



Horsham
District
Council

Horsham District Local Plan Examination

Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 6g: HA5 Ashington (ASN2)

Questions i - iv

September 2026

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Issue: The Soundness of the Site Allocations: Ashington HA5

1. Horsham District Council considers that the allocation of the Ashington Northern Cluster (ASN2) for approximately 450 dwellings is justified, effective, positively prepared and consistent with national policy. The allocation forms part of Strategic Policy HA5 and was identified following additional evidence work undertaken through the Main Modifications process. It represents a logical and sustainable extension to Ashington, a Medium Village within the settlement hierarchy, capable of contributing significantly to housing delivery whilst securing infrastructure, environmental mitigation and community benefits through a comprehensive masterplanned approach. The allocation is supported by site assessment work (**HDCJB14c**); transport evidence (**HDCJB15b**), infrastructure planning (**HDCJB19**) and ongoing collaboration between landowners to prepare a coordinated concept masterplan.
2. The allocation forms a key component of the Main Modifications strategy to increase housing supply and support the revised housing requirement. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Addendum demonstrates that Ashington is a logical and sustainable location for growth, providing a significant contribution towards housing delivery in the southern part of the district whilst benefiting from strategic connectivity to the A24 corridor and the south coast housing market area (**HDCJB13** Paragraph 2.2.19).

i. Transport and Movement

Highway Access Arrangements

3. Horsham District Council considers that the allocation is supported by sufficient evidence at the plan-making stage to demonstrate that safe and suitable access can be achieved, consistent with the requirements of Strategic Policy HA5, NPPF Chapter 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport), and national plan-making practice guidance. Paragraph 111 of the NPPF, 2023 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or where the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. The evidence prepared to inform allocation ASN2 does not identify any such severe impacts that would justify excluding the site from the Plan.
4. The allocation benefits from frontage to both Billingshurst Road (B2133) and Rectory Lane, providing flexibility in the design of access arrangements and resilience in the overall movement network. Importantly, Strategic Policy HA5 does not prescribe a single access solution but requires a comprehensive site-wide masterplan that ensures a coordinated approach across all parcels and supporting infrastructure. This is being coordinated through the masterplan which all three landowners have agreed to adhere to through their representations. It is noted that all three landowners have indicated through their representations (**Main Modifications Comments: Chichester Diocese - /230, Taylor Wimpey - /1456, Devine Homes - /847**) they have independent access into their individual parcel of land that they have under their control.
5. The Parish Council (**Main Modification Comment /133**) raises concerns regarding B2133 traffic volumes; Rectory Lane capacity; cumulative traffic growth; construction traffic impacts; and road safety. Whilst these concerns warrant detailed consideration at the planning application stage and appropriate and proportionate mitigation is applied, they do not amount to evidence that the allocation is undeliverable. The Council would expect planning applications will be accompanied by comprehensive masterplan indicating viable connections between the three main landowners; a comprehensive transport assessment covering the proposed development; Junction Capacity Assessments; Road Safety Audits; Construction Traffic Management Plans; Travel Plans; and Detailed highway design submissions. These documents will enable development management decisions to be based upon detailed traffic modelling rather than assumptions regarding future traffic generation.

6. It is noted that West Sussex County Council (**Main Modification Comment /1510**), as Local Highway Authority, has not identified a fundamental or irresolvable highway objection to the ASN2 allocation through the Local Plan process. WSCC through their representation has recommended additional criterion to be added to Policy HA5 to support the implementation of active travel measures and infrastructure improvements to the strategic road network as advised by the Transport Assessment. It is the consideration of the Council, Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision and Policy 24: Sustainable Transport would be the appropriate mechanism to secure additional contributions towards infrastructure and active travel measures through the Development Management process. No evidence from the **Transport Assessment (HDCJB15b)** or the Local Highway Authority identifies any fundamental highway access constraint that would prevent development of the site. The allocation was specifically included within the district-wide transport modelling and demonstrates that the principal transport pressures arise on the wider A24 corridor rather than from any unique constraint associated with Ashington. The Transport Assessment identifies cumulative pressure at: Buck Barn Junction, Hop Oast Roundabout and Washington Roundabout with strategic mitigation proposed where required. This weighs heavily in support of the site's deliverability. The allocation has the potential to accommodate access from both Billingshurst Road (B2133) and Rectory Lane, subject to detailed design and assessment, creating flexibility in delivery and network resilience. The Council notes that concerns raised regarding traffic generation and cumulative impact will be fully assessed through future Transport Assessments accompanying planning applications. However, the available evidence indicates that access constraints do not represent a barrier to allocation or delivery.

