenity space, parks, equipped play areas, allotments, outdoor gym, trim trail, SuDS, and connecting street infrastructure including retention and enhancement of existing trees, hedgerows and the existing Local Wildlife Site. In addition to school playing field provision, the site promoter has indicated there would also be the provision of a small playing field on separate publicly accessible land. The adjacent village offers a leisure centre and other facilities, which development contributions have the potential to enhance. Greater assurances over the type and location of the space and facilities to be provided, along with the ongoing management and maintenance arrangements, would still be required to ensure the needs can be suitably met. It is anticipated that the necessary community facilities could be provided, and a neutral impact is concluded at this stage.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The promoters seek to provide a linear park / water meadow through the middle of the site (west to east) with play areas / pocket parks. No built leisure or community facilities are proposed (excluding the proposed station car park). There is a lack of certainty that the site will meet its generated demand for open space. Policy compliance is likely to be met via s106/CIL. A neutral impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	Neutral
<p>Transport:</p>	

<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> <u>Public Transport</u></p> <p>The closest regular bus service of reasonable frequency (service 100 – hourly during the daytime, Monday-Saturday) currently stops at the village centre and at the rail station, both between 0.5km and 1.5km walking distance from proposed residential parcels. However, the masterplans enable the integration of bus services through both sites. The train station would similarly be a 0.5km to 1.5km walk from proposed residential land parcels. Car parks for the train station are proposed as an option within the corners closest to the station within both sites, to facilitate increased use of rail travel. Network Rail have however indicated the need to ensure any development close to the railway line is safe, and this would need to be given further consideration as part of any development proposal both north and south of the railway.</p> <p><u>North of the railway:</u> <u>Walking and Cycling</u></p> <p>The proposal seeks to promote a high level of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. The promoters indicate their masterplan includes a movement and access network which adheres to Manual for Streets (MfS) design principles in promoting a hierarchy of different street types and the provision of direct links for pedestrians and cyclists. The proposal also seeks to provide footpath links to existing services and facilities including to the railway station and village centre, both of which lie between 0.5km and 1.5km from the proposed residential parcels. Network Rail have raised a concern relating to an increase in housing near an uncontrolled ground level crossing over the railway, and a diversion of the public right of way or provision of a footbridge or underpass have been suggested to address the increased risks. Land has been safeguarded to facilitate the provision of a bridge. This will need further exploration and could form a requirement within policy. It is considered that the provision of a footbridge would be more easily secured with contributions from a development north and south of the railway, potentially enhancing active travel benefits from any allocation of the two land parcels.</p> <p><u>Road Transport</u></p> <p>Primary vehicular access would be off the A272 via the Amblehurst Green development (north of the site) and via a new roundabout north of the railway (east of the site). This would form a residential through route linking communities to the school and accessible to buses. A secondary access point via Brooker’s Road will be designed with a focus on maximising connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists and to prevent rat running. The layout will ensure there is no or limited vehicular access connecting the A272 to Broomfield Drive to prevent rat running.</p> <p>Development in this location may require upgrades and investment to other junctions offsite. The promoters indicate a willingness to contribute towards upgrades identified as part of the wider Local Plan transport mitigation requirements. The promoters’ phasing schedule shows the delivery of the vehicular link to northern A272 (via Amblehurst Green) at a late stage after the delivery of 565 homes, which may need further justification.</p> <p>There is a stated commitment to walking and cycling, and the site is close to existing services and facilities in Billingshurst, with proposals to enhance</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
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<p>their accessibility. Further work is however required to understand more detail on public transport provision (buses), and the wider off site impacts in relation to transport.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The proposal seeks to promote a high level of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists primarily via Daux Road and existing public rights of way. Vehicular access would be from the A272 to the east via a new roundabout. Access to the west would be restricted potentially just to emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. There is a commitment to walking and cycling, and the site is close to existing services and facilities in Billingshurst. Further work is however required to understand more detail on public transport provision (buses), and the wider off site impacts in relation to transport. There needs to be further exploration into the impact of any development on this site upon the wider road network and any mitigation necessary.</p> <p>It is considered that the provision of a footbridge would be more easily secured with contributions from a development north and south of the railway, potentially enhancing active travel benefits from any allocation of the two land parcels.</p> <p>Given the proximity of the sites, both north and south of the railway, to a mainline rail station, and good opportunity to achieve high levels of walking and cycling for local trips to the nearby village centre and village facilities, a favourable impact is concluded.</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p>	
<p>The promoters of the land north of the railway seek to provide future communications technology within the development. Neither promoter of land either side of the railway give reference to full fibre or what provision is to be made. SSE have indicated capacity is limited in respect of the electricity supply in the west of the District which may require, once all short-term fixes have been assigned, a major capital scheme for reinforcement works that would take several years to complete.</p> <p>Taking account of the potential need to upgrade the electricity supply and the uncertainties around this an unfavourable impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	Unfavourable
<p><i>Economic considerations</i></p>	
<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> There are good transport connections to other settlements and centres of employment including Horsham, Crawley and London via rail.</p> <p><u>North of the railway:</u> The site is primarily promoted for residential but surrounds the existing Rosier Business Park. The promoters have stated that they could provide an expansion of the Business Park to provide additional employment land with uses that complement the existing mix of employment uses. They also propose a community hub more centrally within the site, or as agreed with the Council, which could include flexible commercial units / 'work from home' units. The provision of E, F.2, sui generis Use Classes are indicated (formerly B1 or A1-A5 Use Classes). The site is considered to be well located to other employment opportunities within the village of Billingshurst. Impacts are therefore assessed as favourable.</p>	Favourable

<p><u>South of the railway:</u> The site is promoted for residential. Given the size of the site and its location next to an industrial estate and near the land north which seeks to expand the Rosier Business Park the impact is assessed as neutral. However, when assessed as a comprehensive allocation in combination with the land north of the railway the impacts are assessed as favourable.</p>	
<p>Retail:</p>	
<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u> The site lies relatively near the retail centre of Billingshurst. Development may help increase the viability of existing retail in the village. It is estimated the site is between 10 to 30 minutes walk from local shops (depending on the location within the site). Given the local nature of the retail offer (commensurate with a large village), and the semi-rural nature of the locality, there will be some reliance on private motor vehicles to access shops elsewhere. The site is primarily promoted for residential and there are no clear proposals for the provision of a local shop on-site or enhancements within Billingshurst village centre. A community shop and cafe is suggested as a potential use that could be included within the community hub area in the site north of the railway. Given the relative proximity to the existing services in Billingshurst, and the uncertainty around new provision a neutral impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	Neutral
<p>Further considerations</p>	
<p>Deliverability and Viability:</p>	
<p><u>North of the railway:</u> The main promoter comprises both Crest and Bellway, established national housebuilders with a track record of delivery, including within Horsham District (Bellway are part of the consortium of three developers that provided homes to the north and has control of the northernmost field in the site that is currently safeguarded for primary school use). Crest and Bellway have some of the land in freehold ownership, the rest has the necessary legal agreements in place to deliver this scheme during the plan period. The promoter estimates delivery of 150 dwellings a year (75 by each developer, Crest & Bellway). HDC's independent assessment endorses the ability of this site to deliver 650 within the plan period.</p> <p>The promoter has not provided a detailed viability assessment. They have however assessed a range of broad viability factors to obtain site values once developed based on the industry's standard calculation. Viability will be affected by tenure mix of the affordable housing especially if the split is more in favour of social or affordable rent. They also seek a greater number of market dwellings earlier in the build owing to site start up and infrastructure costs. Overall however, the Council's emerging evidence also indicates that development on the site is considered to be viable.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The promoter, Richborough, an established site promoter with a track record in the District of gaining permissions and enabling development to proceed.. A number of studies have been undertaken and the promoter indicates quick progress to application can be made. As part of a wider allocation with the land north of the railway a favourable impact can be retained.</p> <p>Given the clear deliverability and evidence that both parcels of land are viable, a favourable impact is concluded.</p>	Favourable

Development Quality:	
<p><u>North and South of the railway:</u></p> <p>The proposed development would be an extension to the settlement of Billingshurst and is relatively well located in terms of access to existing services and facilities and an already established community. Integration with the existing community will be assisted by the provision within the land north of the railway of the land for a new primary school, the proposed community hub, employment. This will also be assisted by the station car parks, and future occupants will also be drawn to the wider services and facilities within the existing village. This will be assisted by the provision of the proposed open space, and pedestrian and cycle routes within the scheme.</p> <p>The promoters say they commit to working with HDC and the partnership of organisations in Billingshurst including the Parish Council, Community Partnership and Chamber of Commerce should their site be allocated.</p> <p><u>North of the railway:</u> Bellway and Crest have approached the masterplan comprehensively as one development and are working up a Collaboration Agreement in order to deliver the scheme in respect of the land in their control (which excludes the currently safeguarded school site). A landscape led approach is adopted where existing hedgerows and trees will largely be retained and enhanced, and public rights of way respected. The presence of the Listed Buildings have been noted together with the sensitivity of their settings. The promoter advises that their design principles help ensure new housing is designed to sit within the existing well established landscape framework, interpret and reflect local distinctiveness, and respect and complement the overall character of Billingshurst. It will take appropriate cues from this part of West Sussex to reinforce the identity of Billingshurst but also to establish it as ‘a place’ in its own right.</p> <p>The promoter is not proposing to hold an ongoing stewardship role but is open to promoting the opportunity for community ownership of the community and potential retail uses on the site within the community hub area. This can initially be offered to the Parish Council or can be managed jointly by a community trust.</p> <p>The promoter’s masterplan has been influenced by local community aspirations that have been expressed in respect of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and discussions.</p> <p><u>South of the railway:</u> The site promoter proposes a landscape led approach where existing hedgerows and trees will largely be retained and enhanced, and public rights of way respected. The presence of the Listed Buildings have been noted together with the sensitivity of their settings. Development will respect and complement the overall character of Billingshurst and surrounding countryside / woodland.</p> <p>Overall impacts are assessed as favourable.</p>	Favourable

Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation

Allocation of both the land north and south of the railway would have benefits in bringing forward a significant level of residential accommodation that would help in meeting identified housing needs including a range of housing types and sizes. Evidence indicates that 35% affordable housing can be provided, although the site promoters of the land north of the railway have indicated an intention to deliver the majority of the affordable housing within the later phases of the build out.

The promoters of the land north of the railway have indicated that this site could provide a site for a primary school, community hub and some employment close to the existing Rosier business park. As currently presented, neither the land north nor the land south of the railway are unlikely to deliver development that goes beyond existing technologies and the requirements of highways and building regulations in respect of helping the District towards becoming zero carbon. The phasing of the community facilities in the land north of the railway is also proposed within the latter half of the build out which is not fully reflective of the Council's objectives. Any development would need to demonstrate the ability to deliver the facilities in a timely manner in order to cultivate a sense of place and patterns of use as occupation occurs and should be incorporated into the requirements of any allocation.

The land north and south of the railway are well related to the eastern edge of Billingshurst. The sites would provide a logical urban extension linked to the extant urban extension recently built out to the north and north of the A272. The site promoters have indicated that they have taken a landscape-led approach to the design and layout which seeks to retain sensitive landscape features such as mature trees and hedgerows.

The majority of the two sites is not directly affected by nature conservation designations, and most of the land north of the railway has been assessed as being of low conservation value. The promoters indicate the Local Wildlife Site Wilden's Meadow would be retained and potentially enhanced. Development in this location would need to address the impact of development on the nearby The Mens SAC woodland, which is of international importance for nature conservation. This includes consideration of both loss of bat feeding grounds and the transport impacts on air quality. The site promoters of the land north of the railway have indicated that 17% biodiversity net gain could be achieved on habitats and 12% on hedgerow features but this is subject to change as the development layout progresses.

There are no listed buildings within the proposed developable area, but a Grade II Listed Building, Little Daux Farmhouse, is surrounded by the land north of the railway and another, Rosier Farmhouse, lies within Rosier Business Park between the developable area and the railway. In addition to this south of the railway just beyond the southern site lies the Grade II Great Daux Farmhouse. The northern site is also close to the Billingshurst conservation area, with potential for views to key historic buildings to be impacted. The impact on this nearby heritage would need to be considered as part of the design and layout of any scheme.

The two proposals are relatively close to the village centre and rail station and they seek to promote a high level of accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. The proposals seek to provide high quality footpath and cycle links to these existing services and facilities. Following feedback from Network Rail, the promoters are exploring the provision of a bridge to avoid a significant diversion of the public right of way in order to remove an uncontrolled ground level crossing over the railway adjacent to this allocation. It is considered that the comprehensive allocation of both parcels of land provide an opportunity to jointly deliver an upgrade, enhancing the potential benefits of an allocation in this location.

Primary vehicular access to the northern site will be off the A272 via the Amblehurst Green development and a new roundabout north of the railway and to the southern site via a new

roundabout south of the railway of the A272. The impacts of this and suitability will need further exploration. The proposed layouts have been designed to restrict motor vehicle access connecting the A272 to Broomfield Drive and Daux Road and Avenue respectively to prevent rat running. The developers indicate a willingness to contribute towards upgrades identified as part of the wider Local Plan transport mitigation requirements.

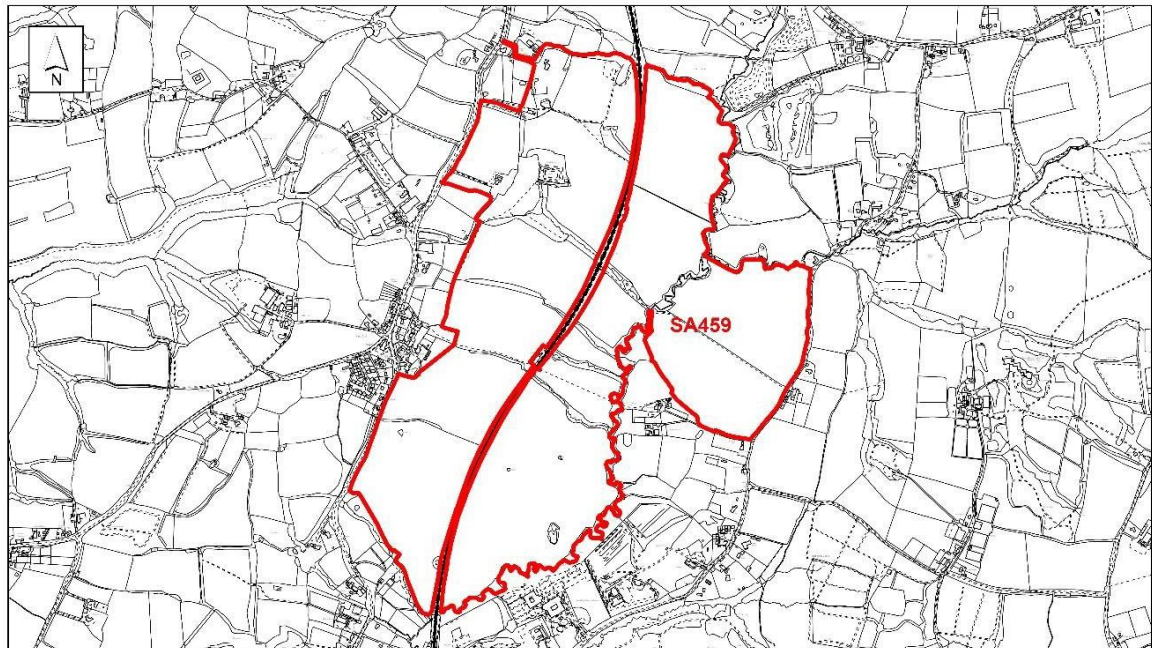
The site has been assessed as deliverable and viable.

