

Horam Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 Response

General Points

It is clear that an enormous amount of work has gone into producing the Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting background papers. The following comments are offered to provide constructive feedback with the aim of producing a robust finished plan that is able to meet the basic conditions. We have provided detailed comments below which we hope you will find useful. In addition, further comments are provided in a table below also. These relate to specific paragraphs or policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan. Please note there is some cross over between our comments below and the comments in the table.

Contributing to Sustainable Development

The Horam Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) is not seeking to meet the future housing needs of the neighbourhood area or allocate sites. Future housing and other development needs in the neighbourhood area will therefore be addressed through the Local Plan process.

The Council has considered the environmental designations proposed within the HNP and notes that many of the proposed environmental designations e.g., Settlement Gaps, Waldron Ghyll Valley, Important Local Views and Local Green Spaces cover sites that have been submitted to Wealden as part of its Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). In effect, the designations could result in limiting the supply of potential housing sites and the number of dwellings that can be delivered on these sites to meet the housing needs of the local community in Horam. The NPPF paragraph 28 is clear that Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than is set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.

The Council published its [SHELAA Report](#) alongside the now withdrawn Wealden Local Plan in 2019 and is currently in the process of updating its SHELAA to inform its emerging Local Plan. This includes reviewing the suitability and deliverability of all sites submitted, this includes both previous sites that were submitted and reported on in the SHELAA 2019 publication, as well as new sites that have been submitted since this date. The SHELAA review will be published alongside the Local Plan Regulation 18 consultation once this takes place later in 2023 and will assist (alongside other evidence) to inform the Council's growth strategy. However, in the interim the vast majority of sites submitted to the Council for its SHELAA are available to view via the Council's [online mapping](#) system.

Climate Change

Climate change is not considered very extensively within the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole and whilst it is referred to within the Design Guide in chapters such as Sustainable Construction, it would have more weight if it was covered in the Plan itself. The design policy for example refers to reducing energy consumption and

promoting renewable sources of energy but neither the policy nor supporting text explains why this is necessary.

Structure

The plan is well structured and easy to navigate. It has a clear contents page and the list of policies on page ii is particularly useful with the policies set out according to what section they are in. Section 1 in particular is concise and easy to read and sets the scene for the plan very well.

The history and growth section has been expanded from earlier versions to include reference to the other settlements within the parish, as we suggested, and this extra information is beneficial to the plan. It is clear how the objectives stem from the vision and how the policies stem from the objectives.

Conciseness

The plan is easy to read and the supporting text is concise and to the point. However, there is some scope to combine some of the policies or remove parts which are covered by national policy or the statutory development plan to create a more streamlined plan.

Referencing

When information is stated in the plan it needs to be referenced where that information has come from. For example, in paragraph 1 where it states the population is 3100 people no source is given and no year. This is better than the previous draft, however there are still instances where sources are not cited. Throughout the document you have used hyperlinks to sources rather than footnotes, which is consistent, however the hyperlinks do not work. This will need to be addressed before the Regulation 16 Consultation.

There are no conformity references on any of the policies. Whilst this is not a requirement they would be useful to help to demonstrate how the plan is in conformity with the NPPF, Local Plan and Core Strategy. You could also add a summary of the justification behind each policy, i.e. which documents support the policy.

Accessibility

The documents are not currently accessible. Please run them through the word accessibility checker and carry out any necessary alterations prior to submitting them to us for the Regulation 15 stage. I attach guidance notes that we have on accessibility for you to use.

Map

This document would benefit from a policy map to show all the different proposed designations in one place e.g. LGS, settlement gaps etc. as well as existing designations such as the AONB, Ancient Woodland, Flood Risk Areas etc.

Detailed Comments on the Policies and Background Documents

Landscape Character Background Paper

Figure 3 in the Landscape Character Background Paper would benefit from the parish boundary being a different colour to the flood zones.

All maps/figures need to have the sources referenced and weblinks added if appropriate.

Para 23 - Requires a correction - Horam Parish comprises a number of settlements dispersed settlements,

Para 33 (above) – Should this read ‘National’ character Areas rather than ‘natural’?

When talking about the Council’s landscape evidence base, the document should start with the most recent / strategic document first i.e., the Landscape Character Assessment 2022, then the site-specific studies and then the 2014 Landscape Character Assessment. Once the remaining landscape assessments are completed, the 2014 Assessment and the site-specific studies will be superseded. We would argue that the 2014 LCA is actually irrelevant as it has effectively been superseded by the 2022 assessment already. We would recommend deleting reference to the 2014 assessment, or at least making it crystal clear that the 2022 assessment supersedes the 2014 assessment and should be the one to set the character context for Horam, including landscape guidelines. This will then ensure that the HNP is in line with the most up-to-date evidence that will support the emerging Local Plan.

Para 64 – This is a long sentence “Given their current, as well as historic, contribution to landscape character, it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan has a specific policy to ensure appropriate respect to existing trees and woodland cover, as well as historic hedgerows, notably enclosing rural lanes and fields, and to promote sensitive new tree planting.” It is suggested this is reworded as follows:

“Given their current, as well as historic, contribution to landscape character, it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan has a specific policy to ensure existing trees, woodland and hedgerows, notably those enclosing rural lanes and fields, are retained and protected. The policy should also promote the sensitive locating and planting of new trees.”

Para 64 – the wording of the suggested policy should reflect the new wording suggested in the table of comments that we have provided below.

Para 65 - “Indeed, the Wealden LCA states” It is uncertain which LCA is this referring to? Please state. Bearing in mind our comments above, we suggest this should refer to the most up-to-date evidence i.e. the 2022 LCA.

Policy HCD2 Local Settlement Gaps and Settlement Gaps document

The Council has concerns regarding the proposed Green Gap designations set out in the draft plan. There is currently no strategic policy contained within the district's development plan framework relating to green gaps and coalescence and therefore it could be questioned as to how an additional designation for green gaps is in line with the Council's strategic local policies or the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The 'saved' policies of the Wealden Local Plan referred to in paragraph 4.4. of the Horam NDP that includes EN2, EN7 (this should be EN6 as commented in detail below) and EN8 largely relates to Landscape Character rather than settlement coalescence.

The main policy approach of Wealden District Council used to safeguard land in the countryside is 'development boundaries' that includes 'saved' policies of the Wealden Local Plan (1998) GD1 and GD2. In short, these development boundaries support new development within them, provided it is in accordance with other policies of the Local Plan. It resists new development outside of those development boundaries, unless it is in accordance with other policies of the Local Plan or material considerations suggest otherwise. This approach continued as part of the Wealden District Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) and is very likely to continue as part of the new emerging local plan also.

It is noted that some Neighbourhood Plans locally (outside of Wealden District) do have Local Settlement Gap policies (for example [Battle](#) in Rother District and [Hassocks](#) in Mid Sussex District) but in these cases, the local planning authority does have an adopted strategic Local Gaps/Settlement Coalescence Policy in place that supports the Neighbourhood plan policy. This is not the case for Wealden District, and it is therefore advised that Local Settlement Gaps will not conform with the adopted approach of Wealden District Council. It should also be noted that for some Local Settlement Gaps, there may be also other important designations (i.e. the High Weald AONB) that would protect such land in any case.

You have now provided a background document which describes how the settlement pattern has evolved, outlines the community views and sets out how a local policy would in your opinion, be compatible with national and local policy contexts. Please note that Policy EN17 from the Wealden Local Plan that you refer to in paragraph 43 of the background document is not a saved policy and reference to this should be removed. You have provided criteria for designation and an assessment of each of the gaps against these criteria.

