

Representation to the Hurst Green Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation - September 2022

This representation is made on behalf of our client, Landstrom Group Ltd, in response to the consultation being run on the Hurst Green Neighbourhood Development Plan, which is a regulation 14 consultation. This representation relates to land to the south east of the proposed allocation at Cooks Field (north west of the A265). Landstrom Group Ltd have entered into a promotion agreement with the landowners.

The Neighbourhood Plan is proposing to help meet housing need through the housing allocations. The housing requirement for the NDP area is 75 dwellings which has been derived from the Core Strategy, policy RA1. This was based on evidence available at that time, specifically the Strategic Market Housing Assessment (SHMA) which dates back to 2013. The SHMA pre-dates the introduction of the standard method for calculating housing need, which will need to be used to inform housing need in the review of the Core Strategy.

Whilst being informed by now out-of-date evidence, presently the Core Strategy is failing to provide sufficient homes, with a housing land supply figure of less than three years. This has recently been confirmed through a planning appeal (PINS ref. APP/U1430/W/21/3283287) when the appeal inspector described the housing supply deficit as “acute”. Due to the lack of housing supply in the area, the policies in the Core Strategy are now considered out-of-date.

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The review of the Core Strategy will enable the Council to address this issue and identify further land for housing development to meet the needs of the area. However, the review timetable has already experienced delay, and the next informal consultation is not expected until February 2023. Following this consultation at least one further public consultation will need to take place before the plan can be submitted for examination in public. Dependent on the issues identified through the plan-making process and availability of resources, this could realistically mean the plan is unlikely to be adopted before 2025.

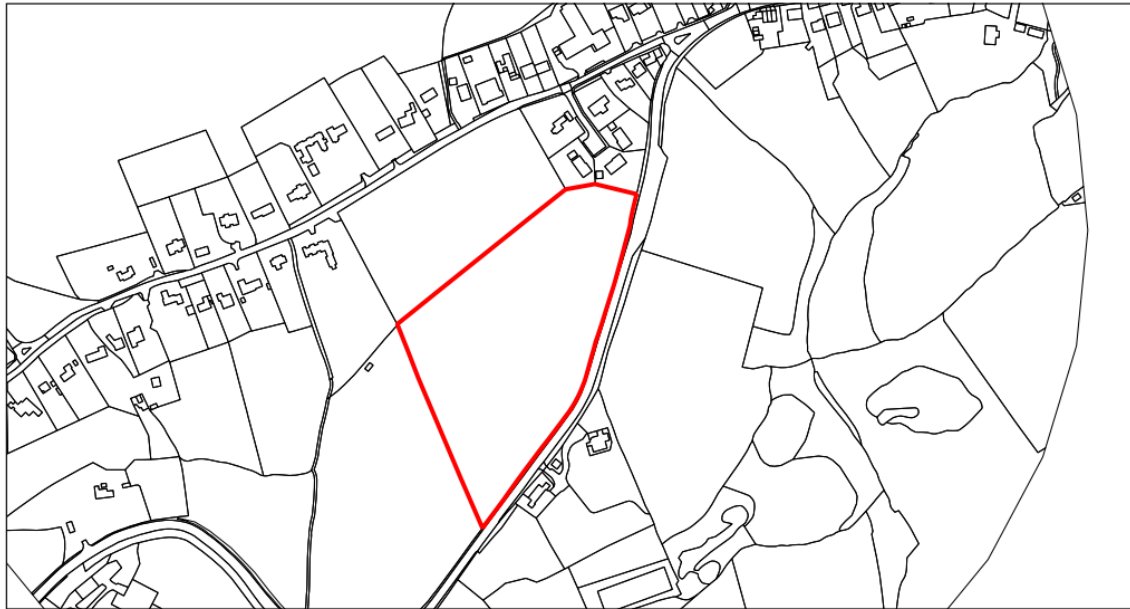
This leads to an acute shortage of housing supply in the area now, with no immediate opportunity for the District Council to address this issue. Therefore, all opportunities to provide housing in a sustainable location should be considered.

Furthermore, the wider District is heavily constrained by environmental designations, which limits the number of locations that would be considered sustainable for housing development; especially locations that would not cause substantial harm to the AONB.

Proposed Site

The site at Cooks field (the proposed allocation) is bordered to the southeast by a wider area of land that is also now being made available for housing development, which is shown in the image below. This parcel could support a capacity of 8 dwellings without causing substantial harm to the AONB. Development of this site could be restricted to the eastern portion of the field with the remaining western side of the parcel opened up for public open space and biodiversity enhancement.

Land Available for Allocation (Land north of A265, south of HGSA1).



Land Available for Allocation (2.99ha) OS Mapping

0 25 50 75 100m

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Built development in the eastern portion would be located adjacent to the existing settlement and is well-screened, and therefore, minimise potential for landscape impacts. With the proposed capacity for this site, the existing settlement would not be overpowered by new development, and the development would help to meet the objectives of both the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the AONB management plan.

The site is available for development immediately, or it could be allocated as a reserve site for housing development, meaning that it could be identified for development in the future. This could help to future-proof the Neighbourhood

Plan, should the housing requirement for the Hurst Green area increase in the future to help meet wider housing needs.

Initial investigations have suggested that access could be provided via the A265, which could enable the creation of a new pedestrian link and crossing at that location. This would align with the Neighbourhood Plan aspiration to “promote opportunities for more sustainable modes of travel in and around the Parish” and also helps to “create an environment that encourages residents to live active, social and meaningful lives”. This would also help to meet the aspirational improvements to the rights of way network shown in figure 10.3 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is recommended that this site is considered for allocating either to help meet housing needs now, or in the future through a reserve site. This site could help meet the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan through improvements to rights of way and potential provision of green open space. The site could provide 8 dwellings, without significantly harming the AONB, through development being limited to the eastern portion of the field which is more sheltered and adjoins existing development, this would also avoid degrading any separation of settlements.