The Integration of Sustainable Transport

7. The Council considers that ASN2 is capable of delivering a highly integrated and sustainable pattern of development consistent with Local Plan Policy: Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport, Strategic Policy HA5, the Ashington Neighbourhood Plan, and the Council's transport evidence base. The allocation has been informed by the **Horsham Transport Study (I07)**, **Horsham Transport Study Update (HDCJB15b)**, **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (HDCJB19)** and **Settlement Sustainability Review (EN07)** and active travel advice prepared to support the examination process.
8. Ashington contains a range of day-to-day services and facilities including a primary school, local shops, pharmacy, community facilities, recreation provision, employment opportunities and bus services. The allocation is located immediately adjacent to the existing settlement and within walking and cycling distance of these facilities, reducing the need for longer journeys and supporting sustainable travel choices. The Council's sustainability evidence (**EN07**) therefore identifies Ashington as a settlement capable of accommodating proportionate growth within the spatial strategy.
9. ASN2 performs comparatively well in connectivity terms. Application of the Department for Transport Connectivity Tool¹ indicates that the Ashington Cluster achieves a higher connectivity score (37-40) than sites located further from the village centre (27-32), reflecting its proximity to local services, bus stops and community facilities a higher connectivity score than alternative locations further from the village centre, reflecting its proximity to local services, bus stops and community facilities. The Ashington Neighbourhood Plan, March 2021 (Policy ASH2: Increase Walking in Ashington) similarly expects new development to maximise opportunities for sustainable movement and provide appropriate accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.
10. Criterion (a) of ASN2 requires a comprehensive masterplan approach across the whole of the allocation to deliver "an integrated and sustainable settlement form". A comprehensive site-wide masterplan is required to be developed. This would be expected to demonstrate a connected network of pedestrian and cycle routes, strategic east-west active travel links, enhanced green corridors, improved Public Rights of Way connections, direct links into the village core, improvements to existing

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/connectivity-tool> Assessing the site using the Connectivity Tool shows that the Ashington Cluster site has a higher connectivity score (37 – 40) when compared to land further from the village centre (27 – 32). The DfT state that the score is a relative measure to compare places rather than a pass-or-fail score.

Public Rights of Way including connections to Footpaths ASH2490, ASH2491, ASH2492, ASH2606, ASH2607 and potential upgrades to Footpath 2611 and associated links to Malthouse Lane, Newhouse Lane, Bridleway 2612 and Park Lane as identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2026. A comprehensive masterplan is being worked on by all landowners but is subject to change as Development Management colleagues work closely with the site promoters and stakeholders.

11. The Council acknowledges that public transport provision in Ashington is more limited than in larger settlements. However, national policy recognises that opportunities for sustainable transport will vary between urban and rural areas. In this context, the relevant consideration is whether development maximises opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport use and whether the allocation can improve existing transport choices within Ashington as a whole. The evidence demonstrates ASN2 satisfies this objective through its location, scale and ability to deliver meaningful active travel infrastructure and connectivity improvements.
12. Overall, the evidence demonstrates that where opportunities exist to deliver active travel measures, ASN2 is well related to the existing settlement, provides realistic opportunities for sustainable travel and is capable of delivering significant improvements to walking, cycling and Public Rights of Way connectivity. Subject to the masterplanning, active travel and transport mitigation measures identified above and within the Council's evidence base, the allocation is considered justified, effective and deliverable.
13. The allocation accords closely with the objectives of NPPF (September 2023) paragraphs 110, 112 and 113 which seek to promote sustainable transport modes; reduce reliance on private vehicles; support walking and cycling; maximise opportunities for sustainable travel; and create safe, secure and attractive movement networks.