Despite the background document you have provided, there are sites submitted within the SHELAA process that would form part of these local settlement gaps, with a number of sites being considered (at a high level at least) to be suitable for development within the 2019 SHELAA. Although, at this stage, these are not of course allocations for development (the sites will be assessed on their own merits through the Local Plan process) there may of course be conflicts here at a later stage. There are also some housing development sites within Local Settlement Gaps that are subject to live planning applications, such as at the Horam – Marle Green Gap (see reference WD/2022/1694/MAO) that may be approved/refused and then subject to planning appeal, as relevant. There is also a risk that owners of such land

may argue that those settlement gaps are not warranted and there is no evidence for this. This is a risk for the NDP. Neighbourhood plans should plan positively and should not be used to constrain the delivery of a strategic site that could be allocated for development in a local plan, and this policy currently does just that. By constraining available sites coming forward, there is a significant risk that this approach would not meet the basic conditions.

The Council is currently working with consultants to undertake landscape sensitivity assessments. We note that this is not currently publicly available as this is still being drafted, however, it may be relevant to take into account its findings once this document is published alongside the Local Plan.

Under 2(i) of Policy HCD2 in defined Local Gaps, development will only be supported *'demonstrates how the proposal safeguards the open character of the relevant Gap'*. I think it's fair to say that almost all new development will have trouble in terms of meeting that requirement. If this policy was to be considered suitable, it is considered that the criteria under 2 (ii) and (iii) would be needed.

Finally, the maps in the settlement gap background paper do not have a key or copyright statements. These will need to be provided for the Regulation 16 stage.

Policy HCD3 Waldron Ghyll Valley

This policy covers a large proportion of the parish and in seeking to maintain the openness of the valley is not dissimilar to the previous Local Settlement Gaps policy. It is also unclear as to how this area has been defined? Similarly, there are sites submitted within the SHELAA process that would form part of the area covered by this policy, with a number of sites being considered (at a high level at least) to be suitable for development within the 2019 SHELAA. Although, at this stage, these are not of course allocations for development there could be a conflict here at a later stage. You may wish to consider defining the Waldron Ghyll Valley around SHELAA sites that are considered (at a high level) to be suitable for development. There are other instances where 'rural development' may also be appropriate in this area (i.e. agriculture, equestrian etc.). The term 'existing built-up areas' within the first sentence of the policy is also difficult in this context as there are several housing sites with planning permission that have yet to commence or are part way through construction that may not be shown on Figure 12. On this basis, the approach taken on 'existing built up area' as shown on the map will become out of date very quickly and will then have very limited weight.

The fundamental question regarding this policy is whether this policy is necessary? Normal policy considerations like design, landscape protection, drainage and biodiversity will ensure its appropriate protection. There are also questions about the wording of the policy and what is meant by 'the overall openness of the Waldron Ghyll Valley ...shall be maintained'. Is this preventing all new development within the defined area? In which case this would be in contradiction to the NPPF and 'saved policies' of the Wealden Local Plan (1998), which permits development in rural areas in certain circumstances (e.g. paragraphs, 78, 79 80 and 84 for example). The wording needs to be less vague and perhaps maintaining the character would be a better phrase here.

If this policy is to be pursued, evidence on the designation will be needed and this would need to demonstrate why this designation on such a large scale is needed given the existing protections in place (e.g. the northern part of the policy area is within the AONB, part of the area is within a Flood Risk Zone).

Policy HCD4 Important Local Views and Important Views Document

You have now provided a background document. However, it lacks a full analysis and explanation of the methodology used to assess the views. Who nominated the views? Who assessed the views? Were there any views nominated that did not meet the criteria? Have local residents had any involvement in the process? There is a section on assessment criteria, however, it is still not entirely clear what the criteria are. Perhaps in addition to the text, a table setting out the criteria and why they have been chosen would help. There needs to be a clear rationale that relates to the quality/importance of the view in the neighbourhood area and that the assessment of each view relates back to the criteria for designation and states how the view meets the criteria, or not. You could look at the Stanton Drew NP Protected Views Document as an example.

28 proposed protected views (30 if you include 21 b and c) is a high number for a parish of this size. Refining so that just those which are of the highest quality/importance are included would be beneficial. Also, there are some views which are on the edge of the parish looking out. Bearing in mind that the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will only relate to development in this parish it is difficult to see how the policy could have any effect on these views. Lastly, there a number of views that are largely covered by Policy HCD2 and HCD3, for example View 8 (Gap between Horam and Maynards Green) and View 11 (Hook Wood southeast across Waldron Ghyll) that means there will be duplication in terms of designations.

The wording of the policy is currently too vague. There needs to be some clarification. For example, you state these views should be retained but does this mean as they are with no change or development allowed? This would contradict Local Plan policies and the NPPF. Under part 2, what type of impact are you thinking of and what would you like to prevent? It could be reworded to provide clarification e.g. proposals for development which would have an adverse impact on the landscape character of an Important Local View as defined in Figure 13 of this NDP will not be supported. Alternatively, what would be supported – if you are to plan positively? This policy should be worded positively rather than negatively? I.e. development proposals will be supported where they.....? Landscape mitigation is also something to consider in this policy.

Many of these views are across sites put forward in the SHELAA process and there may be issues around trying to restrict development and meeting the basic conditions as discussed as Policy HCD2 and HCD3. Again, neighbourhood plans should plan positively and should not be used to constrain the delivery of future sites.

Policy HCD6: Non-designated Heritage Asset, Horam Parish: Historic Overview, Character and Issues Statement, and Approach to Identifying and Protecting Local Heritage Assets Document

The policy is titled Non-designated Heritage Assets. However, the wording of the policy is quite general and does not relate to non-designated heritage assets directly. The parish itself as a whole does not have heritage significance. The policy either needs to be amended to relate to non-designated heritage assets specifically or if you want to cover the broader historic environment, the title and supporting text need to be changed (however is a wider heritage policy needed when we have district wide policies on heritage and the NPPF?). Despite not identifying and assessing potential non-designated heritage assets you can still have a policy outlining how applications affecting them should be considered/what will be supported.

Approach to Identifying and Protecting Local Heritage Assets Document

If you are not proposing to identify and assess non designated heritage assets as part of the Neighbourhood Plan is this document necessary? It may lead to confusion amongst local residents.

Horam Parish: Historic Overview, Character and Issues Statement

This is a detailed document which will undoubtedly be of help when you come to identifying non-designated heritage assets at a later date. It describes the character of each settlement and what should be protected and preserved and where there are opportunities for enhancement, which will be a useful resource for those involved in future development in the parish, both planners and applicants as well as the Parish Council when commenting on applications as part of the planning process.

Project H(i) Local Heritage

As explained in the Historic England guidance, the legitimacy and weight within the planning system of local heritage lists is increased when the list has been prepared in accordance with defined criteria and has been subject to public consultation. There is not a mechanism for producing a local list other than via a Neighbourhood Plan, via a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan or via the District Council. We wonder therefore whether the statement should be tweaked to instead be a community project to nominate non designated heritage assets for the production of a local list in the future? The wording of H(i) will need to be amended accordingly.

Housing Needs Assessment

We wish to make the following points on the housing needs assessment:

Executive Summary

- Paragraph 17: If new housing development was to come forward within Horam Parish, there would still be a district wide need for rented accommodation and this will need to be considered as part of neighbourhood

plan policy and the district council's emerging Local Plan, particularly to meet the needs of those most vulnerable.

