

14th January 2024

Sent via email - Nplans@wealden.gov.uk

Dear Sirs

**Horam Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Consultation
Representation on behalf of Mr & Mrs P M Clanford**

I welcome the publication of the submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan ("the Plan") and fully support the vision, objectives and policies of the Plan.

I consider that the Plan promotes sustainable development and sets out clear and succinct policies for decision making purposes in line with national policy and advice.

The vision and objectives are locally distinctive, protecting the valuable character of the Parish and supporting sustainable patterns of development. The focus on protecting the distinct individual settlements and ensuring that future development respects the character is supported. The emphasis on a landscape-led approach to development is important in achieving this aim.

The content of the vision and objectives is considered to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in particular its policies to secure well-designed and beautiful places and conserving and enhancing the natural environment, which are at the heart of sustainable development.

The suite of policies on character and design are welcome and supported. I consider that they are justified based upon and supported by proportionate evidence. The Landscape Character Assessments, summarised in the Background Paper Landscape are particularly important in providing this evidence and demonstrating the special qualities of the area and how development should respond and reflect this.

The evidence including the Horam Parish Neighbourhood Plan Report and Recommendations on Design Guidelines and Codes, as updated and amended, and the Design Guidelines (September 2023) are also important pieces of evidence in regards to justifying policy in the Plan.

I consider that the policies on character and design in the Plan are also consistent with national policy and in particular NPPF paragraph 180., which emphasises that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, by amongst other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

The approach also aligns with NPPF paragraph 132., which recognises that neighbourhood planning has an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and how development should respond and reflect this.

I therefore fully support Policies HCD1, HCD2, HCD3, HCD4, HCD5 and HCD6 that collectively identify and protect the valued landscapes at a local level and are central to achieving sustainable patterns of development and well-designed and beautiful places.

I consider that it is essential that the density, layout and landscape of any future development in the Parish responds to all these policies and demonstrates how it secures sustainable development consistent with the valued landscapes and character identified.

It is also important that future strategic policies recognise the valued landscapes and the availability of services in Horam in informing the level of growth that can be sustainably accommodated in the future.

I welcome that the Plan includes policies to inform future decision making on housing and employment development in the Parish.

I welcome the reference to ensuring that the Village Centre retains its role and function providing for the day-to-day needs of existing residents as well as future residents of the area. This may necessitate some future development, however, it should also be acknowledged that Horam is accommodating a significant increase in housing but that this level of growth has not been planned positively and is happening without holistic consideration and assessment of service availability, sustainability and landscape impact.

I consider that the availability of services including public transport needs to be better reflected in determining future sustainable patterns of development in the Parish. The NPPF recognises that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering genuine choice of transport modes. This is particularly important in reducing congestion and emissions. The NPPF recognises that the ability to achieve this will vary between urban and rural areas. As such it is important that as part of the Plan there is monitoring of development and local service availability which should inform consideration of sustainability for future development in the Parish.

The Policies on Transport and Movement are welcome and an important part of promoting the delivery of sustainable patterns of development. Equally important is the availability of community facilities and I welcome the Policies HCF1 and HFC2 in seeking to secure improvements to facilities.

I welcome the Council's conclusion that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B to the TCPA 1990. I consider that this is a justified conclusion as the Plan has been carefully prepared, with extensive consultation and supported by detailed evidence. It is also consistent with national policies and advice.

Thank you for your consideration of my response to the Horam Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 Consultation. I would request to be kept informed of progress on the Plan and would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the independent examination.

Yours faithfully
Mr & Mrs P M Clanford