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**HORSHAM DISTRICT
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**

**HORSHAM DISTRICT
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
TO 2018**

**Facilitating Appropriate
Development**

**Draft Supplementary
Planning Document**

January 2009

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document has arisen from the need to provide 'flexibility' to ensure that there is sufficient housing supply during the life of the existing adopted Core Strategy (2007). The background to this is explained below. The document, then, sets out the requirements against which planning applications for development on greenfield sites in the District, put forward by landowners/ developers as a response to the evolving circumstances, will be considered.
- 1.2 As a set of criteria for judging acceptable development, the policy can be applied to all forms of development, although it is expected that it is likely to be a key determining factor in applications for housing development adjoining built up area boundaries prior to the adoption of the Core Strategy Review.

Background

- 1.3 The background to this policy approach is found in the Report on the Examination into the Core Strategy, where the Inspectors concluded that Policy CP4 'Housing Provision' was unsound as drafted in that it did not provide enough flexibility to enable it to deal with changing circumstances in accordance with Test 9 of the tests of soundness set out in PPS 12, and therefore recommended a suitable 'hook' to enable reserve sites to be included in a subsequent DPD so as not to undermine the Council's fundamentally sound strategy. The final paragraph was thus added to Policy CP4 stating that additional land in the most sustainable locations will be identified through the Site Specific Allocations DPD, or a contingency DPD, to be held in reserve and for its release to be managed through Policy CP9. In response, the Council had concluded that a separate Reserve Housing Sites DPD (RHS DPD) should be prepared as the most appropriate means to address this requirement.
- 1.4 During the preparation of the RHS Preferred Options document, it became apparent that the matter of finding and identifying "suitable" sites was not going to be straightforward. There was concern that the potential number of homes to be held in reserve was not considered sufficient to make the production of the document worthwhile; this was even prior to the consultation responses. The analysis of the responses to the identified sites, particularly the land east of Manor Close, Henfield, the largest site on the list, suggested that the list of identified sites would have to be readdressed. The timescales involved in achieving the adoption of a sound document were, therefore, set to slip considerably.



- 1.5 Work had also commenced on the Core Strategy Review, and there was a feeling that the Core Strategy Review could catch up or even overtake the RHS DPD given the processes involved. Once the Review is adopted, the DPD would in effect become defunct.
- 1.6 At the same time changes in government policy identifying housing requirement figures as floors nor ceilings (that is, minimum, not maximum requirements), meant that the production of a RHS DPD was no longer considered the most appropriate way forward, as this new policy approach would allow for planning applications for housing developments on land not necessarily formally allocated for development but in 'appropriate' locations in any case.
- 1.7 Alongside these issues the economic climate was having a significant impact on development. With housing completion figures markedly down in 2007/ 2008, and unlikely to pick up significantly in the immediate future, it was considered that identifying more land was not the most appropriate course of action when few homes are in fact being built on land already identified. It seemed unlikely that a RHS DPD when produced would be able to deliver the amount of 'shortfall' in the timescales, thus casting doubt on the benefit of identifying, and holding in reserve, specific sites.
- 1.8 Therefore, a more responsive, pro-active way forward is seen to be required if the Council is to continue to be in a position to deliver a 5 year rolling supply of housing land as required by Government guidance in PPS3: Housing. This document, then, has been produced as a response to these issues. It can achieve that flexibility required by the Inspectors who examined the Core Strategy (2007) and enable the provision of the necessary housing within the District, as soon as market conditions allow.

Consultation Process

- 1.9 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared by Horsham District Council and will be published as a SPD in accordance with PPS 12 Local Development Frameworks. This draft SPD will be subject to a six week public and stakeholder consultation, the results of which will be acted upon accordingly and a table of responses will be published with the final document.