- Paragraph 43 relates to accessibility and adaptability standards. The government is intending to mandate M4(2) standards in all new homes, but has not yet done this. Given the above, and that the Council is also expecting to do this through its emerging Local Plan, I am not sure it is needed, as stated at Policy HHD1.
- Paragraph 46 states '*It is considered that Horam's position in the settlement hierarchy makes it a relatively less suitable location for specialist accommodation on the basis of the accessibility criteria and the considerations of cost-effectiveness above.*' We do not believe it is for the local HNA to determine where specialist housing accommodation should go, so would advise to remove this.

Context

Paragraph 72 states '*The Wealden LHNA (August 2021) states that 1,225 dwellings are needed per annum across the district. This can be loosely apportioned to Horam with reference to population statistics. Horam represents 1.77% of Wealden's population and might therefore be expected to need 22 dwellings per annum (rounded). Over the period of the LHNA (2019-2039) this equates to 434 dwellings. Over the anticipated Neighbourhood Plan period (15 years) it equates to 330.*'

The figure for the district has altered slightly since then and it now stands at 1,200 dpa exactly in 2023. This work is of course very straightforward in terms of its methodology and does not account for any spatial strategy from WDC, or provide a constraints-based approach to the Parish (that could either be lower or higher based on these).

The NPPF at paragraph 66 confirms within the local planning authority overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. At paragraph 67, it confirms that if an exact figure can't be provided, an indicative figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority. It does not appear that the latter issue or constraints has been considered in coming to the conclusion that has been reached.

RQ 1: Tenure, Affordability and the Need for Affordable Housing

Paragraph 118 states '*First Homes are to be offered at a discount of at least 30% on equivalent market prices (i.e., new build, entry-level properties). Local authorities and neighbourhood plan qualifying bodies will have discretion to increase the discount on First Homes to 40% or 50% where there is evidence to suggest this is appropriate.*'

Agree with the statement above and this is highlighted in the PPG. Not for this document, but we would expect for the viability of this higher figure to be tested in

some way in terms of viability also. The Council itself will be revisiting this issue through its local plan evidence base and this will be viability tested although, this may not be at a 50% discount for the district wide plan, so may not be relied upon.

Paragraph 152c states *'For 10% of all housing to be affordable ownership in Wealden, where 35% of all housing on eligible sites should be affordable, 29% of affordable homes should offer a route to ownership.'*

This is a very strict interpretation of affordable housing policy in the NPPF and there are several exemptions to this listed that should be included here, including self-build. I would state that many local planning authorities are continuing to prioritise rented accommodation.

Paragraph 155 states *'Since shared ownership appears to be the most affordable route to ownership in Horam, it should represent 10% of the affordable mix after the minimum First Homes share is allocated. Rent to Buy can be seen as the least affordable tenure locally and thus, is given 5% of the mix. Rent to Buy is not common and it may be prudent not to specify an exact percentage if it is not known to be deliverable locally.'*

We cannot see that Rent to Buy has been covered elsewhere in the analysis before, but it features here in any case and is included in the mix. This is not mentioned in the accompanying policy either.

Paragraph 157 states *'Where the neighbourhood planning group wish to develop policy that deviates from that outlined in the Local Plan – either by differing from the headline split between renting and ownership or by specifying a greater level of detail around sub-tenures, it is important that they liaise with WDC to gather more detailed income and viability information, and to ensure that departures from the local policy context have their support.'*

Agree with the above comments. This has not been verified by the Council at this stage in terms of viability evidence, particularly on the tenure split and first homes discount.

RQ2: Type and Size

Paragraph 215 states that *'The size mix remains generally larger than the national average but slightly smaller than the Wealden average.'*

We consider on this basis, whether there are actually strong reasons to deviate from the assumptions made for market homes in the Council's own LHNA? There are substantial differences between the two assessments in terms of the housing mix (particularly around 2- and 3- bedrooms) and it does not appear to be sufficiently justified by the text that precedes the suggested dwelling mix.

The HNA does not consider the housing mix for affordable homes (rented or ownership) so the proposed policy within the NDP can only consider the housing mix of the whole scheme, and this should be made clear in the respective policy.

RQ3: Specialist housing for older people, including disabilities

Paragraph 269 states that *'the current adopted Local Plan does not provide explicit encouragement for development to accommodate specific groups such as older people. Also, it does not set specific targets for the proportion of new housing that might be required to meet national standards for accessibility and adaptability (Category M4(2)), or for wheelchair users (Category M4(3)). The evidence gathered here would appear to justify the Parish Council approaching the LPA to discuss setting requirements on accessibility and adaptability at District level. It is unclear whether Neighbourhood Plans can set their own requirements for the application of the national standards of adaptability and accessibility for new housing and so discussions with the LPA are advised if this is a key priority'*.

The Council through its emerging Local Plan will consider the implementation M4(2) standards for all new dwellings and a percentage of M4(3) dwellings where this is possible to do so. This will of course be subject to financial viability testing that the Council is currently undertaking. We note that the Horam NDP is currently not supported by a viability assessment and without this, implementing such standards within policy is likely to come under scrutiny.

Given the above and the fact that M4(2) standards may be made mandatory by government in the future, it is not considered that this is necessary for the Horam NDP to consider any further.

Policy HHD1: Housing type, size and mix

Under Policy HHD1, point 4 outlines that *'development proposals which include the provision of homes suitable for older residents, including supported and specialist housing, and independent living, will be supported where it is located within easy access of shops, facilities and public transport services'*. However, it does not confirm the type of older person, specialist accommodation that is supported? This is described in the [PPG](#) and it would be helpful to include in this policy, unless all types of specialist older persons housing are supported.

Policy HHD2: Affordable Housing

Under Policy HHD2, point 2, we assume that the affordable housing splits relate to your local HNA but this has not been tested in terms of viability yet. This is a risk to the NDP and could be questioned by housing developers/ agents etc (i.e. what evidence do you have on this point?)

After reviewing the HNA, it is noted that due to recent developments in Horam, there is already a higher percentage of such affordable housing in Horam but this does not necessarily diminish the need for such accommodation at the district wide level. This split in tenure may be appropriate locally, but the council may seek to allocate land through the emerging Local Plan with a different affordable housing tenure mix to meet the district wider need.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan would need to provide viability evidence to confirm that this affordable housing tenure mix is viable in Horam.

Under point 3, a similar issue arises in respect of the 50% discount to First Homes which is steep and is contrary to our district wide evidence that suggests that a 'discount of 30% looks generally reasonable for first homes, although higher discounts may be suited for 3-bedroom homes'. You may not be able to rely upon the Council's evidence base for this in terms of viability evidence. It is noted that the policy only supports the 50% First Homes discount rather than requiring it, but it should be noted that the District Council's own policy on this matter may override the NDP on this point.

Local Green Space Assessment Paper

In relation to paragraph 3.7 of the Local Green Space Report, the latest Open Space Assessment is available on our website, so the following paragraphs will need updating. The Council produced its Wealden District Council Open Space Assessment Report - April 2022 and Wealden District Council Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (April - 2022) that can be found here: [Open space, sports and recreation. - Wealden District Council - Wealden District Council](#)

On the tables of the Local Green Space Report, if you have no comment to make, we suggest you add a N/A to make this clear.