ii. Design, Layout and Facilities

Physical Integration with Ashington and the impact on the village

14. The Council considers that ASN2 represents a logical and sustainable extension to Ashington and that its allocation is justified through a comprehensive masterplan approach which is capable of integrating new development with the existing settlement whilst protecting the village's character and identity. The allocation directly adjoins the existing built-up area and is not physically separated from the village by strategic infrastructure or significant landscape barriers. The allocation is directly adjacent to the existing built-up area boundary and represents a logical extension to the settlement. The allocation would accord with Strategic Policy 3: Settlement Expansion in Horsham District Local Plan).
15. The Council's Site Assessment work identified the allocation as capable of accommodating development through a landscape-led approach which utilises existing hedgerows, tree belts, watercourses and topographical features as the primary structuring elements of the masterplan (**Site Assessment Report, Part C, HDCJB14c**). The allocation has been specifically framed to be delivered through a comprehensive site-wide masterplan ensuring coordinated integration with Ashington rather than piecemeal expansion.
16. A key finding of the SA is that piecemeal development would be inappropriate. The SA states:

"It is considered that 'ad-hoc' development of individual parcels coming forward without regard to neighbouring land parcels could prejudice the wider comprehensive development of the area and may be an inefficient use of land and undermine well designed places and placemaking." (**SA Addendum, HDCJB13** paragraph 2.3.22).
17. Consequently, the policy requirement for comprehensive development is both justified and necessary. The SA further confirms that:

"At Ashington there is a requirement that development accords with a comprehensive site wide masterplan to ensure a co-ordinated approach to development across the entirety of the allocation"

and deliver an integrated and sustainable settlement form." (SA Addendum, HDCJB13 paragraph 3.1.17).

18. A concept masterplan has already been prepared jointly by landowners but is subject to evolution as dialogue between the Council and site promoters continues with Development Management colleagues. The approach is consistent with Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality and Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles which seeks development that responds positively to local character, creates well-connected places and establishes a strong sense of place. It also aligns with NPPF requirements that planning policies should promote well-designed places, ensure development functions well over its lifetime and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible (NPPF 2023 Para. 126). In particular, paragraphs relating to achieving well-designed places emphasise the importance of development being visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and creating strong movement networks. These principles are reflected in the requirements of Policy HA5 (MM229, ANS2, a-g) and the masterplanning process.
19. The allocation should therefore be viewed as a planned expansion of Ashington rather than a detached or isolated development.

The provision of social and community facilities, open spaces and recreational facilities