Officer Recommendation

On balance this site is considered for allocation, taking into account the conclusion of the sustainability appraisal. This indicates that urban extensions perform relatively well in delivering sustainable development, together with the existing track record of delivery by the promoters in this location and /or District. There are also clear links and a strong relationship with the existing settlement of Billingshurst and proximity to existing public transport links to larger settlements including Horsham and Crawley. There are no identified 'showstoppers' for this site, although some issues still need to be resolved, including in relation to the siting of the primary school and affordable housing mix and phasing, and in respect to the land south of the railway suitable landscape retention. In addition, solutions to address electricity capacity and the safety of an unmanned pedestrian level railway crossing given the proposed increase in residents in close proximity are also required. Development would be expected to seek to secure Local Wildlife Site enhancements and deliver biodiversity net gain. As with all strategic allocations, the 'site' as a whole will need to contribute towards meeting identified Gypsy and Traveller needs in the District.

The sites, both north and south of the railway are recommended for allocation in the Horsham District Local Plan as a single comprehensive allocation to the east of the village.

Site Map:



Horsham District Council
 Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
 West Sussex RH12 1RL
 Barbara Childs - Director of Place

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Local Plan Review 2023			
Land at Kingsfold			
Reference No :	Date : 15 November 2023	1:14,000 at A4	
Drawing No :	Drawn :	Checked :	Revisions :

Site Area: 158ha

Site Description:

The landscape is predominantly agricultural and rural in character. The Sutton and Mole Valley railway line divides the site centrally into eastern and western parcels. There are tree belts and wooded areas (including designated Areas of Ancient Woodland) that divide the western and eastern parcels of land into smaller fields. Boldings Brook passes through the eastern part of the site and is surrounded by mature vegetation.

The western parcel inclines from the lower land level of the railway line upwards to the A24 Dorking Road in the west. The existing hamlet of Kingsfold is located on a small portion of the western boundary. To the east of the railway line, the land is relatively flat until it meets Boldings Brook, where it inclines eastwards to meet Langhurst Wood Road and Friday Street. The land in the south eastern part of the site is relatively flat and well screened by existing trees and hedgerows.

Summary of Proposal:

Housing

The proposal has evolved significantly during the preparation of the Local Plan. The proposal currently seeks to deliver around 2,150 dwellings in a new settlement, formed of individual conurbations, adjacent to the existing settlement of Kingsfold and the A24. Development is proposed both east and west of the railway line. It has been indicated that the site could deliver 35% affordable housing together with a care home to meet the needs of the elderly population. It is not clear that the proposal seeks to deliver Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.

Employment

The promoter has indicated that a new 5.9 hectare business campus would be created along with a 3.3ha employment hub, building upon the success of the Broadland Business Campus to the immediate south east of the site.

Transport

The site promoter states that a new railway station could be delivered in phase 6 of the development (years 11-12), though have stated that the site is not contingent on a new station. and a new bridge crossing the railway line in proposed. The scheme promotes active travel, including cycle and pedestrian connectivity within the site and beyond, and also aims to connect to nearby towns and villages via new bus routes. The promoter also indicates that, subject to ongoing consultation with the community, safety improvements to the existing A24 through Kingsfold could be brought forward as part of the scheme, as could an A24 relief road as part of the wider scheme.

Education and Community

Promoters of this site have indicated that a new 3FE primary school would be delivered. No secondary school has been identified, though engagement with the Education Authority by the site promoter is ongoing to establish whether on site secondary provision would be required. The promoter has stated that primary health care facilities would be provided, with discussions with local GPs and the Primary Care Network ongoing.

It is proposed that open space and sports pitches would be provided together with three Local Centres with overlapping catchments, a village hall and a pub and smaller local retail centres within each of the conurbations.

Environment

The site promoters have stated that the scheme could deliver between 10% and 20% biodiversity net gain. They would seek to protect the existing ancient woodland and retain 50% of the site for green and blue infrastructure. A new country park would be created, with habitats restored and areas rewilded. The inclusion of a 5kW solar farm would reduce the total amount of open space, however, the most recent masterplan indicates 79ha of open space and landscape provision.

Net Zero Carbon

The promoter has indicated that electric vehicle charging points would be provided and has made a commitment to energy efficiency and sourcing energy from non-renewable sources, including schemes such as district heating, solar power and ground source heat pumps. More recently, the promoter has proposed the addition of a solar farm at the northeastern most corner of the site, which could generate power for around half the new homes proposed.

Site Assessment against Criteria

Environmental considerations

Landscape:

The site does not lie within or near a protected landscape. The landscape is rural with much of the land in agricultural use. The Sutton and Mole Valley

Very unfavourable

<p>Railway line divides the site into eastern and western parcels. There are tree belts and wooded areas (including designated Areas of Ancient Woodland) that divide the western and eastern parcels of land into smaller fields. Boldings Brook is sited in the eastern part of the site, surrounded by mature vegetation.</p> <p>The Landscape Capacity Assessments (2021) found the majority of the site to have no/low capacity for residential development, with only small parcels to the east and west of the site assessed as having low-moderate capacity. The assessment of the site for employment development found the whole site to have no/low capacity.</p> <p>Although some parts of the site are relatively well contained in the landscape, other areas are more exposed: from particular vantage points along Friday Street and the easternmost area of the site, there are far reaching views over the whole site towards the A24 in the distance. Previous iterations of the indicative masterplan have attempted to direct development to areas where the promoters have identified capacity exists. Given recent changes in the promotion of the site, and updates to the scheme, it is unclear how the most recent proposal and layout attempts to address the significant landscape constraints of the site. The promoter has indicated development will continue to be focused on the south of the site, with a higher density than earlier iterations in these areas in order to allow for more informal, low density development sensitive areas without impacting the overall quantum of development that could be delivered.</p> <p>The Council recognises that its Landscape Capacity Assessment is at the strategic level and that finer grain work is necessary to identify the capacity of a large site such as this. Notwithstanding this, at this stage there are fundamental concerns regarding the location of development in landscape terms, particularly given the topography of the site and the site's constraints. A development of this scale would have very significant changes on the settlement pattern creating a linear urban form alongside the A24, potentially extending the urban form north from Horsham to the Surrey border. It would alter the very rural character of the area and therefore a very unfavourable rating for landscape is concluded.</p>	
<p>Biodiversity</p>	
<p>The site does not contain a SAC, SPA or SSSI. A Traditional Orchard (a Priority Habitat under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan) is sited in the eastern parcel of the site, east of the residential dwellings Blackfriars and Blackfriars Cottage.</p> <p>There are four Areas of Ancient Woodland contained within the site; Skense Copse and Warnham Mead Row to the south west of the site, Old Barn Gill straddles the railway line in the centre of the site, Boldings Copse lies partially within the site along the eastern boundary and North Wood also lies partially within the site, along the northern boundary. The Furze Field Area of Ancient Woodland is not contained within the site but adjoins the northern boundary.</p> <p>The Brookhurst Wood and Gill and Morris's Wood Local Wildlife Site (formerly SNCI) lies approximately 250m to the south east and just beyond this, lies the Warnham Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). No detailed ecological work has been submitted by the new site promoters. However</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>

<p>the promoters have largely taken into account the environmental characteristics of the site within their submitted material, and indicate that over 50% of the site would be kept as green and blue infrastructure, that existing biodiversity assets would be retained and improved and that parts of the site would be subject to restoration through engagement and work with Wilder Horsham. The masterplan includes a proposed Park and Recreation Ground and a substantial natural greenspace offer, both of which would be strategically significant due to their scale.</p> <p>It is considered that the indicative proposals could result in some favourable ecological impacts. Overall, it is considered that there are issues with regards biodiversity that need to be addressed in the event that this land is allocated for development. Taking into account the preliminary nature of the work provided at the time of writing and the likelihood that the masterplan may continue to evolve an unfavourable impact is assessed at this stage</p>	
<p>Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:</p>	
<p>In the north western part of the site there is an Archaeological Notification Area (Medieval Moated Site and possible deserted Medieval Village, Moat Copse, Warnham)/ This surrounds Moat Copse which is designated as an Archaeological Site. The Grade II listed Kingsfold Place lies approximately 55m to the west of the site, and adjacent to the site's eastern boundary lies the Grade II listed Cripplegate. To the north east of the site lies a cluster of Grade II listed buildings including Friday Farm, Howells and Little Benhams; Shiremark Farmhouse lies to the north west of the site. There are other listed buildings at a further distance from the site. The Grade II listed Kingsfold Place can clearly be seen from within the site, including from the eastern part of the site.</p> <p>No detailed heritage work has been submitted to the Council by the new site promoters to date. It is recognised that further work is needed to understand the archaeology of the site to understand the impacts of development on archaeological remains, with the possibility that there are remains from the prehistoric period onwards. As such, harm cannot be ruled out at this point.</p> <p>While at this stage, no substantial issues are identified that would prevent development from occurring, the potential for harm to heritage assets have been identified. As such, development at this site is assessed as being unfavourable against this criterion and that further work is required.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
<p>Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):</p>	
<p>The site lies within a Brick Clay (Weald Clay) Minerals Safeguarding Area. These designations cover large parts of the district and are not a significant constraint to the site coming forward. Contaminated land surveys have not been undertaken although the predominantly agricultural nature of the site means that the potential for contamination is low.</p> <p>The site does not lie within or near an AQMA, however, the site promoter</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>

has suggested that improvements to rail infrastructure and bus services between Dorking and Horsham could improve air quality and emissions in the local area.

Gatwick Airport is located approximately 7.5km to the north east of the site and overflying aircraft does create some noise impacts within the site. It should be noted that there are proposals by Gatwick Airport to increase the capacity of the airport, including bringing the standby runway into full use. Although there is no planning permission in place, were this to be granted, development in Kingsfold would be particularly impacted and Gatwick Airport Ltd have highlighted that this site could be affected by potential noise impacts associated with future growth of the airport.

There are also noise impacts associated with the railway line and the proximity of the A24 (although any proposed road upgrades could potentially reduce the impacts as part of the development) and the potential for noise impacts on new residents as a result of any new through road bypassing the A24.

It is advised that detailed design will be required regarding the design of safety improvements to the A24, and to any potential new through road bypassing the A24. Where development is proposed close to the railway line, additional surveys and studies will be required. Network Rail have advised that this site would be affected by whistleboards which sound between 06:00 and 24:00 and it is assumed that a railway station itself would have noise impacts, if delivered.

The site is not within a Source Protection Zone. The promoter does not consider that development of the site will have an adverse impact on water quality, although consideration will be given to any impacts and further surveys are programmed. The promoter suggests that careful ecological management could improve the biodiversity value of Boldings Brook and the Gills.

While the issue of water neutrality has fallen away the promoters indicate they will continue to include water efficiency measures on site. This would be required as a matter of course given that the District is in an identified area of water stress and measures are required to ensure that water usage of residents does not exceed 110litres per person per day.

Whilst the majority of environmental quality considerations associated with the site do not raise concern, the site is affected by numerous noise impacts, from a number of sources, namely aircraft, road and rail noise. Both air and rail transport have the potential to cause adverse noise impacts associated with this site. Given this, an unfavourable rating is concluded for environmental quality, albeit there may be potential for mitigation of these impacts

Flooding / Drainage:	
<p>The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1, although the area of the site associated with Boldings Brook is in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Given this, an assessment of 'neutral' is at this stage concluded. No information relating to flood mitigation or adaptation has been submitted to the Council by the new site promoters at this stage.</p>	Neutral
Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency	
<p>A wide range of measures are set out, which include carbon reduction, the provision of electric vehicle charging points, renewable energy generation, waste minimisation, water efficiency, designing flexible buildings and enhancing biodiversity, among others. The most recent submission includes the potential for a solar farm on site, which would provide enough energy to power approximately half the development. The promoters have also suggested that a number of aspirational targets could be included in the site allocation policy if the site were taken forward. The scheme is intended to align with the West Sussex 2030 Energy Strategy, with the intention that all homes will be 100% electric and that the scheme will also make sure of a district heating network through a Heat From Waste scheme.</p> <p>Given the details submitted to date and the promoter's commitment to implementing energy efficient and low carbon measures the proposals have been rated as 'favourable' for meeting the challenge of climate change.</p>	Favourable
Social considerations	
Housing:	
<p>The site is being promoted as a mixed use garden village style development, providing between 2,125 – 2,385 new homes. The site promoters indicate 35% of the housing delivered will be affordable.</p> <p>The latest capacity study indicates the scheme would deliver a mix of densities across the site, responding to the landscape constraints. Higher density development would be located towards the south of the site nearer the location of the proposed railway station (from 100dph within the "innovation community" live-work units to 60dph in the more high density residential area). The majority of the site would be built to around 38dph – this density would be found towards the centre and to the east of the site. In the north a lower-density eco/custom build area would be built to around 35dph. Each of the three local centres would have pockets of residential development built to 50dph.</p> <p>While no specific details have been provided as to how gypsy and traveller needs would be met, around 15 pitches would be required in a site of this size and the promoter has indicated the site has the potential to delivery Gypsy and Traveller accommodation. It is also stated the proposals will meet the needs of specific groups, including the elderly in extra care facilities.</p> <p>Overall, the site would help to provide a substantial contribution to housing needs. However due to the lack of certainty and commitment to the provision of Gypsy and Traveller needs, the assessment is concluded as favourable at this stage.</p>	Favourable

<p>Education:</p>	
<p>A 3FE primary school is proposed to be delivered as part of Phase 2 of the development. It is presumed that this would be to meet the entire needs of the new settlement but given that 345 homes are proposed in the first phase, it would appear that some children will have to be schooled elsewhere, at least in the first instance.</p> <p>No secondary school is proposed as part of the development and, while the Council is aware that engagement has taken place, it is unclear to what extent secondary education needs will be met or whether the proposed off-site solution would be acceptable. Given the population of the proposed settlement, it would seem likely to generate significant needs for such provision. Without direct provision it is likely that children of secondary age would go to nearby schools – the nearest of which is Horsham Bohunt School approximately 2.4km away – though given the expected growth at Mowbray (North Horsham), there are concerns about its capacity to accommodate an increase in enrolment. Pupils would most likely need to travel by bus (or private motor vehicle) to Bohunt School, given the poor connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Until more information is forthcoming, it is assumed that the development will add greater strain on secondary education schools in the area, and despite the provision of a primary school is assessed to have an unfavourable impact on this criterion.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
<p>Health:</p>	
<p>The promoters are promoting a 'primary preventative healthcare environment' concept which seems to equate to 15 minute neighbourhood principles – where everyday facilities can be accessed within a short distance within local centres. This would lend itself to healthy lifestyles, as would the provision of open space and leisure facilities.</p> <p>A GP surgery and pharmacy is proposed in stage 2 of the development albeit no detailed information has been provided to support its delivery. However, in common with other strategic site proposals, the extent and form of future health provision would necessarily be informed through further discussions with the NHS Integrated Care Board (formerly the CCG) and discussions with existing providers.</p> <p>Overall, it is recognised that the promoter has a clear commitment to healthy lifestyles and provision of local healthcare on site. There is however uncertainty over the NHS Integrated Care Board supporting on-site facilities, and in the short term as a minimum there is likely to be a need to travel to travel to GPs around 3km away in Surrey and Horsham. At this stage the impacts is concluded as favourable.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities	
<p>Limited information has been submitted in relation to the leisure and community facilities that the site would provide, with the promoter indicating further community engagement is required in order to establish what the most appropriate facilities will be. New country parks and sports provision are proposed and would be welcomed. Although it is likely that leisure provision could be provided to meet requirements, given the large nature of the site, very little information has been received which sets out what is proposed and what would benefit potential residents as well as those further afield. Given the uncertain nature of the proposals, it is therefore assessed as neutral against this criterion.</p>	Neutral
Transport:	
<p><u>Walking and Cycling</u></p> <p>The site promoters state that walking and cycling routes would be enhanced including by improving the existing crossing points by diverting and enhancing existing PRoWs to link parts of the site. This may help to remove unsafe crossings over the railway line in accordance with Network Rail's nationwide strategy. However, at this stage limited detail on the discussions with network rail have been provided to the Council.</p> <p>Horsham is not within easy walking distance of the site given the distance to facilities in Horsham and a lack of any safe or direct pedestrian routes (noting also the lack of any safe crossing points on the A264 or A24). Cycling is promoted and the site promoters have advanced ideas to create green travel corridors, suitable for cycling, that would also connect to longer routes to Horsham and beyond.</p> <p>Whilst the scheme offers some services and facilities, residents would still be reliant on other settlements – particularly Horsham town. The A24 is a busy and fast stretch of road with no footways and the more rural roads of Langhurst Wood Road and Friday Street, similarly provide no footways. The promoters have identified such issues and continue to investigate whether measures, such as segregated paths/cycle lanes could be introduced but it is not known at this point whether this is achievable.</p> <p>It is considered that residents in such a location would be reliant on their private motor vehicles to meet a number of their day-to-day needs, and will increase pressure on the existing road network. Hence the proposal does not meet wider aspirations for promoting sustainable travel before the private vehicle.</p> <p><u>Public Transport</u></p> <p>The promoters have indicated that they would seek to deliver a railway station on the Sutton and Mole Valley railway line within the Garden Village. They have indicated that this would be delivered around 11-12 years into the development of the site and that it would help to increase the frequency of services to Horsham and London. This constitutes a key benefit of the scheme. However, there remains a lack of certainty that it would be delivered. The promoter has submitted a Memorandum of Understanding between themselves and Network Rail. Notwithstanding this, there is no evidence that provides any certainty that a railway station would be</p>	Unfavourable