Suggested Site	Comment
Site 1- Land at Corner of A267	<p>Part of this site is within the Council's SHELAA process (reference 1062/3030) and will therefore be considered for both employment and housing use, which it is being promoted for (excludes the pond). Its designation as a Local Green Space may be seen as removing an opportunity for development and meeting the basic conditions test.</p> <p>Of course, it goes without saying, that the landowner (given the site has been submitted to the SHELAA process) will likely dispute this and this is therefore a risk to the NDP.</p> <p>The Council would not consider this site as tranquil, given its location adjacent to the A267 to the east and employment uses to the west.</p> <p>Given the above we do not believe this site is appropriate for Local Green Space designation.</p>
Site 2- Land in front of Four Seasons	We would question the tranquillity issue once more here, given the proximity to the A267 and being bisected by Autumn Drive.
Site 5- Memorial Garden, Hillside Drive	Is there more that can be added here? We do understand the purpose of the Local Green Space designation, but given its owned by HPC is there any need for this

	designation? Is there some historical significance as this has been left empty in the Local Green Space Report?
Site 6- Corner of Paynesbridge Way with Vines Cross Road	It is good quality residential amenity space, but does it meet the high bar of being demonstrably special to the community? Although the public can access the green space, there is no seating or other places to dwell / spend time.
Site 7- Land behind Maynards Green School	If it's a school playing field, then does this need an extra level of protection. We therefore, question whether it should be designated as a Local Green Space.
Site 8- Area by Hillside Car Park	It is good quality residential amenity land for residential development, but does it meet the high bar of being considered as demonstrably special at this stage. Although the public can access the green space, there is no seating or other places to dwell / spend time.
Site 10- Field and bank north of solar farm	<p>It appears from the wording that the origin of the ponds has not been agreed, so perhaps don't use this unless it can be certain that it relates to the Wealden iron industry.</p> <p>If support was to be given (it appears from the summary table that you do not intend to designate) then the justification will need to be thought out more thoroughly. We agree that there may be some difficulty in making the connection that this land is demonstrably special to the local community.</p>
Site 15- Land at Foords Farm	We would question whether this green space is in close proximity to the community it serves, given its location outside of Vines Cross and with no substantive pedestrian connectivity. Can the general public use it?
Site 16- Golf Course	Agree with the conclusion here, but we consider it to be an extensive tract of land in our view and should not be brought forward as a LGS. Of course, part of the golf course is also outside the Parish as well so cannot be included.
Site 18- Area between Cuckoo Trail and Maynards Green Road	Agree with the conclusions, the site is already in the High Weald AONB, heavily treed, narrow and is owned as part of the Cuckoo Trail. There is no further requirement to designate as an LGS.
Site 19- Corner of Laundry Lane and Horbeeche Lane	Agree with summary, that this is a very small parcel of land that relates to a highway verge and vehicle crossovers and

	is not demonstrably special, albeit those trees of course hold amenity value. This should not be an LGS.
Site 20- Wooded strip of land on west side of Chiddingly Road	Agree with the conclusion that states a TPO is potentially the most likely protection here and that a LGS is not necessary.
Site 21- Green strip between electricity sub station and Crematorium	Part of this site is included within the SHELAA process (reference 911/3030) and also forms part of a planning application for new homes under reference 2022/1899. There is planning permission for housing development (38 (net) dwellings) for the site under WD/2018/2526/MAO that was granted in November 2022. We would advise strongly that this not included as a LGS, given the risks to the NDP. I have noted that your summary concludes that you will not bring this forward as a LGS and we agree with this.
Site 24- Land behind the Brewers Arms	<p>Agree with conclusion to this LGS candidate. The site use is no longer in operation and is located within the High Weald AONB, so is sufficiently protected.</p> <p>We would note that the field itself was submitted to the SHELAA under reference 239/3320 but was found 'unsuitable' in the latest assessment in 2019. Nonetheless, there is a risk the landowner would not support the designation of a LGS here and this in turn would be a risk to the NDP.</p>
Site 25- Field behind the Brewers Arms, Vines Cross	<p>See comment above for the smaller part of this site. Agree with the conclusion and would strongly suggest that you do not designate this site as a LGS. The site is within the High Weald AONB in any case.</p> <p>Is there a reason why this has been considered separately to Site 24, given they form part of the same field?</p>
Site 26- Strip of land alongside Nettlesworth Lane	Agree with conclusion that the site is not suitable for LGS designation, given its existing protection as part of the High Weald AONB and its narrow form, as well as its lack of recreational value.
Site 27- Field between Laundry Lane and Rosemead Place development	This site has been put forward within the SHELAA process under reference 830/3030 and at a high level was found suitable for residential development within the 2019 SHELAA assessment. The site has also been subject to several planning applications in recent years for residential development including the latest planning application under reference WD/2022/1694/MAO for 46 homes that was refused in June 2023 following a committee decision.

	<p>It is noted that there will likely be strong resistance from the developer during the NDP preparation and this is of course a substantial risk to the NDP. In addition, the Council does not agree with the assessment in terms designating the site as a LGS, given its agricultural nature and its proximity to the Poppy Drive development to the west that is largely constructed.</p> <p>It was advised that this LGS should not come forward within the Regulation 14 version of the NDP and this continues to be the advice moving forward.</p>
Site 28- Open space alongside the Waldron Ghyll	<p>Part of this site to the south has been submitted to the Council under the SHELAA process (reference 925/3030) and was found unsuitable for development due to TPO protections, views to the AONB and flood risk in the 2019 SHELAA.</p> <p>Given the environmental protections in place, including flood risk, it is not considered necessary to designate this site as a LGS as stated, as there are limited options for development in this location.</p> <p>In addition, as stated before, given the submission of the land within the SHELAA process, there is a risk that the landowner will actively disagree with the assessment as an LGS, and therefore, this is a risk to the NDP.</p>
Site 29- Main part of Clearhedge Wood	<p>Agree with the conclusion to this assessment as almost all of the land is Ancient Woodland so strongly protected, and moreover, this is an extensive tract of land. Therefore, we would agree with the conclusion that this site should not be a LGS.</p>
Site 30- Eastern arm of Clearhedge Wood	<p>Agree with conclusion that there is no need to designate this site as an LGS given its existing protection as Ancient Woodland.</p>
Site 31- Main part of Coneyburrow Wood	<p>Agree with conclusion that there is no need to designate this site as a LGS given it is largely still protected as Ancient Woodland. The site is also an extensive tract of land and quite some distance from the local community.</p>
Site 32- Ancient woodland south west of Horam Manor	<p>Agree with the conclusion that there is no need to designate this site as an LGS given its existing protection as Ancient Woodland.</p>

Site 33- Field enclosed by Ancient Woodland	Agree with the conclusion that the site is not demonstrably special and it is also not publicly accessible, meaning it is unlikely to pass the NPPF criteria at paragraph 102.
Site 35- Land and banks behind units in Discovery Way	<p>This site is within the SHELAA process (reference 117/3030) and was considered suitable for residential development within the 2019 SHELAA report. It is also known that there is a live planning appeal for residential development with the Planning Inspectorate (reference 2022/1180) so it is likely that the landowner will challenge this designation as an LGS.</p> <p>This is of course a risk to the NDP and will likely be challenged. There is also a risk that the appeal succeeds. Given the above, it is advised that this parcel of land is not designated as an LGS.</p> <p>That this site is subject to an ongoing planning appeal for residential development should be stated in the assessment.</p>
Site 36- Land south of Grange Close	<p>This site has been submitted to the SHELAA (reference 123/3330 and 875/3030) and was previously considered as part of an allocation for housing within the withdrawn Wealden Local Plan (2019) and is actively promoted for residential development. Both sites were considered suitable for residential development as part of the 2019 SHELAA report.</p> <p>This is a significant risk to the NDP and designation as a LGS has been actively criticised by the developer/landowner through the Regulation 14 consultation process. In addition, it is not considered that this site is demonstrably special to Horam and moreover, it is difficult to envisage how it would meet the NPPF criteria.</p>

