

The Planning Policy Team
Rother District Council
Town Hall
Bexhill-on-Sea
TN39 3JX

16th July 2024

Dear Sirs

Representations on the Draft Local Plan 2020-2040 Regulation 18 Consultation

Site at Cherry Tree Nursery, Hawkhurst Road, The Mount, Flimwell, TN5 7QL

1. Introduction

- 1.1. On behalf of our client, Cherry Tree Farm Investments Ltd, I am pleased to submit representations on the Rother District Council Draft Local Plan 2020-2040 Regulation 18 version, in relation to the site at Cherry Tree Nursery, Flimwell (the site).
- 1.2. The site comprises a parcel of land that is part of a wider 9.55 hectare broad location (ref: TIC0008) that has been identified by the Council in the Draft Housing Land and Availability Assessment (HELAA) as a 'potential additional' growth site, that may be suitable for development, subject to further assessment.
- 1.3. The address of the broad location (ref: TIC0008) is Flimwell East Broad Location, Hawkhurst Road, Flimwell and is referred to in these representations as the 'broad location'.
- 1.4. Please see Figure 1.0 below which shows the extent of the broad location and Figure 1.1 which

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shows the location of the site at Cherry Tree Nursery within the broad location.

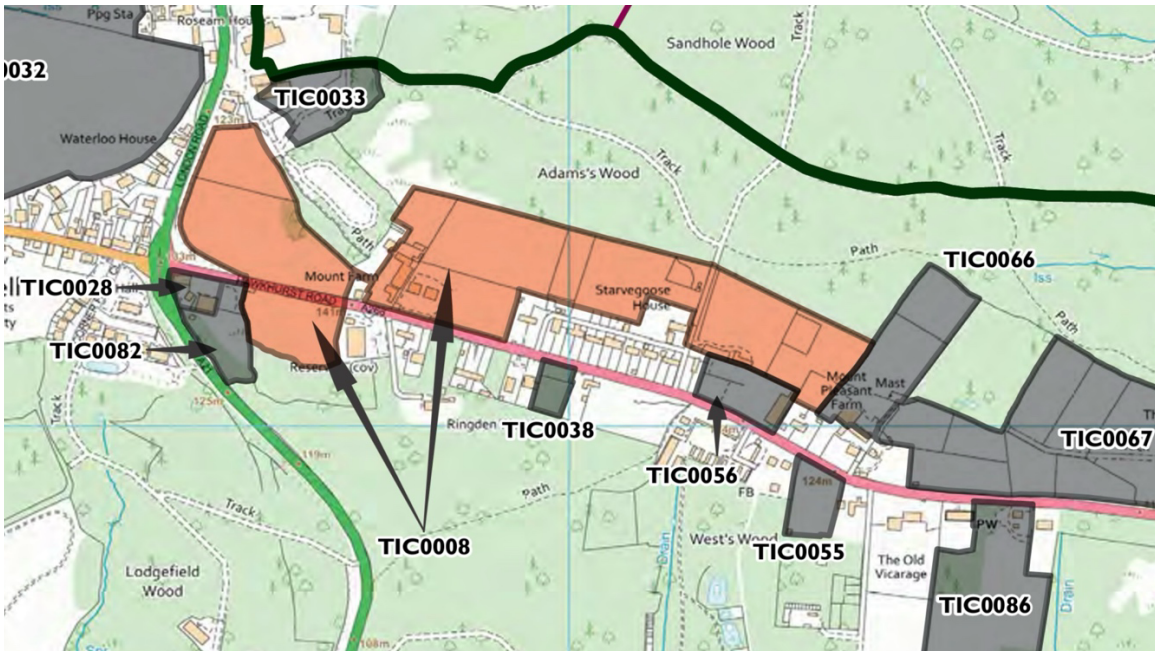


Figure 1.0 Broad Location Site TIC0008

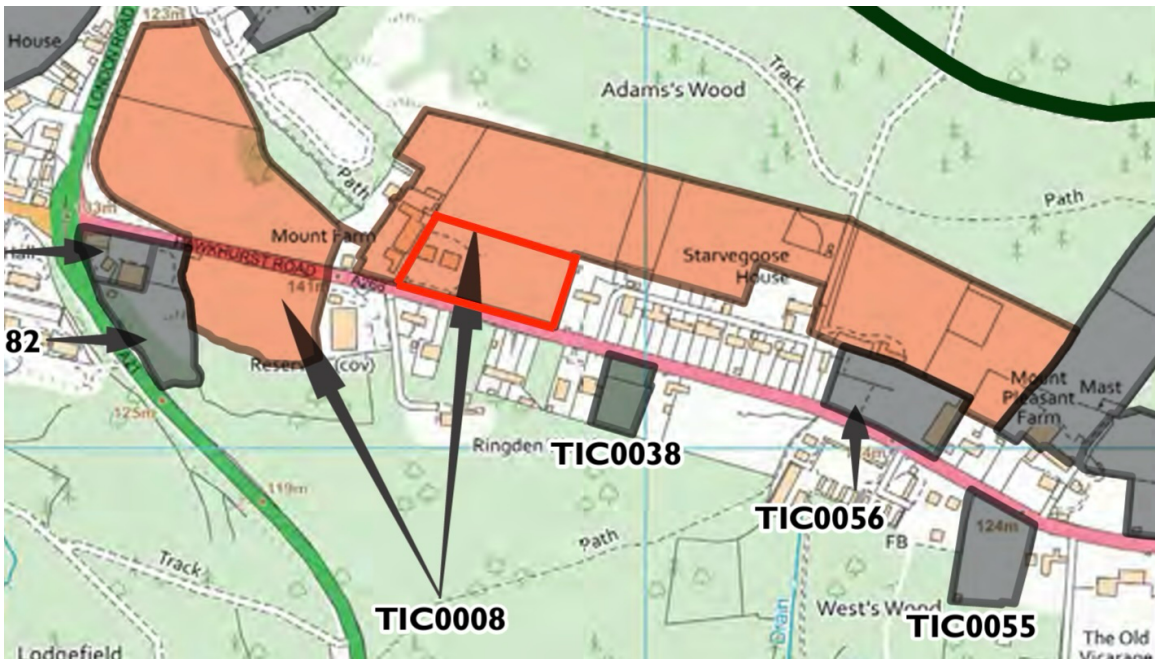


Figure 1.1 Extent of the site at Cherry Tree Nursery (outlined in red) within the broad location site TIC0008