<p>delivered if the site were allocated and/or that service frequency would be improved. It is also noted that the Council's correspondence with Network Rail indicates that they don't believe a development of this size at this location would justify a new railway station and highlight that this line is an unattractive one to London. As such, the Council is not currently of the view that there is a realistic prospect of delivery of such improvements in the plan period. The promoter has stressed that the potential for a new railway station represents an opportunity rather than necessary mitigation and that the site is sustainable without this, given the proximity to Warnham Station.</p> <p>Existing bus stops for Metrobus route 93 run alongside the site, that currently provide an hourly service to Horsham and Dorking. The promoters consider a new bus service which runs along the primary road through the new development would be delivered as part of the scheme.</p> <p><u>Road Transport</u></p> <p>The proposals suggest a 'relief road' for Kingsfold village could be considered as part of the wider scheme, and would connect the various parcels of development together, and downgrade the A24 in this location to discourage traffic through the existing settlement of Kingsfold. Although this in principle seems an attractive proposition, it is not considered necessary to solve any pressing highway capacity issue as no such issue has been identified at the strategic level. The proximity of this site with the Surrey border may also have the potential for greater impacts in this area than many proposals for new development in the District.</p> <p>Overall, transport impacts are assessed as unfavourable. Whilst the potential for road and rail upgrades are recognised, the rail proposals in particular will be challenging to achieve and there is no clear prospect that either will come forward in the plan period, although it is acknowledged that the promoter does not consider a railway station necessary for a sustainable scheme. The proposed road upgrade does little to resolve existing congestion issues elsewhere in the district and does not fully improve the road between the A264 and Capel in Surrey. Despite efforts to encourage active travel, and relative proximity to Warnham Station, it is considered highly likely that residents would be reliant on private vehicles for higher order services and employment opportunities.</p> <p>While the promoter identifies WSCC's intention to improve the A24 between Worthing and Dorking, and suggests the development could contribute to some of these improvements in the Kingsfold area, it is not yet clear how the scheme's proposals would coordinate with the highways authority's evolving plans for this route.</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p>	
<p>The site promoters have confirmed that future communications technology will be provided as part of the proposals.</p> <p>The impact is therefore assessed as neutral.</p>	Neutral
<p><i>Economic considerations</i></p>	
<p>Economy:</p>	

<p>Emerging master plan proposals propose an extension to the Broadlands Business Campus of 11 hectares (75,000 sq m or 800,000 sq ft) to compliment and further the existing offer. Although up-to-date information has not been supplied, previously this was estimated to provide 3000 jobs.</p> <p>According to supporting information, the extension would provide an uplift in terms of both quality and quantity of employment space. The promoters place emphasis on the location of the site within the Gatwick Diamond and highlight that there is scope to enhance the offering in the commercial property market. Information received suggests that this part of the proposal would come forward in the Phase 5 (Years 9-10) of development.</p> <p>The latest masterplan also shows an employment hub, though no significant detail is provided. It is expected that this would also create jobs.</p> <p>The proposals are considered to result in a significant amount of employment space, co-located with an existing business campus with its valued businesses making an important contribution to the District's economy. From an economic perspective, this would appear to have a positive impact on this criterion, albeit there are already allocations being proposed in other locations around the district that would in combination go beyond the assessed employment need in the District. The site is assessed as 'favourable'</p>	Favourable
<p>Retail</p>	
<p>The promoter indicates that as well as a main local centre, three smaller local centres would be created in different parts of the new settlement. No other supporting information on what type of retail facilities will be delivered has been submitted, with the applicant stating that further engagement with the community will shape the provision.</p> <p>Kingsfold does not currently offer any retail facilities and therefore, aside from what can be provided through the local shops on site, residents would likely be reliant on Horsham Town or places further afield to meet their full range of retail needs. Horsham town centre is some 6km in distance from the site and aside from vehicular access, more sustainable transport options are not considered that strong in this location – despite what is being proposed. Overall, an unfavourable rating for retail has been concluded.</p>	Unfavourable
<p>Further considerations</p>	

<p>The Council has significant doubts that the proposal would justify nor be able to fund the delivery of the railway station, with viability evidence based on an understanding by the promoter that Network Rail would deliver the railway station while contributing to these works. Thus, in the unlikely event that a railway station is delivered – other infrastructure or affordable housing could be sacrificed.</p> <p>The vision document identifies the development of the site in eight phases over around a 14-year period. The speed of delivery seems very ambitious and in the Council’s experience of strategic sites, strategic developments are unlikely to build out as quickly as indicated. A slower than anticipated rate of delivery would leave overall housing supply in deficit. This would have a knock on impact on infrastructure delivery thus reducing the benefits of the proposal and/or delay the positive impacts of the proposal. No formal evidence of land ownership or option agreements have been submitted to the Council to support this vision statement.</p> <p>Community ownership or land value capture has not been proposed by the promoters. Given the uncertainty of delivery and viability an unfavourable rating for deliverability and viability has been concluded for the site.</p>	Unfavourable
<p>Development Quality:</p>	
<p>The promoters advocate a new garden village, comprising five conurbations, adjacent to the existing settlement of Kingsfold. It is suggested that this would equate to around 2,150 homes and a business campus that could deliver around 3,000 jobs, with complementary facilities (retail, leisure, health, education, open space, etc.) to support a new community. Whilst in the longer term, it is considered a sustainable new community would be delivered, this will (as for any new settlement) take time to emerge. There would be reliance on existing community facilities in nearby settlements to some degree, particularly in the early phases of any development.</p> <p>The latest masterplan and vision suggest that the site layout has been informed by landscape work, with areas identified as having capacity in the main being where development is sought.’ However, there is little explanation of how the scheme will look or will fit in with the wider surroundings. Three small and one large local centres would be created for everyday needs but inevitably residents would be reliant on higher order settlements for additional needs. Internal vehicular and pedestrian/cycle links are proposed to link up the site, in an attempt to overcome the severance issue that the railway line presents.</p> <p>At this stage in the proposals, the promoters have indicated that long term management of the site will be discussed during the planning application process and discussions are ongoing with WSCC with regards transport and highways aspects. Further information is necessary to support the proposed railway station and railway improvements.</p> <p>It is unclear what other consultation has been undertaken relating to the most recent scheme, however the promoters indicate that they intend to engage positively and productively with local people in an open manner, providing opportunities for local people to speak directly to the team.</p>	Unfavourable

No detailed information has been provided on the design of the residential elements, however there are indications on characteristics of the development more broadly, such as looking to the local village character of Warnham to inform the development pattern and massing, and the architecture and materials. nor is there a suggestion of design codes or styles that the promoters wish to introduce.

There is limited information to judge the quality of the proposal at this stage, with it being unclear as to how the majority of the built form would be designed. An unfavourable impact is, overall, concluded.

Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation

Allocation of this site would have benefits in bringing forward a significant level of residential accommodation that would help in meeting identified housing needs including a range of housing types and sizes. The site is however situated in the very north of the District, and whilst relatively close to Horsham is not well connected with the town. The promoters have a highly ambitious development rate, which, if not achieved, may make some elements of their proposal unviable.

One of the main advantages of the proposals is the potential delivery of an extension to the Broadlands Business Campus of 75,000 sq m and 3,000 jobs, potentially of high quality, particularly given the co-location with the existing employment provision at Broadlands, albeit there are alternative sites under consideration to meet the District's future employment needs. It is understood access to this area of land would need to be obtained through the current business park in Langhurstwood Road. No evidence of any agreement has been provided to the Council.

The scheme proposes a number of community benefits, including a country park, re-wilding of agricultural land, a new primary school, extra care/sheltered accommodation for the elderly and retail facilities. Whilst welcome, future residents would still be heavily reliant on other settlements, particularly Horsham, but also Warnham and potentially settlements further north, into Surrey for main retail facilities, as well as secondary school and sixth form provision.

The presence of the railway line through the centre of the site would create a severance issue, which the promoters have yet to directly address. The majority of the development would be focussed in the southern portion of the site, with the highest density development focused around the proposed railway station.

The site is in a location that has a strong rural character and, despite contrary views of the promoter, development of this site is considered to not only result in significant landscape harm, but could also harm the setting of a number of listed buildings and land of archaeological interest. There are significant existing environmental assets on the site, which are predominantly proposed to be retained and improved. The proximity of the railway line raises the potential for adverse noise impacts, and there is potential for further adverse noise impacts associated with the proposed relief road and the proximity to Gatwick and associated flight paths. It is likely that these noise impacts could be mitigated through appropriate positioning of properties and noise insulation measures.

The promoters indicate that a railway station would be provided and that the development could improve frequency on the line. There appears to be no reliable evidence to support the feasibility of this proposal, and the promoter has not submitted viability information to demonstrate that the most recent scheme could be delivered. In any event, the railway line does not provide a quick service into central London and passengers would need to connect at Horsham to services to other parts of Horsham District, Gatwick and the coast. Connectivity to the site is considered to be relatively poor and, given its location, it is considered likely that private vehicles will be the dominant form of transport to travel outside of the site, despite the

claims of the promoters. The potential provision of internal links and the creation of safe crossing points would allow internal movements and promote healthy lifestyles should local attractors (local centres, leisure facilities, health services, etc) be provided.

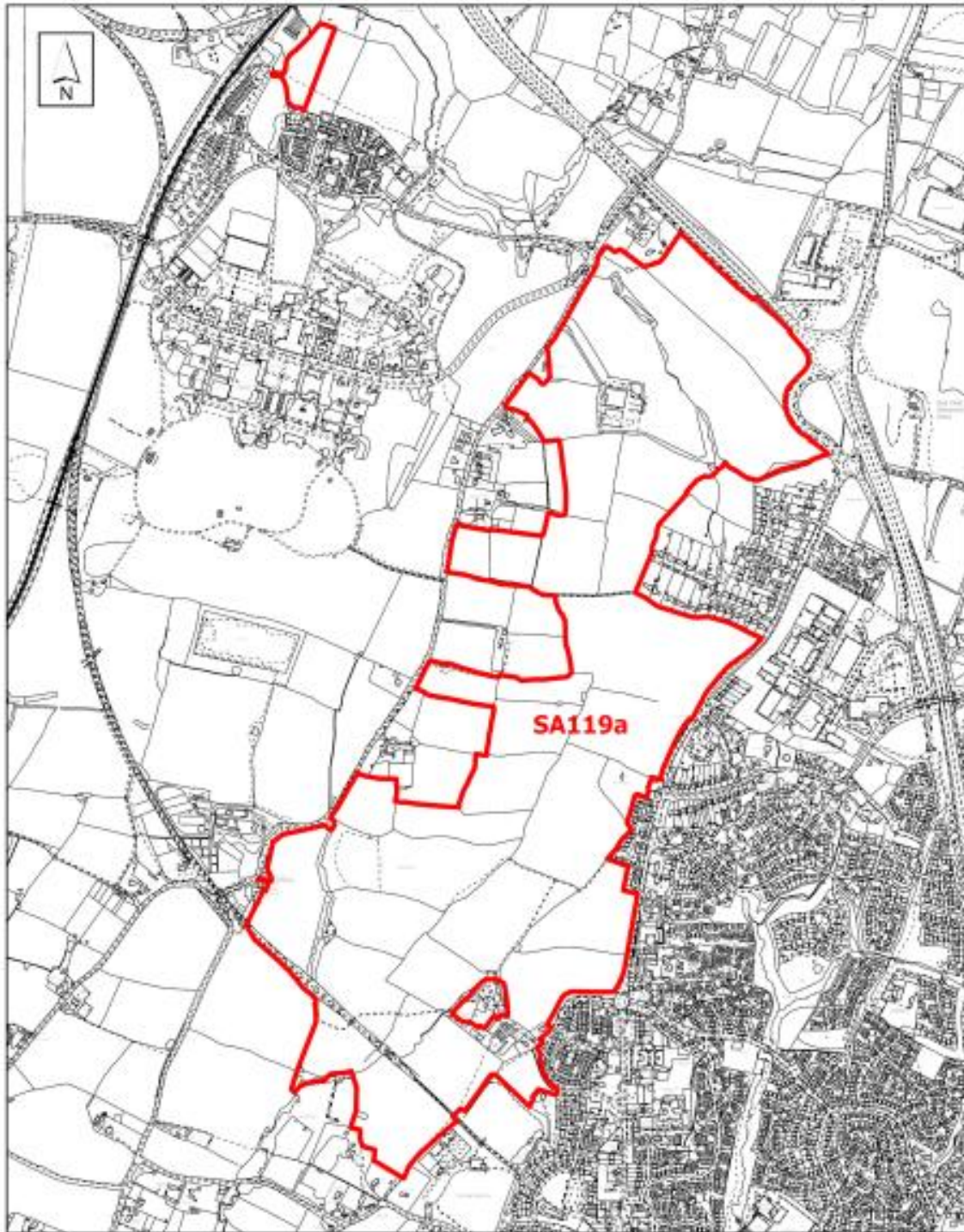
Officer Recommendation:

This site is not recommended for allocation due to a combination of factors, including landscape impacts and lack of certainty as to the nature, deliverability and viability of the scheme. Furthermore, the site is detached from any existing established settlement, and would be a village-size settlement with more limited opportunity for self-containment. It scores less well in the Sustainability Appraisal than settlement extension sites, reflecting the high level of challenge there would be in achieving sustainable travel habits and access to facilities, particularly in the early phases of development.

Site Name: Land North West of Southwater

SA119a

Site Map:



Horsham District Council
Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex RH12 1RL
Barbara Childs : Director of Place

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Local Plan Review 2026 Land NW of Southwater	
Reference No :	
Date: 10 March 2026	Scale : 1:12,000 at A4
Drawing No :	Revisions :

Site Area:	Approximately 116ha
<p>Site Description:</p> <p>The main part of the site is located to the west / northwest of Southwater. It comprises arable and pasture land, interspersed by hedgerows, larger areas of woodland, and a number of Public Rights of Way, stretching from east to west across the site. It contains three Areas of Ancient Woodland (Courtland Wood, Two Mile Ash Gill and Smiths Copse). To the north the site is constrained by the A24. To the east there are more urban influences where the site adjoins Worthing Road, Southwater and the previously permitted development site known as “Broadacres”. However, the site’s western boundary (Two Mile Ash road) and southern boundary (Church Lane, straddling the Downslink (a disused railway line converted to a cycle route, which runs from Guildford to Shoreham) are considerably more rural in character. There are also a number of statutorily listed buildings located within/ immediately adjacent to the development site. A smaller piece of land, broadly 1.3 hectares, is located further to the north west adjacent to Christ’s Hospital Railway Station.</p> <p><u>“Broadacres” Development</u></p> <p>Land to the immediate south and south-east of the development site is known as “Broadacres”. It is a Strategic Allocation within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) adopted in 2015 and planning permission for 594 dwellings (DC/14/0590/OUT) and associated community facilities. This development was permitted on 25 June 2015, has commenced and is approximately half-complete.</p> <p><u>Neighbourhood Plan</u></p> <p>The Southwater Neighbourhood Plan was made on 24 June 2021. Land West of Southwater, as identified on the Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map, is allocated for the provision of 422-450 new residential units, consisting of a minimum of 350 C3 dwellings and a minimum of 72 units falling within Use Class C2. The site is required to provide a minimum of 8 hectares of public open space. The neighbourhood plan residential allocation extends from the north-west boundary of the existing Strategic Site “Broadacres” and extends north and west, across the development site, up to Courtland Wood. The plan also identifies a parcel of land south of New Road which is safeguarded for the provision of a future secondary school. The Neighbourhood Plan also includes Policy SNP18 - A Treed Landscape, which seeks, for major development, the provision of 1 new tree per 40 sqm of floorspace created.</p>	
<p>Summary of Proposal:</p> <p><u>Housing</u></p> <p>The site is being promoted as an urban extension to Southwater for the delivery of up to 1,000 C3 dwellings. This would be split between 650 market dwellings (65%) and 350 affordable dwellings (35%). The site promoters are proposing space for 5 Gypsy & Traveller pitches and up to 80 extra care/care home units.</p> <p>In terms of housing mix, the site promoter has indicated that they will be providing a mix of bedroom sizes and a mix of rented, shared ownership and discounted market homes.</p>	

Employment

The site promoter is seeking to provide an employment hub in the north of the site, providing approximately 4 hectares of employment space.

