Chapter 7: Development Quality, Design and Heritage

- Horsham District has a mostly rural character, containing a network of towns, villages and hamlets, each of which having their own identity. Development proposals will need to consider how this can be maintained and where possible enhanced.
- In order to maintain the District's high quality of life for existing and future residents, development will need to be designed to ensure that it is of a high standard. This includes considering how design of development meets the needs of all age groups (young and old), those with disabilities, and makes sure spaces are safe and attractive for all.
- The District's rich and diverse cultural heritage and archaeology contributes to the sense of place and character. These are not always protected by national designations, but in combination they have a high local value.
- Any proposals for development should consider the impact on the District's history and heritage.
- The District has a number of significant heritage assets which need to be preserved and enhanced in order for future generations to enjoy them.

7.1 The District has a rich history with archaeological finds dating back to the Palaeolithic era, and has clear evidence of settlement in Roman times. Most of the settlements in the District date back to Saxon and medieval times. Horsham became a market borough in the 14th Century. The north of the District grew through the development of the Wealden iron industry and the south grew through the wood trade. There was a 'boom' period for the District during the 15th and 16th centuries; the 17th to 19th Century saw a comparative depopulation, with a reversal occurring from the late 20th Century. This is reflected in the buildings in Horsham Town and the surrounding villages.

7.2 Understanding the cultural heritage of the District is important as it guides settlement patterns and historic landscape considerations, and also influences decisions about the materials used in development. The historic environment also has a key role to play in the local economy; historic buildings in town centres attract businesses and shoppers, and stately homes and parks are often a tourist attraction.

7.3 For development to be sustainable, good design is essential. It will need to draw on local, social and environmental characteristics alongside visual and functional concerns. This includes ensuring that the design of development takes account of the needs of residents. In Horsham District this is likely to see increased elderly populations who may experience more mobility difficulties – development (including street design) should be designed to be accessible to all including those requiring wheelchairs. Evidence also shows that males and females do not always use space in

the same way, and development should be designed to ensure the needs of girls / teenagers can also be provided. [6] Good design will ensure that development enhances and complements local character, landscape and open spaces, and ensure that environmental mitigation is incorporated into development. Ultimately good design should achieve vibrant and functional communities with a distinctive 'sense of place'.

Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality

7.4 Good design is a fundamental element in sustainable development. This policy seeks to ensure that development in the District promotes a high standard of design, architecture and landscape. Development will be required to deliver sustainable and beautiful buildings and places that enhance and protect locally distinctive characters through good design, landscaping (both within a scheme and in terms of the impact on surrounding landscapes), creating or contributing to the identity or 'sense of place', and in ensuring that local, social and environmental characteristics are considered. Where appropriate, the authority in consultation with the local community will support the preparation of design guides and codes to provide a framework for delivering locally distinctive development. Development proposals will be expected to take account of these documents.

Strategic Policy 19: Development Quality

High-quality and inclusive design for all development in the District will be required based on a clear understanding of the local, physical, social, economic, environmental and policy context. In particular, development will be supported provided that it meets all the following relevant criteria:

1. It provides an attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable environment in accordance with the principles of Council endorsed Design Codes and Guides, Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit, the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code, or any future updates;
2. It encourages and enables low traffic neighbourhoods with good street design that prioritises pedestrians and cyclists, promoting active travel modes which in turn improves people's health and wellbeing;

[6] Making Space for Girls: https://assets.website-files.com/6398afa2ae5518732f04f791/649a965c4611586b90cc4760_Homes%20England%20Inclusive%20Spaces%20MSFG.pdf

3. It complements and responds to locally distinctive characters and heritage of the surrounding area (including building types, architectural styles, materials, detailing and colour. In appropriate locations where context permits, contemporary architecture can be considered;
4. It contributes a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves, having consideration to the built historic environment and townscape, and in the way they integrate with their structural surroundings and the landscape in which they sit;
5. It makes efficient use of land and optimises the provision and use of buildings and open space within a site, taking into account the character, appearance and needs of the site itself, together with the appearance and needs of the surrounding area;
6. It contributes to, and enhances, the green and blue infrastructure that makes the District a pleasant place to live. Existing landscape belts, trees, hedgerows and watercourses that form the character of the landscape should be retained;
7. It helps secure a framework of high-quality open spaces which meets the identified needs of the community, and where relevant to reflect the Neighbourhood Plan, Design Statement and/or Character Statement for that area; and
8. If located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, proposals for housing should have regard to the High Weald Housing Design Guide.

Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles

7.5 To ensure that all proposals for development are of high quality, well designed and take account of the existing character of the area, the following policy will apply to all new development. Applicants must consider all of the criteria within this policy in relation to their proposal and will be required to justify why they do not consider a specific element is relevant to their application. The NPPF is clear that development should achieve appropriate densities and optimise use of land. This will require consideration of a range of factors including an area's prevailing character and setting and the potential for regeneration or change. Development should also take account of any emerging best practice or technological updates, for example in the design and delivery of waste collection services including recycling and food waste collection.

Strategic Policy 20: Development Principles

In order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, and deliver beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, proposals for development will be supported provided that it meets all of the following:

1. Makes efficient use of land, and prioritises the use of previously developed land and buildings, whilst respecting any constraints that exist and meet the requirements of, and accord with, other Local Plan policies and designations;

2. Provides or retains a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings of the proposed site;
3. Is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of existing and future occupiers or users of nearby property and land, for example due to overlooking, over dominance or overshadowing, light pollution, traffic generation, and general activity, noise, odour and/or vibration, and having regard to the sensitivities/impact of surrounding development;
4. Ensures that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views;
5. Ensures that it is locally distinctive in character, respects and responds to the character of the surrounding area (including the overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where available and applicable, takes account of the guidance in relevant Council endorsed Supplementary Planning Documents, Design Statements, Character Assessments and/or masterplans;
6. Uses high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping and demonstrates sustainable use of resources in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management, energy efficiency and climate change adaption;
7. Includes the provision of tree lined streets and trees in open spaces or elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), street furniture, public art and street scene improvements where appropriate;
8. Relates sympathetically to the local landscape and nature. Any losses or harm to landscape and natural features that may occur through the development will require justification and evidence that new opportunities will be provided or that mitigation or compensation for any loss will be provided;
9. Ensures buildings and spaces are orientated to gain maximum benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy, unless this conflicts with the positive character features of the surrounding townscape, landscape or topography or otherwise significantly compromises other design principles;
10. Provides pedestrian, cycle and public transport priority over the use of private motor vehicles, incorporating the provision of safe recreational/utility routes, public rights of way and connectivity within the development and to the surrounding area;
11. Ensures that the development design is attractive and inclusive, meeting the needs of all users, with particular consideration given to disability, age and gender, as well as addressing the needs of those with caring responsibilities;
12. Incorporates convenient, safe and visually attractive areas for the parking of vehicles, including cycles and mobility aids;
13. Ensures that the internal and external design of properties allows sufficient space for both general waste and recycling provision, and that the scheme provides adequate and safe access for waste collection vehicles. Storage of bins, recycling and food waste collection facilities must be convenient, safe and visually attractive;
14. Incorporates measures to reduce actual or perceived opportunities for crime or antisocial behaviour both on the site and in the surrounding area. Measures expected include the creation of visually attractive active frontages with windows

and doors that provide informal surveillance of public areas by occupants of the site, adjoining streets and public spaces; and

15. Make a clear distinction between the public and private spaces.

Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment

7.6 The historic environment is one of the District's greatest assets. It is rich and varied in both urban and rural areas, with many high-quality historic places that have formed part of the landscape for thousands of years. In many places throughout the District, the historic environment is the District's environment. Farms, hamlets, villages and towns form the core of this District's historic development and character.

7.7 The Council recognises that the historic environment is an irreplaceable resource which should be conserved for future generations. It provides a backdrop to sustainable tourism and local economy by creating places that are unique to the District.

7.8 Heritage assets may be classified as either 'designated' or 'non-designated' and both are important to consider through the planning process. The aim of the historic environment policy is to preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the District's heritage assets, including where those qualities make the asset special and historic. Significance is defined as the value of the heritage asset and setting as illustrated by the archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest it possesses.

7.9 The historic environment is recognised and conserved through local and statutory designations. The District is currently home to around 1,500 Listed Buildings, 27 Conservation Areas, 178 Archaeological Notification Areas, 29 Scheduled Monuments and a number of Registered Parks and Gardens. In order to safeguard and enhance our District's heritage the Council will undertake regular reviews of Conservation Area's (and any relevant Appraisal and Management Plan's) to ensure they remain up to date and relevant. An annual update of Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register will also be undertaken, and locally important heritage assets will be defined where required.

