

Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan

**Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Consultation Draft
Sustainability Statement**

January 2020

1. Introduction

1.1. This Sustainability Statement has been prepared to support the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan'). It demonstrates how the Plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development.

1.2. Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It is about considering the long-term environmental, social and economic issues and impacts in an integrated and balanced way. The UK Government has set five guiding principles to achieve the sustainable development purpose. These principles form the basis for policy in the UK and are as follows:

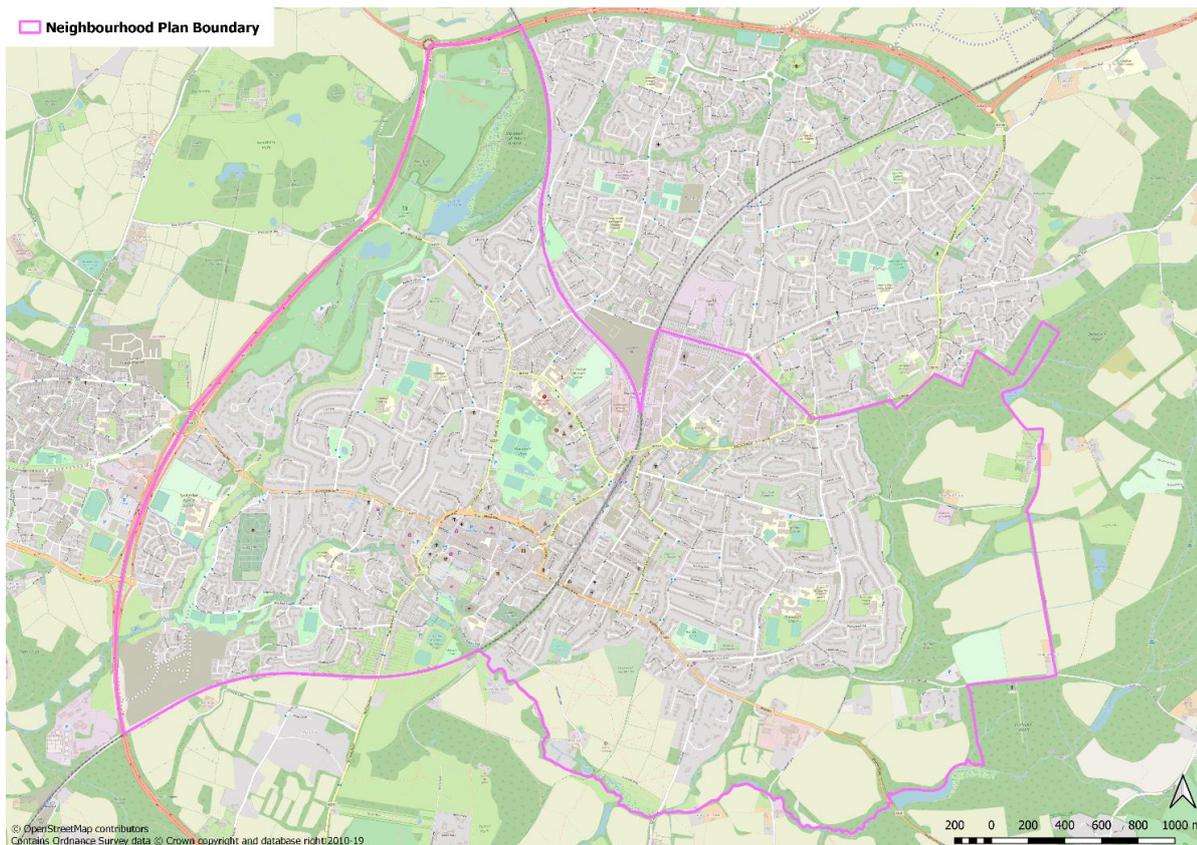
- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Building a strong, stable and sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

1.3. One of the means by which sustainable development can be achieved is through the land-use planning process. The Plan can help to achieve sustainable development as it aims to ensure that development meets the needs of people living and working in the Neighbourhood Area, while at the same time helping to ensure that adverse environmental impacts are minimised.

The Plan

1.4. The designated Neighbourhood Plan Area is shown in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Horsham Blueprint Neighbourhood Area



- 1.5. The Plan has been developed by members of the Plan Steering Group following an extensive programme of engagement with the local community. The Plan's vision for development of the area up to 2031 is as follows:

In the years up to 2036, the people of Horsham will live in a friendly and inclusive thriving market town and recognised destination set between the High Weald and the South Downs.