Education

The site promoter is seeking to provide land for: a 60 place nursery; a 1 form entry (expandable to 2 form entry) primary school; and a 6 form entry (expandable to 8 form entry) secondary school. The secondary school would be provided in Phase 1 and the nursery and primary school would be delivered in Phase 2.

Neighbourhood Centre/Community Facilities

The site promoter would provide a neighbourhood centre comprising commercial and community floorspace. This could have a range of uses including complementary retail to Lintot Square and community facilities. The developer is seeking to provide enhancements to the ancillary buildings that lie adjacent (to the immediate east of) Great House Farm. These will be renovated to create new commercial and community spaces.

Open Space and Sport The promoters are proposing a net gain in biodiversity (greater than 10%). They propose 59 hectares of new public open space, including sports pitches, play areas, walking routes, multi-functional green spaces and an orchard.

Sustainability

The site promoters propose a fabric first approach to construction of homes, a gas-free development and carbon emissions standards beyond those in building regulations, and water efficiency measures to achieve average usage of 110 litres/ person/ day to meet policy expectations.

Transport

The site promoters propose a car park and cycle storage at Christ's Hospital station. Key highways mitigation measures proposed are signalisation of the Hop Oast roundabout to provide a safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists; a link road to Hop Oast; a link road to Two Mile Ash Road, and a new spine road running north-south through the site.

They also propose new walking and cycling routes within the site; improved walking and cycling routes to Southwater, Horsham, and Christ's Hospital Station, as well as contributions to the existing bus 23 service to increase frequency and re-route through the development at school times. The promoters state they will explore options to encourage links to Christ's Hospital Station

Site Assessment against Criteria	
<i>Environmental considerations</i>	
Landscape:	
<p>The main landscape constraints on site relate to the three areas of Ancient Woodland within the site (Courtland Wood, Two Mile Ash Gill and Smith’s Copse) and the Public Rights of Way network within the central and southern part of the site, including the Downs Link Way. The westernmost section of the site is particularly rural in character and there are currently very limited urban influences in this location.</p> <p>The Landscape Capacity Assessment (HDC, 2021) identifies this land as falling within Zone 2 South Horsham-Southwater. The Study indicates that the site falls within three different landscape character areas: 27- Two Mile Ash and Environs; 28 Land West of Southwater; and 29 Land NW of Southwater. Area 27 is identified as having no/low capacity for large-scale housing and large-scale employment uses. This reflects the fact that the site contains some sensitive areas (including ancient woodland and listed buildings). The design of any development on this site would need to take account of these constraints to minimise any potential harm to the ancient woodland and listed buildings.</p> <p>The developer, through their revised Masterplan, has sought to mitigate previously identified adverse landscape impacts. They have reduced the number of homes on site from 1,500 in an earlier scheme (withdrawn application DC/22/1916/OUT) to 1,000 C3 dwellings. This includes removing development from the western edge of the site close to Two Mile Ash Road and also removing housing from the field south of the Great House Farm and being replaced by grass sports pitches.</p> <p>In addition to removing the housing parcels, the developer is proposing to replace the sports facilities that were previously proposed south of the Downs Link with informal green space, and to remove the sports pitches that were previously proposed south of Church Lane.</p> <p>In terms of trees, the site promoter has said that measures will be taken to retain the vast majority of existing trees and hedgerows and that the policy requirements can be met in relation to tree planting.</p> <p>The changes made by the developer to remove 500 dwellings from the previous application, in sensitive areas of the site, have resulted in the previous rating of “Unfavourable” being upgraded to “neutral”.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

<p>Biodiversity:</p> <p>The site contains a number of biodiversity assets, such as areas of ancient woodland (Courtland Wood, Two Mile Ash Gill and Smith’s Copse), which are located on the western and eastern edges of the site. These would be retained as part of the proposals for green infrastructure on the site.</p> <p>Initial ecological survey work has been undertaken which has identified the presence of protected species on the site. The survey work has identified that additional mitigation measures are required in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of individuals and populations of protected and notable species including bats, badgers, birds, reptiles, Great Crested Newts and invertebrates. • Protection of habitats within and adjacent to the site, including ancient woodland (2 of which are designated as non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites), ancient and veteran trees, hedgerows and water bodies. • Protection of off-site designated areas in the wider area, in particular the Arun Valley SPA, SAC and Ramsar from adverse effects of water abstraction. <p>In addition, it is noted that the development site lies within the 12km wider conservation area of the Mens Special Area of Conservation (SAC), designated for woodlands, which feature Barbastelle maternity roosts.</p> <p>The site promoter has indicated that they will be providing a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%, will be designed to take account of the proximity of protected sites and will seek to retain and protect key habitats on site.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:</p>	
<p>A Built Heritage Baseline Assessment has been produced for the site. It identifies that there are 24 listed buildings within a 500m study radius of the site, one of which is Grade II* (Great House Farmhouse) and 23 of which are Grade II. There are also two Grade II* listed buildings located just outside of the study area to the northwest at Christ’s Hospital School. There are ten Parish Heritage Assets within the Study area, which have been identified via the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan and area treated as non-designated heritage assets. Three inter-connected barns at Great House Farm (Barns A, B and C), located within the site, are additionally regarded as non-designated heritage assets.</p> <p>Any development on site will need to take account of these buildings, together with consideration of the heights of development, topography, views, the rural setting and the impact of increased traffic on local roads. Development will need to demonstrate how the rural character and green routes can be retained through the development.</p> <p>Great House Farmhouse is surrounded by the site on all sides, although itself remains outside of the proposed development boundary. It is proposed</p>	<p>Neutral</p>

that the Barns (Orchard Barns) to the immediate east will be removed and replaced with commercial and community spaces. Orchards will be included as part of this redevelopment.

The current proposal for the site removes a parcel of residential development that was proposed to the south of Great House Farmhouse, as well as removing hockey pitches that were proposed to the immediate south of the Downs Link. It is understood that Great House Farmhouse will remain as a single residence. If so, it will require a proportionate size of grounds surrounding it to retain its original character. This building must continue to be appreciated in its historic rural setting. Any nearby development must not dilute this setting and for this reason, the housing parcel shown to the south of the ancillary buildings should not be developed.

The site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval remains. There is potential for archaeological remains from all eras to be found on and around the site. The promoters have undertaken work to investigate the presence of archaeological features. It concludes that there was a “moderate to high potential for deposits of earlier prehistoric, Iron Age to Romano-British and post-medieval date within the Site” and a “low to moderate” potential for deposits of Neolithic, Bronze Age, Saxon and medieval date, based on discoveries within the main site. The significance of such finds are likely to be of “local or regional” significance.

The Archaeological Assessment concludes that further survey work is not needed but archaeological mitigation measures are likely to be required and that a targeted evaluation in the areas of the site directly impacted by the proposed development should be carried out. It is suggested that any such evaluation could follow outline consent secured by an appropriately worded archaeological planning condition.

Given the removal of housing to the immediate south of Great House Farmhouse and the proposed hockey pitches to the south of the Downs Link, a rating of “neutral” is given

Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):

The promoters have studied the ground conditions and contamination issues regarding the site and have not noted significant effects, though it is noted that further work is needed to clarify the issues relating to the site, including detailed intrusive ground investigations.

The site is also located in a minerals safeguarding area for brick clay and building stone. These designations cover large parts of the district and are not a significant constraint to the site coming forward; nevertheless a Minerals Resources Assessment has been prepared. The site is not located in an Air Quality Management Area. Air quality studies suggest that the proposal would have a negligible effect and that users would not be subject to poor air quality

Overall, a neutral rating is given, however, this is dependent on further exploratory work being carried out by the Promoter to establish that no development occurs on contaminated land

Neutral

Flooding / Drainage:	
<p>Work undertaken by the promoter explains that the site is located in Flood Zone 1, with a low risk of tidal and fluvial flooding. There are no main rivers in proximity to the site. The site is not located within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone and is at minimal risk of groundwater flooding. The site is not affected by reservoir flooding and the risk of sewer flooding is negligible. Evidence provided suggests that the development would not have significant impacts in terms of surface water flooding</p> <p>There is risk that some significant effects could arise from development , but mitigations are proposed and set out in submitted documentation (including the drainage strategy) meaning that the proposed development avoid significant impacts. Accordingly, a neutral impact is recorded.</p> <p>Given the limited existing flood risk and proposed enhancements a neutral impact is concluded.</p>	Neutral
Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency:	
<p>A Climate Risk and Resilience Report was prepared that did not identify significant risks associated with the proposal. Sustainability and Energy Statements have also been produced.</p> <p>The promoters suggest that a BREEAM 'Very Good' rating will be achieved for all non-residential/commercial units; a reduction in CO₂ emissions beyond those stipulated in building regulations, gas-free development, energy efficiency measures incorporated, but suggest that a zero carbon development could only be achieved should the national electricity grid be decarbonised.</p> <p>Taking account of these proposed measures, a neutral assessment is given.</p>	Neutral
Social considerations	
Housing:	
<p>The site is being promoted as an urban extension to Land West of Southwater for the delivery of up to 1,000 dwellings and an outline application has been submitted (DC/26/0366). This is reduction of 500 dwellings from the application DC/22/1916/OUT for 1,500 dwellings, which was withdrawn on 22 February 2023. The areas where the housing has been removed are discussed above.</p> <p>The 1,000 dwellings would include 35% affordable housing. An additional 80 units would be extra care housing. It would be split between 650 market dwellings (65%) and 350 affordable dwellings (35%).</p>	Favourable

<p>The site promoter is also proposing a mix of rented, shared ownership, and discounted market homes; housing for older people, including Extra Care; custom and self-build plots.</p> <p>The site promoter has also confirmed that a parcel of land could be provided to accommodate 5 gypsy & traveller pitches in the northern portion of the site, adjacent to the proposed employment site.</p> <p>The provision of 35% affordable housing is in line with the Council's emerging local plan policy. The Council would expect the mix of housing to be in line with that set out in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2019).</p> <p>The provision of housing is assessed as favourable.</p>	
<p>Education:</p>	
<p>The site promoter is proposing land for a 1 form entry (FE) primary school, expandable to 2FE with SEND (special educational needs and disabilities) facilities and a nursery, and A 6FE secondary school, expandable to 8FE with SEND facilities.</p> <p>In terms of location, the promoter is seeking to locate the a new secondary school in the northern central portion of the site with access from an internal spine road. The site promoter is also proposing locating the primary school on the eastern side of the development site, adjacent to Worthing Road and the proposed internal spine road.</p> <p>West Sussex County Council have advised the site promoter on timescales for the delivery of the secondary and primary schools. The provision of a school site is assessed as very positive as it will benefit existing communities as a need for additional secondary school places has been identified in the District.</p> <p>Within the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan, land is already safeguarded for the provision of a new secondary school (from the 450 homes allocated). This is on land on the eastern side of the development site, to the south of New Road, adjacent to Worthing Road, and is favoured by the local community in terms of providing maximum accessibility and benefit to the settlement. With regards to the proposed splitting of the primary and secondary schools by the site promoter, the Council would prefer to see the primary and secondary schools located on the safeguarded land site, as set out in the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>This proposal would meet its own and wider educational needs for the District. As the proposed location is not in accordance with the Made Neighbourhood Plan and is not policy compliant., the proposed scheme for secondary school land is considered to be Positive'.</p>	<p>Positive</p>
<p>Health:</p>	

<p>At this stage the NHS Integrated Care Board have not indicated that new health care provision would be required as part of any new development in this location. The centre of the proposed site is located approximately 1.25km from the existing Village Surgery in Southwater which is understood to have capacity to accommodate the new development proposed on this site. Accordingly, it is considered the effect will be neutral.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities:</p>	
<p>As part of the Broadacres development to the south of this site (being brought forward by the same site promoter), new community sports pitches and a pavilion have been provided. The site promoter remains committed to the creation of a strong, sustainable and self-sufficient neighbourhood at Southwater, with additional community facilities.</p> <p>It is proposed that the development would include a neighbourhood centre providing comprising commercial and community floorspace; flexible community facilities within Orchard Barns; an orchard for local food production, and approximately 59 acres of public open space for community use.</p> <p>Overall, the majority of these provisions, particularly for play and open space are positive and a rating of “favourable” is given.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p>Transport:</p>	
<p><u>Walking and cycling</u></p> <p>The site promoters see active travel forming a large proportion of the trips generated by the development, with a compact development including employment and other facilities, including 2 schools, and the delivery of new and enhanced routes within the site, as well as improvements to existing off-site routes.</p> <p>The promoter is proposing that a connection to National Cycle Route 223 (the ‘Downs Link’) is provided, which operates through the Site, while a contribution towards improvements to the Downs Link would also be secured as part of the proposed development.</p> <p>The proposed spine road through the Site would be provided with comprehensive, high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure to Local Transport Note 1/20 standards and would connect to adjoining walking and cycling routes within the Site and to off-site areas. I</p> <p>There would also be improvements to the existing Public Rights of Way.</p> <p>A number of key off-site walking and cycling routes to destinations such as Horsham and Christ’s Hospital will also be enhanced by way of infrastructure improvements that will be delivered as part of the proposed development, or by way of a contribution to WSCC towards the delivery of</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

<p>these schemes.</p> <p><u>Public Transport</u> The site benefits from bus services 23 and 98. The promoters propose enhancements to the 23 service to improve frequency to Horsham Town and potential rerouting of the service into the site (subject to agreement with the bus provider. The promoters note that bus service 98 should be enhanced should development at Horsham Golf and Fitness come forward as permitted.</p> <p><u>Road Transport</u> In terms of the development site itself, the road network will be centred around a spine road that flows from a new mini roundabout on the north of Worthing Road and rejoins Worthing Road, via Chessal Avenue at the south.</p> <p>In terms of impacts upon the wider road network and mitigation, the promoter is proposing improvements to the A24 Worthing Road/ Hop Oast Roundabout. In line with West Sussex County Council's A24 Corridor Enhancement Study, the Hop Oast roundabout would be fully signalised in order to allow for safe crossing of pedestrians and cyclists across the A24 and to increase capacity of the junction for motorised vehicles. Further dialogue will need to be undertaken with West Sussex County Council on this scheme.</p> <p><u>Christ's Hospital Links</u> The site promoter has investigated the area of the Site that is located to the east of Station Road (at Christ's Hospital railway station) and whether it could function as a potential new car park and bus turning area serving Christ's Hospital railway station. This area could also accommodate additional cycle storage facilities.</p> <p>Overall, the site promoter has sought sustainable transport solutions to cater for a large new strategic development. This includes a significant commitment to reduce reliance on cars, and to enhance links to Horsham and the nearby railway station. It is also considered that transport impacts arising from the scheme on the wider road network can be mitigated. Overall the transport impact is assessed as favourable.</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p>	
<p>The site promoter indicates that they have been in contact with utility providers and statutory undertakers to assess the capacity of local infrastructure and to identify any upgrades required to support the development. Upgrades are required to provide adequate capacity to the development (gas, electricity / water) but no unresolvable issues have been identified. The impact is therefore assessed as neutral.</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p><i>Economic considerations</i></p>	
<p>Economy:</p>	

