

## **Planning and Affordable Housing Statement**

**(including Minerals Resource Assessment, Landscape Impact  
Assessment and Lighting Assessment)**

**Land West of Backsettown, Furners  
Lane, Henfield**



# ECE Planning

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Project Name: Furners Lane

Location: Furners Lane, Henfield, BN5 9HS

Client: Elivia Homes

File Reference: P2027i

Issue	Date	Author	Checked	Notes
A	17/09/2024	M Smith	C Barker	Initial Draft
B	19/09/2024	M Smith	C Barker	Client Draft
C	26/09/2024	M Smith	C Barker	Planning Issue

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Statement has been produced by ECE Planning on behalf of **Elivia Homes** in support of a Full Planning Application for the development of Land West of Backsettown, Furners Lane, Henfield ('the Site') to provide 29no. residential dwellings. The description of development for the proposals reads:

*Erection of 29 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, parking and creation of new vehicular access from Furners Lane.*

- 1.2. The site is allocated for the residential development of up to 30 dwellings within the adopted Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2021).
- 1.3. This statement sets out relevant background for determination of the planning application, including a description of development of the Site and its surroundings, the relevant planning history and planning policies, details of the proposed development, and an assessment of relevant planning policies and material considerations.
- 1.4. The proposals have also been informed by the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023 version), the Planning Practice Guidance, Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2021).

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## 2. The Site

- 2.1. The Application Site is located to the west of the village of Henfield. The site is contiguous with Henfield settlement boundary, and is situated to the south of Furners Lane with the road forming part of the northern boundary (shown below in Figure 1). The gross site area extends to circa 2.9ha.
- 2.2. Whilst the site falls outside the defined settlement boundary, it benefits from a Neighbourhood Plan allocation for up to 30 dwellings.



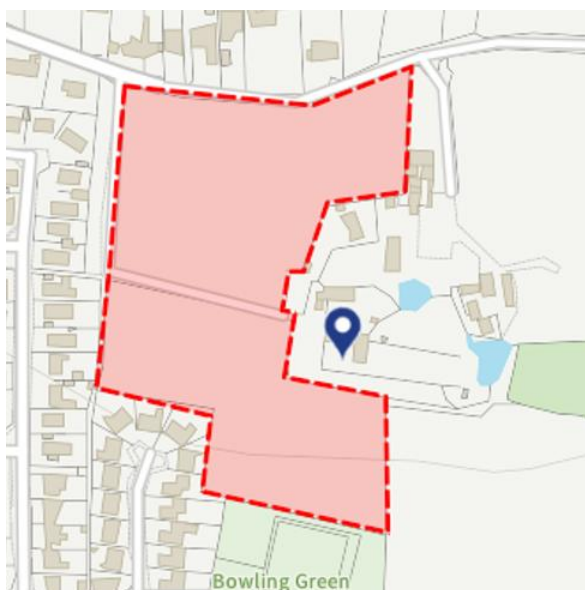
Figure 1 - Location of the Application Site in context of Henfield

- 2.3. Henfield village is a sustainable settlement within the District of Horsham, categorised as a 'smaller town/larger village' within the Horsham District Planning Framework. The village is considered to have a good range of services, facilities and strong community networks.
- 2.4. The Site itself, is located less than 250 metres from High Street, where there are multiple shops and services as demonstrated within Figure 1. In addition, there are several bus stops with Furners Lane Bus Stop being the closest, just 230 metres from the application site. The bus stops provide frequent connections to Horsham, Burgess Hill, Brighton and Crawley, making the application site a highly sustainable location.
- 2.5. The application site is largely comprised of scrubland, bordered by mature hedgerows and residential gardens. Scrub has been allowed to develop in many areas with two TPO'd veteran trees located in the north west corner of the site. Overhead power cables cross part of the site.
- 2.6. To the west and southwest boundary of the site is existing residential development with detached, traditional style houses in bungalow to the west and two storey properties to the north (Furners Lane) and south (The Daisy Croft). To the east and southeast boundary is pastureland. This is demonstrated within Figure 2.



**Figure 2 - Aerial Imagery of Application Site**

- 2.7. To the east of the site is a Grade II listed building called 'Backsettown' shown below in Figure 3. There are no other heritage designations of note. The existing access route to Backsettown crosses the centre of the site, accessed via Furners Lane.



**Figure 3 - Listed Buildings around the Site**



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- 2.8. The Site is within Flood Zone 1 which means that there is a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. In addition, the Site is not at risk of flooding from surface water as seen in Figure 4.