Careful development and use of space will have resulted in a town which still feels compact whilst being closely connected to its surrounding landscape through footpath and cycle links as well as its many green spaces and wildlife corridors. Horsham Park will continue to be the focus for recreation in the town and for the wider local area. The river running through the town also provides a recognised and natural asset, popular with locals for walking and leisure activities and providing access to residential, shopping and recreational areas leading off the Riverside Walk.

Horsham Town Centre will be an attractive and bustling destination comprising larger anchor stores and smaller independent shops, mixed in with opportunities for locals and visitors to take part in leisure, recreation and cultural activities. The evening economy will be further supported by additional housing located within the town centre itself, with residents able to work locally if they wish, or take advantage of the excellent rail and road links to access work further afield.

The area will have retained its market town character together with its heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, further enhanced by the quality of its built and natural environment.

- 1.6. In order to deliver the vision, the Plan sets out to meet a series of objectives:

Objective 1: To safeguard, conserve, protect and enhance the historic character of the Area, including its Conservation Areas and heritage assets and their settings.

Objective 2: To safeguard green space, where it contributes to the wider green and blue infrastructure and/or is demonstrably special, for instance where it contributes to local character, biodiversity, recreation or tranquillity.

Objective 3: To protect and improve community, recreational, sporting and leisure facilities and be an integrated, balanced and resilient community, catering for diverse and changing needs across all age and social groups.

Objective 4: To ensure that development is well designed, is in keeping with local character and does not put adverse pressure on the roads, publicly available car parking and other services and infrastructure

Objective 5: To encourage new housing that provides opportunities for first-time buyers and young families to move into or remain in the area and provide opportunities for older people wishing to downsize.

Objective 6: To have a network of attractive streets and public spaces, which encourages pedestrian use and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys, and which moves the balance away from the dominance of cars, improves access within the area and to the surrounding settlements and countryside.

Objective 7: To support Horsham Town as a distinctive market town with a lively shopping experience and an eclectic mix of retail and complementary uses/facilities and a safe and welcoming evening economy to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

Objective 8: For the area to have a competitive edge as a good place to start and build a business, particularly in the digital and energy sectors, contributing to a net zero carbon economy; thereby supporting a sustainable local economy that provides high quality local employment.

Objective 9: To support initiatives and schemes that offset the impacts of climate change and create a low-carbon neighbourhood.

Policy context

- 1.7. The Plan has been prepared having regard to national policy and to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local development plan. At the national level, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) establishes the scope and purpose of neighbourhood plans. At the local level, the development plan comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.8. Horsham District Council (HDC) has issued a 'standard' screening for all neighbourhood plans within the district. This states that if a neighbourhood plan is allocating sites for development then it could have a significant environmental impact, therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required. The Horsham Blueprint Plan does not allocate sites and it has been confirmed by HDC that an SEA is not required.
- 1.9. Separately, a screening opinion in respect of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) determined that an is not required. This is subject to consultation with relevant stakeholders including

Natural England, which will be undertaken as part of the Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Consultation.

2. Sustainability Assessment

2.1 In order to demonstrate that the Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, it is necessary to identify sustainability objectives to enable an assessment to be made of the Plan. Whilst there are objectives established at the strategic level through the HDPF, for a neighbourhood plan that must confine the matters it deals with to local issues, these are most appropriately established at the local level. Accordingly, the sustainability objectives of the Plan have been taken directly from the HDPF Sustainability Appraisal Environmental Report (November 2015)¹.

2.2 The qualitative scoring system used to assess the likely effects is shown below:

++	The policy is likely to contribute significantly towards the sustainability objective
+	The policy is likely to contribute positively towards the sustainability objective, although not significantly
0	The policy is considered to have no significant positive or negative effect
-	The policy is likely to detract from the achievement of the sustainability objective, although not significantly
--	The policy is likely to detract significantly from the achievement of the sustainability objective
?	The policy has an uncertain relationship to the sustainability objective. Alternatively, insufficient information may be available to enable an assessment to be made.

2.3 Table 2.1 shows the assessment and provides a commentary as to which policies in the Plan are relevant to each of the HDPF Sustainability Assessment (SA) criteria.

2.4 Table 2.1 shows that all of the policies in the Plan will either have no significant effect (positive or negative), a positive effect or a significant positive effect.