Policy HCE4: Local green space designations

For clarity, and as discussed above in relation to the Local Green Space background paper, we can confirm that Wealden District Council supports/does not support the following Local Green Spaces Designations in Policy HCE4: Local Green Space Designations:

Local Green Space Designations in Policy HCE4	Wealden District Council Stance at Regulation 14
a) Land at corner of A267/accessway to Village Hall (Site Ref. 1 in LGS Report)	Does not support
b) Land in front of Four Seasons adjacent to the A267 (bisected by the entrance road to Four Seasons) (Site Ref. 2 in LGS Report)	Support
c) Allotments (Site Ref. 3 in LGS Report)	Support
d) Horam Recreation Ground (Site Ref. 4 in LGS Report)	Support
e) Memorial Garden, Hillside Drive (Site Ref. 5 in LGS Report)	Support (although it is not thought to be necessary given the land is owned by Horam Parish Council)
f) Land on corner of Paynsbridge Way and Vines Cross Road (Site Ref. 6 in LGS Report)	Does not support
g) Area by Hillside Car Park, junction with Meadow Rise (Site Ref. 8 in LGS report)	Does not support
h) Station area, Horam, including access land from B2203 (Site Ref 9. In LGS report)	Support
i) Land between Horebeech Lane and Beauford Road (Site Ref. 11 in LGS Report)	Support
j) Land between the High Street and garages in Beauford Road (Site Ref. 12 in LGS Report)	Support
k) Vines Cross Pond, Foords Lane junction with Ballsocks Lane (Site Ref. 13 in LGS Report)	Support
l) Land at Hurst Shaw, Vines Cross (Site Ref. 14 in LGS Report)	Support
m) Land at Foords Farm with duck pond (Site Ref. 15 in LGS Report)	Does not support

n) Strip of land between Merrydown estate and the A267 (Site Ref. 22 in LGS Report)	Support
o) Pond between tennis/football pavilion and Winter Gardens (Site Ref. 23 in LGS Report)	Support
p) Field east of Rosemead Place, north of Marle Green, crossed by footpath 11 (Site Ref. 27 in LGS Report)	Does not support
q) Treed rural fringe along banks of Waldron Ghyll and footpath, between Maynards Green Road and Vines Cross Road (Site Ref. 28 in LGS Report)	Does not support
r) Fishing Lakes and surrounds, opposite Lakeside Cafe (Site Ref. 34 in LGS Report)	Support
s) Land south of Grange Close, adjacent to A267 (Site Ref. 36 in LGS Report)	Does not support

Water Management and Flood Risk Background Paper

1.6- Much of the area described in this paragraph is outside and downstream of the parish.

2.6- This is unproven – there may just be no capacity left within parts of the foul sewage network.

The statement at paragraph 2.8 “Increased impermeable surfaces increases run-off and can impact on both fluvial flood risk and surface water flooding incidents” is misleading as surface water runoff and flooding can, and is, managed by the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) within developments. The NPPF is clear that development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of a site specific flood risk assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate (paragraph 167(b)). This sentence should be caveated to this effect.

The Council’s SFRA should be referred to more extensively and the data within it used within this paper (and particularly within Section 3), rather than simply relying on the EA Flood Map for Planning (Figure 5) as the Council’s SFRA is based on

more up to date flood modelling, and this is for flood risk from all sources taking into account the climate change allowances to represent potential future flood zones.

Paragraph 3.4 refers to the “areas of most serious and/or persistent flooding” being upstream from where the watercourse is bridged by a road, track or footpath. However, this cannot be a certain conclusion as the Flood Zones shown on Figure 5 represent the floodplain of the watercourse/river. They do not show persistence or severity of flooding, just where the river floods. Furthermore, within this paragraph there is no evidence to support the assertion that “Stream Farm Bridge and Horeham Bridge (shown by red circles on Figure 5) are recognised as restricting high flows and causing upstream flooding”.

3.9- Built-up areas are over-represented on such mapping as incidents are more easily observed and have potential for an adverse flood impact than a more rural equivalent area.

3.12- This is true nationally and is one of the reasons our drainage engineer and the LLFA comment on new development drainage.

Paragraph 4.2 is again misleading. The NPPF is clear that “All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account all sources of flood risk and the current and future impacts of climate change – so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property”. They should do this, and manage any residual risk by, amongst other measures, “using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management)”. The NPPF does not explicitly say, as paragraph 4.2 does, “land at the lowest risk of flooding from all sources, should be considered for development; i.e. land in Flood Zone 1 with no surface water or other sources of flood risk” as surface and other flood risk can be mitigated.

Paragraph 4.4 is superfluous to the NDP as it is a policy requirement of the Local Plan preparation to undertake the Sequential, and potentially Exceptions, Tests. The NPPF clearly stipulates this and the NDP does not need to repeat this fact. Would also argue that the statement in this paragraph “Given the clear evidence that Horam is susceptible to flooding” is misleading as the areas susceptible are contained to along the river (fluvial flooding) and some parts of the Parish to surface water flood risk. The entire Parish is not shown to be covered by fluvial or surface water flood risk and in any case surface water flooding can be effectively managed through the provision of SuDS and in such cases should not be considered a constraint to development.

4.8- This is a somewhat new approach and would require landowner cooperation.

At paragraph 4.16, it states that “it is considered both reasonable and necessary that development in the Heathfield – Horam – Hellingly areas should seek to contribute to reducing flood risk in the catchment of the Waldron Ghyll/Bull River/Cuckmere River” however development is only expected to reduce its own flood risk and ensure it doesn’t contribute to increasing flood risk elsewhere. This does not cover remediating

issues that are beyond that required for a development to address. This comment also applies to the final bullet point of paragraph 4.17. They go beyond what can be asked of developers.

There is little / no evidence to support the requirement at paragraph 4.18(c), and this approach does not align with the national policy approach to flood risk. The national policy approach does not specify “upstream” or “downstream” of specific infrastructure, rather it requires all developments to assess flood risk on a case by case basis through a site specific flood risk assessment following the sequential test and potentially exceptions test.

In addition, paragraph 4.18(e) does not align with the national policy approach. It would be dependent on the location and size of the site and space for water would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis taking account of flood risk and all other material considerations.

Furthermore, paragraph 4.18(f) does not align with national policy and this is not something that would be able to be requested of developers. Also it is unclear whether the strategy would be just for the site or would it cover a much wider area. In addition, who would develop the strategy?

In approaching the management of flood risk and general principles, it would be beneficial to follow the national approach and the recommendations within the Council's SFRA.

In the Natural Flood Management section, you will need to provide evidence to support the claim that “Given the terrain and landscape and flashy nature of the ghylls, the local area is suited to the use of NFM measures to mitigate the effects of extreme rainfall events and the most damaging impacts of flooding”. This approach would require the agreement and cooperation of landowners and could be difficult to implement.

The use of leaky dams (paragraph 4.22) is a relatively new approach and is yet to be comprehensively proven to work. There is the risk that debris from the leaky dam is washed down stream and in fact could cause blockages to pipes or the watercourse further downstream.

The NPPF does state that local plans should manage residual flood risk by (alongside other measures) safeguarding land from development that is required, or likely to be required, for current or future flood management (paragraph 161(b)), however the use of flood storage areas has issues as it is likely to involve the flooding of private land and therefore requires landowner approval / cooperation. This matter is best addressed through the production of the Wealden Local Plan rather than the NDP in the first instance (paragraph 4.23 of the NDP).

At paragraph 4.24, would urge caution as to the sweeping statement that “The most suitable locations are woodlands, as occasional, short-term flooding does not cause real damage to the woodland flora”. There is no evidence given to support this statement. Whilst ‘wet woodland’ may be suitable, some woodlands may actually be

damaged by letting them flood for example. The NPPF makes no specific mention of the types of habitats that could be used in NFM.