20. The evidence demonstrates that ASN2 represents a significant opportunity not only to accommodate housing growth but also to address existing deficiencies in open space, recreation and community infrastructure within Ashington. The allocation has been specifically framed through Policy HA5 to ensure that development delivers the infrastructure necessary to support both new and existing residents, consistent with the requirements of the NPPF and the Council's evidence.
21. The allocation policy expressly requires the delivery of open space, recreation facilities and community infrastructure as part of the development. The scale of ASN2 provides a strategic opportunity to secure infrastructure benefits that could not realistically be achieved through smaller, piecemeal schemes. The Council's assessment is informed by the **Open Space, Sport and Recreation Review (OSSR) (I04)**, which identifies existing deficiencies in several forms of open space provision in Ashington and establishes the quantitative standards that should be applied to new development.
22. The OSSR calculator applies the adopted quantity standards set out in the Review to the population expected to arise from the proposed development. Using the Council's occupancy assumptions and open space standards, it calculates the amount of open space and recreational infrastructure required to meet the needs generated by the new population. In this context, ASN2 provides a significant opportunity to secure new and enhanced open space, recreation and community infrastructure that would serve both existing and future residents. The allocation has been identified on the basis that a comprehensive masterplan will deliver an integrated network of open space, green infrastructure and recreational facilities, informed by the Council's evidence base and adopted standards.
23. The Council recognises that delivery of the allocation is dependent on the coordinated participation of the principal landowners. It is acknowledged one of the landowners is preparing technical evidence to support a planning application. Accordingly, the detailed extent and distribution of open space provision will be refined through the comprehensive masterplanning and development management process. Nevertheless, Strategic Policy HA5 provides a robust framework to secure appropriate open space, sport and recreational infrastructure commensurate with the scale of development and to make a positive contribution towards addressing the needs of residents within Ashington.
24. The Council considers the importance of avoiding fragmented provision and therefore considers that ASN2 provides a significant opportunity to address existing deficiencies in open space, allotments, youth provision, recreation facilities and community infrastructure identified by the **OSSR (I04)**. Policy HA5, together with **(I04)** and supporting infrastructure evidence, provides a robust policy framework to ensure that development delivers both new facilities and improvements to existing assets. The allocation is therefore capable of making a substantial positive contribution to the health, wellbeing, recreation and social infrastructure of Ashington, consistent with the objectives of the NPPF.

iii. Impacts and Mitigation

landscape and the countryside

25. The Council acknowledges that ASN2 would result in the development of greenfield land adjoining the northern edge of Ashington. However, the allocation was identified through the Local Plan evidence base on the basis that landscape effects can be appropriately mitigated and managed through a comprehensive masterplan approach.
26. The Council recognises that the Ashington Northern Cluster would result in the development of countryside land, which currently lies outside the built-up area boundary of Ashington. These matters have been considered through the **Site Assessment Review (HDCJB14c)** (SA085/SA790/SA539/SA520/SA524) and the **Council's Landscape Capacity Assessment (EN08)**, which identifies the relevant Local Landscape Character Area AS3 as having low/moderate capacity for residential development. The assessment indicates that development could give rise to adverse landscape and visual effects unless appropriately designed and mitigated through a robust landscape-led design approach.
27. However, the evidence demonstrates that the allocation is capable of being made sound, subject to the requirements set out in the draft policy. In particular, the site would need to come forward as a site wide masterplan rather than individual piecemeal development, as parcels disconnected and isolated from each other would prejudice the delivery of a coherent landscape framework, weaken the treatment of internal and external boundaries, and result in a fragmented settlement edge which can be intrusive when experienced from the surrounding countryside.
28. Policy ASN2(c) requires the masterplan to adopt a landscape-led approach. A comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) should inform a coordinated masterplan for the allocation at planning application stage. The assessment should guide the developable area, layout, density, building heights, boundary treatments and mitigation measures, while also considering the setting of nearby listed buildings and the wider landscape character. It should demonstrate how development responds to the key characteristics and management guidelines for the J2 Broadford Bridge to Ashington Farmlands Landscape Character Area and deliver a coherent landscape framework across the site as a whole.
29. Development should be landscape-led, with the retention and enhancement of mature trees, hedgerows and historic field boundaries informing the site layout from the outset. Structural planting, landscape buffers, green infrastructure and integrated SuDS should reinforce the site edges and provide effective visual containment, particularly where the allocation adjoins the open countryside. The layout should reflect the site's edge-of-settlement location, focusing development where it relates best to the existing village and providing softer, lower-density transitions towards the countryside. Arboricultural, ecological and drainage considerations should be integrated within a comprehensive green infrastructure framework.
30. The Council considers that landscape and visual impacts do not preclude allocation of ASN2. Policy requirements, supported by site-specific assessment, structural planting, green infrastructure, SuDS and long-term landscape management, provide an appropriate framework to avoid unacceptable harm to landscape character, visual amenity or the surrounding countryside.