¹ https://www.horsham.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/28641/HDPF-SA-SEA-2015.pdf

Table 2.1: Assessment of policies in the Horsham Blueprint Neighbourhood Plan against HDPF Sustainability Appraisal Objectives

HDPF SA Objective	Relevant Horsham Blueprint Neighbourhood Plan objective(s)	Assessment	Commentary
<p>To provide high quality, affordable housing for all, which includes a range of size, types and tenures and is appropriate to local needs, and those in the wider subregion</p>	<p>Objective 4: To ensure that development is well designed, is in keeping with local character and does not put adverse pressure on the roads, publicly available car parking and other services and infrastructure</p> <p>Objective 5: To encourage new housing that provides opportunities for first-time buyers and young families to move into or remain in the area and provide opportunities for older people wishing to downsize.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>Policy HB1 (Location of Development) sets out where development is appropriate and where it should be avoided, with an emphasis on the use of brownfield sites in preference to greenfield.</p> <p>Policy HB2 (Meeting Local Housing Need) encourages development that is suited to the needs of the local population as it is forecast to grow, notably homes which serve couples and young/growing families, and those wishing to downsize to a more manageable property.</p> <p>Policy HB4 (Design of Development) encourages developments to be of high quality, guided by the principles of Building for Life, and consider accessibility issues.</p>
<p>To ensure everyone has access to appropriate, educational facilities and training opportunities.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>0</p>	
<p>To ensure everyone has access to appropriate, affordable community facilities including childcare, leisure and recreation facilities, green infrastructure and public open space, together with opportunities to enjoy the night time economy</p>	<p>Objective 2: To safeguard green space, where it contributes to the wider green and blue infrastructure and/or is demonstrably special, for instance where it contributes to local character, biodiversity, recreation or tranquillity.</p> <p>Objective 3: To protect and improve community, recreational, sporting and leisure facilities and be an integrated,</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">++</p>	<p>Policy HB13 (Provision of Sport, Leisure and Recreation Facilities) identifies specific community infrastructure requirements and locations towards which new development should contribute.</p> <p>Policy HB6 (Retaining and Enhancing the Vitality and Viability of Horsham Town Centre) recognises the importance of the Horsham Town as a primary settlement and the need to sustain its appeal by encouraging a mix of uses, including not only retail but also cultural, creative and leisure uses.</p>

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	<p>balanced and resilient community, catering for diverse and changing needs across all age and social groups.</p> <p>Objective 6: To have a network of attractive streets and public spaces, which encourages pedestrian use and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys, and which moves the balance away from the dominance of cars, improves access within the area and to the surrounding settlements and countryside.</p>		<p>Policy HB7 (A Welcoming Public Realm) seeks to enhance the public realm in the town centre and across the wider area in order to improve the experience of shopping and leisure activities there.</p> <p>Policy HB8 (Horsham as a Sustainable Visitor Destination) exists to attract and expand visitor facilities in the area, to encourage in particular longer-stay visitors to the area.</p> <p>Policy HB10 (Green Infrastructure and Development) identifies green infrastructure – including the Riverside Walk, Chesworth Farm and Horsham Park - that contribute to the accessibility and enjoyment of the countryside in what is otherwise a fairly densely urbanised area.</p> <p>Policy HB11 (Local Green Spaces) protects a series of green spaces that are demonstrably special to the local community, ensuring their continuing use and enjoyment by local people.</p>
<p>To protect existing health care facilities and improve healthcare provision. To improve health by encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting health education improving access to health care facilities.</p>	<p>Objective 2: To safeguard green space, where it contributes to the wider green and blue infrastructure and/or is demonstrably special, for instance where it contributes to local character, biodiversity, recreation or tranquillity.</p> <p>Objective 3: To protect and improve community, recreational, sporting and leisure facilities and be an integrated, balanced and resilient community, catering for diverse and changing needs across</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">+</p>	<p>Policies HB10 (Green Infrastructure and Development) and HB11 (Local Green Spaces) protects a series of green spaces and corridors which, in the majority of cases, give communities access to a ‘green lung’ in otherwise dense areas of housing. Access to such spaces has been shown to improve both physical and mental wellbeing.</p> <p>Policy HB12 (Encouraging Sustainable Movement) supports the identification of routes that should be protected and enhanced for walking and cycling. This will help to encourage more people to walk and cycle, particularly for shorter journeys, not only reducing air pollution and traffic congestion, but also</p>