4.28- They have effectively been mandatory for some years now.

4.31- This should be determined by a site specific percolation test to BRE Digest 365.

4.33- 'Targeted woodland planting can slow water across the landscape'- or lead to loose wood blocking downstream assets

Water Management and Flood Risk Strategy- see comments on this in the table below.

Specific Points in the Main Plan Document

Para/Policy Reference	Comment	Suggested Change/ Recommendation
Paragraph 1.5	This looks like it should be a link but it does not work. Any quotations should be fully referenced.	Add link to the source
Figure 1	Would be better if the map was round the right way.	Move map 90 degrees. If you need help with mapping please advise us.
Paragraph 1.7	'it will be submitted to WDC for a further consultation'	We would suggest adding here the following: 'It will be submitted to WDC at the Regulation 15 stage when the District Council will confirm it meets regulatory requirements - this could be a footnote.
Paragraph 1.25	There are some initial stages that have admittedly past now that have not been included here such as SEA/HRA Screening and the formal designation of the area.	Suggest that these are added in at the appropriate places.
Paragraph 2.2	The second sentence is quite long and doesn't read very well.	Adjust the commas and add in 'meant that' before the Weald
Paragraph 2.13	Typo 'High Weald Area of Natural Beauty'	Add 'Outstanding'.
Paragraph 2.24	'iron extraction, with and forges are noted in the area'.	Amend the wording so that this sentence makes sense.

	This sentence does not make sense.	
Paragraph 2.32	<p>'It is referred to as a hamlet but as is'</p> <p>Unfinished sentence</p>	Finish the sentence.
Objective 10	'These should be inclusive and accessible.'	This could be changed to something like 'To encourage and enable inclusive and accessible cycling, walking and public transport services'.
Paragraph 4.4	<p>The NPPF at paragraph 130 does state planning policies should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, but also states (my emphasis) '<i>while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)</i>'.</p> <p>In addition, reference to the Wealden Local Plan and Policy EN7 is not correct as this only relates to the Ashdown Forest.</p>	<p>We are not sure that paragraph 130 of the NPPF is necessarily reflected in full in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.</p> <p>Reference to Policy EN7 of the Wealden Local Plan should be removed from paragraph 4.4. Believe the reference you are referring to is EN6.</p>
Policy HCD2 Local Settlement Gaps	See separate detailed comments above.	
Policy HCD3 Waldron Ghyll Valley	See separate detailed comments above	
Policy HCD4 Important Local Views	See separate detailed comments above	
View 14	'View from Furnace Lane looking SSW across Hook's Farm listed building'	<p>What does the 'SSW' mean in this phrase? This should be spelt out. We assume south-southwest?</p>

View 17	States N/A?	We assume this view will need a title? It is noted that this suggested view was not incorporated so why is it here? Is this a list of potential views?
Policy HCD5 Design of New Development	<p>Criteria c) 'Normally be of one or two storeys in height'</p> <p>Very specific – a reference to reflecting character and height is sufficient. What justification/evidence is there for this specific reference to storey heights?</p> <p>Criteria j) 'Have safe vehicular and pedestrian access and not result in unacceptable traffic or transport conditions, including congestion'</p>	<p>This is still not defined particularly well here and will be judged by the local highway's authority in any case as part of a planning application process. Could use similar wording to the NPPF at paragraph 111?</p>
Paragraph 4.28	The final sentence of the paragraph 4.28 requires a full stop.	Add full stop.
Policy HCD6 Non designated Heritage Assets	See separate detailed comments above	
Paragraph 5.3	'There are some 1,350 dwellings in the Parish as of 2021'	Is this known as the Census has not dealt with lower geographies than the district level at this stage. Is this estimated from tax banding? It would be helpful to have a source added.
Paragraph 5.9	'The total population of the Parish, as of the 2021 Census, is 3,100 people'.	See comment above, but I am not sure this was released in the 2021 Census, I assume this is an estimate. In any case, can the source be added, it may be the HNA estimate.
Policy HHD1: Housing type, size and mix	See separate detailed comments above	
Paragraph 5.17	(An income multiple of 3.5 is used by the Financial Conduit Authority as the standard assumption for single mortgage applicants...)	The term 'conduit' is used here, but I assume it's 'conduct' here. Could this be a footnote?

Paragraph 5.20	<p>'subject to viability considerations'</p> <p>Has this work been undertaken? This will be key for this policy moving forward and without this work there will be risk for the NDP (I.e. what's the evidence to suggest this is financially viable?)</p>	Add viability evidence
Policy HHD2: Affordable Housing	See separate detailed comments above	
Paragraph 6.2	'...in a net gain for wildlife'	Should be ..in a net gain for biodiversity...
Paragraph 6.3	'...that biodiversity gains'	Should read ... that biodiversity net gains (see last sentence).
Paragraph 6.5	..the Cuckoo Trail..	This isn't really a habitat. Suggest removing and refer to it as part of the GI network instead.
Paragraph 6.9	<p>'Planting of locally native trees and shrubs'</p> <p>Need to consider the possibility that non-native species may be more appropriate due to things such as climate change. Native species may not be well suited to a changing climate for example.</p>	
Policy HCE1: Nature and biodiversity	Point 1 '... as minimum,'	Should read 'as a minimum',
Policy HCE1: Nature and Biodiversity	<p>Point 3</p> <p>'Where development incorporates green infrastructure, either through retention and or provision of new infrastructure, it should:'</p> <p>This makes it sound as though developments don't have to provide GI whereas I am</p>	<p>Consider rephrasing:</p> <p>'Development should incorporate green infrastructure within the scheme design and layout where possible, either through retention and or provision of new infrastructure, and in so doing, the GI provided should:'</p> <p>For point d) wording to the effect of the following could be used:</p>

	<p>assuming the point of the policy criteria and the policy itself is to ensure GI provision, enhancement and protection.</p> <p>The list that follows is fine, although some thought may be needed around d) as walking and cycling could be at odds with nature conservation / enhancement opportunities.</p>	<p>‘Maximise opportunities for people to interact with nature and encourage walking and cycling, ensuring that opportunities will not cause harm to wildlife and habitats’</p>
Policy HCE2: Trees and Hedgerows	<p>Criteria 2 says:</p> <p>‘Development that incorporates, or is likely to impact on, existing trees, woodlands or hedges should provide for their retention and long-term management’.</p> <p>It can be the case sometimes that the removal of certain trees is needed / acceptable to ensure the wellbeing of others, and this would be decided on an application basis. Also, may be tricky to ask for ‘long-term management’.</p>	<p>Having spoken to the Council’s Arboricultural and Biodiversity Officer, we suggest rewording:</p> <p>‘Development that incorporates, or is likely to impact on, existing trees, woodlands or hedges should provide for their retention, where appropriate, and ongoing management.’</p>
Policy HCE3: Dark Skies and Lighting	<p>Criteria 1</p> <p>‘Provision of street lighting is not normally appropriate within new development’.</p>	<p>This is a statement rather than a policy requirement. Suggest deleting as Criteria 2 covers this point.</p> <p>A good example of a dark skies policy which looks at lighting is Wadhurst’s (Policy WAD17)</p>
Policy HCE 4: Local Green Spaces	See separate detailed comments above	
Policy HCE5	(1) ‘... established in the Wealden Open Space Study’	<p>There are two reports related to the open space study:</p> <p>https://www.wealden.gov.uk/UploadedFiles/Wealden-Open-Space-Report-26.05.22.pdf or</p>

[illegible]

	Is there evidence to support this or is this anecdotal?	
Paragraph 6.37	'Given that most <u>of</u> land'	Given that most of <u>the</u> land
Paragraph 6.38	<p>'should take opportunities to help reduce flood risk in Horam and the wider catchment of the Waldron Ghyll'</p> <p>Development is only expected to reduce its own flood risk and ensure it doesn't contribute to increasing flood risk elsewhere. This does not cover remediating issues that are beyond that required for a development to address.</p>	
Paragraph 6.39	This is a somewhat new approach requiring landowner cooperation.	
Paragraph 6.40	<p>'The most suitable locations for these measures are woodlands. Open, low-lying land adjacent to watercourses, where flood waters can safely overflow for short periods, may also be appropriate. Potential areas of opportunity for Natural Flood Management are shown indicatively on Figure 16'</p> <p>There is no evidence given to support this statement. Whilst 'wet woodland' may be suitable, some woodlands may actually be damaged by letting them flood for example. The NPPF makes no specific mention of the types of habitats that could be used in NFM.</p>	Add evidence for this.

