

Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon the Parish Council's Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2031.

General

We support District and Borough Councils in preparing the evidence bases for their development plans and in Mid Sussex we are aligning our own infrastructure plans with the emerging District Plan. We encourage Parish Councils to make use of this information which includes transport studies examining the impacts of proposed development allocations. Where available this information is published on the County Council's website or that of the relevant District or Borough Council. In relation to the County Council's own statutory functions, we look for all Neighbourhood Plans to take due account of our policy documents and their supporting Sustainability Appraisals. These documents include the West Sussex Waste Local Plan, Minerals Local Plan and West Sussex Transport Plan. We also recommend that published County Council service plans, for example Planning School Places, are taken into consideration.

Having reviewed the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan for Balcombe we are providing these officer comments rather than a formal County Council response. Once you have considered our comments we encourage you to informally discuss any specific issues you may have relating to the County Council with our Principal Community Officer who deals with your area. An outline of how the County Council supports neighbourhood planning is given on the Neighbourhood Planning page of our website which includes contact details and can be accessed via the following link:

http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/living/environment_and_planning/planning/planning_and_you/neighbourhood_planning.aspx

Small scale housing sites

Given that the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan includes the proposed allocation of small scale housing sites, it is important to note that site specific principles in the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be tested and refined through the Development Management process (through the provision of pre-application advice or at the planning application stage) or as part of a consultation for a Community Right to Build Order. Whilst supporting the proactive approach undertaken to allocate sites in the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan, we are unable to comment on site specific principles at this stage. In considering site specific principles, please refer to the Development Management Guidance note attached to this email.

Highways and transport pre-application advice is available from the County Council which operates a scheme of charging to enable this service to be provided to a consistent and high standard. Please find further information on our charging procedure through the following link:

http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure/getting_around_west_sussex/roads_and_pathways/plans_and_projects/development_control_for_roads/pre-application_charging_guide.aspx

Specific considerations

Policy 2: Housing Site Allocations – Clause (iii) of this policy states that development of approximately 14 dwellings at Barn Field would be conditional upon the scheme containing proposals for traffic calming measures to Haywards Heath Road to the satisfaction of the highway authority. West Sussex County Council is the highway authority in this case and we are not aware of any previous proposals for traffic calming at this location. It is likely that the introduction of such measures would require the approval of the County Council's Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee and be dependent upon the outcomes of design investigations, consultations and safety audits as well as the availability of the necessary funding.

Because justification and deliverability has yet to be established for traffic calming measures in Haywards Heath Road there is doubt at this stage over whether Policy 2 (iii) is fully achievable. It is recognised however that such measures are an aspiration of the Parish Council albeit that they will depend for their implementation upon decisions taken by other authorities, especially West Sussex County Council as Local Highway Authority. We therefore suggest that the reference to traffic calming in Haywards Heath Road be removed from Policy 2 (iii) and that suitable wording be inserted in paragraph 5.5 of the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan, presenting the desired measures as a non-statutory proposal of the Plan.

Regards,

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