<p>The employment hub is located in the northern part of the main site which will provide space for employment needs such as office space, logistics, light industrial and storage space (Use Classes E, B2 and B8). The proposal is for up to 4 hectares of flexible employment space (Use Classes E/B2/B8) with the majority of floorspace being contained within the northern part of the site, allowing for good access to the road network.</p> <p>Overall, there are likely to be favourable impacts on the economy.</p>	Favourable
<p>Retail:</p>	
<p>The site promoters are proposing to provide a new local centre as part of the development to provide commercial and community space. The mix of uses and scale of retail provision within this local centre would be designed to be complementary to the village centre at Lintot Square and not undermine the viability and attractiveness of this centre which has been identified as a particular concern amongst existing Southwater residents and a retail impact assessment has been submitted to demonstrate this.</p> <p>A small level of additional and complementary retail provision is considered to be beneficial to the new development in particular and is assessed as a favourable impact. However, it would need to be certain that this did not conflict with the Lintot Square development and is instead complimentary.</p> <p>Given the above, an overall favourable impact is concluded.</p>	Favourable
<p>Further considerations</p>	
<p>Deliverability and Viability:</p>	
<p>The site promoter has indicated that development on Land North West of Southwater could start in 2029/30 and that all 1000 dwellings would be complete by 2040/41. That would be an average build-out rate of 83 dwellings per annum.</p> <p>Though it is noted that the developer has delivered relatively slow build out rates on other schemes in the district, given that a planning application has been submitted, the Council considers that the build out rate is broadly achievable and that the majority (around 950 homes) of the development can be delivered within the plan period.,</p> <p>The Council considers that development could commence on site in 2029/30, however the average build out rates are unlikely to exceed 70 dwellings per year- and that is on the basis that the developer has discussed delivering a wider range of products (more rented homes/ housing for older people, including Extra Care and custom and self-build plots). The Council considers that approximately 735 dwellings would be completed on site with the Plan period (i.e. by 2040).</p> <p>Given the concerns with the anticipated build-out rates, and queries over the alternative products being offered by the site promoter, it is considered</p>	Neutral

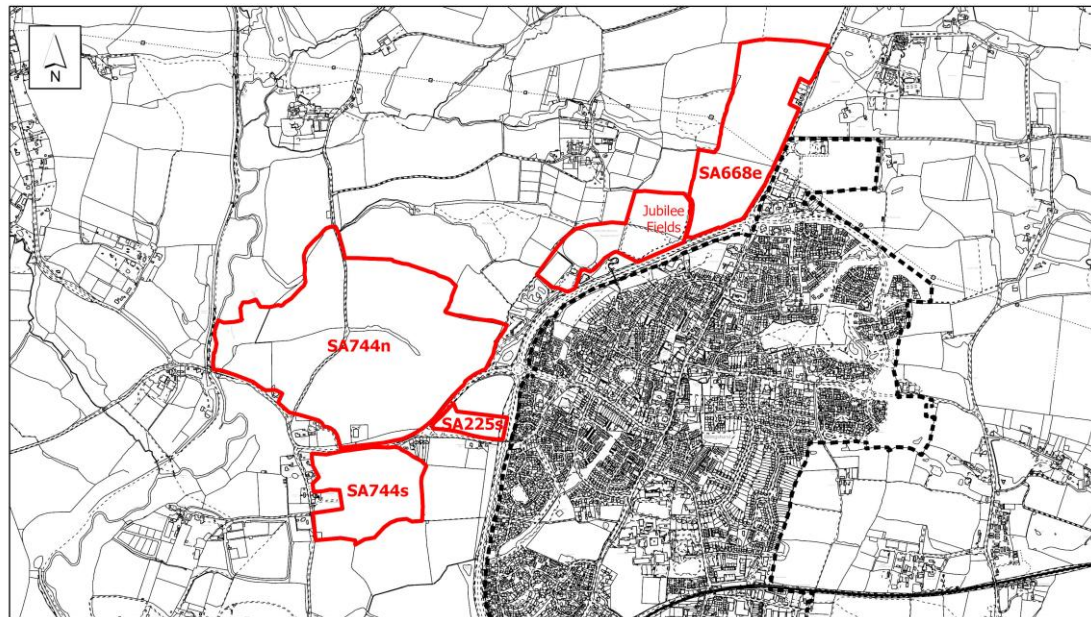
appropriate to give a “neutral” rating to site deliverability.	
Development Quality:	
<p>The proposed development would be an extension to the settlement of Southwater and the site is well located in terms of access to existing services and facilities and an already established community.</p> <p>Taking account of the site promoter’s existing track record of high quality development in this location, development quality is assessed as very positive.</p>	Very positive
<p>Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation</p> <p>The site promoter is proposing a development of 1,000 homes, offering 35% affordable housing, together with a wide range of education facilities (nursery, primary and secondary schools); local amenities (neighbourhood hub, Scout/ local group facilities, transformation of Great House Farmhouse area); an employment hub (with 3 ha of employment space); open space provision (approximately 40 acres) and restoration of ancient woodland; a sustainable approach to construction (Electric vehicle charging facilities; air source heat pumps; improved water efficiency); land for 4 to 5 Gypsy & Traveller pitches and a number of transport improvements (new spine road; signalization of Hop Past Roundabout; link road to Hop Oast; link road to Two Mile Ash Road; improved walking and cycling routes; and investment in Metrobus Services; car park and cycle storage at Christ’s Hospital).</p> <p>Allocation of this site would have benefits in bringing forward a significant level of residential accommodation that would help in meeting identified housing needs, including affordable housing, in the District. The site is located on the western edge of Southwater, which is one of the largest and most sustainable settlements in the District, offering a wide range of services, employment and good public transport and road links. Development would deliver homes in a key area of housing demand. The site is also close to the A24 which is the main north-south route through the District.</p> <p>The promoter is currently building out an existing permission for 594 homes on land to the West of Southwater demonstrating that they have a track record of housing delivery in the District. This new site is well located against the existing settlement form of Southwater and would connect directly to the new development to the south which is already being built out.</p> <p>The principle of up to 450 homes on a land parcel to the north of the Downs Link has now been established as part of the made Southwater Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The main concerns are with the proposed location of the new education provision, which is split between the northern central section of the site (for secondary) and eastern centre of the site (for primary). The Council would like to see the secondary and primary schools provided to the south of New Road, in the area safeguarded for education within the made Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, the Council has concerns regarding the delivery timescales (and the products involved) put forward by the site promoter for the scheme as a whole.</p> <p>Officer Recommendation: Overall, development in this location has been assessed as performing well against the criteria above and in the Council’s sustainability appraisal. It is therefore considered that allocation of land for 1,000 dwellings in this location would be appropriate</p>	

and deliverable. The Council will expect to see education facilities provided, in line with the safeguarded site in the “made” Southwater Neighbourhood Plan, to the immediate south of New Road. It will also expect to see the site promoter putting forward a diverse range of housing types, so that there is genuine choice for potential new residents and also so that development is delivered at the rates that the site promoter claims can be achieved. Subject to these matters, the site is recommended for allocation in the Horsham District Local Plan

Site Name: Land West of Billingshurst (Newbridge Park)

SA744 / SA668 / SA225

Site Map:



Horsham District Council

Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex RH12 1RL
Barbara Childs : Director of Place

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**Local Plan Review 2026
Land West of Billingshurst (Newbridge Park)**

Reference No :	Date : 25 February 2026	1:15,000 at A4
Drawing No :	Drawn :	Checked : Revisions :

Site Area:

88.5 hectares

Site Description:

The site lies within the countryside to the west of the village of Billingshurst. The site primarily comprises arable and pasture fields bounded by hedgerows and mature trees. Some isolated mature trees are present within some of the fields. The north eastern parcel (SA668) is relatively flat. The land north of the A29 undulates with a tree-lined valley running east to west through the middle. The land slopes down from the north east to the south and west with a medium slope. The site is separated from the rest of Billingshurst to the east by the A29, which adjoins the site. To the south, west and the north the site is countryside and is very rural in character.

Summary of Proposal:

Housing

The site as a whole is promoted for up to circa 1,100 dwellings. The development could provide 35% affordable housing and specific elderly care provision (up to 80 beds). Potential to deliver accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers has also been identified by this promoter.

Employment

Land adjacent to the site at Platt's roundabout has recently been built out for a petrol filling station and some additional commercial units – these would provide employment opportunities and retail provision for

new residents. Retail space (25,000 ft² Gross Internal Area (GIA)) on the northern parcel SA668 has been proposed.

Transport

Access to the site would be obtained from the A272 and the promoters have indicated that they would enhance pedestrian and cycle connectivity with the existing village centre.

Education and Community

Promoters of this site have all indicated that land would be provided for a new 2 form entry primary school and other forms of community provision, including health care. The promoters indicate that public open space with associated infrastructure and a country park would be provided together with a new leisure centre and improved sports facilities at Jubilee Fields. Landscape-led design and garden suburb principles would be incorporated into the development. No secondary school has been proposed.

Environment

The promoters also indicate that they could achieve biodiversity net gain by provision of the country park and outline measures such as hedgerow planting and woodland and wetland provision.

Net Zero Carbon

The promoter has indicated that development would contribute to zero net carbon through a range of measures including electric vehicle charging points, solar panels, air source heat pumps, and a renewable energy subsidy. Building regulations and design would contribute to reduced carbon emissions.

Site Assessment against Criteria

Environmental considerations

Landscape:

Although not designated as being of landscape importance, the landscape in this area is attractive and undulating and is part rural in character. The Landscape Capacity Study, 2021 indicates that the site has some capacity for development but advises that the slopes facing west are particularly sensitive to visual impact. It is however recognised that the most sensitive landscape area is proposed as a new country park.

The presence of the Country Park, and the proposed sports pitches mean that the built form of the development would take place on two separate land parcels on SA744 and SA668. This would result in a dispersed and non-cohesive settlement form. In addition, the proposed masterplan shows the southern parcel of land would primarily deliver housing away from the A29 thus further from the existing settlement. This will therefore give rise to a development which lacks any clear relationship with the existing built form of Billingshurst and would appear a smaller scale rural development which is not of sufficient scale or cohesiveness to present as a settlement in its own right, yet which is separated from any existing settlement. This would have a significant negative effect on the local townscape and landscape. The impact is therefore assessed as very unfavourable.

It is recognised that a number of land parcels west of Billingshurst have been proposed for assessment for development, in addition to this site. It is considered that the potential for development west of the A29 should be

Very unfavourable

considered on a comprehensive basis as part of a future local plan review.	
Biodiversity:	
<p>There are no statutory designated areas located within the site itself, however the Upper Arun SSSI is located approximately 15m west of the site at its closest point. The site is also located close to The Mens which is designated as an SAC and is of international importance for the woodland and barbastelle bat colony. The Upper Arun SSSI and the Wey and Arun Canal, River Arun and adjacent meadows Local Wildlife Site is also relatively close to the site.</p> <p>The site promoters have undertaken an initial site assessment which recognises the location of the site as being in the core feeding area for the Barbastelle bats. The promoter proposes that inclusion of additional native species planting, enhanced habitats within the site and creation of dark corridors, will enhance the site for commuting and foraging bats and there will be no impact on the integrity of The Mens SAC. However, the full impact of development in this location would require further detailed ecological assessment if allocated. The study also concludes the proposals have the potential to impact the Upper Arun SSSI and the Wey and Arun Canal, River Arun and adjacent meadows Local Wildlife Site through run off pollution, dust from construction, noise and wind-blown litter. Measures to mitigate these impacts are possible, but at this stage limited detail as to how this would be delivered has been provided.</p> <p>The site promoter has indicated they could provide biodiversity net gains through the creation of a country park, reprovisioning woodland and areas of rewilding. A report indicates the potential for up to 30.5% net gains, but this figure is based on ecological appraisal work that was not conducted for the purposes of Biodiversity Net Gain, which did not allow for an accurate condition assessment of each habitat. Therefore whilst biodiversity net gains are clearly possible, this percentage must be treated with considerable uncertainty, and a 10% policy provision assumed for the purposes of this assessment. Whilst the net gain is beneficial, the lack of detail as to how the impact on an internationally designated habitat site, the SSSIs and local wildlife sites would be mitigated lead to a conclusion of unfavourable impacts at this stage.</p>	Unfavourable
Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:	
<p>Within the development site there is one archaeological site. There are no scheduled monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, registered battlefields or registered parks and gardens. Within 1 km of development site boundary there are 49 listed buildings, and the Billingshurst Conservation Area. There is therefore potential for archaeological remains to be found across the development area.</p> <p>Although there are no listed buildings within the proposed development area, there are 8 listed buildings located along Lordings Road the settings of which have been identified as being as sensitive to change. New development is proposed to the east of these properties. Detailed assessment work would be required to determine the precise impact on archaeology or listed buildings and the impact is therefore assessed as unfavourable at this stage.</p>	Unfavourable

Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):	
<p>The site is located in a minerals safeguarding area for brick clay and building stone. These designations cover large parts of the district and are not a significant constraint to the site coming forward.</p> <p>No geotechnical survey is available, but given the agricultural nature of the site it is considered that there is unlikely to be any significant land contamination that would prevent development in this location.</p> <p>The site is not close to any Air Quality Management Areas. As identified in the ecological survey, there is however potential for the new development to generate pollution to the nearby water courses as a result of surface water flows. Overall, impacts are assessed as neutral.</p>	Neutral
Flooding / Drainage:	
<p>The extreme westernmost part of the site lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3 of the River Arun. The rest of the site is within Flood Zone 1. Some of the site is at risk from surface water flooding. Whilst it is noted that no land within flood zones 2 or 3 would form part of the built development, limited information has been provided to the Council in relation to site drainage matters, including surface water run-off, which has been identified as being directly linked to the river Arun. Whilst it is likely that these risks can be mitigated, the lack of any detailed information on this matter leads to an unfavourable assessment at this stage. It is however considered that flood and drainage impacts could be mitigated and a neutral impact concluded.</p>	Neutral
Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency:	
<p>The site promoter has provided some information to the Council as to how development would contribute to net zero carbon. This includes measures such as green infrastructure provision to help adapt to changing seasons. All dwellings will have an electric vehicle charge point. There is an aspiration for 'all-electric' energy strategy including the use of solar photo voltaic panels and air source heat pumps, and a trial of battery storage and smart grid systems on individual homes. It is stated that there would provide a subsidy to all residents to purchase 100% renewable energy via a green tariff which will convert each dwelling to a full net zero home.</p> <p>The design of the dwellings will include water saving measures, such as water saving fixtures and fittings. This would however be a standard requirement given the need for all development in Horsham District to adhere to water efficiency measures of 110 litres per person per day, given that the District is in a water stressed area. Other measures include low energy design of buildings and seeking to encourage walking and cycling. Whilst these are positive measures, further detail as to how this could be achieved is required. In addition, the site is some distance from the main services and facilities in Billingshurst and the scale of the development is likely to generate additional trips by car to the existing village centre and beyond. At this stage a neutral impact is concluded.</p>	Neutral
Social considerations	
Housing:	