Paragraph 6.41	<p>‘The use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) is encouraged’</p> <p>This is a requirement on new development.</p> <p>This paragraph is true but the two sentences in the paragraph are unconnected.</p>	Reword
Paragraph 6.42	<p>‘Depending on the height of the water table at the location of any proposed development site, restrictions may be placed on the types of SuDS appropriate to certain areas’</p> <p>This is standard national practice, not unique to Horam.</p>	If this has come from the ESCC SuDS guidelines, then it should be made clear that this is where the information has come from. At the moment, it appears to be just anecdotal evidence.
Paragraph 6.43	<p>‘Where SuDS are appropriate to the location, they should be compatible with and contribute to local landscape character’.</p> <p>This is desirable/aspirational rather than enforceable.</p> <p>Above ground features such as a pond provide more contribution to the area, are cheaper to build and easier to maintain than the equivalent underground feature such as a tank.</p>	
Paragraph 6.45	<p>‘Where hard landscaping is needed the use of porous materials should be maximised to enable infiltration’.</p> <p>Subject to soakage tests to BRE Digest 365.</p> <p>‘Applicants shall consult with East Sussex County Council</p>	

	<p>and Environment Agency (EA), as well as Wealden District Council, as appropriate to inform an appropriate drainage solution'</p> <p>The Council would do this as part of the planning process.</p>	
Paragraph 6.47	<p>'Separate consent may be required from the EA for works close to the Waldron Ghyll upstream as far as Horam, where it is classed as a 'main river''</p> <p>and from the LLFA on the remaining "ordinary watercourses"</p>	Add further explanation.
Figure 16	Where has this map come from? Where are these NFM measures detailed?	This map needs to be backed up by evidence.
Policy HCE6: Flood Risk	<p>Criteria 1a)</p> <p>'Strictly applying'</p>	Don't need to say 'strictly' as the sequential test will need to be applied in areas of flood risk. Delete.
	<p>Criteria 2a</p> <p>Southern Water are obliged to accept new properties whatever the capacity (or not) of the foul system. They normally use developer contributions to fund improvements to their infrastructure and capacity. The Council has no control over this.</p>	Consider reframing this part of the policy as Southern Water are obliged to accept new properties regardless of capacity and this is outside of the planning system.
	<p>Criteria 3Ci</p> <p>Should consider rephrasing this. We can't insist on a holistic GI strategy, however, you could ask for measures to contribute to GI.</p>	Suggest rewording this.
	Criteria 3cii	Cii should be removed.

	<p>We could not apply this to any watercourse. The legislation provides for peak run off rates not being increased or maintained at the present level.</p> <p>This section is fine as an aspiration but goes well beyond what the planning system can insist on.</p>	
Paragraph 7.5	<p>'A mix of uses is considered appropriate in Horam village centre (the extent of which is defined in Figure 17, reflecting the area defined in the now withdrawn Wealden Local Plan),'</p>	<p>The withdrawn Wealden Local Plan (2019) holds no weight at this stage so defining the extent of that boundary through that process is not appropriate. These are not defined as part of any adopted Local Plan, so perhaps defining this is not helpful at this stage. Most of our current Neighbourhood Plans do not attempt to define this (see Policy 5 of Herstmonceux NDP for example, although slightly out of date). The emerging new local plan will however look to define this.</p>
Policy HLE1: Horam Village Centre	<p>Criteria 1. 'Proposals for development in Horam village centre (as defined in figure 17) should, where appropriate, incorporate a mix if uses'</p>	<p>Given the comment above on paragraph 7.5, we consider that this should be reworked to just talk to town centre uses within rather than defining that area. The criteria from 1(a) to (d) is considered appropriate.</p>
	<p>Criteria 4 (a) and (b)</p>	<p>The timing of the periods for both 4(a) and (b) is inconsistent as written currently, with criteria 4(a) stating a period of 18 months and criteria 4(b) stating 12 months. This will make things complicated for the case officer in determining the planning application and the applicant. We suggest that 18 months is appropriate for both criteria?</p>
	<p>Criteria 4 (b) 'subject to peer review'</p>	<p>From the policy, it is not clear what is meant by 'peer review' here. Of course, the Council would deal with the planning application and the marketing evidence provided as part of that process. Normally speaking, the applicant would need to pay the costs of that peer review to the District Council and that should be included as</p>

		part of the planning application process; this should be stated within the planning policy.
Policy HLE2: Employment	Criteria 2. This criteria does not define where new employment uses are acceptable. From the emerging Wealden Local Plan perspective, we would suggest that development would be acceptable in the development boundaries, but not outside of them unless it's an intensification of an existing business. At the moment this reads as its acceptable anywhere in the Parish?	Amend policy to define where new employment uses are acceptable and where extensions/intensifications to existing employment sites are supported.
	Criteria 2(d). 'do not result in a significant increase in large and heavy vehicle traffic movements on non-strategic routes within the Neighbourhood Plan Area'	The NPPF talks to demonstrable harm, and this could be included within the policy here?
	Criteria 2(f) 'where appropriate, they enable active travel through delivery of new walking and cycling routes'	Is this not a duplication of the active travel policy?
Policy HLE3: Home working	<p>We are not convinced a separate policy is needed. If ancillary and no new building being built or a new building is Permitted Development, planning permission is not required.</p> <p>If planning permission is required for an outbuilding and use ancillary to the existing house, then the use will be assumed to be residential so normal householder planning considerations will apply.</p> <p>If not ancillary, then a change of use is proposed, which would be subject to other policies – namely the</p>	We would advise that you remove this policy.