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CHAPTER 2: FACILITATING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT: THE APPROACH

2.1 The approach put forward in this document is a criteria based one, which accords with current national and local planning policies and will enable all stakeholders to determine if sites may be considered suitable for development. There are already existing policies relating to sites within settlement boundaries set out in the Local Development Framework (LDF) documents, so that this document relates solely to greenfield sites. It is envisaged that the criteria will mainly be applied to housing proposals, although the approach put forward in this document will also allow for the criteria to be applied to other types of development; so that, for instance, there may be potential for additional employment sites to come forward if it appears that the Employment Provision as set out in Policy CP10 of the Core Strategy (2007) is not coming forward as envisaged and where the aims of Policy CP11 'Employment Sites & Premises' can be met. This could also allow for existing employment sites in the built up area to be made available for housing, whilst making possible the movement of employment sites to more suitable locations on edge of settlements, with the possibility of business expansion.

Deliverability

2.2 Sites put forward under this policy approach should be "deliverable" at the time that the site is put forward for planning permission. In the case of housing, there is likely to be a specific need in the short term; therefore sites should be capable of delivering housing completions within the five year period up to 2013, which is when it seems most likely that housing completions will be low (possibly as a result of an unforeseen delays in the coming forward of the larger, strategic developments and the current economic climate). Those proposing the residential development of a site, therefore, are encouraged to demonstrate a strong desire and willingness to develop it in the short term, with the necessary evidence to back up such statements. This evidence will not only support the proposal, but will enable the Council to resist pressure for development on unsuitable sites, as it can prove that its housing supply requirements are being met. Applicants should be aware, then, that the time limit condition attached to a planning permission may reflect that more immediate timeframe that development is required. Moreover, it is expected that time limits will tie in with the timescale for the Core Strategy Review, so that any subsequent renewal application can be considered in light of the change in circumstances.



Sustainability

- 2.3** A willingness to develop is not, and should not, be the only criteria which governs the permitting of potentially suitable sites. The Council's policies also require that development is in "sustainable" locations. Category 1 settlements are considered sustainable locations, as these are towns and villages with a good range of services and facilities, as well as some access to public transport; they are also deemed capable of sustaining some expansion (see Policy CP5 'Built-Up Areas and Previously Developed Land' of the Core Strategy (2007)). In the case of Category 2 settlements only small scale development within the settlement and minor extensions to the settlement may be permitted providing that they address a specific local need (see Policy CP5); these locations are less sustainable and it seems less likely that sites here will be immediately deliverable due to the requirement to show an identified local need, nevertheless they could be considered if the evidence is available. In both cases any site would be expected to adjoin the defined Built- Up Area Boundary.
- 2.4** In all previous cases where sites have been allocated through the Local Development Framework (LDF) process, they have been subject of a Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA). In this case that can not be done as sites are not allocated in the document. There will be the usual tests when dealing with any application, such as highway implications and the proximity of the site to facilities, for example schools and shops. However, it seems appropriate that any new sites coming forward under the existing Core Strategy should also be tested more rigorously against a set of sustainability criteria. A sustainability report, should be submitted with any application using the set of sustainability criteria set out in Appendix A and the method of scoring against them.
- 2.5** It is likely that some sites that come forward have already been tested against similar criterion in the preparation of previous LDF documents or indeed in the SA/ SEA Interim Report on the Reserve Housing Sites which is no longer being pursued. That information can be used as a basis for their assessment. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) will have information relating to the criteria. However, in all cases those seeking planning permission should provide any data that they are aware of that relates to the criteria, and may prove useful in assessing the sustainability of the sites. This information will be backed up by the submission of the detailed information normally required to support a planning application.



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- 2.6** It is considered that as more sites come forward it will be easier to compare them and assess their position in a hierarchy enabling the Council to resist unsuitable, or less suitable, development. Those sites which come forward first will be the hardest to assess and will set a benchmark for future proposals. It is therefore important that all the necessary information is provided to support any planning application, and that it is detailed and relevant.

