



HORSHAM TOWN DESIGN STATEMENT

CONSULTATION STATEMENT

Establishment of the Steering Committee

1 In 2004, following extensive community consultation, the three Neighbourhood Councils which cover the unparished areas within Horsham town each published a Neighbourhood Character Assessment as part of a broader Neighbourhood Appraisal which identified the locally valued and important elements and features of their area.

2 In August 2006 The Horsham Society was invited to join a meeting of councillors representing the unparished areas within Horsham town to discuss the possibility of creating a design statement for the town. The meeting agreed to establish a steering committee comprising two representatives each from the three Neighbourhood Councils – Denne, Forest and Trafalgar, the North Horsham Parish Council and the Horsham Society.

3 The first meeting of the Steering Committee was held on 8 November 2006 in the Horsham District Council (HDC) offices at Park North. It was attended by the Head of Strategic and Community Planning, and a senior member of his staff, who provided guidance and advice. This was to establish the format for subsequent meetings. In all the Steering Committee met on 14 occasions.

Scope and process

4 It was agreed at the outset that the Design Statement should cover the built up area of the town including the three Neighbourhoods and the Roffey and Holbrook wards of North Horsham Parish.

5 The Design Statement would draw heavily on the Neighbourhood Character Assessments but would also seek to set out a vision for the future and design guidelines for future development. The Design Statement was to be aimed at all those who propose changes to the existing character of the town. Subject to adoption by HDC it would become a Supplementary Planning Document and a material consideration in determining planning applications.

6 The Steering Committee decided to adopt the following process

- A public launch of the project, including an exhibition.
- Preparation of a draft Design Statement.
- Public consultation on the draft.
- Preparation of a final draft.
- Formal submission to HDC.

The public launch

7 The main event was a public exhibition held on Saturday and Sunday 9-10 March 2007 in the Swan Walk shopping centre.

8 The exhibition comprised a number of display boards which explained the purpose of a design statement, sought public ideas around a number of key questions, highlighted the character of the built environment of each Neighbourhood, and Roffey and Holbrook wards of North Horsham, and invited individuals to offer assistance. Representatives from the Neighbourhood and Parish Councils and the Horsham Society were present throughout the opening times to provide help and explanation.

9 The public were invited to add comments to one of the display panels and to complete and return a questionnaire. There was also a competition, run in conjunction with the West Sussex County Times, inviting short statements describing what was special about the area of Horsham in which they lived.

10 The exhibition was advertised by posters and leaflets distributed at key points, including HDC and neighbourhood notice boards, local shops etc. The Steering Committee published a Press Release and this was published up by the County Times.

11 Letters were sent to head teachers of 15 Horsham schools about the exhibition and competition. HDC also sent letters to approximately 700 individuals who had responded to the earlier consultation on the Neighbourhood Character Assessments.

12 The exhibition was also advertised on the HDC web site and the Horsham Society web site (from which copies of the exhibition displays could be downloaded).

13 A large number of people visited the exhibition over the two days. Over 80 questionnaires were returned and many comments were left on the boards, but the response to the competition was disappointing. The questionnaires were analysed and a database created containing the names of those who had expressed an interest in keeping in touch with the project.

Preparation of a draft Design Statement

14 The built up area is large and diverse with buildings from differing periods and characteristic street scenes. After much discussion the Steering Committee decided to structure the Statement broadly by reference to historic periods showing both examples and relevant development issues. The Statement then draws the issues together and provides advice on managing change.

Consultation on the draft Design Statement

15 The draft Statement was put out for public consultation during the period 25 April – 30 May 2007.

16 The consultation was publicised through a press release and on the HDC web site from which copies could be downloaded.

17 Hard copies were sent to around 60 members of the public who had expressed an interest in keeping in touch following the exhibition, about 220 individuals, companies and organisations on the HDC planning consultation database, schools in the town, and

all HDC, Neighbourhood and North Horsham Parish councillors. Copies were made available for inspection at Horsham Library and the District Council offices.

18 In order to help people to frame their comments a response sheet was sent with every copy of the Design Statement and made available on the web site.

19 Responses were received from 22 individuals and organisations. These were analysed and considered by the Steering Committee. The Committee's response to each of the comments is shown at Annex A.