	<p>employment policy and policies about general character.</p> <p>Ultimately, this policy seems unnecessary.</p>	
Paragraph 7.16	<p>Agree with the sentiment here, and of course that Council wishes to avoid permanent residential homes in the countryside, but provided that static caravan, chalets and lodge style development is tourism development and acceptable in character, then that should be the same as other forms of tourism accommodation.</p>	<p>Re –phrase the last sentence of paragraph 7.16.</p>
Policy HLE4: Visitor Accommodation and facilities	<p>Criteria 1. We would suggest that this should only be acceptable within development boundaries, or as small-scale extensions to existing holiday parks outside of development boundaries.</p> <p>Criteria 1, final sentence is missing a full stop.</p>	<p>Amend criteria 1.</p>
	<p>Criteria 3a. Proposals for development will not be supported where they would result in the loss of camping and caravan sites</p>	<p>Again, laudable aim but should this apply in all circumstances which is implied. If a camping and caravan sites is no longer viable and closes, this cannot be prevented</p>
	<p>Criteria 3b. 'They involve the replacement of camping plots with static units, including single storey chalet or lodge style development for holiday purposes.</p>	<p>This should be subject to the design of the chalet, lodge style development and its location. See comments on paragraph 7.16.</p>
	<p>Criteria 4 'Proposals should seek to retain existing visitor attractions, tourist and hospitality facilities ... unless demonstrated to be unviable.</p>	<p>How would they prove they are unviable through the planning application process? It is not clear here.</p>

Paragraph 8.2	'... Concerns were expressed through consultation as to the speed and volume of traffic on roads across the Parish'	Consider re-phrasing: Concerns were expressed throughout the consultation process.....
Policy HTM1: Traffic Management	(1)'Proposals for new development should ensure that they would not have a material adverse impact on road safety, including through any resultant congestion'.	Would recommend rephrasing: Proposed new development should ensure that it has no adverse impact on road safety or increase in levels of congestion, both alone or in combination with other development.
	(2d)'...Avoid engineered solutions, such as humps, cushions and chicanes, but as far as practicable, achieve traffic calming through use of landscaping and building layout'.	We would recommend rephrasing as follows: "Ensure that traffic calming measures can be achieved via landscaping and development layout; engineered speed humps, cushions and chicanes should only be used where no alternative options are appropriate." The final layout is subject to approval by ESCC Highways if the road is to be adopted and maintained by them. We would recommend that any policy is compliant with ESCC Local Design Guide for Residential Development The comment above regarding the ESCC Design Guide would also apply to the use of raised crossing points as detailed in HTM1 (2f).
Paragraph 8.6	This last sentence is national legislation and not needed.	Remove last sentence.
Paragraph 8.8	'... quality and attractiveness of the walking and cycling network though is only as good as the missing links or gaps in the routes. These could be improved, providing for direct, safe routes, to make walking and cycling attractive	Consider rephrasing: ... quality and attractiveness of the walking and cycling network is only as good as the missing links or gaps in the routes. These missing links should be identified and then improved, to provide direct, safe routes, that make walking and cycling an attractive proposition for people of all ages.

	propositions for people of all ages’.	An explanation could be added of how these routes could be improved.
Paragraph 8.9	<p>‘Consideration will be given to the use of the Parish Council proportion of CIL monies.’</p> <p>Consideration for what use? We recognise this is implied but it should be identified as to what the money is to be used for and how it is compliant with the current CIL Regulations.</p>	
Policy HTM2: Active and healthy travel	(1a) ‘... Provide new walking and cycling routes that are direct, safe and convenient to use and designed for use by people of all ages and abilities and which promote permeability within and between new developments and to existing built-up areas. Where appropriate to the site, these should retain and provide connections to the existing public right of way network’.	<p>Would recommend rephrasing:</p> <p>Provide new walking and cycling routes that are direct, safe and convenient to use by individuals of all ages and abilities, which promote permeability within and between new developments and to existing built-up areas. Where appropriate to the site, these should retain or provide connections to the existing public right of way network.</p>
	(2) There is a viability issue here, as well as whether this can be secured through a section 106 agreement as one of the tests is whether it is directly relevant to the development. This could come from the Parish Council CIL pot however.	
	(3) ‘Proposals for residential development shall provide secure cycle storage assigned to the dwelling and located within or immediately adjacent to the property, fully enclosed and at ground-level’.	

	<p>Even for a single dwelling? Is this required? Perhaps a major development threshold should be used here, and we should refer to ESCC standards.</p> <p>Should consideration also be given to the provision of secure storage and charging facilities for visitors to a development?</p>	
Project H(v): Encouraging walking and cycling	<p>2g Reference is made to the replacement of stiles with gates to improve the accessibility of existing ROW. The enhancement of existing ROW does not appear to be covered within the policy HTM2 or the supporting text.</p> <p>This is national policy but should be gaps, then gates, then stiles in order of preference.</p>	<p>Add reference in the supporting text to the enhancement of existing ROW.</p> <p>Reword 2g.</p> <p>Paragraph 2 of the policy talks to helping deliver projects identified in Project H(iv) is this correct or should it actually be “deliver projects within H(v)” which would then cover the existing ROW enhancement.</p>
Paragraph 8.11	User Research undertaken	User research undertaken (no capital letter required on research)
Paragraph 8.12	This is already underway using both base budgets and a “levelling up grant”.	
Paragraph 8.13	<i>‘will become an even greater natural, economic, tourism and health and wellbeing asset. It will continue to be accessible to everyone and a resource everyone is proud of’.</i>	Quote reference required
Paragraph 8.15	‘.... gateway between the Cuckoo Trail and Horam Village Centre’	Trail
Paragraph 8.17	‘unable to drive: impacting in particular on the young and elderly’	<p>Consider rephrasing:</p> <p>unable to drive impacting particularly on the young and elderly</p>

Policy HTM4: Public transport	(2)'... Where development is designed to allow bus routing through these'	We would recommend rephrasing: Where development is designed to accommodate public transport, streets must be carefully designed to balance the needs of competing users and avoid conflicts between bus users, pedestrians and cyclists
	(3) 'Any bus stops provided in areas of new development should be located so that all residents are, as far as possible, within walking distance of a bus stop (defined as 400m based on the walking network as opposed to an 'as the crow flies' distance)'.	We would recommend: Where bus stops are provided within residential development these should be located within 400m walking distance of dwellings.
Policy HCF1: Community facilities	(1) Perhaps the term within the development boundaries is needed here. Otherwise we are supporting these uses in all locations?	Add clarification.
	(1a)'... include provision of flexible space that can be used for a variety of community uses;'	It is recommended that the following amendment is made to ensure that appropriate community uses are identified for flexible space. For example, it would not be appropriate to have fitness classes within a doctor's surgery flexible space "include provision of flexible space that can be used for a variety of appropriate community uses;"
	(1c)'... maximise, as far as possible the provision of charging points and cabling for electric vehicles;'	Consider rewording: Include the provision of EV charging points for electric vehicles and secure bike and mobility scooter charging points.
	(2) 'The loss of community facilities will only be supported where a new, equivalent replacement is made for that use or is met by an existing facility within the Neighbourhood Plan Area, and	We would recommend the following: The loss of a community facility will only be supported where a replacement is provided, equivalent to or better than exists currently or where the need can be met by an existing facility within or adjacent to the

	where evidence is provided that demonstrates that the facility is no longer required or viable.'	Neighbourhood Plan Area, and where evidence is provided that demonstrates that the current facility is no longer required or viable.
Policy HCF3: Infrastructure	(1)'Proposals for major development that....'	What is classed as major development? This will need to be clarified and should accord with the current planning definitions.
Policy HCF4: Allotments and Food Growing Opportunities	(1)'Proposals for major residential development that....'	What is classed as major residential development? This will need to be clarified and should accord with the current national planning definitions.
	(1) '... the location shall be informed by an overarching green infrastructure strategy for the site'	Clarification should be given as to whose Green Infrastructure Strategy this relates to, Wealden District Council's or Horam's own? If you are referring to one to be submitted with an application, then this would be a matter for the Council's validation criteria to determine when it is required.
Paragraph 10.4	'Since December 2020, CIL Charging Authorities have to publish Annual Infrastructure Funding Statements (IFS)'	Consider rephrasing: Since December 2020, CIL Charging Authorities are required to publish Annual Infrastructure Funding Statements (IFS)
Paragraph 10.6 (Table)	It should be noted that not all of these projects are suitable for funding via CIL (i.e. wildflower verges are not considered as infrastructure, and it would also be difficult to show that it will address the demands that that development places on the area.	Consider removing that project.