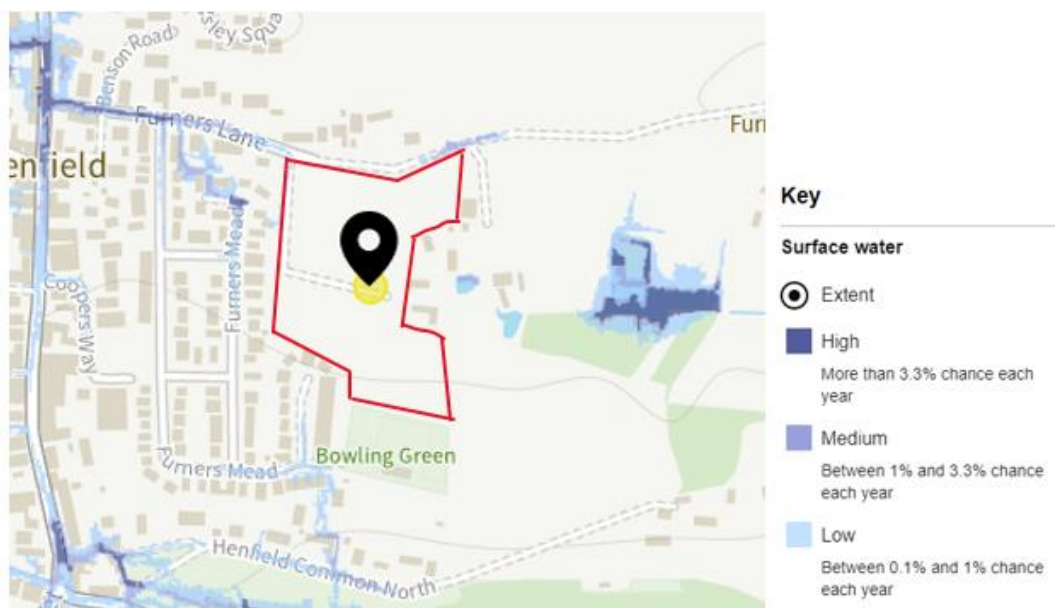


Figure 4 - Surface Water Flood Risk Mapping



## 3. Planning History

- 3.1. This section sets out the planning history relevant to the determination of this planning application. This includes details of planning applications which have recently been submitted within the locality.
- 3.2. A search of the Local Planning Authority's (LPAs) online planning register has been undertaken, which highlighted there was no relevant planning history in relation to the site.

### Pre-Application Advice

- 3.3. In July 2023 a Pre-Application Meeting was requested with Horsham Council. In August, a site visit was carried out and in September, written advice was received which is attached in **Appendix A** of this Statement.
- 3.4. The proposed development put forward within the pre-application request followed the broad parameter plans of the Neighbourhood Plan allocation, proposing 29 dwellings with substantial open space to the east to limit impacts to the Grade II Listed Building to the east of the site, 'Backsettown'.
- 3.5. The Pre-application proposal deviated from the Neighbourhood Allocation with the proposed access to the site being via Furners Lane as opposed to Furners Mead.
- 3.6. Key details and advice received from the Pre-Application Response include:
- The principle of Development is considered acceptable by virtue of the Neighbourhood Plan allocation
  - Built development to the western side of the site was acceptable and accords with the parameter plans of the Neighbourhood Plan allocation.
  - The Officer did not oppose to access via Furners Lane, and the departure from access via Furners Mead, subject to robust justification for this alternative and support from the Parish Council and WSCC Highways.
  - The officer raised concerns about the proximity of the units closest to The Daisycroft and suggested that this part of the site is redesigned to increase back-to-back distances and include reduced storey heights.
  - A Water Neutrality Strategy is required to ensure that the proposal can offset the water use required by the development.

### Community Engagement / Public Consultation

- 3.7. Following the written pre-application advice from Horsham Council, substantial community engagement has taken place.
- 3.8. A meeting and presentation was held with Henfield Parish Council on Monday 2 September, in which the proposed layout was presented and discussed with feedback from the Parish Council. The local community was invited to attend this meeting.
- 3.9. Following this, an online Public Consultation was held from 4 September to 18 September, with information regarding the history of the site, planning policies, proposed layout and house types, along with transport, landscaping and drainage details. This online consultation included a feedback form, with local residents to provide comments on the proposals. More detail on this is provided with the supporting Statement of Community Involvement.

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## Surrounding Area

- 3.10. The following applications relate to development within the vicinity of the application site and provide context to the wider setting of the area.
- 3.11. **DC/24/0535** - Erection of 4No. semi-detached dwellings and 1No. detached dwelling together with upgraded access onto Furners Lane. Associated hard and soft landscaping works. – **Pending Decision**
- 3.12. This application is located at Land adjacent to Cedar Cottage, Furners Lane, Henfield. This sits to the north of the Site subject of this statement.

## 4. The Proposal

- 4.1. This Application seeks Full Planning Permission for the erection of 29no. dwellings on the western half of the site, with a Net Developable Area (NDA) of circa 1.2ha as part of a wider 2.9ha site allocation. Please refer to Figure 5 which visually details the proposal.



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4.2. The proposed mix is set out in the Table below:

**Table 1 - Proposed Housing Mix and Affordable Housing**

<b>Dwelling Size</b>	<b>Market Housing</b>		<b>Affordable Housing</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	<b>No of Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No of Units</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No of Units</b>	<b>%</b>
1-Bedroom	-	0%	2	20%	2	7%
2-Bedroom	3	16%	4	40%	7	24%
3-Bedroom	7	37%	4	40%	11	38%
4-Bedroom	9	47%	-	0%	9	31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 4.3. The proposal includes six accessible and adaptable dwellings (Building Regulation M4(2) compliant) and 2 no. wheelchair accessible dwellings (Building Regulation M4(3) compliant).
- 4.4. All units meet or exceed nationally described standards, providing a very high standard of accommodation. Private garden space is also provided for all dwellings.
- 4.5. To the east of the new dwellings a generous area of open space is proposed, retaining a soft, rural edge of settlement character of the site. This area will also include a biodiversity enhancement zone, a wildlife corridor to meet the requirements of biodiversity net gain and SuDS features.
- 4.6. A new vehicular access is proposed from the northeast corner of the site from Furners Lane, with the existing vehicular access to Backsettown solely retained as a foot/cycle way. Existing pedestrian routes located to the north and western boundaries of the site along footpaths will be maintained and the footpath to Furners Mead would be improved, affording pedestrians direct access to the village facilities beyond.

## 5. Policy Overview

### 5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires, that where the Development Plan contains relevant policies, an application for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the Development Plan comprises:

**Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)  
Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2017-2031)**

- 5.1.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and Supplementary Planning Guidance are material considerations, together with local guidance documents.
- 5.1.3. It should be noted that the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework is currently out of date by reason of it being over 5 years old. The Government require all Local Authorities to review the Local Plan every five years and therefore the Council are currently preparing a new Local Plan for the District which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2024.

### 5.2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 5.2.1. The NPPF, most recently amended in December 2023, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
- 5.2.2. The following extracts of the NPPF are considered most relevant in the determination of this application. The below are not explored in detail within this Statement but have been fully reviewed in preparation of this application.

**Chapter 2 (Achieving Sustainable Development)**

**Chapter 5 (Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes)**

**Chapter 8 (Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities)**

**Chapter 11 (Making Effective use of Land)**

**Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places)**

**Chapter 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change)**

**Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)**

### 5.3. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

- 5.3.1. The PPG supplements the overarching objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework. The guidance provided by the PPG has been fully considered in the creation of the application and the proposed plans are seen to be fully compliant with it.

### 5.4. Strategic Planning Policy – Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 5.4.1. The Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) was adopted in November 2015 and is the overarching planning document for Horsham District outside the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and replaces the Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies documents which were adopted in 2007.

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- 5.4.2. Although the HDPF is out of date by reason of it being over 5 years old, the following policies are considered to be relevant to the application and have been given full consideration in the preparation of this application.

**Policy 1 - Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development**

**Policy 2 - Strategic Policy: Strategic Development**

**Policy 3 – Strategic Policy: Development Hierarchy**

**Policy 4 - Strategic Policy: Settlement Expansion**

**Policy 15 - Strategic Policy: Housing Provision**

**Policy 16 - Strategic Policy: Meeting Local Housing Needs**

**Policy 24 - Strategic Policy: Environmental Protection**

**Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character**

**Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection**

**Policy 31 – Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity**

**Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development**

**Policy 33 - Development Principles**

**Policy 35 - Strategic Policy: Climate Change**

**Policy 36 - Strategic Policy: Appropriate Energy Use**

**Policy 37 – Sustainable Construction**

**Policy 38 - Strategic Policy: Flooding**

**Policy 39 - Strategic Policy: Infrastructure Provision**

**Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport**

**Policy 41 - Parking**

**Policy 42 – Strategic Policy: Inclusive Communities**

## 5.5. Horsham Draft Local Plan – Regulation 19

- 5.5.1. As the Horsham District Planning Framework is now out of date, the Council has commenced work on a Review of the Local Plan. The Draft Horsham Local Plan will set out new development allocations, and policies for infrastructure, community facilities, design and heritage to guide development from 2023-2040.
- 5.5.2. The Draft Local Plan is not at an advanced stage. The Council formally submitted the Local Plan and supporting documents to the Planning Inspectorate on Friday 26 July 2024.
- 5.5.3. The Review of the Local Plan is not considered to be advanced enough to enable the policies therein to be afforded any weight in the decision-making process.

## 5.6. Henfield Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.6.1. The Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) was formally adopted by Henfield Parish Council on 23 June 2021, following a successful referendum on 6 May 2021 with 90.53% of the votes cast in support of the Plan.
- 5.6.2. The Neighbourhood Plan sets out a series of planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications in the area during the period to 2031. The main policies of relevance within the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:



**Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parish**

**Policy 2: Housing Site Allocations**

**Policy 2.3: Land West of Backsettown, off Furners Lane, Henfield**

**Policy 4: Transport, Access and Car Parking**

**Policy 5: Utility Infrastructure**

**Policy 7: Education Infrastructure**

**Policy 8: Broadband Infrastructure**

**Policy 10: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity**

**Policy 12: Design Standards for New Development**

- 5.6.3. The site has been allocated for residential development within the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan under Policy 2.3 (Land west of Backsettown, off Furners Lane, Henfield). The policy reads as follows:

*P2.3.1 Land west of Backsettown, off Furners Lane, Henfield is allocated for approximately 30 single storey dwellings, subject to the following criteria:*

*a. The proposal demonstrates an understanding of the elements which contribute to the character of the site and these inform the design and layout of the site. The proposal must be of an appropriate scale and massing in keeping with the character of the surroundings. In particular it should respect the single storey nature of the properties in Furners Mead to the immediate west of the development area part of the site. The proposal should also provide the landscape buffer and open space to the east of the site. (shown in Figure 5) – Refer to Section 6.4 of this Report.*

*b. The proposal preserves the setting of the Backsettown House, the listed building to the east. – Refer to Section 6.6 of this Report.*

*c. The proposal should provide dwellings suitable for older and downsizing households in order to meet local housing needs. The provision of single storey dwellings will be particularly supported. – Refer to Section 6.3 and 6.5 of this Report.*

*d. The proposal takes account of the amenities of adjoining residential properties. - – Refer to Section 6.5 of this Report.*

*e. The proposal takes account of visibility and key views. – Refer to Section 6.8 of this Report.*

*f. The proposal maintains and enhances the site's rural character, retaining existing field boundaries, hedgerows and trees where appropriate and enhancing with native species. Mature trees should be protected and maintained. – Refer to Section 6.8 and 6.10 of this Report.*

*g. A full ecological and biodiversity assessment should be submitted as part of the application. Any reasonable mitigation proposed by the assessments must be implemented in full. – Refer to Section 6.11 of this Report.*

*h. A comprehensive transport assessment should be submitted with the application. Any reasonable mitigation to make the application more acceptable in planning terms must be implemented in full. – Refer to Section 6.7 of this Report.*

*i. Vehicular access into the site is provided from Furners Mead and in a way which does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent residential properties. – Refer to Section 6.7 of this Report.*



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j. All roads, cycle ways and footpaths should conform to West Sussex Highway Standards. – Refer to Section 6.7 of this Report.

k. Any external lighting should be designed to minimise light pollution and supports the dark skies policy of the South Downs National Park. – Refer to Section 6.13 of this Report.

l. The part of the site outside the built-up area boundary is safeguarded, designed and provided to an agreed timetable as open space for recreational use by the residents and wider community. – Refer to Section 6.4 of this Report and the Design and Access Statement.

m. The public rights of way are retained and enhanced, and upgraded to cycleways where appropriate. – Refer to Section 6.4 of this Report and the Design and Access Statement.

n. The proposal includes an adequate number and positions of electric vehicle charging points to enable residents to choose to use electric vehicles. – Refer to Section 6.9 of this Report

o. The development of the site delivers any reinforcement of the sewerage network which directly arises from the construction of the proposed new homes. – Refer to Section 6.12 of this Report

p. The development of the site takes place on the basis of a comprehensive drainage strategy. The strategy should address how seasonal groundwater would be satisfactorily accommodated within the development of the site. – Refer to Section 6.12 of this Report



Figure 6 - Henfield Neighbourhood Plan Allocation - Policy 2.3

## 5.7. Five Year Housing Land Supply

- 5.7.1. The Council published an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024 which includes a summary of its housing position. This confirms that after an update to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in December 2023 the housing target for the District set by national government is 911 dwellings per annum. The Council can demonstrate a 59% (2.9 years) Five Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) against this new requirement.

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## 5.8. Facilitating Appropriate Development (FAD)

- 5.8.1. In light of the Council's inability to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing sites, the Council published the FAD in October 2022. This document now forms a material planning consideration in decision making. It is noted however that the advice contained in the FAD is guidance only and does not form policy, and does not alter the statutory decision making framework.

## 5.9. Written Ministerial Statement (Building the Homes we Need)

- 5.9.1. The provision of housing on this land should not be underestimated. It is clear from the Government that there is a significant drive to deliver homes, as encouraged in the most recent Written Ministerial Statement (WMS) dated 30 July 2024.
- 5.9.2. As set out in the WMS, the Government are looking to build circa 1.5 million homes across the next five years to deal with the housing crisis. To achieve this, the Government are looking to restore and raise housing targets, build in the right places, move to strategic planning, deliver more affordable homes, build infrastructure to grow the economy and support local planning.
- 5.9.3. The redevelopment of the Land will align with the Government's targets and will make a valuable contribution towards local need and more widely, the 1.5 million homes target.
- 5.9.4. It is notable that the Government are seeking to introduce the revised Standard Housing Methodology (SHM) before the end of 2024 which will immediately impact upon housing targets within the emerging Local Plan.

## 5.10. Other Relevant Guidance and Policies

- 5.10.1. The following summarises the relevant guidance for this application:

**Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing (2017)**

**Guidance on Parking in New Residential Developments (2010)**

**CIL Charging Schedule (2017)**

**Transport and Development Study Technical Note (2015)**

**Landscape Character Assessment (2003)**

**Landscape Capacity Study (2021)**

**Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020)**

**Planning Advisory Note: Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure (2022)**

**Facilitating Appropriate Development (2022)**

**Natural England's Advice Note regarding Water Neutrality within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone (February 2022 V2)**

**Henfield Parish Design Statement (2008)**

## 6. Planning Appraisal

### 6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. This section of the Statement details how the proposed development complies with the policies set out within the Development Plan. The following matters are the principle considerations with regards to the proposal:

**Principle of Development**  
**Affordable Housing and Housing Mix**  
**Design, Form and Appearance**  
**Residential Amenity**  
**Heritage**  
**Site Access, Highways and Parking**  
**Landscape Impact Assessment**  
**Sustainability**  
**Arboriculture**  
**Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain**  
**Flood Risk and Drainage**  
**Lighting Assessment**  
**Water Neutrality**  
**Minerals Resource Assessment**

### 6.2. Principle of Development

- 6.2.1. Under Policy 2.3 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2021) the site is allocated for residential development for up to 30 dwellings, as such the principle of development is clearly established.
- 6.2.2. This is further supported by Policy 4 of the Horsham District Planning Framework, which supports Neighbourhood Plan allocations which adjoin an existing settlement edge. As outlined within Section 2 of this Statement, the site is located within a sustainable location on the western edge of the settlement boundary of Henfield.
- 6.2.3. Paragraph 76 of the Framework requires local authorities to identify a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide a minimum of 5 years housing against their requirement set out in adopted strategic policies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than 5 years old.
- 6.2.4. As set out in Horsham District Council's most recent Annual Monitoring Report (published on 18 January 2024), the Council can only currently demonstrate **a 2.9 year supply of housing** and is therefore not able to meet its housing land supply targets.
- 6.2.5. The issue of housing delivery is considered to be a significant material consideration in favour of the proposed development, and the delivery of 29 residential dwellings would be a welcome contribution to this severe housing need.
- 6.2.6. In summary, by virtue of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan allocation under Policy 2.3, the lack of five-year housing supply and the site's sustainable location, the development of this site is considered acceptable in principle.
- 6.2.7. As outlined in Section 5.6 of this Statement, the Neighbourhood Plan allocation is subject to criteria specified within Policy 2.3. This report demonstrates how each of these criteria are being met below.

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## 6.3. Affordable Housing and Housing Mix

- 6.3.1. The proposed development seeks to deliver high quality homes in the form of one, two, three, and four-bedroom dwellings to meet projected future household needs for the local area, and with particular focus on the crucial affordability need in this area. The proposed mix of dwellings is as follows:

**Table 2 - Proposed Housing Mix and Affordable Housing**

Dwelling Size	Market Housing		Affordable Housing		Total	
	No of Units	%	No of Units	%	No of Units	%
1-Bedroom	-	0%	2	20%	2	7%
2-Bedroom	3	16%	4	40%	7	24%
3-Bedroom	7	37%	4	40%	11	38%
4-Bedroom	9	47%	-	0%	9	31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 6.3.2. Policy 16 of the HDPF stated that development should provide a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures to meet the needs of the district's communities to create sustainable and balanced communities. On this basis, an edge of settlement appropriate mix has been proposed with a proportion of smaller 1 and 2-bedroom dwellings, and several larger family sized units that would be expected in this type of location.
- 6.3.3. Policy 16 also requires developments of 15 dwellings or more to provide 35% affordable housing. The proposed development is considered to be policy compliant, providing 10 affordable dwellings which equates to 35% on site provision.
- 6.3.4. Policy 2.3 criterion c of the HNP states, '*the proposal should provide dwellings suitable for older and downsizing households in order to meet local housing needs. The provision of single storey dwellings will be particularly supported.*' In accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan allocation, close to 40% of the proposed dwellings are chalet bungalows comprising 1.5 storeys in height, and these units will all include ground floor bedroom accommodation, suitable for older and downsizing households to meet local housing needs in accordance with Policy 2.3 of the HNP.
- 6.3.5. It is considered that with regards to the affordable housing provision and housing mix, the proposed development is compliant with policy requirements.

## 6.4. Design, Form and Appearance

- 6.4.1. Policy 32 of the HDPF seeks high quality and inclusive design, with proposals expected to provide attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable environments, complement local distinctive characters and contribute to a sense of place.
- 6.4.2. Policy 2.3 criterion a of the HNP requires that: '*the proposal demonstrates an understanding of the elements which contribute to the character of the site and these inform the design and layout of the site. The proposal must be of an appropriate scale and massing in keeping with the character of the surroundings. In particular it should respect the single storey nature of the properties in Furners Mead to the immediate west of the development area part of the site. The proposal should also provide the landscape buffer and open space to the east of the site.*'
- 6.4.3. Criterion f requires that, '*the proposal maintains and enhances the site's rural character, retaining existing field boundaries, hedgerows and trees where appropriate and enhancing with native species. Mature trees should be protected and maintained.*'

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- 6.4.4. In accordance with the Policy 2.3 of the HNP, the proposed layout has followed the parameter plans of the policy, with a substantial landscape buffer to the east of the site, and built form to the west adjoining the settlement edge, to fill a 'missing-tooth' within the Henfield Settlement boundary.
- 6.4.5. As required by criterion (a), chalet bungalows that utilise rooms in the roof are proposed along the western edge, closest to Furners Mead to reflect the character, scale and massing of the surroundings. The proposed dwellings are considered to consist of a high quality design which has taken precedent from the local vernacular by utilising a traditional pallet of materials with a variety of details.
- 6.4.6. The design utilises a traditional building form generally of chalet bungalows, detached houses, and semi-detached houses, with a small run of terraced properties through the centre of the site. Scale has been further expressed through changes in roof design using a mix of hipped roofs, feature gables, and front-to-back pitched roof dwellings.
- 6.4.7. The material selection has been carefully considered to reflect the local vernacular of Henfield. Red and brown multi-bricks are complimented by tile hanging, whilst weatherboarding has also been used across the site.
- 6.4.8. All materials chosen have multiple local precedent within Henfield. The use of weatherboarding reflects not only buildings on the High Street but also the agricultural aesthetic of local farm buildings on this rural fringe site.
- 6.4.9. A small selection of materials repeated through the site will ensure a simple palette avoiding a busy facade with windows and detailing breaking the elevation up. This simple palette aims to give the development its own identity and rhythm, whilst clearly responding to the local architectural vernacular and creating a sense of place through introducing a unifying choice of materials and detailing.
- 6.4.10. The proposed interaction between the built form and soft and hard landscaping has been designed to provide high quality public realm through soft areas of landscaping to encourage social interaction within the proposed streets. In addition, extensive open space and play areas are provided throughout the site, with a concentration of open space both formal and informal towards the east of the site.
- 6.4.11. It is considered that with regards to the design, form and appearance, the proposed development is fully compliant with The Horsham District Planning Framework and Henfield Neighbourhood Plan, and has fully considered and reflected the intentions of Policy 2.3 of the HNP. Please refer to the Design & Access Statement and accompanying drawings for more information.

## 6.5. Residential Amenity

- 6.5.1. Policy 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that development avoids an unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property, for example through overlooking or noise, whilst having regard to the sensitivities of surrounding development.
- 6.5.2. Policy 2.3 of the HNP, criterion d requires that '*the proposal takes account of the amenities of adjoining residential properties.*'



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- 6.5.3. During pre-application discussions in August 2023, the Planning Officer raised concerns over the relationship between the proposed development to the south of the site and the existing residential properties along The Daisy Croft, stating, *'the proximity of these existing dwellings to the site coupled with the position of their back gardens which directly adjoin the site means that any development proposed in this location must include sufficient separation and significant buffering in order to avoid adverse impact on privacy.'* This advice was acknowledged and in response to officer's concerns the southern built development of the site has been re-orientated to limit the impact of this relationship.
- 6.5.4. The proposed southernmost dwellings (Plots 24 and 25) are chalet-bungalows, orientated to face inwards (east and west) with gardens to the rear, to ensure that the proposed gardens do not directly back onto the existing gardens of The Daisy Croft properties.
- 6.5.5. Furthermore, a row of single-storey garages are proposed along the southern end of the site to utilise the space, but maintain an appropriate relationship with existing properties along The Daisy Croft. The layout affords for a significant visual break (approx. 22m) between the two chalet bungalows (Plots 24-25). The proposed distances between the rear of the existing properties and the side flank of the proposed properties is 12.5m – 17.4m which, in our view, is an acceptable rear to flank relationship.
- 6.5.6. The proposed development is both well screened and sufficiently distant from neighbouring properties to ensure privacy, outlook and access to sunlight and daylight are not materially affected for existing residents.
- 6.5.7. Furthermore, all new dwellings have been sensitively designed to protect the existing neighbouring properties of Furners Mead and The Daisy Croft. Notably, the dwellings in the south west of the site have been proposed as chalet bungalows to mirror the bungalows on the west boundary along Furners Mead and minimise overlooking.
- 6.5.8. All new dwellings would be built to meet or exceed nationally described space standards to offer a high-quality residential environment. As outlined in Section 6.3 of this report, several house types include ground floor bedroom accommodation which allows greater flexibility for future occupiers. In addition, six units will meet Building Regulation M4(2) requirements and two units will meet M4(3) requirements, allowing for future adaptability.
- 6.5.9. All dwellings provide private gardens and are set within a high quality natural and semi-natural environment, affording opportunities for recreation and the enjoyment of nature.
- 6.5.10. As such, the proposal fully accords with the requirements of Policies 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework and Policies 2.3 and 12 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan.

## 6.6. Heritage

- 6.6.1. Policy 34 of the HDPF states that development should make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and ensure that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas.
- 6.6.2. There are no listed buildings within the redline boundary and the Henfield Conservation Area are not contiguous with the site, however Backsettown, a Grade II Listed Building is located immediately east of the site, with the access road bisecting the site.
- 6.6.3. Policy 2.3 criterion b of HNP states that proposed development should *'preserves the setting of the Backsettown House, the listed building to the east.'* As such, it has been carefully considered within the proposed design of the layout, with access maintained across the site and a substantial landscape buffer between the heritage asset and the proposed built-form (over 45m).

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6.6.4. This landscape buffer includes open space and buffer planting along the boundary. Therefore the heritage asset will still be perceived as distinct and separate from the proposed development.

6.6.5. A Heritage Impact Assessment has been undertaken to support this application and states that:

*The placement of new housing in the study site will cause a visible change within Backsettown's setting. Aside from the approach along its original driveway, views of the asset across open fields will be limited, and the perception of the building as a former farmhouse will be less clearly discernible. The proposed development is therefore considered to constitute a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the asset. There will be no effects in any other designated heritage assets. No non-designated heritage assets in the vicinity have been identified requiring assessment.*

6.6.6. The proposed development therefore constitutes a low level of 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of the heritage asset, by virtue of the loss of former agricultural land surrounding the heritage asset and along the approach to the site.

6.6.7. It is acknowledged that this site is allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan, to provide 29 residential dwellings to meet local housing need. It is to be expected that the housing along the approach to Backsettown will impact the setting of this heritage asset, however, in our view the benefits of providing much needed housing within this allocated site outweighs the low level of 'less than substantial harm' to the heritage asset.

6.6.8. The proposed development has been designed to limit the impacts on the setting of the heritage asset as far as possible, and this has been achieved through appropriate landscape buffers, and high quality, traditional design of dwellings.

6.6.9. In our view, the proposed development accords with Policy 34 and Policy 2.3 and preserves the setting of the Backsettown House. Please refer to the Heritage Impact Assessment for further information.

## 6.7. Site Access, Highways and Parking

6.7.1. Policy 40 of the HDPF seeks for development to promote an improved and integrated transport network and promote sustainable transport. Policy 41 seeks adequate parking and facilities to be provided, including the needs of cycle parking, plug-in charging and other low emission uses.

6.7.2. Policy 2.3 of HNP criterion i. proposes vehicular access via Furners Mead, noting that this must not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of the occupiers of adjacent residential properties. It does, however, state subject to appropriate technical issues being satisfied the site also has the potential to be served by an alternative and/or additional access from Furners Lane to the north of the site.

6.7.3. Legal and technical issues have prevented forming the vehicular access from Furners Mead via the existing curtilage of No. 21, and so detailed designs for an access from Furners Lane is proposed within the development layout.

6.7.4. The position of this access has been determined by both the extent of the adopted highway of the lane running along the northern boundary and the veteran tree buffer zone required for the two TPO'd Oak trees located in the north west corner of the site.





Figure 7 – Furners Lane Access

- 6.7.5. Furthermore, the access arrangement is designed to discourage vehicles leaving the development from turning east onto the unadopted section of Furners Lane, while achieving adequate visibility splays. Figure 7 demonstrates the on-street parking past the existing access of the site, and the poor quality surfacing.
- 6.7.6. These proposals have been consulted on with West Sussex County Highways at a pre-application meeting who are in principle in agreement with the proposals, subject to further supporting technical assessment.
- 6.7.7. As this section of Furners Lane has no pavements, it is proposed that the public footpath linking the site and Furners Mead (FP 2548-1) will be surfaced and improved to provide a direct link into the centre of the village. It is acknowledged that this public footpath upgrade was fully supported by the Henfield Parish Council during community engagement meetings prior to the submission of this application.
- 6.7.8. The existing track serving Backsettown House & Farmstead running along the western boundary, that also serves as a public footpath (FP 2548), will be stopped up as a vehicular access, and retained solely as a public footpath, with a new permeable surface to improve the setting of the TPO'd veteran Oak trees. Backsettown House & Farmstead will be accessed from the new access road.
- 6.7.9. With the detailed consideration of the revised access, it is considered that the proposal meets the requirements of the 2.3 of the Neighbourhood Plan and also removes disturbance from vehicular traffic from the residents of Furners Mead.
- 6.7.10. Furthermore, 72 car parking spaces are proposed across the site of which 59 will be allocated spaces and 13 will be visitor spaces, and each dwelling will include storage space for two bicycles. The car and cycle parking provided for the development is therefore compliant with West Sussex County Council's Guidance on Parking at New Developments document 2020 in accordance with a PBZ2 in which Henfield is located.

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- 6.7.11. In summary, the proposed development fully accords with Policies 40 and 41 of the HDPF, and the requirements of Policy 2.3 of the HNP. Please refer to the supporting Transport Statement and Travel Plan for further details.

## 6.8. Landscape Impact Assessment

- 6.8.1. Policy 2.3 criterion e of the HNP states that the proposal '*should take account of visibility and key views*' and specifically mentions the view looking east towards Backsettown (shown in Figure 7 below).



**Figure 8 - View looking East towards Backsettown House and Farmstead (Page 35 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan)**

- 6.8.2. This and other key viewpoints have been considered in how the proposed development will impact upon the landscape, its aesthetic aspects, perceptual aspects and distinctive character. This is explored further within the Design and Access Statement.
- 6.8.3. It is acknowledged that the character of the site will change, primarily as a result of the change in land use on the site from pasture to new residential development, however mitigation measures have informed the proposed design in order to maintain, and importantly enhance the character of the site and provide physical and visual containment of the proposals where required. This includes a substantial open space measuring at least 45m between the built form and heritage asset Backsettown House, and enhanced boundary planting to screen views looking into the site.
- 6.8.4. Furthermore, the site itself is quite contained by existing vegetation and existing residential development to the west and south.
- 6.8.5. In summary, the proposed development is consistent with existing residential uses and respects its immediate context. Furthermore, the comprehensive green infrastructure and open space measures to the west help to assimilate the development in the character area.

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- 6.8.6. The landscape and visual impacts will be localised and largely restricted to a change in the character of the site. This cannot be avoided given the nature of the proposed development but will be balanced by the provision much needed housing, of an improved public footpath surface, and better public footpath connectivity and the introduction of a large area of accessible open space. On balance therefore, the proposed development is judged to be acceptable in landscape and visual terms.

## 6.9. Sustainability

- 6.9.1. Policy 37 of the HDPF states that *'proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development. To deliver sustainable design, development should incorporate the following measures where appropriate according to the type of development and location'*. In addition to the measures listed under the policy, *'all new development will be required to provide satisfactory arrangements for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials as an integral part of design'*.
- 6.9.2. An Energy Statement supports the application and outlines that the proposed dwellings all exceed the minimum requirements of Part L (2021) Building Regulations. Space heating and hot water will be provided by individual air source heat pumps and the statement outlines that all dwellings achieve reductions in carbon emissions below the minimum required to achieve compliance under Part L (2021) through energy efficiency measures.
- 6.9.3. The proposal includes electric vehicle charging points in accordance with the requirements of West Sussex County Council's Standards. In summary, the proposed development complies Policies 35, 36 and 37 of the HDPF. Please refer to the Energy Statement for more information.

## 6.10. Arboriculture

- 6.10.1. Policy 33 of the HDPF states that developments should include the retention of existing important landscape and natural features, for example trees, hedges, banks and watercourses. Development must relate sympathetically to the local landscape and justify and mitigate against any losses that may occur through the development.
- 6.10.2. Policy 2.3 of the HNP, criterion f states that, *'proposals must maintain and enhance the site's rural character, retaining existing field boundaries, hedgerows and trees where appropriate, enhancing with native species. Mature trees should be protected and maintained.'*
- 6.10.3. As detailed in Section 2, the site is largely comprised of scrubland, bordered by mature hedgerows and trees. Two veteran trees (both with TPOs) are located in the north west corner of the site immediately south of the point of access from Furners Lane, and the current access route to Backsettown House directly bisects the buffer zone of these trees.
- 6.10.4. The proposed development will move the existing access from the veteran buffer zones of these trees (with the exception of a small portion of the access remaining within the eastern end of buffer zone V11). This removal of the existing access to outside of the buffer zones will be an improvement on the existing condition and will ensure the future and longevity of these veteran trees. The existing access will be removed and replaced with a footpath within the same alignment, and the RPAs will be mulched with the same species woodchip to improve rooting conditions.
- 6.10.5. Three low quality trees will be removed as part of the development and part of one hedge which is of poor condition. All the significant boundary tree cover will remain intact and no medium or high-quality trees will be removed. Additional tree planting is proposed within the enhanced open space to the east of the site.



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- 6.10.6. The application is supported by an Arboricultural Impact Assessment which concludes that the proposed development would not cause an unacceptable or adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area from a tree perspective.
- 6.10.7. Furthermore, during community engagement with the Parish Council concerns were raised regarding trees along Furners Lane being impacted by vehicles accessing the site for construction. This is being considered by an appointed arboriculturist and mitigation measures will be made to ensure that there is no impact to these trees.
- 6.10.8. As such, the proposed development retains and incorporates healthy, mature trees and hedgerows and will not result in the removal of trees which contribute positively to the area and therefore fully complies with the relevant policies. Please refer to the accompanying Arboricultural Report and associated plans for further information.

## 6.11. Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

- 6.11.1. Policy 31 of the HDPF states *'development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigates or compensates for this loss, and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained'*.
- 6.11.2. Policy 2.3 criterion g of the HNP states that, *'a full ecological and biodiversity assessment should be submitted as part of the application.'* As such, an Ecological Impact Assessment has been submitted in support of the application which details the extent of ecology on site and appropriate mitigation measures to ensure on site ecology is appropriately managed. Please refer to the supporting Ecological Impact Assessment for further details.
- 6.11.3. In addition, a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment supports the application which details that the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain can be appropriately achieved on site as required by the Environment Act.
- 6.11.4. On this basis, the proposed development is in accordance with required policy in terms of ecology and biodiversity. Please refer to the supporting Ecological Impact Assessment and BNG Assessment for further information.

## 6.12. Flood Risk and Drainage

- 6.12.1. Policy 38 of the HDPF states that development proposals will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to development sites with the lowest risk of flooding and making required development safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 6.12.2. Policy 2.3 of the HNP requires a comprehensive drainage strategy to support the development. A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy has been submitted in support of this application. The Flood Risk Assessment outlines that the site is located with Flood Zone 1 and is considered at low risk of surface water and groundwater flooding.
- 6.12.3. The drainage strategy outlines that the proposed development will discharge foul water to the Southern Water public foul sewer to the northwest of the site in Furners Lane, via a new connection.

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- 6.12.4. Surface water will be discharged to a surface water sewer identified to the northwest of the site along Furners Lane. Surface water flow rates will be restricted to the Greenfield Runoff QBar rate in accordance with the requirements of West Sussex County Council's surface water drainage requirements. Surface water will be temporarily stored on site through the use of a combined below ground attenuation tank and pond prior to discharge. This will be sized for the 1:100 year event with a 45% allowance for climate change.
- 6.12.5. All surface water runoff shall also be treated prior to discharge to the sewer to help prevent contaminated surface water from leaving the site.
- 6.12.6. In summary, the reports outline that the proposed development is fully compliant with the required policy and is entirely acceptable with regards to drainage and flood risk.

## 6.13. Lighting Assessment

- 6.13.1. Policy 2.3 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan, criteria k states that:

*k. Any external lighting should be designed to minimise light pollution and supports the dark skies policy of the South Downs National Park.*

- 6.13.2. The proposed roads within the development will not be adopted by the Highways Authority. As such, the proposed lighting strategy for the development will be low level bollard lighting. This will be designed to minimise light pollution in accordance with criterion k of the Policy 2.3 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan. Lighting to individual plots will be low level designed to minimise light spillage and protect ecology and amenity.

## 6.14. Water Neutrality

- 6.14.1. The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone as defined by Natural England and which includes supplies from groundwater abstraction which cannot, with certainty, demonstrate no adverse impacts upon the defined Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.
- 6.14.2. A recently received advice note from Natural England advises that plans and projects affecting sites where an existing adverse effect is known will be required to demonstrate, with sufficient certainty, that they will not contribute further to an existing adverse effect. The received advice note advises that the matter of water neutrality should be addressed in assessments to agree and ensure that water use is offset for all new developments within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.
- 6.14.3. On this basis, a Water Neutrality Statement has been submitted in support of this application which details that the proposed water use of the development will be appropriately offset through water saving measures off-site. Please refer to the supporting Water Neutrality Statement prepared by Motion for further information.

## 6.15. Minerals Resource Assessment

- 6.15.1. Within the HDPF, supporting text for Policy 2 (Sustainable Development) outlines that proposals should have regard to the defined County Minerals Safeguarding Area and Minerals Consultation Area guidance and policy prepared by West Sussex Country Council. The site falls within Soft Sands Minerals Consultation Zone of the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (2018) and the associated Safeguarding Guidance.
- 6.15.2. Policy M9 of the Joint Minerals Local Plan states:

*Safeguarded Areas (as shown on maps in Appendix E) will not be permitted unless:*

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- (i) Mineral sterilisation will not occur; or*
- (ii) it is appropriate and practicable to extract the mineral prior to the development taking place, having regards to the other policies in this Plan; or*
- (iii) the overriding need for the development outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral and it has been demonstrated that prior extraction is not practicable or environmentally feasible.*

- 6.15.3. Under criterion i) while the site lies within a Mineral Safeguarding Area in relation to Soft Sands, given the size and nature of the site, any sterilisation of the mineral is not considered to have a likely significant effect on its availability across the County. In this respect the loss of the site on wider Soft Sands supplies would be inconsequential.
- 6.15.4. With regards to criterion ii) clearly the development of up to 29 dwellings is of strategic importance for housing delivery for Horsham District and ensuring that the Council can demonstrate a deliverable five year supply of housing. This need would in our view override the safeguarding of Soft Sand.
- 6.15.5. On this basis, the delivery of residential development on an allocated site within the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan would carry greater weight in the decision-making process when considered against Policy M9 of the Minerals Local Plan.
- 6.15.6. In mineral extraction terms the scheme is considered acceptable.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1. This Planning Statement has been produced by ECE Planning on behalf of **Elivia Homes**, in support of a Full Planning Application for the development of Land West of Backsettown, Furners Lane, Henfield. The description of development for the proposal reads:

*Erection of 29 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, parking and creation of new vehicular access from Furne's Lane.*

- 7.2. The principle of residential development is established on-site by virtue of the allocation of the site under Policy 2.3 of the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan (2021).
- 7.3. The proposed development will deliver 29 residential dwellings comprising a mix of housing types and tenure, including policy compliant affordable housing dwellings (35%).
- 7.4. The proposed layout has been sensitively designed to not have a detrimental impact on existing and proposed residential amenity, responding to the surrounding character of dwellings along Furners Mead and Furners Lane, and respecting the setting of Grade II Listed Heritage Asset, Backsettown House.
- 7.5. In terms of landscaping, the proposed development would not result in any significant impacts on the environment or landscape. Furthermore, the proposals seek the provision of public open space, play space and enhances buffer planting. The proposed layout directly responds to the parameter plan set out within the Neighbourhood Plan allocation.
- 7.6. The application is accompanied by detailed drainage and flooding information which ultimately conclude that the proposed development would be entirely acceptable and future residents would be safe from flooding.
- 7.7. The application is accompanied by a detailed transport and highways information which concludes that the road, access and layout has been designed to be entirely acceptable with regards to highways standards and requirements.
- 7.8. All other material considerations have been considered within this Statement and accompanying reports which demonstrate that the proposed development would not result in any significant harm to amenity or environment which cannot otherwise be mitigated by appropriate conditions.
- 7.9. Furthermore, Horsham District has a severe housing need with the most recent Annual Monitoring Report January 2024) only able to demonstrate a 2.9 year housing land supply. As such, 29 residential dwellings would be a welcome contribution to this severe local need.
- 7.10. To conclude, the application is compliant with the Horsham District Planning Framework, Henfield Neighbourhood Plan and the NPPF. It is strongly contended that all the relevant issues have been satisfactorily addressed, such that there would not be any demonstrable harm as a result of the development proposed and planning permission should be granted without delay.