7.10 Local heritage is recognised through designated Sites of Archaeological Interest, "Locally Listed" buildings as well as similar assets which come to light during the course of development. Collectively, the District's historic environment are these

heritage assets and carry weight in the consideration of planning and development matters.

Horsham Roofing Stone

7.11 Of the local building materials used in the construction of buildings in the past, Horsham roofing stone is the most difficult to obtain, but is also a locally distinctive building material which makes a strong contribution to the character of the District. Horsham Roofing Stone is a relatively scarce material and it is essential that opportunities to extract the stone are taken to ensure the District's historic roofs, including those of listed buildings, can be repaired in the future. The availability of Horsham roofing stone will also enable new development to reinforce the local distinctiveness of the District.

7.12 In order to facilitate opportunities for extraction of Horsham Stone, the Council will expect development proposals to include a proportionate minerals resource assessment. Where a site is underlain by the safeguarded area for building stone as illustrated in the West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan or contains a site of historic Horsham stone extraction a minerals resource assessment must have regard to the standards considered acceptable to the Minerals Planning Authority.

Strategic Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment

1. The Council will preserve and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings. Applications for such development will only be supported if they:
   a) Make reference to, and show an understanding of, the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record;
   b) Take account current best practice guidance produced by Historic England and Conservation Area Character Statements, Appraisals and Management Plans;
   c) 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;
   d) Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, including traditional architectural form, proportion, detailing, materials and, where appropriate, landscape features including trees;
   e) Demonstrate that the use(s) proposed are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset whilst securing its viable and sustainable future and continued preservation, especially any assets on Historic England's At Risk Register. Changes of use must be compatible with, and respect, the special architectural or historic interest of the asset and setting; and

f) Demonstrate that any proposal in the vicinity of a heritage asset with, or has the potential to include, archaeological interest is accompanied by appropriate archaeological research, including the investigation, recording and reporting of both above and below-ground archaeology. This will, as a minimum, include a desk-based assessment, and where deemed necessary by the Council, a field evaluation will also be required. If necessary, the Council will require assets to be preserved in situ or excavated.

2. Proposals which affect a heritage asset, or the setting of a heritage asset, will only be supported where accompanied by a Heritage Statement.
3. Proposals which would cause substantial harm to, or loss of, a heritage asset will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial public benefits gained would outweigh the substantial harm or total loss of the asset and that any replacement scheme makes an equal contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Applicants must show an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset to be lost, either wholly or in part, and demonstrate how the heritage asset has been recorded.
4. Proposals which would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and will only be supported where public benefit is considered to outweigh the harm.

Policy 22: Shop Fronts and Advertisements

7.13 Shop fronts, including temporary shop fronts and advertising help contribute to a vibrant and successful economy. To enable shopping areas to remain vibrant whilst protecting the often historic character of town and village centres across the District, shop fronts and advertisements will be expected to be of high quality and will require a particularly sensitive approach in Conservation Areas and to Listed Buildings.

7.14 When assessing the relationship of the shop front to the building the Council will require details of the evaluation of the whole building frontage. In Conservation Areas in particular, traditional materials of suitable colours or high-quality substitutes should be used. Applicants should consult Horsham District Council: Design of Shopfronts and Advertisements or any subsequent updates, as well as any other Council or local Parish Design guidance.

Policy 22: Shop Fronts and Advertisements

1. Applications for new, replacement and temporary shop fronts, including fascias, will be supported where the proposal respects the architectural style, character and form of the buildings or location of which they form a part, including appropriate use of materials, colour and illuminations.

2. Within Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings or other designated heritage assets, proposals will be expected to retain an existing traditional shop front and/or features of architectural or historic interest, through retention or restoration. This will include the use of traditional materials or high-quality substitutes, traditionally painted fascias and hanging signs with muted colours. Externally illuminated signs must be discreet and appropriate to their context.
3. Advertisements, including interactive advertisements, hoardings, illumination of hoardings and illuminated fascia signs should be sensitively designed, of an appropriate size and appropriately located.
4. Advertisements should not be detrimental to the visual amenity of local residents, buildings or the area by reason of scale, detail, character, design or illumination; impair on pedestrian or highway safety including in respect of people with disabilities; or result in, or compound, the perception of clutter on the street scene.
5. The cumulative impact of advertisements on the character and appearance of the surrounding townscape and landscape will be considered as part of any such application.