wildlife and biodiversity

31. The allocation contains ecological features and habitats which require protection and mitigation. The site assessment process (**HDCJB14c**) identified ecological sensitivities but did not conclude that these represented a fundamental constraint to development. The allocation policy incorporates specific safeguards requiring conservation of the Arun Valley SPA and Ramsar Site and compliance with wider ecological mitigation requirements. The Council is satisfied that ASN2 can be delivered without adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The Council's **HRA (HDCJB12)** evidence concludes that the Main Modifications do not materially alter the previous HRA findings and that there remains a high level of confidence that the additional growth

proposed through the Local Plan will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. The Council's evidence recognises the presence of hedgerows, tree belts, ponds, watercourses and potential protected species interest.

32. The allocation is supported by Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity, which requires the protection of ecological networks, retention of key habitat features, maintenance of habitat connectivity, sensitive lighting design and appropriate mitigation measures. Through project-level HRA and ecological assessment, development at ASN2 will be required to safeguard and enhance habitat corridors used by qualifying species.
33. The Council considers that ecological constraints affecting ASN2 are understood at a strategic level and are capable of being appropriately assessed, avoided, mitigated and compensated through the masterplanning and development management process. Consequently, biodiversity considerations do not represent a fundamental constraint to the allocation's delivery. The site has been assessed through the Local Plan evidence base, including the **Sustainability Appraisal (HDCJB13)**, **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (HDCJB17)**, **Habitat Regulations Assessment (HDCJB12a)** and supporting environmental evidence, all of which informed the selection of ASN2 within the Ashington Cluster allocation. The Sustainability Appraisal identified ecological sensitivities but concluded that impacts can be mitigated through policy requirements, site design and project-level assessment (**SA Addendum (HDCJB13)** Paragraphs 2.3.37 and 3.1.28).
34. The site lies within the wider 12km Barbastelle Bat Sustenance Zone associated with The Mens SAC and within 10km of the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar. Development proposals will therefore require Habitats Regulations Assessment screening, supported by appropriate ecological surveys and, where necessary, appropriate assessment. Particular regard will be required to the retention of established vegetated corridors, management of lighting impacts and the maintenance of functional habitat connectivity used by Barbastelle bats, consistent with the Council's Habitats Regulations Assessment and Natural England guidance. The Council would expect comprehensive ecological surveys to be completed as part of the application process.
35. Ecological surveys undertaken on related planning proposals demonstrate the presence or potential presence of several protected and notable species, including Barbastelle and other bat species, hazel dormouse, breeding and wintering birds, reptiles and badger. These constraints are not uncommon in strategic allocations across the District but can be addressed through a comprehensive mitigation hierarchy in accordance with national policy. Site masterplan should secure retention of key habitat corridors, species-specific mitigation, sensitive lighting design, habitat enhancement and long-term ecological management.
36. The site also contains, or is immediately adjacent to, Priority Habitats identified within Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory, including traditional orchard habitat and areas of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland. These habitats are material considerations and should be retained, buffered and enhanced wherever possible. In addition, veteran trees identified on the site require protection through the establishment of appropriate root protection and buffer areas, consistent with Natural England standing advice and the requirements of draft masterplanning work undertaken for the allocation. A network of watercourses traverses and adjoins the site, connecting to Lancing Brook and ultimately the River Adur catchment. Development proposals will therefore need to maintain ecological connectivity, protect water quality and provide suitable undeveloped buffer zones along watercourses.
37. The site is partially located within an Area that Could Become Important for Biodiversity (ACIB) identified through the West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Consequently, future development should contribute towards LNRS priorities through the enhancement of traditional orchards, creation of woodland habitat, strengthening of ecological networks and provision of riparian buffer corridors. These measures would contribute not only to ecological mitigation but also to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) delivery.
38. In relation to BNG, the allocation provides significant opportunities to secure measurable biodiversity enhancements. Retention and enhancement of existing hedgerows, woodland edges, mature trees, watercourses and habitat corridors are likely to form an important component of the baseline habitat

resource and assist delivery of the statutory BNG requirement. The Council's ecology advice identifies opportunities to achieve strategic significance uplift through alignment with LNRS priorities, including orchard enhancement, woodland creation and river corridor restoration. River Condition Assessments and habitat enhancement strategies can be secured at the planning application stage where required.

