Matter 2 Vision and Objectives and Local Plan Growth

Issue 1: Whether the Spatial Vision for Wealden is justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

32. Are the key local plan objectives which have been identified relevant; justified; and consistent with National Policy?

33. Is the Plan period effective, justified and consistent with national policy?

2.1 In noting question 33 we would refer to our response on matter 3 - Question 48.

Issue 2: Does the significance attributed to air quality considerations present a positive framework which is consistent with national policy, justified and effective, and will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development within the District?

34. Why is the Council’s proposed Main Modifications to remove reference to the Pevensey Levels Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site required to make the Plan as submitted sound?

35. Is a simple reading of policy AF1, that all development, irrespective of whether it is included within the list of categories set out in footnote 14 of the LP, or where it is located within the Plan area, is reliant on the action of the LPA? Does this raise any risk to the delivery of development within the Plan? Would development be dependent on the delivery mechanism being created or implemented?

36. Is Policy AF1 consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and national policy? Is the policy justified by appropriate evidence to suggest that harm to Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Lewes Downs Special Area of Conservation will take place, in the absence of mitigation, as a result of the envisaged level of Local Plan Growth, and in combination with other plans and projects?

37. How will the delivery mechanism work? Who is responsible for it? How does it mitigate any adverse impacts, and is there a clear direct link between development and mitigation on a pro rata basis? Should there be one? Is there a difference between the mitigation required for development already identified within the Plan and development which is in addition to that which has already been considered within the Plan’s HRA?

38. Is criterion a) of Policy AF1, clear what development will fall within its remit and how developers should satisfy its requirements? Is the policy internally consistent in how the Lewes Downs SAC and the Ashdown Forest SAC are treated? What evidence is there that the harm would ensue without mitigation, and that the mitigation measures set out within Policy AF2 would be effective and directly relate to the proposed development?

39. What would be the impact on development viability of the proposed financial obligations set out in the Air Quality Mitigation – Interim Mitigation Strategy Tariff Guidance for Residential Dwellings and Business Development?

40. Are the two policies consistent with the CIL Regulations?

41. Specifically, how would such measures set out in Policy AF2 be differentiated from other strategies, good practice, and the wider principles of sustainable development consistent with core planning principles of the Framework?
2.2 As members of the Ashdown Forest Stakeholders Forum, Wates agree with and support the submission of the Forum on Matter 2 – Issue 2. We would however like to highlight the following in response to question 34.

2.3 Under the Proposed Submission Local Plan, a requirement for mitigation had been identified in relation to air quality impacts on Pevensey Levels SAC and Ramsar under Policy AF1. Following the submission version of the HRA (dated January 2019) which concludes no adverse effect from air quality impacts, there is no longer a requirement for mitigation. The amendments to Policy AF1 in the Main Modifications would thus be consistent with the recommendations of the HRA.

Issue 3: Are policies EA1- EA3 positively prepared, consistent with national policy and justified?

42. Are policies EA1 – EA3 predicated on robust evidence in terms of impacts and proposed mitigation?
43. Are these policies consistent with the CIL Regulations?
44. What is the justification for setting out the 400 m and 7 km thresholds? Is it clear what is meant by ‘large residential developments’?
45. Are the policies consistent with national policy?

2.4 As members of the Ashdown Forest Stakeholders Forum, Wates agree with and support the submission of the Forum on Matter 2 – Issue 3.