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	<p>all age and social groups.</p> <p>Objective 6: To have a network of attractive streets and public spaces, which encourages pedestrian use and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys, and which moves the balance away from the dominance of cars, improves access within the area and to the surrounding settlements and countryside.</p>		<p>supporting healthier lifestyles. This policy complements the safeguarding of the ancient twittens (alleyways) as set out in Policy HB3 (Character of Development).</p> <p>Polices HB13 (Provision of Sport, Leisure and Recreation Facilities) and HB14 (Community and Cultural Facilities) identifies specific community infrastructure requirements and locations towards which new development should contribute. This will help to deliver facilities that provide opportunities for socialising, recreation, cultural learning and education.</p> <p>Policy HB15 (Allotments and Community Growing Spaces) seeks to protect existing facilities and, where possible, integrate additional growing spaces into new development. Gardening and self-sufficiency – through access to allotments - can contribute to mental health and wellbeing.</p>
<p>To create a safe and secure environment (which minimises antisocial behaviour) and reduces the fear of crime.</p>	<p>Objective 6: To have a network of attractive streets and public spaces, which encourages pedestrian use and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys, and which moves the balance away from the dominance of cars, improves access within the area and to the surrounding settlements and countryside.</p> <p>Objective 7: To support Horsham Town as a distinctive market town</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Policy HB4 (Design of Development) includes prvision for new development to be designed to meet the requirements of ‘Secured by Design’ and minimise the likelihood and fear of crime.</p> <p>Policy HB12 (Encouraging Sustainable Movement) supports the identification of routes that should be protected and enhanced for walking and cycling, and which are accessible to a range of users. Prioritising these routes for protection, maintenance and where possible, expansion, will create safe routes</p>

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	with a lively shopping experience and an eclectic mix of retail and complementary uses/facilities and a safe and welcoming evening economy to meet the needs of residents and visitors.		for people to access various parts of the area. Policy HB7 (A Welcoming Public Realm) seeks to enhance the public realm in the town centre and across the wider area, creating a safe and accessible civic space.
To positively promote equal opportunities for all sections of the community.	Objective 3: To protect and improve community, recreational, sporting and leisure facilities and be an integrated, balanced and resilient community, catering for diverse and changing needs across all age and social groups.	+	Policy HB13 (Provision of Sport, Leisure and Recreation Facilities) and Policy HB14 (Community and Cultural Facilities) identify the need to safeguard existing valued facilities and ensure the provision of new ones to meet the demands of the growing community. They focus on the provision of a diverse range of cultural and recreational facilities to meet the needs of different sectors of the community.
To protect and enhance the quality and level of biodiversity and natural habitats within the District and where appropriate provide new green infrastructure.	Objective 2: To safeguard green space, where it contributes to the wider green and blue infrastructure and/or is demonstrably special, for instance where it contributes to local character, biodiversity, recreation or tranquillity.	++	Policy HB10 (Green Infrastructure and Development) identifies the corridors of green infrastructure within the neighbourhood area that will help to maximise opportunities for biodiversity as well as providing 'stepping stone' routes for wildlife. Policy HB11 (Local Green Spaces) protects a series of green spaces and that are demonstrably special to the local community, including those which are felt to provide natural habitats of biodiversity value.
To conserve and enhance the quality of landscape and townscape character.	Objective 1: To safeguard, conserve, protect and enhance the historic character of the Area, including its Conservation Areas and heritage assets and their settings. Objective 2: To safeguard green space,	++	Policy HB3 (Character of Development) seeks to ensure that development recognises the local context within which it is located and is sympathetic to this. It identifies the Conservation and Character Areas within the neighbourhood area, and the historic features and assets – such as ancient twittens (alleyways) -

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	<p>where it contributes to the wider green and blue infrastructure and/or is demonstrably special, for instance where it contributes to local character, biodiversity, recreation or tranquillity.</p> <p>Objective 4: To ensure that development is well designed, is in keeping with local character and does not put adverse pressure on the roads, publicly available car parking and other services and infrastructure</p>		<p>that contribute to the townscape character. It also identifies key gateways into the town in order to enhance the visual impact of the area. The policy will help to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the local heritage and history.</p> <p>An associated action is the need to consider additional heritage assets that should be afforded an additional level of protection.</p> <p>Policy HB11 (Local Green Spaces) protects a series of green spaces and that are demonstrably special to the local community, including those which have been part of the intrinsic design of housing developments in the past, and which contribute to the character of those areas.</p>
<p>To conserve and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the historical and cultural environment of the District</p>	<p>Objective 1: To safeguard, conserve, protect and enhance the historic character of the Area, including its Conservation Areas and heritage assets and their settings.</p>	<p>++</p>	<p>Policy HB3 (Character of Development) seeks to ensure that development recognises the local context within which it is located and is sympathetic to this. It identifies the Conservation and Character Areas within the neighbourhood area, and the historic features and assets – such as ancient twittens (alleyways) - that contribute to the townscape character. It also identifies key gateways into the town in order to enhance the visual impact of the area. The policy enables a greater understanding and appreciation of local heritage.</p> <p>An associated action is the need to consider additional heritage assets that should be afforded an additional level of protection.</p>
<p>To maintain and where possible improve on the District's high environmental quality in terms of</p>	<p>Objective 9: To support initiatives and schemes that offset the impacts of climate change and create a low-carbon neighbourhood.</p>	<p>+</p>	<p>Policy HB10 (Green Infrastructure and Development) identifies the corridors of green infrastructure within the neighbourhood area that will help to maximise opportunities for biodiversity as</p>

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soil, water, air, noise and odour.			<p>well as providing routes for wildlife.</p> <p>Policy HB11 (Local Green Spaces) protects a series of green spaces and that are demonstrably special to the local community, including those which are felt to provide natural habitats of biodiversity value.</p>
To minimise flood risk and promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).	<p>Objective 4: To ensure that development is well designed, is in keeping with local character and does not put adverse pressure on the roads, publicly available car parking and other services and infrastructure</p> <p>Objective 9: To support initiatives and schemes that offset the impacts of climate change and create a low-carbon neighbourhood.</p>	+	<p>Policy HB4 (Design of Development) encourages the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems, which can demonstrate how their design will enhance wildlife and biodiversity as well as minimise the impacts of flooding.</p>
To reduce water and energy use through efficiency measures and increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable and low carbon sources.	<p>Objective 9: To support initiatives and schemes that offset the impacts of climate change and create a low-carbon neighbourhood.</p>	+	<p>Policy HB5 (Energy Efficiency and Design) encourages the highest level of sustainable design, in order to reduce energy consumption and climate effects. This includes a range of initiatives such as incorporating solar panels and minimising water use.</p>
To promote the reuse of land, materials and resources through sustainable construction methods. To maximise opportunities for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste in the District	<p>Objective 4: To ensure that development is well designed, is in keeping with local character and does not put adverse pressure on the roads, publicly available car parking and other services and infrastructure</p> <p>Objective 9: To support initiatives and schemes that offset the impacts</p>	+	<p>Policy HB5 (Energy Efficiency and Design) encourages development to minimise waste through the development of more energy efficient buildings, e.g. incorporating grey water systems.</p>

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	of climate change and create a low-carbon neighbourhood.		
To encourage vitality, vibrancy and overall stability within the local economy, including rural areas	<p>Objective 7: To support Horsham Town as a distinctive market town with a lively shopping experience and an eclectic mix of retail and complementary uses/facilities and a safe and welcoming evening economy to meet the needs of residents and visitors.</p> <p>Objective 8: For the area to have a competitive edge as a good place to start and build a business, particularly in the digital and energy sectors, contributing to a net zero carbon economy; thereby supporting a sustainable local economy that provides high quality local employment.</p>	++	<p>Policy HB8 (Horsham As a Sustainable Visitor Destination) recognises the important contribution tourism makes to the local economy and identifies Horsham as a key destination in West Sussex, that can capitalise on this. This includes maintaining and expanding provision for visitors, to attract not only day-trippers, but also longer staying visitors, whose contribution to the local economy is often greater.</p> <p>Policy HB9 (Protecting Existing and Encouraging New Commercial Premises and Land) supports existing businesses and seeks to help create the conditons to attract new businesses to the area.</p>
To promote the viability and vitality of existing town and village centres.	<p>Objective 7: To support Horsham Town as a distinctive market town with a lively shopping experience and an eclectic mix of retail and complementary uses/facilities and a safe and welcoming evening economy to meet the needs of residents and visitors.</p>	++	<p>Policy HB6 (Retaining and Enhancing the Vitality and Viability of Horsham Town Centre) encourages mixed development in the town centre, in order to promote a range of uses, that will increase footfall, time spent and expenditure.</p> <p>Policy HB7 (A Welcoming Public Realm) seeks to protect and enhance the public realm in the town centre and across the wider area, in order to enhance the experience of shopping and leisure activities there.</p>
To reduce the need to travel and improve travel choices through the	<p>Objective 6: To have a network of attractive streets and public spaces, which</p>	++	<p>Policy HB12 (Encouraging Sustainable Movement) emphasises the importance of identifying the 'key movement</p>

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<p>provision of a range of sustainability transport options, including walking, cycling and public transport</p>	<p>encourages pedestrian use and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys, and which moves the balance away from the dominance of cars, improves access within the area and to the surrounding settlements and countryside.</p>	<p></p>	<p>routes' within the area, which should be prioritised for maintenance and improved in terms of accessibility. This will encourage more movements to be taken by sustainable modes and transport. The Riverside Walk and the twittens for an important part of this network and work is ongoing with West Sussex to map out the remainder of the network.</p> <p>Policy HB7 (A Welcoming Public Realm) seeks to enhance the safety and experience for pedestrians in the Area, in particular the Town Centre.</p>