39. Overall, It is considered that the ecological constraints associated with ASN2 are identifiable, capable of mitigation and consistent with the allocation strategy set out in Policy HA5. Appropriate safeguards can be secured through the policy requirements of the Local Plan, project-level ecological assessment, BNG delivery, Habitat Regulations Assessment and detailed masterplanning.
40. The evidence base does not identify any ecological issue that would prevent the allocation from being developed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, biodiversity legislation or the conservation objectives of internationally designated sites.

[heritage assets](#)

41. The evidence demonstrates that the heritage impacts arising from the allocation of ASN2 are understood and capable of being appropriately mitigated through the masterplanning and planning application process. The Council's **Site Assessment** work (**HDCJB14c**), **Sustainability Appraisal** (including the SA Addendum) (**HDCJB13**), Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and supporting heritage advice identified no designated or non-designated heritage assets within the allocation itself, although several designated heritage assets are located within its wider setting.
42. The principal heritage considerations relate to the impact on Grade II Laurel Cottage, Orchard Cottage; setting of the Grade II West Wolves Farmhouse, the Grade II Oast House Farm complex, and long-distance views towards the Grade I Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The northern part of ASN2 forms part of the wider rural setting of West Wolves Farmhouse, reflecting its historic agricultural relationship with the surrounding farmland. The southern portion of the site contains limited heritage significance beyond the contribution made by historic field boundaries and mature boundary vegetation, which form part of the area's historic landscape character.
43. The Council has assessed that development at ASN2 can be accommodated through a landscape-led design approach that responds sensitively to local character and the significance of nearby heritage assets. Appropriate mitigation should include the retention and reinforcement of existing field boundaries and mature vegetation, the provision of substantial structural landscaping along key site edges, careful management of building heights and layout, and the preservation of important views and visual relationships, particularly those associated with West Wolves Farmhouse and longer-range views towards the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.
44. Policy HA5 and the allocation framework provide the mechanism to secure these measures through masterplanning and detailed design. The site-specific requirements for landscape buffers, green infrastructure and sensitive place-making will assist in maintaining the rural transition between the proposed development and surrounding countryside while conserving the significance of nearby heritage assets. The allocation is also supported by Strategic Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment and will preserve and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings and apply appropriate mitigation measures.
45. Having regard to the Council's Site Assessment work, the anticipated effect on the setting of nearby designated heritage assets would be limited. Any harm identified through future assessment would be expected to be capable of mitigation and would need to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. This harm can be further minimised through the detailed design process and weighed against the substantial public benefits of delivering housing, infrastructure, open space and community facilities through the Ashington Cluster allocation.
46. Accordingly, the Council considers that heritage considerations do not represent a constraint to the delivery of ASN2. The allocation is consistent with the statutory duty under sections 66 and 72 of the

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and with national policy requirements relating to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The evidence base demonstrates that the significance and setting of nearby heritage assets can be appropriately conserved through the mitigation measures embedded within Policy HA5 and subsequent planning applications. The allocation is therefore justified, effective and deliverable from a heritage perspective.