<p>A total of approximately 1,100 homes is proposed. This site therefore has the potential to provide a meaningful contribution towards the Council's housing requirements. At this stage, it has been indicated that the level of affordable housing, which can be provided, would be 35%, together with some specific elderly accommodation (80 beds) in the southern part of the site. A site to meet Gypsy and Traveller requirements has also been identified. No significant detail has been provided regarding the mix or size of homes which could be delivered.</p> <p>Whilst the contribution to housing stock would be significant, the location of the homes would not relate to the existing settlement of Billingshurst as they are south of Newbridge Road and east of Lordings Road to the south which does impact on housing provision forming part of a cohesive community. The Northern parcel is relatively separate from the southern parcels and from the existing settlement. The homes could therefore lack any cohesive community core. The impact on housing provision to meet the needs of the local community is assessed as favourable.</p>	Favourable
<p>Education:</p>	
<p>Promoters of this site have indicated that land would be provided for a new 2 form entry primary school with special support centre next to the country park.</p> <p>The site would not provide new land for a secondary school. The Weald secondary school in Billingshurst is reaching capacity and it is therefore unclear as to how the educational needs of the additional children on this site could be met, without children having to travel potentially very significant distances to reach secondary education. WSCC have indicated to meet the increased housing targets placed on the Council, an additional secondary school (in addition to that at Southwater and West of Ifield) would be required. If this site is allocated as a further strategic allocation in addition to existing allocations within the submitted local plan, it is unclear at this stage as to how educational needs arising from the scheme could be met</p>	Very Unfavourable
<p>Health:</p>	
<p>The site promoter indicates that some land could be provided for additional health care if required, or a financial contribution to existing healthcare facilities. In common with other strategic site proposals, the extent and form of future health provision would necessarily be informed through further discussions with appropriate NHS bodies and discussions with existing providers. At this stage it is understood that the preferred NHS Integrated Care Board (formerly the CCG) solution to meet additional health care needs would be an expansion of the existing GP practice.</p> <p>The site proposes a country park and a range of leisure facilities which will contribute to health and wellbeing and healthy lifestyles. As previously outlined, the development is located away from the existing built form of the Billingshurst. Although it is recognised that some enhancements to pedestrian facilities will be provided, the A29 is a significant 'hard' boundary and this is likely to limit the attractiveness of walking and cycling – this may therefore have an impact on the ability to effectively contribute to healthy lifestyles. A neutral impact is therefore concluded.</p>	Neutral
<p>Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities:</p>	

<p>The site would provide a new country park between the western and northern parts of the main part of the site (SA744) north of the A272, including 40 allotments and a community orchard. A new leisure centre including a gym, indoor tennis court, padel court and a new 3G playing field on the parcel at Hilland Roundabout (SA688) would be provided to extend the offer at Jubilee Fields. It is noted that this has support within the existing community. A community hub is proposed in the Country Park. These facilities would provide benefits for the new and existing communities in Billingshurst. However, the scale of development is such that there would be continued reliance on existing community networks and the existing village centre facilities in Billingshurst and given the development form and relationship with the existing village, there may be limited ability for the development to achieve a cohesive community with a clear sense of place. A favourable impact is concluded at this stage.</p>	Favourable
<p>Transport:</p>	
<p><u>Walking and Cycling</u></p> <p>The site promoters have identified that new pedestrian and cycle access will be provided and have confirmed that walking and cycling would be prioritised as part of the new development and would include a community cycle hire scheme. Details as to potential walk and journey times have been submitted to the Council. There is also a commitment to provide enhanced pedestrian and cycle links between the new development and the existing settlement. However, these are at a relative early stage</p> <p>The site is not of a scale to deliver sufficient community services to prevent reliance on Billingshurst for day to day services and facilities. Although the existing village is close geographically, the A29 Billingshurst bypass, which has a 60 mph speed limit, does present a significant physical barrier in terms of accessing wider community facilities by sustainable measures. The proposed pedestrian and cycle crossing points are limited to two, serving the main southern residential development parcels: an existing non-motorised user bridge (Bridgeway 3668, Newbridge Road) crossing south of the A272/A29 Platt's roundabout, and improved at-grade crossing at the roundabout itself. Further crossing points would be available to the northern parcels and improved Jubilee Fields and new sports facilities via the existing footbridge crossing the northern A29 bypass (Footpath 1335), and at the new roundabout at Billingshurst Trade Park north of Billingshurst. Walk time analysis by the promoter indicates that the village centre could be reached in 10 to 21 minutes' walk at an average speed of 5 km/h. Nevertheless, it is considered that the lack of permeability and integration due to the presence of the high speed A29, and the effective limitation for most future occupiers to just one fully segregated crossing point (Bridleway 3668) would do little to compel active travel to key village services.</p> <p><u>Public Transport</u></p> <p>In geographic terms, the land is not too distant from the railway station. Existing bus stops enjoying a regular daily service (bus 100, hourly Monday-Saturday) are located in the village centre and railway station respectively, both up to a 20-25 minute walk for would-be future residents. Again, some limited information has been submitted to the Council as to how existing bus services could be enhanced to access the new development. Given the land is not located close to the existing bus 100 route, this may be difficult to achieve. A potential mobility hub and car clubs are suggested but no detail is provided as to how this could operate successfully. Access to the railway</p>	Very Unfavourable

<p>station would not appear convenient by walking or cycling and would also need to be significantly enhanced. Taking into account the presence of the A29 Billingshurst bypass and lack of direct ('straight-line') walking or cycling routes, the effective distance from the site to the railway station is considerable and may encourage additional car journeys to the station. The impact of this on the station car park will require further detailed investigation.</p> <p><u>Road Transport</u></p> <p>No detailed transport modelling has been undertaken in relation to this scheme. Three new accesses will provide access/egress into the three land parcels comprising the western part of the site. In addition to the likely additional local journeys into Billingshurst, the development would still generate traffic impacts on the wider road network, particularly if combined with other nearby development proposals. It is therefore unclear what specific highways mitigation measures would be required and how the site promoter would address these issues.</p> <p>Due to the significant challenges regarding pedestrian and bicycle permeability mainly stemming from the presence of the A29 bypass, and limited information provided to the Council in relation to transport assessment and mitigation, a very unfavourable impact is concluded at this stage. It is considered that any impacts of development west of the bypass would be better considered as part of a comprehensive scheme looking at a number of land parcels on a joint basis, which would provide clearer opportunities for transport enhancements or mitigations.</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p>	
<p>It is proposed to set aside land next to the recycling centre to allow it to grow – it is understood this has some support from West Sussex County Council as the waste and recycling authority. No details have been provided in respect of future communication technology. The site promoters indicate that they can provide key utilities to the site.</p> <p>SSE have indicated capacity is limited in respect of the electricity supply in the west of the District which may require, once all short-term fixes have been assigned, a major capital scheme for reinforcement works that would take several years to complete. Impacts are therefore assessed as unfavourable at this stage.</p>	Unfavourable
<p><i>Economic considerations</i></p>	
<p>Economy:</p>	
<p>Land at Platts roundabout, which forms the eastern entrance to the site has permission for a petrol filling station and convenience store with outline permission for 4,627sq.m of B class use employment space – this area is proposed as an employment / retail hub as part of the proposals. Some of this is completed and a further outline application has been permitted. No new employment land is proposed as part of the scheme although the site promoters also indicate that co-working space could be provided as part of the employment land to facilitate increased working from home and smaller businesses. Billingshurst has a number of existing employment sites and new employment land is being constructed on land opposite the northern parcel of this site. There are therefore a number of opportunities to live and work locally. Overall, the impact is therefore assessed as neutral.</p>	Neutral

Retail:	
<p>Land at Platts roundabout, which forms the eastern entrance to the site has already development consent for the provision of additional commercial land – this area is proposed as an employment / retail hub as part of the proposals. This would help to meet local day to day retail needs but travel to central Billingshurst or beyond to access higher order retail services and facilities would still be necessary. This may help to enhance the vitality of the Billingshurst village centre. Overall impacts are assessed as neutral until further information is provided in respect of the proposed development in the submitted Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report which indicates 25,000ft² (GIA) retail space is being proposed.</p>	Neutral
Further considerations	
Deliverability and Viability:	
<p>This proposal is a standalone scheme within a single landownership. The northern part of site SA225 has permission for a petrol filling station and convenience store with outline permission for 4,627sq.m of B class use employment space. The southern part of SA225 has been conditionally sold to a care home developer. The site owner has recently entered into an agreement with a housing delivery partner.</p> <p>The promoter states that they intend to submit a hybrid planning application in outline for the whole development but with full permission for 500 units in the northern plot SA668 and the first phase of land in plot SA744, west of the recycling centre. They estimate that first phase completions should be achievable within 3 to 4 years. Large scale developments are complex, and this build out timescale does not accord with the Council's experience of delivering this scale of development. The promoter, Highwood will deliver homes along with partners, Vivid (housing arm Bargate Homes). . The Council's evidence on housing delivery indicates that market capacity in this part of the District would make timely delivery of more than one strategic site in the area challenging.</p> <p>Viability information has been provided to the Council. This indicates that development could be delivered.</p> <p>More detail would be required to support any allocation for there to be sufficient certainty regarding delivery. This includes details around primary school provision/phasing and transport mitigation. Give the uncertainties, it is not considered that delivery of development at scale would be achieved until much later in the plan period once issues of concern have been resolved. The impact is therefore assessed as unfavourable.</p>	Unfavourable
Development Quality:	

<p>Although provisionally an extension to Billingshurst, this site is less well related to the existing settlement form than many other proposed urban extensions, given the A29 which currently forms a firm boundary to the existing developed area.</p> <p>The proposal is for an extension to Billingshurst of up to 1,100 new homes forming a new community with a County Park, Community Hub and Primary School, and extensions to the nearby sports facilities. An indicative masterplan has been provided, but it is unclear as to how some aspects of the scheme would come forward. There is limited information on design, layout, and permeability. Additionally, the settlement form lacks cohesion with two dispersed land parcels, much of which does not have any clear relationship with the existing built form of Billingshurst.</p> <p>In the longer term it is understood that the landowner would continue to live on the site and assume a master builder role to retain a high degree of influence over the design and to ensure the legacy of the development is not reduced in any way. The promotion team and main development partner will also remain in place to ensure continuity. Some early community consultation has been undertaken.</p> <p>The development quality is currently assessed as unfavourable reflecting the development's lack of cohesion and relatively limited vision and information put forward on the site to date.</p>	<p>Unfavourable</p>
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Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation

The allocation of this site would help to provide a meaningful contribution of homes, including affordable homes and elderly accommodation. Although close to Billingshurst which has a good range of services and facilities, the development of this site would lead to a dispersed new settlement form across two land parcels, limiting the ability of the new development to form a cohesive new community to a greater degree than would other proposed settlement extensions in the District. In addition, the land is separated from the existing built form of Billingshurst by the A29. Therefore the proposed housing developments would have a more limited relationship with the existing settlement and would not sit well with the existing settlement pattern. As well as making integration and interaction with the existing settlement challenging, this would also contribute to a negative impact on the local landscape character which is currently very rural in character.

The site would provide community facilities including a primary school, a large new country park and significantly enhanced sports and leisure provision. However the site is not of a scale to deliver sufficient other community services to prevent some reliance on Billingshurst for day to day services and facilities. There are uncertainties as to how secondary school provision arising from this development could be met given the scale of housing proposed, given the understanding that the Weald is approaching capacity.

The site is also located close to The Mens woodland which is designated as an SAC and is of international importance for woodland species and a barbastelle bat colony. The Upper Arun SSSI and the Wey and Arun Canal, River Arun and adjacent Local Wildlife Site is also relatively close to the site. The site promoter's evidence highlights that these could be adversely impacted. Whilst the site promoter indicates that biodiversity enhancements could be provided, there is very limited information to evidence that impacts could be satisfactorily

mitigated. It is also unclear how the impact on heritage assets close to this site would be mitigated.

Although geographically close to Billingshurst, the A29 presents a significant physical barrier in terms of accessing wider community facilities by active travel (i.e. walking, wheeling and cycling), with poor permeability with the existing settlement resulting (only a single bridge crossing for non-motorised users would provide a direct link from the larger southern residential parcels to the rest of the village). Limited work has been undertaken and provided as to how existing bus services could access the new development, however there is low certainty as to whether this would be achieved. A potential mobility hub and car clubs are suggested but no detail is provided as to how this could operate successfully. Access to the railway station, particularly by active travel modes, is sub-optimal and would also need to be significantly enhanced.

No detailed transport modelling has been undertaken in relation to this scheme. In addition to the likely additional local journeys into Billingshurst, the proposed development would be expected to generate traffic impacts on the wider road network, particularly if combined with other nearby development proposals. It is therefore unclear what specific transport mitigation measures would be required and how the site promoter would mitigate these issues.

Viability evidence has been submitted by the promoter indicating the development as viable. However considerably more detail is required to support deliverability with regards any allocation. This includes details around school provision and transport mitigation. It is therefore not considered that significant levels of development would not come forward until much later in the plan period once these issues have been resolved. Market capacity would make the timely delivery of more than one strategic site in this area challenging.

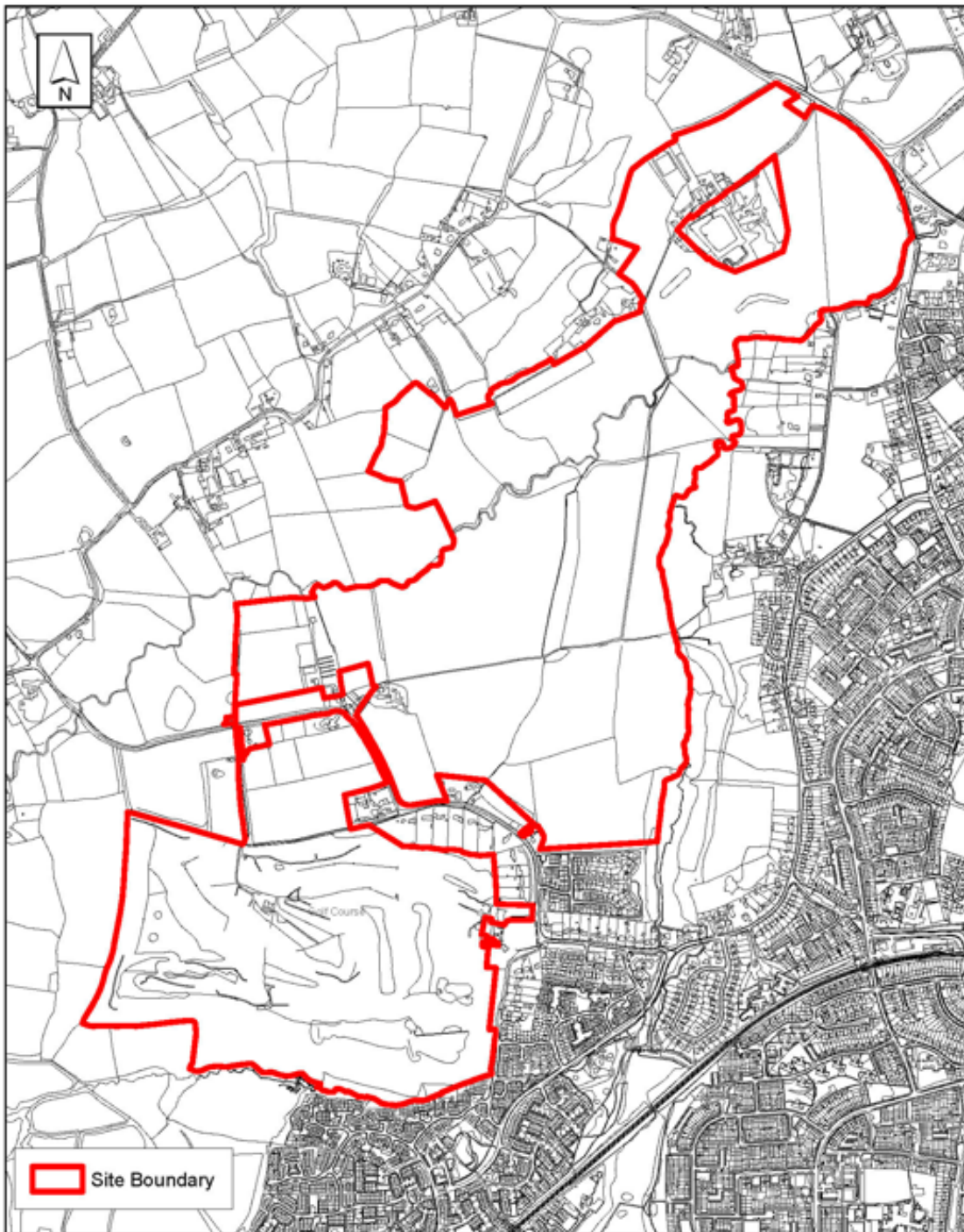
Officer Recommendation:

Whilst this site would help deliver housing to meet the required targets, it is not considered this scheme would deliver a cohesive neighbourhood that is well linked to the existing development in Billingshurst. Development would also have impacts on the landscape, biodiversity and heritage close to the site. To date limited information has been provided to the Council to help demonstrate how the environmental, community and transport impacts can be resolved. The site is not recommended for allocation

Site Name:
Land West
of Ifield

SA101

Site Map:



Horsham District Council

Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham
West Sussex RH12 1RL
Barbara Childs : Director of Place

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**Local Plan Review 2022
West of Crawley**

Reference No :

Date: 03/11/2022

Drawing No :

Scale : 1:12,000 at A4

Revisions :

Site Area:	170 hectares
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Site Description:

The site is being promoted by Homes England and is now subject to a Hybrid Planning Application for residential-led mixed use development. Most of the site comprises arable and pasture fields bounded by hedgerows and mature trees. Ifield Golf Club course, consisting of fairways and woodland, makes up around a third of the site. It is located in the southern section of the site.

Some isolated mature trees are present within some of the fields. To the east, the site adjoins the neighbourhood of Ifield in Crawley, and Gatwick Airport is to the north, both of which are key urban influences in this area. Although adjacent to the busy road network, and close to the urban influences, the area is predominantly rural in character including areas of Ancient Woodland.

Summary of Proposal:

The site is being promoted for approximately 3,000 homes. The site promoter indicates that it could form a standalone extension to Crawley but has also been promoted as the first phase of a wider expansion of the town potentially comprising 10,000 homes in total. **The assessed site is however for 3,000 homes and supporting uses within the red line shown.** A Hybrid Planning Application (DC25/1312) was submitted by Homes England in August 2025 – this seeks full permission for a Crawley Western Multi-Modal Corridor (Phase1) and access to a site for a new secondary school, and outline permission for up to 3,000 homes, various business uses, hotel, community and education facilities, public open space/sports pitches and other supporting uses/infrastructure.

Housing

A new community 3,000 homes is proposed. This would include a minimum of 35% affordable housing. A range of housing types and tenures would be provided to respond to local needs. Potential to deliver accommodation for 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches has also been identified by this promoter.

Employment

The site promoter indicates that as part of the masterplan for a new neighbourhood, the development will deliver workspaces for start-up, intermediate and grow-on businesses and co-working, and land for employment which complements the existing offer at Gatwick Airport, and in both Crawley Borough and Horsham District. There is an intention to provide an enterprise/innovation hub of a substantial scale as part of the 3,000 home scheme.

Transport

Homes England is proposing that the development is a '15-minute neighbourhood' whereby all day-to-day services and facilities are within a 15 minute walk or cycle ride for all residents. Proposals would also seek to ensure that there is access to high levels of public transport including an expansion of the Crawley fastway system. It is proposed that this scheme would provide the first phase of a potential future western link road from the A264 to the A23 in the north.

Education and Community

The proposals will deliver a new primary school and would provide land for a secondary school, which will be delivered by the Department for Education (DfE) at the start of the first phase of any build programme. Schools would provide for special educational needs (SEND), and nursery / pre-school provision. A new neighbourhood centre would provide a hub for the community, to include retail space, community space and leisure venues. Open space and sports pitches would be provided.

Environment

The proposed development area contains land which is designated for its importance for biodiversity and landscape including a Local Wildlife site (Ifield brook Meadows), SSSI and ancient woodland. This land is not proposed for built development. The site promoters have committed to a landscape led scheme that would deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain, a network of generous green corridors and buffers, and mitigation measures to protect the local Bechstein Bat population. A target of 50% of the land being open space has been identified, including 85 hectares of publicly accessible open space.

Net Zero Carbon

The site promoters state that the development would reduce its carbon footprint and would ensure homes are designed to be zero carbon ready to meet government climate change targets. Opportunities for on-site energy generation would also be explored. A sustainability statement has been submitted with the hybrid planning application to guide short- and long-term decision-making for delivery partners.

Site Assessment against Criteria

Environmental considerations

Landscape:

The landscape west of Crawley, whilst visually attractive, has not been designated as being of national landscape importance. A High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is relatively close by located to the south of the A264.

The Landscape Capacity Study 2021 assesses the overall area as ranging from no/low to moderate-high capacity for development. The most sensitive area is the Mole Valley within the northern segment, however no built development is proposed in this part of the site. For the central and southern portions, landscape capacity is low to moderate reflecting, amongst other things, some urban intrusions on the landscape and loss of hedgerows, but also areas of greater tranquillity and a more rural, in places open, character with historic features such as Ifield Conservation Area. Ifield Golf Course, in the southern portion, has moderate capacity for housing development as it has suburban influences, is relatively enclosed, but also has higher land in the centre of the golf course which is more exposed to views from the surrounding countryside.

Landscape evidence has been submitted to inform an illustrative masterplan. Analysis has been undertaken of key views and character areas. Mitigations identified include protecting and enhancing Ifield Brook Meadows, enhancing the character of the River Mole corridor by creating a linear park, protecting key views – particularly from the high ridge of land on the southern part of the golf course – and providing landscape connectors to provide a reference of the past to future development

Overall, strategic development at this scale will have an impact on what is currently a generally rural landscape and there are areas where the landscape is sensitive to development. Whilst it is recognised there is potential for mitigation, and landscape enhancement in areas where the landscape is already compromised, the overall impact is assessed as unfavourable.

Unfavourable

Biodiversity:

Given its rural character, the site has a number of sensitive biodiversity assets. There is one ancient woodland located on the site, in the southern area of Ifield Brook Meadows Local Wildlife Site. A further three ancient woodlands are located adjacent to the site – to the south of Ifield Golf Course, north of the cattle fields, and one south of the Rover Mole to the east of the site boundary. Ifield Brook Meadows LWS runs along the eastern boundary of the site and represents an area of high Biodiversity. This site incorporates relatively herb rich meadows enclosed by thick hedges, Ifield Brook itself and some woodland. Ifield Brook, Ifield Mill Stream and Hyde Hill stream, and seven ponds provide further potentially species-rich habitats. A number of Bechstein bat roosts, including maternity roosts, have been identified close to the proposed development, with Hyde Hill Wood, the golf course and areas adjacent to and within Ifield Wood considered the areas of most importance for this species. Broadleaved woodlands, semi-improved grasslands and amenity grasslands across the site support high distinctiveness habitats. There is a Site of Special Scientific Interest some 650 metres south of the southern boundary.

The site promoter has committed to providing a 10% biodiversity net gain. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report submitted as part of the Hybrid Planning Application sets out measures to achieve a net gain of 10% for area-based habitats. The BNG Report indicates a net loss of 3.42% for hedgerows and a -0.46% net loss for rivers. The report asserts that based on the outline parameter plans, these losses can be offset through the creation of approximately 1.2 km of species-rich native hedgerow which would deliver a net gain of 10.7% for hedgerows. Similarly, the creation of 2.2km of new ditches could achieve a 10.14% net gain for watercourses.

There are known to be sensitive habitats present on the site, and these would need to be protected and enhanced. In particular, the promoter's emerging site masterplan has been informed by the Bechstein bat surveys, in particular focusing on suitable buffers to adjacent off-site habitat and retention of strong commuting features through the site. The proposal maintains around 50% of the total land as undeveloped, and the illustrative masterplan ensures that built development avoids such areas whilst providing appropriate buffers, and wildlife corridors are protected. As part of the Hybrid Planning Application, the promoters have sought to evidence that the scheme will achieve 10% biodiversity net gain however this depends on the offsetting of biodiversity loss, the means for which will not be certain ahead of later stages of the planning process (i.e. reserved matters). Given this, together with the presence of Bechstein bats and balanced with the anticipated uplift of biodiversity net gain that can be achieved, an unfavourable rating is concluded.

Unfavourable

Archaeology / Cultural Heritage:

A significant constraint in relation to cultural heritage is the Ifield Conservation Area on the eastern boundary, which includes the Grade I listed St Margaret's Church, and a further seven Grade II listed buildings. A number of further Grade II listed buildings are present adjoining or close to the site, which could potentially be affected by the proposed development. The medieval moated site at Ifield Court is a Scheduled Ancient Monument is excluded from the development site boundary but is nevertheless an important asset requiring consideration in the masterplanning process.

An Archaeological Notification Area (Iron Ore Industry and Medieval Moated Site) covers the majority of the site. Trial trenching relating to works associated with new water infrastructure has identified the remains of a prehistoric roundhouse and associated features in the south eastern part of the site.

The site promoter has also recognised the significance of historic field boundaries and mature treelines that provide screening to historic assets.

Whilst there are archaeological or heritage constraints affecting this site, it is considered that there is potential for mitigation. As one specific example, the indicative masterplan prepared by the promoter maintains generous sightlines towards the church from the west. Notwithstanding mitigations, due to the unavoidable impact on heritage assets an unfavourable rating is concluded

Unfavourable

Environmental Quality (Soil / Air / Water):

The West of Ifield site is within proximity to Gatwick Airport, and therefore susceptible to aircraft noise. The promoter's indicative masterplan shows that all noise sensitive development will be located to the south of the 60dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ noise contour, thereby complying with the policy framework set out in the Crawley Local Plan and supported by this Council. A noise impact assessment has been undertaken and submitted as part of the Hybrid Planning Application Environmental Statement. The HDC Environmental Health team has considered this assessment and recommends appropriate mitigation against environmental noise and overheating risk is applied to residential development (to be secured by condition).

The site also lies within a Brick Clay (Weald Clay) Minerals Safeguarding Area. However large parts of Horsham District lies within this area, and subject to further consultation with WSCC, this is not considered to be an overly restrictive constraint.

The site lies approximately 2km to the west of the Hazelwick Air Quality Management Area in Crawley Borough. There is therefore the potential for new development to impact on this designation. The site promoter has submitted an assessment of air quality impacts (including cumulative) as part of the Environmental Statement which asserts that, taking into account mitigation during construction phases, the impact on the AQMA is not expected to be significant. It is however noted that the HDC Air Quality Officer has asked for more information on the modelling undertaken to inform this. Overall, there is good potential to mitigate impacts through the proposed transport strategy which seeks to minimise private car journeys into the centre of Crawley through provision of frequent direct Fastway bus services, provision of direct cycle corridors to the town centre, and prohibition of private cars from using straight-line road links into Crawley.

The site promoter intends that impacts on water quality are dealt with through implementation of a sustainable drainage (SuDs) strategy, and as part of fluvial flood risk management measures. As part of the Hybrid Planning Application, hydraulic modelling, a Flood Risk Assessment and a Level 2 Sequential and Exception Test have been undertaken by the site by the promoter. These confirmed issues around flood risk evident across the wider site, however residential employment and school elements, as well as the locations of allotments and sports pitches, are proposed to be located on land outside of the extent of fluvial flooding (i.e. limited to Flood Zone 1).

Taking account of the proximity of the site to Gatwick airport and the need for further detail to understand the impacts and mitigation on air quality, the impact is currently assessed as unfavourable but with potential for mitigation.

Flooding / Drainage:

The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1, however there are parcels of the site that lie in Flood Zones 2 and 3, particularly along the River Mole Corridor and its tributaries, including Ifield Brook. The emerging masterplan does not include development on any area of land classified as Flood Zone 2 or 3 (0.1% and 1% probability of flooding in any given year, respectively).

Homes England recognises the potential for impacts on the River Mole and its tributaries. It has undertaken hydraulic modelling of the Upper River Mole in support of the Hybrid Planning Application, which has been approved by the Environment Agency. A Flood Risk Assessment and a Level 2 Sequential and Exception Test have been undertaken for the site which have informed the indicative masterplan.

The landscape is relatively flat and has heavy clay soils across most of the site which has the potential for drainage impacts, and the presence/risk of surface water flooding is noted – it is proposed that mitigation would be delivered through sustainable drainage systems (SuDs). A surface water drainage strategy has been submitted as part of the Hybrid Planning Application which seeks to mitigate the impact of the Crawley Western Multi-Modal Corridor.

A key identified constraint is in respect of wastewater network capacity, which is approaching its limit in the local area. It is anticipated that new waste water infrastructure would be required to support the development, The promoter has stated in the Planning Statement supporting the Hybrid Planning Application that waste water will be managed through the existing network using the Crawley Waste Water Treatment Works, with Thames Water having confirmed sufficient capacity. It is advised that additional required capacity will feed into Thames Water's long term modelling so that necessary future upgrades can be delivered; capacity improvements to the strategic foul water network identified to date will be supported through protecting sufficient space within the development layout. Close ongoing liaison will be necessary with Thames Water in this respect.

Given that the emerging masterplan limits development to Flood Zone 1, and on the basis of good prospect of a comprehensive SuDs strategy being implemented, a neutral rating is concluded

Neutral

<p>Climate / Renewables / Energy efficiency:</p> <p>Homes England has set out a vision for an exemplar scheme for sustainable development, strategically located to maximise the use of public transport and achieve a '15 minute community' whereby most needs are not more than a short walk or bike ride away. There is a commitment to a carbon neutral scheme, incorporating on-site energy generation. A sustainability statement has been submitted with the hybrid planning application to guide short- and long-term decision-making for delivery partners. This focuses on seven themes, provides an assessment of development proposals against these, and recommends actions going forward for future development phases.</p> <p>An Energy Statement has also been submitted in the planning application which considers three options for meeting current policy standards with regards to energy sources and consumption. These are 1. direct electric heating, 2. Individual property air source heat pumps, together with onsite solar photovoltaics (PV) to deliver 10% of the energy demand, 3. Air source heat pumps on buildings with communal heating for flats, together with PV to deliver 10% of the energy demand. The choice of scenario is advised as coming at later stages of build-out as all are likely to meet national and local requirements for carbon reduction targets at 2050. The options do rely on decarbonisation of the National Grid by that date.</p> <p>Overall, there are considered to be good opportunities for the site to contribute towards decarbonisation although it is noted that the strategy stops short of achieving net zero carbon. The means of fully achieving the vision promoted by the promoter are not at this stage fully known, therefore a neutral rating is achieved for this criterion</p>	<p>Neutral</p>
<p>Social considerations</p>	
<p>Housing:</p> <p>A strategic scale development of this scale could deliver a very significant proportion of the Council's housing requirements. Crawley has a significant assessed housing need that cannot in its entirety be met within its own administrative boundaries due to a lack of available housing land. It has potential to deliver a portion of the housing need that has been identified as part of Duty to Co-operate discussions, particularly in the North West Sussex housing market area.</p> <p>It is considered that given the nature and type of need for affordable housing in the adjoining town of Crawley, a 40% affordable housing target would be more appropriate in this location. The promoter has recently stated that it can deliver 40% affordable housing on this site. This has been confirmed as being viable through the Council's updated viability assessment. This will include market, affordable and social rent. Homes England has confirmed that a range of housing types and tenures would be provided to respond to local needs. House sizes will range between one and five bedrooms and will be of a mix that reflects the future needs of both Horsham District and Crawley.</p> <p>The site promoter identified an area of search for up to 15 Gypsy and Traveller pitches. This would make a significant contribution to meeting the need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the District.</p> <p>Overall, there are strong prospects that should the site be allocated, a significant amount of housing will be delivered which addresses the needs of the housing market area. Overall impacts are assessed as very positive.</p>	<p>Very Positive</p>

<p>Education:</p> <p>The site promoters have shown on the indicative masterplan land to accommodate a new 6 form entry (FE) Secondary School (with the opportunity to expand to an 8FE in future) to meet existing identified needs; a further 3FE primary school; Early Years educational provision including a Special Support Centre for those with Special Educational Needs (SEND), and a Further Education, Skills and Innovation facility.</p> <p>It is proposed that the primary school would be delivered in the early phases of development, and a secondary school site that would address an urgent need for additional school places has Department for Education funding secured (albeit still subject to planning) – this is expected to be delivered in the early phases of housing development and as such, access to the site is included in the Hybrid Planning Application. The secondary school would provide for the existing unmet educational needs of Crawley as well as Horsham and the new development itself.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that there are strong prospects of an improved educational offer benefitting existing and new communities, should the site be allocated. A very positive impact is therefore concluded</p>	Very Positive
<p>Health:</p> <p>Homes England has advised that initial discussions with the former Horsham and Mid Sussex / West Sussex CCG (now the NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board) have taken place and that the extent and form of future health provision will be informed through further discussions with the ICB and discussions with existing providers. Land for future requirements is identified within the indicative masterplan so as to future proof provision.</p> <p>Overall, as with all proposed strategic sites, there is uncertainty over the nature of health facility provision as this is dependent on ICB requirements. Discussions to date indicate that there is an intention on the part of Homes England to make appropriate provision via joint working with the ICB and other partners. Favourable impacts are therefore likely.</p>	Favourable
<p>Leisure / Recreation / Community Facilities:</p> <p>The site is located close to the urban edge of Crawley, which is a key cultural hub with a wide range of services and facilities which would be of benefit to new residents.</p> <p>The site promoters have stated a commitment to delivering at least 50% of the site as formal and informal open space as shown on the indicative masterplan. They have stated in the Hybrid Planning Application that a minimum 72.5 hectares of natural/seminatural greenspace and minimum 26 hectares of public parks and gardens, and more than 15km of new footpaths and cycleways, will be provided. Provision of formal and informal recreational open space takes account of, and in some areas exceeds, local evidence and policies on space standard requirements. The site promoter has actively engaged with Sports England and the local planning authorities to identify requirements which are being reflected in the emerging masterplan. Open space provision would range from a formal sports hub site plus further subsidiary sports pitches, green movement corridors, a major linear ridgeland park and a country park to the north of the developed area alongside the River Mole.</p> <p>There is considered to be a high level of commitment to boosting local services and community facilities including a new community hub.</p> <p>Development of the site would however result in the loss of Ifield Golf Course. The</p>	Neutral

<p>Council’s evidence on Golf provision in the District indicates that whilst HDC has a high level of provision of golf clubs, particularly when compared with other areas, these sites may meet the needs of those living in neighbouring districts and boroughs. A suite of studies has been submitted by Homes England as part of the Hybrid Planning Application to assess golfing need versus supply in the area (the Golf Needs Assessment) and supporting studies proposing mitigation for the loss in the context of NPPF (Dec 2024) paragraph 104. At the time of writing, clarifications requested by the Council on the details of these is awaited.</p> <p>Although redevelopment of this site would lead to the loss of one type of recreational facility, this is balanced against the evidence of wider golfing provision in the District and the potential for the site to deliver other and wider forms of public access open space in the future, as well as provision of new community sports and leisure hubs and school sports facilities. However, taking account of the need for further detail on the details of assessment and mitigation a neutral impact is concluded at this stage</p>	
<p>Transport:</p>	
<p><u>Walking and cycling</u></p> <p>The proposed scheme is for an urban form that reduces the need to travel, is designed to prioritise walking, cycling and travel via public transport, and provides sustainable travel choices that enable non-car choices wherever possible. This would be guided by the principle of a ‘15 minute community’, where people can access all their essential needs within a 15 minute walk or cycle. The promoter has shown on their masterplan a network of attractive, low- or no-traffic cycle and pedestrian routes linking the different parts of the development and into Crawley, as well as a multi-modal corridor, with segregated cycle and pedestrian provision, giving access into the site from Charlwood Road to the north. They state that more than 15km of new footpaths and cycleways will be provided.</p> <p><u>Public Transport</u></p> <p>The site is relatively close to Ifield railway station which provides a direct line between London and the south coast; the Hybrid Planning Application proposes direct links to the station from the development by walking, wheeling and cycling, and improvements to Ifield Station such as improved cycle access/parking. The scheme proposes to extend the Crawley Fastway bus services to serve the development and provide high quality bus services to key destinations such as Manor Royal business park in Crawley, Gatwick Airport and Crawley Town Centre. The development would also provide active forms of travel such as e-scooters and e-bikes and engage ‘mobility as a service’. The details of such measures are set out in the promoter’s indicative masterplan and Transport Assessment incorporating a sustainable transport strategy.</p> <p><u>Road Transport</u></p> <p>Roads in and around Crawley are known to experience congestion in the area of the proposed development, for example on the A264 corridor and routes into and through Crawley from the west. The site promoters indicate that the proposed early development of a ‘phase 1’ middle section of an eventual full multi-modal corridor incorporating a link road from the A264 near Faygate to the A23 within Crawley Borough facilitates delivery of the full link in future. It is recognised that the full link would potentially require an alignment passing through land currently safeguarded for potential future expansion of Gatwick airport, albeit different route options are being explored. Whilst the Council will continue to seek a clear commitment from Homes England or other appropriate Government bodies to the full delivery of the sustainable transport corridor link, it is recognised that the development of 3,000 homes proposed for allocation in this local plan cannot demonstrate the land</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

<p>ownership / viability to deliver the full route. The site promoters are however committed to providing the less ambitious 'phase 1' middle section of the multi-modal route to provide access into the development from Charlwood Road, which would form part of any future full A264-A23 route. It is proposed that access from the development to Rusper Road, linking into southern Ifield, would be restricted to public transport and emergency access and so would mainly benefit public transport access rather than significantly addressing existing private vehicle congestion. There remain concerns over impacts of development traffic on the local road network, with further details requested and, at the time of writing, awaited in response to the Hybrid Planning Application.</p> <p>Overall, there are likely to be favourable impacts at the strategic level, given the sustainability and transport benefits of locating strategic development close to Crawley and Gatwick which are significant trip generators within the sub-region. This is balanced against likely unfavourable impacts at the local level, given the limited road and junction capacity and worsening congestion at the local level</p>	
<p>Other infrastructure:</p> <p>There is not considered to be any abnormal infrastructure constraint or requirements in terms of supplying key utilities to the site. As part of the Hybrid Planning Application, a Utilities Statement has been submitted which acknowledges necessary capacity improvements to sewerage infrastructure and does not report any other abnormal utilities infrastructure constraint.</p> <p>Overall, there are likely to be neutral impacts on other infrastructure on the basis that the key issues are being addressed.</p>	Neutral
<i>Economic considerations</i>	
<p>Economy</p> <p>The site promoters have outlined high-level objectives to create employment spaces for start-up, intermediate and grow-on businesses as well as space for established businesses to relocate and expand, deliver an innovation, enterprise and learning hub, provide homes where they are most needed, improve affordability to support recruitment at existing hubs such as Manor Royal and Gatwick Airport, and support local economic objectives such as the emerging C2C Local Industrial Strategy. Approximately 2ha of land would be provided for employment, in addition to opportunities provided in the new neighbourhood centre which would include an innovation centre to facilitate small- and medium enterprises starting up. The promoters have stated in the Hybrid Planning Application that 1,352 jobs would be created in total once development is completed, with 1,369 jobs created in the construction phases. The site promoters have put forward an economic strategy which does not just create jobs within the site itself, but also seeks to facilitate job growth in existing employment hubs. Full details on delivery of key elements of the economic strategy will emerge only when the detailed planning of the early development phases occurs, however the promoter proposes to deliver the innovation centre in phase 2 of the wider development of the site.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that there would be beneficial impacts arising from the development of this site, with new employment land and connections to existing employment centres. Whilst it is not likely that this development will be able to deliver the Council's aspiration of one new job per home, this is in the context of being located in proximity to a large, well established business park (Manor Royal in Crawley) and also to Gatwick Airport. An Employment and Economic Development Strategy has been submitted with the Hybrid Planning Application for maximising</p>	Favourable

<p>local job opportunities, particularly within the site itself, whilst complementing existing employment hubs, although further consideration of the precise mix and location of commercial uses may be needed in considering planning applications. A favourable impact is therefore concluded.</p>	
<p>Retail:</p> <p>The strategic site would be designed to have a substantial neighbourhood centre accessible to all parts of the development of 3,000 homes. This would provide retail and community uses to serve the new community. The Hybrid Planning Application indicates that the retail offer would be of a scale that supports rather than undermines the existing retail hierarchy, albeit Crawley Borough Council has questioned the scale proposed; evidence to date suggests that high connectivity into Crawley Town Centre in particular would be the aim in respect of providing for higher order retail needs. The Employment and Economic Strategy submitted with the Hybrid Planning Application, which is supported by a Retail Impact Assessment, provides flexibly for retail which supports economic activity and community needs, although further consideration of the precise mix and location of commercial uses may be needed in considering planning applications.</p> <p>Overall, the evidence provides reasonable confidence that, subject to details, an appropriate strategy for retail provision would be pursued, which would balance the objectives of meeting the local community's needs with supporting not undermining the existing retail hierarchy. Therefore, favourable impacts are likely.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p>Further considerations</p>	
<p>Deliverability and Viability:</p>	
<p>97% of the promoted land is within the full ownership or control of Homes England; the Government's housing delivery agency. It is therefore in a strong position to deliver strategic scale housing. Homes England has signposted other schemes, such as Northstowe in Cambridgeshire, as examples of shortened timelines between site acquisition and housebuilding starts, and faster than average build-out rates. Homes England has estimated that build-out rates could reach 300 homes per annum, utilising building techniques such as modern methods of construction. Whilst this is considered too high an estimate based on other evidence, and current rates of build out at Kilnwood Vale to the south, which has more than one builder on site at any time. Nevertheless, there is a good prospect for a solid programme of delivery and it is expected that approximately 1,600 homes of a 3,000 home allocation could be completed in the Plan period. Homes England have also committed to early delivery of schools and community infrastructure.</p> <p>The land proposed for development is within Horsham District but is located on the western edge of Crawley. Any development in this location will ultimately form a new neighbourhood of Crawley and consideration of the scheme will require close working with CBC. Whilst there are challenges with the delivery of such a scheme with cross boundary impacts, Horsham District and Crawley Borough have a long history of joint working and have a track record of delivering strategic scale development to the West of Kilnwood Vale.</p> <p>Considering the scale of the scheme and the complexities of delivering a new neighbourhood, there are risks to the number of homes that can be delivered. The existing development at Kilnwood Vale to the south also gives an indication of the likely market capacity of the area and potential build out rates. It is however accepted that the ability of the Government's national agency to be involved as the master developer will assist in overcoming delivery issues that may be experienced on other sites.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>

<p>The site promoter has previously provided a breakdown of viability information to the Council. This indicates that that the provision of a scheme which provides a minimum of 35% affordable housing, and a mitigation and infrastructure package that meets NPPF and regulatory requirements, would be viable. Further work to test the viability of a 40% target for affordable housing is being prepared by the Council.</p> <p>At this stage impacts are assessed as favourable</p>	
<p>Development Quality:</p> <p>Homes England has set out a vision for a '15 minute neighbourhood' and taking its lead from the Crawley Neighbourhoods concept. They have committed to using the Building for Healthy Life approach, secured through a site-wide design code. There is a strong commitment to sustainable travel which builds on the site's proximity to the existing urban area. As England's national housing delivery agency, Homes England is well placed to deliver on its vision. The proposed development would ultimately read as part of the settlement form of Crawley and is relatively well located in terms of access to existing services and facilities and an already established community.</p> <p>Homes England is looking to deliver a landscape-led development and use a variety of building styles, with a focus on contemporary living. Evidence has been presented to indicate architectural styles that draw inspiration from exemplar developments elsewhere in the UK. A site-wide framework design code is currently being prepared by the promoter.</p> <p>Homes England is a public body and has a mandated responsibility to achieve good place-making and sustainable communities. Hence there are good prospects for long-term stewardship of place, and also for ensuring land value is captured for community benefit.</p> <p>Direct community engagement has been undertaken by Homes England in the early stages of planning a scheme for the site and at subsequent stages of the proposals being developed. This has primarily involved community exhibitions.</p> <p>Impacts are assessed as favourable at this stage.</p>	<p>Favourable</p>
<p>Site Assessment Summary & Recommendation</p> <p>Allocation of this site would have benefits in bringing forward a significant level of residential accommodation that would help in meeting identified housing needs including a range of housing types and sizes. Taking account of the wider housing market needs and the proximity of the site to Crawley, out the outcome of revised viability assessment work, it is considered that 40% affordable housing should be provided in this location. The land West of Ifield is adjacent to the built-up area of Crawley and benefits from close proximity to existing major employment hubs, and a number of higher order facilities and services at Crawley.</p> <p>The site promoter indicates that the site would deliver a range of services and facilities to facilitate the creation of a new neighbourhood community in this location. Evidence demonstrates a multi-modal access corridor into the site, a large neighbourhood centre forming a community and education hub, sites for a secondary and primary school respectively, a well-developed network of green infrastructure, active travel (walking and cycling) links, a priority bus route, land for employment, and three distinct character residential areas. A Gypsy and Traveller accommodation site will also be provided.</p>	

Overall, strategic development at this scale will have an impact on what is currently a generally rural landscape and there are areas where the landscape is sensitive to development. Any development will need to be designed to minimise adverse impacts as far as possible. Without mitigation, there is also potential for adverse biodiversity impacts, including ancient woodland and Ifield Brook Meadows Local Wildlife site. This land is not proposed for built development and the site promoter is committed to enhancing this asset for nature. A significant Bechstein bat population has been identified in the area which will require careful mitigation, including suitable buffers to adjacent off-site habitat and retention of natural features within the site that the bats use to move around. It is further recognised that the site promoter indicates achievement of 10% biodiversity net gain. Given the Council's emerging evidence that at least 12% is achievable across the District as a whole, this will need to be enhanced.

The site is close to Gatwick Airport – this is beneficial in terms of economic links, but there is potential for new development to be adversely impacted by noise. The indicative masterplan shows that all noise sensitive development will be located to the south of the 60dB $L_{Aeq,16hr}$ noise contour. The site is also close to the river Mole. It is noted that the emerging masterplan limits development to Flood Zone 1 and commits to delivering a comprehensive SuDs strategy. There is also limited capacity for foul drainage and it is anticipated that significant upgrades to sewerage infrastructure may be required.

Homes England has set out a vision for a '15 minute neighbourhood' and takes its lead from the Crawley Neighbourhoods concept. There is a strong commitment to walking, cycling and sustainable travel which builds on the site's proximity to the existing urban area

The site can be readily connected to existing public transport networks, in particular through expansion of the Crawley Fastway bus network. The site is also relatively close to Ifield railway station.

Roads in and around Crawley are known to experience congestion in the area of the proposed development, for example on the A264 corridor and routes into and through Crawley from the west. There is a need to ensure that any development which comes forward addresses the significant local concerns. Provision of high quality and convenient links by active travel means and by Fastway bus are expected to mitigate potential traffic impacts that might otherwise have occurred.

The scheme has been assessed as financially viable. The site is promoted by Homes England, who owns or controls 97% of the land. Homes England is the national agency for strategic housing delivery. As a Government Agency it is also able to help secure infrastructure investment required to accelerate housing delivery. It is therefore considered there is potential to deliver around 1,600 homes in the plan period.

Officer Recommendation:

Taking account of the location of the site close to both Crawley and Horsham, this site is well located in terms of its ability to significantly address Horsham District's housing need, and further address pressing educational needs for both Horsham District and Crawley. Urban extensions have also been identified in the Council's Sustainability appraisal as performing reasonably well in their ability to deliver sustainable development.

Homes England is the national agency for strategic housing delivery and there is potential to help secure infrastructure investment required to accelerate housing delivery. The site is therefore considered suitable for allocation. However, any scheme must be carefully designed to deliver high quality development that minimises landscape, biodiversity and other environmental impacts and

takes account of its relationship on the edge of Crawley. The development will also need to deliver very high rates of sustainable travel and contribute towards the delivery of a wider multi-modal western link.