Scale

- 2.7** The scale of development will impact on the deliverability and the sustainability of a development. It is, therefore, considered necessary to put a limit on the size of the development. In terms of housing, it is considered appropriate to restrict this to no more than 200 dwellings on any one site or cumulatively attached to any one settlement. This is considered appropriate, as it is in line with the Council's existing policy approach. Policy CP8 allows for some small scale development on greenfield sites. None of those sites allocated in the SSAL (2007) exceed 200 dwellings. A larger proposal over 200 dwellings could be considered strategic, at least within its context, and may prejudice consideration of strategic locations in the review of the Core Strategy. This would not necessarily prevent a smaller segment of a possible future strategic site coming forward, providing it accorded with all the other existing policy criteria and would not prejudice the future development of the wider area in a proper planned, comprehensive manner.
- 2.8** The size of other developments that come forward under this approach will also be considered in terms of their scale in relation to the settlement to which they are attached and should also respect the requirements of Policy CP8 by assisting "in the gradual evolution of the communities by enabling development which meets their needs but does not fundamentally undermine their qualities which make them or their countryside setting unique and special".





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CHAPTER 3: FACILITATING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT: CRITERIA

- 3.1** The preceding chapter focused on the issues of deliverability, sustainability and scale as a basis for the approach to be taken in considering proposals on greenfield sites. The criteria set out in this chapter must be met for the development on greenfield sites to be considered acceptable.
- 3.2** New development may be acceptable on greenfield sites providing:
1. The site boundary is contiguous (at least one boundary must physically adjoin in whole or part) with an identified Built- Up Area Boundary to accord with policies CP5 and CP8 of the Core Strategy;
 2. That, if the site adjoins a Category 2 settlement, evidence of an identified local need justifying the development must be provided in accordance with policies CP5 and CP8 of the Core Strategy, and policy DC1 of the General Development Control Policies;
 3. The scale of the development adjoining a Category 1 settlement does not exceed 200 dwellings, individually or cumulatively, to accord with the aims of the policies CP1, CP3, CP8, CP9, CP15, CP19 and DC9; and any development adjoining a Category 2 settlement would be expected to be of a much smaller scale in accordance with policies CP3, CP5, CP8, CP15 and DC1, DC9;
 4. The impact of the development individually, or cumulatively, around the edges of a settlement should not result in the actual or perceived coalescence of settlements in accordance with policy DC3;
 5. The impact of the development individually, or cumulatively, does not prejudice comprehensive, long term development, in order not to conflict with the development strategy set out in the Core Strategy and/or not to prejudice the review of the Core Strategy;
 6. The landscape and townscape character will be protected, and conserved and/or enhanced, in accordance with policies CP1, DC2, DC4 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), DC9 and DC12 (Conservation Areas);



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FACILITATING APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT: CRITERIA

7. Development must complement the character of the settlement as defined in the relevant Town or Parish Design Statement, in accordance with policies CP3 and DC9;
8. Archaeological sites, ancient monuments and listed buildings must all be protected, in accordance with national guidelines and policies DC10 and DC13;
9. The biodiversity of a site should be protected, conserved or enhanced where relevant, in accordance with policies CP1 and DC5;
10. Existing natural features, such as, woodland, trees and hedgerows should be retained wherever possible, in accordance with policies DC6 and DC9;
11. The site and proposed development should be sustainable in accordance with PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, and the Core Strategy (2007) in particular policies CP5, CP8, and CP9. A sustainability report must be submitted with any planning application following the criteria and scoring guidelines set out in Appendix A;
12. In order to assess and where necessary compare sites adjoining the same settlement, the advice in paragraph 75 of PPG13, that is, the length of short journeys that are likely to be replaced by walking, those under 2km, shall also be used. Sites where it is possible to walk to a wide range of facilities maybe considered preferable to sites which are further away and make car journeys into town/ village centres more likely;
13. Environmental quality should not be compromised; appraisal should be undertaken as to the effect on water quality, flood risk, pollutants including noise and light pollution, energy sources, sustainable construction and recycling of water and waste, as required by policies CP2 and DC9;
14. The development should be of a high quality, in all aspects, including layout and design, to accord with policies CP3 and DC9;
15. Where housing is proposed there should be a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures in accordance with policy CP12; on developments of more than 15 dwellings up to 40% of the dwellings will be required to be 'affordable' dwellings, and a mix including smaller units will be required by policy DC18;



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16. The proposal does not result in the loss of existing sport, recreational or amenity space unless the criteria set out in policy DC25 are met and the aims of PPG17 are met;
17. The proposal will be expected to satisfy the criteria relating to transport and access set out in policy DC40. Note that criteria b requires that development is of an appropriate scale to the transport infrastructure in its location. Transport contributions may be required. A Green Travel Plan will be required for non-residential developments;
18. The Council must be satisfied that the site is deliverable and sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate this. Applicants must be prepared to accept time limited permissions which have regard to new policy development.





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CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

- 4.1** This Supplementary Planning Document provides greater detail on the Council's current policies in relation to the potential release of additional housing land and therefore is in conformity with the Core Strategy (2007). Policy CP4 of the Core Strategy allows for flexibility through the allocation of 'reserve' sites should the housing delivery identified in the Plan falter, and provides the policy basis for this document. This document, however, focuses on a more pro-active approach to development delivery in light of current circumstances which have changed since the Core Strategy (2007) was adopted. It puts forward an approach and a set of criteria for the release of suitable sites and identifies the ways in which sites will be judged as meeting the spatial objectives set out in the Core Strategy. It does not seek to identify any specific sites or to predetermine the location of any additional sites to be released in the shorter term.
- 4.2** This Supplementary Planning Document then is published for a six week public consultation period. After further consideration and analysis of representations, the final document will be adopted by the Council and published.

Supplementary Planning Document consultation process

- 4.3** The consultation period will run between 16 January and the 27 February 2009. Comments should, whenever possible, be made online by visiting www.horsham.gov.uk/strategic_planning.
- 4.4** All representations will be made publicly available and will be viewable on our web site. Hard copies of the representations received will also be available to view at the Council Offices and the Storrington Help Point. Comment forms if used should be sent to the following address to be received by **4.20pm on 27 February 2009**;

Head of Strategic and Community Planning,
Horsham District Council,
Park North,
North Street,
Horsham,
West Sussex, RH12 1RL

Email: strategic.planning@horsham.gov.uk





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Appendix SUSTAINABILITY REPORT: CRITERIA

Sustainability Topic	Scoring Criteria
Housing Affordability / Market	0 → 5. Higher scores should be assigned where development of a site would help to address an identified shortage of affordable homes
Building Methodology/ Code for Sustainable Homes	0 → 5. If housing development, Code 3 is expected; if higher than Code 3 can be given positive score. Other forms of development can be given positive score if it can be shown that sustainable methods of construction and design are used and renewables are taken advantage of.
Services and Facilities	0 → 5. For a higher score, the site needs be located close to a wide range of services and facilities. Points are lost if development of a site would result in a loss of a service or amenity
Landscape and Townscape Character	-5 → 0. Scores range from zero, where development would not have an adverse effect on landscape and townscape (e.g., a site which has a previous built land use), to -5 where development would have a severe negative effect on the surroundings, for example, harming a protected landscape.
Biodiversity	-5 → 0. Scores range from zero, where development would not have an adverse effect on biodiversity, to -5, where for example protected species and habitats would be damaged by the development.
Historical Environment	-5 → 0. A score of zero should be assigned where there would be no negative impacts on the historical environment around the site. Negative scores should be given when development would harm the historical environment – e.g. a listed building or Conservation Area.
Air Quality	-5 → 0. Negative scores should be assigned when development of a site would be adversely impacted by poor air quality. A negative score should also be given where development of a site would itself contribute to an existing air pollution problem.



Sustainability Topic	Scoring Criteria
Water Quality	-5 → 0. Larger negative scores should be given where development has the potential to harm water quality, for example, through groundwater pollution, proximity to a watercourse, or where sewage treatment works are at capacity.
Road /Public Transport	0 → 5. Positive scores could be given for good access to the road network. Larger scores are given for settlements that have better access to public transport, i.e., have a railway station & / or bus services that travel to a wide range of destinations.
Flood Risk	-5 → 0. Sites close to a water course, or specifically identified in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment documentation as being at risk from flooding, or have the potential to contribute to flood risk themselves should be assigned a negative score.
Local Economy / Business	0 → 5. Higher positive scores can be allocated for sites where there is a good range of local employment in or close to a settlement. Where employment provision forms all or part of the proposal this will also attract a positive score.
Retail	0 → 5. Higher positive scores should be allocated for sites where there is good retail health and access to a range of shops in a settlement.