[climate change mitigation, drainage, flood risk, and utilities](#)

47. ASN2 lies in Flood Zone 1. Some areas of the site are affected by surface water flooding, which have been identified through GIS information provided by WSCC as the Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA). The allocation was assessed against Strategic Policy 10: Flood Risk and the Council's wider climate change and infrastructure evidence during plan preparation. The Site Assessment identified pockets of surface water flooding across parts of the site. As a consequence, Policy HA5(g) specifically requires: "the design and setting takes account of the areas of the site affected by surface water flooding and appropriate mitigation is applied in line with Strategic Policy 10."
48. This demonstrates that flood risk considerations have directly informed the policy framework. It is envisaged development will need to incorporate viable sustainable drainage systems (SuDS); surface water attenuation; green infrastructure; Integrated drainage design; and flood mitigation measures. The NPPF requires development to avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere and to incorporate sustainable drainage solutions wherever appropriate. The allocation provides significant opportunities to integrate drainage infrastructure with landscape and biodiversity enhancements through multifunctional green spaces which would accord with Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity and support climate change adaption in accordance with Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change.
49. The Council notes concerns raised regarding water resources and wastewater infrastructure. However, the **Infrastructure Delivery Plan (HDCJB19)** and utility engagement undertaken through plan preparation indicate that network reinforcement works are anticipated and capable of being delivered through utility investment programmes and infrastructure funding mechanisms. The Council's evidence records ongoing engagement with Southern Water. Southern Water has, through its representations (**Main Modifications Comment /374**) identified that network infrastructure reinforcement works are required and funded through industry mechanisms. Early engagement with utilities providers will ensure delivery keeps pace with development. Phasing of development may be required to align with the installation of water and sewerage infrastructure and will be coordinated through the Development Management process.
50. Furthermore, the allocation provides opportunities to deliver climate mitigation measures through energy-efficient building design; green infrastructure; tree planting, sustainable travel networks; water efficiency measures; and climate-resilient drainage infrastructure. Such measures will be secured through the Development Management process. These measures are consistent with the climate change objectives of the Strategic Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity and Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change.

iv. Delivery

[masterplanning](#)

51. The Council considers that the deliverability of ASN2 is significantly strengthened by the comprehensive masterplanning requirements embedded within Strategic Policy HA5. These requirements directly address concerns regarding piecemeal development and ensure that infrastructure, movement networks, landscape structure, open space, drainage systems and community facilities are planned comprehensively from the outset. The three site promoters are collaborating on a coordinated masterplanning approach and have accepted the need for a site-wide framework. This provides a strong indication that delivery can proceed in a comprehensive rather than fragmented manner.
52. Policy HA5 (ASN2) framework contains sufficient safeguards to coordinate infrastructure and mitigation. Strategic Policy HA5 requires a site-wide masterplan covering the entire allocation to ensure

coordinated development; Infrastructure delivery; a landscape-led proposal; connectivity between phases appropriate mitigation and Integrated community facilities.

commencement and build out rates

53. ASN2 demonstrates active landowner promotion; ongoing pre-application engagement; agreed concept masterplanning work; developer interest across multiple land parcels; no known ownership disputes preventing delivery; and a clear policy framework supporting residential development. The allocation is capable of making a positive contribution to housing supply forecast to deliver from 2030. (**Matter 5: Spatial Strategy and Site Selection: Appendix D Housing Delivery and Trajectory**). The Council considers there is a high degree of confidence regarding delivery of the allocation. The Council is currently in negotiation with site promoters in control of SA524 and SA520/SA790 who have submitted applications to the Council for consideration.
54. The Council is aware that at least part of the allocation area has already been the subject of detailed engagement with the Council through the pre-application process. This demonstrates market confidence in the allocation and indicates that landowners are preparing for early progression once the Local Plan is adopted. ASN2 benefits from the potential for multiple development parcels to come forward in parallel, subject to compliance with the agreed masterplan. This reduces overall delivery risk and increases the likelihood of achieving higher annual build-out rates. The evidence demonstrates that the allocation is capable of early commencement following Local Plan adoption and would constitute a phased delivery to ensure infrastructure is delivered across multiple parcels; concurrent infrastructure provision; sustained housing completions over an extended period; and making a meaningful, positive contribution to both the housing land supply and overall plan delivery trajectory.