20 The final Design Statement reflects the views of the community.

Horsham Town Design Statement
Steering Committee
October 2008

Horsham Town Design Statement Consultation - Specific comments and Steering Committee's response

Ref No	Comment	Weight	Response
1	DS only of value if guidelines are enforced	2	Noted. It is intended that the principles set out in the Statement will be applied as appropriate to the consideration of all relevant planning applications.
2	Make link to Neighbourhood Character Assessments more explicit	1	Accepted. This has been included in the introduction.
3	Needs firm editing to ensure consistency of style	1	Accepted.
4	Print and or photos too small	2	Accepted. The final design will address this.
5	Exclude dates in period headings (not accurate)	1	Not accepted, but explanation of periods and dates added.
6	Photo captions too wordy	1	Noted, but generally not accepted.
7	Historical section needs revision	1	The section has been revised.
8	Statement more detailed than necessary	1	Noted, but there is a difficult balance to be struck given the wide target audience.
9	Tends to repetition as some issues are common to all areas	1	Noted, but see above.
10	Too negative: full of what we don't want, too little positive ideas/ examples of good developments	5	Accepted in part. Some illustrations of appropriate development added.
11	Include more examples of where new build complements existing streetscene	1	Accepted. Some illustrations added.
12	DS should include examples of previous design mistakes	1	Noted, but not considered appropriate.
13	More emphasis required on need for more progressive contemporary architecture	1	Noted. Reference added in Section 10.

14	How will streets/buildings not identified in DS be protected?	1	Noted. The examples included in the text are intended to be illustrative rather than a comprehensive record. The principles set out in the Statement will be applied as appropriate to the consideration of all relevant planning applications.
15	Include importance of Strategic Gaps	1	Noted. Use of the specific designation would be inappropriate but the principle of avoiding coalescence is covered by an expanded reference in Section 7.
16	Include ref to SSI and AONB	1	Accepted in part. Reference to High Weald AONB added to Section 2.
17	Address historical and tourism importance of Carfax, Horsham Park and Causeway	2	Accepted. Reference added in Section 4.
18	Emphasise the central role Carfax - a distinctive town centre	1	Accepted. Reference added in Section 4.
19	Emphasise Barrack Field and its role in Horsham's history	1	Noted, but not included.
20	Is pedestrianisation such a good idea?	1	Noted, but not an issue it would be appropriate for the Design Statement to encourage or discourage.
21	Avoid demolition of large houses on entry roads & replacement by flats	1	Noted. The need for sensitive development on approach routes has been strengthened in Section 7.
22	More emphasis on landscaping to soften entry roads into Horsham/ include photos	3	Accepted. Strengthened reference in Section 7.
23	Important views should not be restricted by development/ show examples to/from Denne Hill	3	Accepted. Already covered but references strengthened in Section 7.
24	Make more of our street sculptures (perhaps separate section with guidance)	2	Accepted in part. New reference added under street furniture.
25	Stop sale of gardens for building	1	Noted. Problem of pressures to exploit large plots highlighted in Section 5.7.
26	Horsham Park - leave untouched	2	Noted. Importance of Park already covered.
27	More specific policy against tower blocks required	1	Noted. Issue already covered in Section 10.
28	Include photos of unnecessary street furniture and silly lengths of cycle lane	1	Noted, but considered inappropriate.

29	Street furniture: More litter bins needed	1	Noted. Separate sub-heading for litter bins has been added in Section 10.
30	Too much street clutter	1	Already covered in Section 10.
31	Control 'A' Boards	1	Already covered in Section 10.
32	More emphasis on avoiding 'terracing effect'	1	Accepted. Reference added in Section 10.
33	Shop fronts in keeping with street scene	1	Noted. Already included in Section 10.
34	Parking must be available close to houses, avoid garage blocks	1	Accepted in part. Reference added in Section 10.
35	Include map to show square arrangement of Victorian streets	1	Noted, but would not fit in with design.
36	Include ref/photo of Horsham stone roofs	1	Noted. Covered in Section 5.1.
37	Include photo of Museum as example to give it a plug!	1	Now included.
38	Include north side of West Parade (Victorian)	1	Noted, but already sufficient and more comprehensive examples.
39	Include Newlands Rd, Milnwood Rd, south side of West Parade (between the wars)	1	Reference added.
40	1945-1970 - include ref to utility construction	1	Noted, but there are few if any remaining examples of utility construction within the town.
41	Add Fordingbridge Close as example of modern development	1	Noted, already included.
42	Add reference/photo to Town Hall	1	Accepted. Photo added.
43	Too much emphasis is given to conserving some buildings	1	Noted. Examples have been included to highlight their specific characteristics, but the merits of conservation as such are not a matter for the Design Statement.
44	Importance of A264 as barrier to further development	1	Noted. Covered by references to containing development within built-up boundary. (Section 7)
45	Conclusion should state town is now full - infrastructure cannot cope with more development	1	Noted. Covered by references to containing development within built-up boundary, need to maintain green spaces etc. (Section 7)
46	Include potential for expansion of surrounding villages rather than the town	1	Noted, but inappropriate for the town design statement.

