Horsham District Council

The Planning Inspectorate
C Eagle, 3rd Floor
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Our ref: DC/24/0069
Your ref:
APP/Z3825/W/24/3355346

Date: 11/02/2025

Dear Sir

**Town and Country Planning Act 1990**
**Appeal by Earlswood Homes and Sussex Design & Development**
**Site Address: Land at Ryecroft Lane, Storrington, RH20 4PA**

**RE: National Planning Policy Framework 2024 – Housing Delivery Test Results**

I refer to your letter dated the 23 January 2025, and the implications that the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework and Housing Delivery Tests results in December 2024 may have for the above appeal.

Para 79 and 80 of the NPPF Dec 2024 set out the following:

79. To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply:
a) where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.
b) where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph 78 of this framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan;
c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote 8 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

80. The Housing Delivery Test consequences set out above will apply the day following the annual publication of the Housing Delivery Test results, at which point they supersede previously published results. Until new Housing Delivery Test results are published, the previously published result should be used.

The HDPF is well over 5 years on from its adoption, and all accept that the tilted balance ('presumption in favour of sustainable development') applies, under the terms set out in NPPF paragraph 11. In addition, we can confirm to the Inspector that the HDT 2023 measurement for Horsham District (published 12 Dec 2024) is 62%, therefore the Presumption applies as set out in NPPF para 79c. It is noted that para 79c refers back to NPPF para 11 footnote 8 – in fact, both of the circumstances described in footnote 8 apply in Horsham District.

We therefore have to acknowledge that a 20% buffer applies to the standard housing method, against which the 5-year housing land supply is assessed. The last AMR (published Jan 2024) in any case indicated a 5YHLS of only 2.9 years even as assessed against the version of the NPPF which applied at that time, and we are unable to provide any assurance that this has improved in the interim. In short, paragraph 79c does apply in full.

It is worth adding, for avoidance of doubt, that in the Council's view, the sole reason for our 5YHLS being low and HDT test also being low is due to the Natural England Position Statement issued September 2021, effectively imposing water neutrality immediately from the date of issue of that statement.

I can also advise that an updated AMR is being prepared and we expect to publish this in the spring. We are also preparing alongside this an Action Plan as per the expectation in NPPF para 79.

Yours sincerely,

*A Wilkes*

**Amanda Wilkes**