Delivery Confidence

55. The Council is confident that delivery of the allocation in accordance with policy framework set by ASN2 is viable. There is known developer interest; confirmation of landowner engagement; absence of strategic constraints; infrastructure planning through the IDP; active promotion through the examination process; and evidence of pre-application progression. Collectively, these factors provide a substantial degree of confidence regarding delivery.

funding and phasing of infrastructure and mitigation measures

56. The Council considers that the allocation of ASN2 within Policy HA5 (Ashington Cluster) is justified, effective and deliverable throughout the plan period, and that the evidence base demonstrates that any impacts can be appropriately mitigated through identified infrastructure improvements and policy requirements.
57. The Council's transport evidence (**HDCJB15b**) and subsequent updates, confirms that the impacts of development at Ashington have been assessed cumulatively alongside other Local Plan allocations. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (**HDCJB19**) identifies the A24/A283 Washington Roundabout improvement scheme as essential mitigation required to accommodate cumulative growth, including the Ashington allocations. The scheme comprises junction improvements, additional turning capacity and local widening works and is identified as deliverable infrastructure within the plan period. The Transport Assessment evidence does not identify any severe residual transport impacts that would render ASN2 undeliverable.
58. The allocation is further supported by sustainable transport measures identified within both Policy HA5 and the IDP. These include improvements to active travel and public rights of way connections, including links to Malthouse Lane, Newhouse Lane, Park Lane and the wider rights of way network. These measures will improve accessibility to village services and support opportunities for modal shift consistent with Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport and Strategic Policy 25: Parking.
59. The IDP confirms that Southern Water has identified infrastructure upgrades associated with ASN2, including water network reinforcement and wastewater improvements. This is also highlighted through the representation by Southern Water (**Main Modification Comment /374**). These requirements are

recognised delivery matters rather than fundamental constraints. Appropriate phasing mechanisms and infrastructure investment programmes are available to ensure development proceeds alongside the necessary upgrades in accordance with Strategic Policy 23: Infrastructure Provision.

60. The allocation has also been considered against wider infrastructure requirements. The IDP confirms that education, healthcare, community facilities, green infrastructure and emergency service requirements can be accommodated through established developer contribution mechanisms and strategic infrastructure delivery programmes. No statutory infrastructure provider has identified a constraint that would prevent development from coming forward.
61. In landscape and environmental terms, Policy HA5 contains specific site requirements relating to green infrastructure, biodiversity enhancement, landscape integration and sustainable drainage. The allocation is therefore capable of delivering measurable biodiversity gains and maintaining appropriate separation from surrounding countryside, consistent with the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal and environmental evidence base.
62. The Council acknowledges that parts of Ashington fall within a Brick Clay Minerals Consultation Area. However, this is not an impediment to development and can be addressed through the established minerals safeguarding process in consultation with West Sussex County Council as Minerals Planning Authority.
63. Overall, the evidence demonstrates that the impacts arising from ASN2 are known, assessed and capable of mitigation. The allocation is supported by the Council's evidence base. Accordingly, the Council considers that Policy HA5 (ASN2) is justified, effective, deliverable and consistent with national policy, subject to the infrastructure mitigation and phasing mechanisms already identified within the evidence base.
64. Infrastructure delivery will be secured through a combination of: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL); Site-specific mitigation; Utility provider investment and Section 106 obligations where necessary. Policy HA5 ensures infrastructure, open space and community facilities are delivered alongside development. Masterplanning will establish a clear phasing strategy linking development parcels to infrastructure provision.

[potential delivery impediments](#)

65. The Council accepts that further technical work will be required prior to the grant of planning permission, including detailed masterplanning; transport assessment updates; ecology surveys; heritage assessments; flood risk and drainage modelling; utility capacity confirmations; viability testing where necessary; and infrastructure phasing plans. However, the need for further technical assessment does not undermine deliverability. Rather, it reflects the normal progression from strategic allocation to planning application and is fully anticipated by both the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance.