

Hurst Green Parish Council
The Parish Office
Station Road
Hurst Green TN19 7PL

4th October 2022

Dear Ms Ellis and Councillor Brown,

**REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION HURST GREEN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
2021-2039: LANDOWNER/DEVELOPER REPRESENTATION**

This representation is made by the owners of Site HG45 which is the subject of Policy HGSA4: 'Land Adjacent to Iridge Place' in the Pre-Submission Draft Version of the Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan (HGNP).

We are very supportive of the Neighbourhood Plan process because it brings together all stakeholders involved in the growth and development of Hurst Green, and we recognise the many benefits it brings to the local community. We have found members of the Parish Council very approachable and able to outline and explain the detail of the HGNP. The studies commissioned by the Parish Council have been informative and useful, particularly the 'Landscape Assessment Report' prepared by Harper Landscape Architecture, and the 'Site Assessments Summary Report', prepared by Alison Eardley Consulting. Likewise, the enquiries made by the Parish Council to stakeholders on behalf of all developers, such as to 'Highways England' (now 'National Highways') regarding new accesses on to the A21, have been very helpful.

We were pleased to participate in the Public Exhibition held in October 2021, which gave us the opportunity to present a sketch of a Design Concept for our Site. We welcome the opportunity that the Regulation 14 Consultation now offers to make further comments on the draft Plan.

New Housing: Providing housing for a growing population is a core part of the HGNP and we fully support the approach to site selection described in ‘Policy HG2 Housing Strategy 5.5’, that sites should be *‘sustainable from primarily an ecological and landscape perspective and also from a social perspective in terms of any community benefits a given site may provide’*.

New Public Footpath: Significantly, we are committed to providing *‘a new footpath link between the A21 London Road and Drewetts Field’* Policy HGSA4 C vii. We propose that the new footpath will commence where the existing pavement terminates (at the driveway to Number 70, London Road) and continue through the site to Drewetts Field. The footpath will provide an alternative to the only existing access to Drewetts Field via the rough track (Public Right of Way 31) which is shared with motorists. The benefit to the community will grow as the sports facilities are expanded (Policy HG14 Sports and Leisure).

We believe this footpath will go some way to satisfying the ‘Vision for Hurst Green’ by *‘making movement by foot less challenging’*, *‘improving walking opportunities’* and *‘not exacerbating car parking problems’* which is expressed in Policy HG7 Enhancing the Public Realm A iii and Policy HG18 Encouraging Sustainable Movement.

Scale of Development: We acknowledge that the scale of our proposed residential development on Site HG45 (of no more than 4 dwellings) means that the housing provision will be *‘considered windfall’* by Rother District Council (Policy HG2 Housing Strategy 5.10), as far as the Council’s target is concerned; none the less, we support the design objective that residential development *‘relates to the local character and is appropriate to its rural location and avoids a suburban feel’* Policy HGSA4 C i Design.

Access from the A21 London Road: As the A21 is part of the Strategic Road Network, the design of the new access will conform to the standards set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

Sustainable and Landscape-sensitive Housing Development: We support the desire for *‘sustainable and landscape-sensitive housing development’* expressed in the ‘Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan 3.2’ and we reflected this in the sketch of our Design Concept presented at the Public Exhibition in October 2021. Specifically, we have set back the new building away from the A21 (HGSA4 11.56 and Policy HG5 Design of Development V), retained as much existing tree cover as possible at the front of the site and created a dog-legged driveway between the retained trees to lessen the visual impact (HGSA4 11.55). We also envisage the retention of trees at the rear of the site abutting the Drewett Sports Ground, together with new planting along parts of the boundary with

neighbouring properties (HGSA4 11.56), which will all sustain the high-quality sense of place and minimise the impact on inter-visibility between properties and views in.

On-site Biodiversity: We are mindful that development proposals should maintain and enhance '*the natural environment and landscape features*' and '*existing on-site biodiversity assets and make provision for wildlife needs*' (Policy HG9 Protecting the Natural Features of the Parish) and we have already commissioned a Phase 1 Ecology Survey and follow-up surveys relating to protected species. We are confident that the small scale of the development on our site and the retention of existing vegetation where possible, together with new planting of indigenous species, will ensure these objectives are satisfied.

Informal Public Amenity Space: In the sketch presented at the Public Exhibition, we also identified an informal public amenity space in the south-west corner of the site, which today includes part of a rather overgrown seasonal pond, shared with the neighbouring property at Number 74 London Road. The possibility of developing this as a permanent wildlife pond will be explored, together with an appropriate attenuation strategy in respect of the surface water generated by the new buildings and hard landscaping (Policy HGSA4 ii and v).

In conclusion, we very much share the exciting new vision for the village presented in the Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan. We look forward to seeing its further development and to continuing our family's relationship with the village, which dates to the early 19th century and was centred on the bakery at Number 81, London Road.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew and Steve Gasson