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1.5. As set out above, the broad location has been identified by the Council as a ‘potential additional’ growth site, that is subject to further assessment. Paragraph 5.32 of the Regulation 18 version of the draft Local Plan sets out that potential additional growth sites include:

1.5.1. *...those sites which may be suitable, available and achievable for development over the plan period (as listed in the draft HELAA), subject to further assessment work and the result of the Regulation 18 consultation.*

1.6. These representations provide information that confirms the suitability, availability and achievability of the site at Cherry Tree Nursery for development, within the wider broad location site TIC0008, to inform the Council’s further assessment work for its inclusion as an allocation site for development in version Regulation 19 of the draft Local Plan and through to adoption.

2. The Site and Surroundings

2.1. The site is located just to the east of Flimwell, to the north of the A268 Hawkhurst Road. The site sits between The Weald Smokery to its west, and a detached property known as The Old Police House to its east. Please see the aerial photograph in Figure 2.0 which shows the location and extent of the site, outline in red.

2.2. The site is approximately 0.8ha in size and of a roughly rectangular shape. The site contains a large area of hardstanding to its south western corner, comprising the framework for former polytunnels, a timber building and a vacant mobile home. The site falls within the Parish of Ticehurst.

2.3. The area around the site comprises a mix of pasture, woodland, commercial and residential uses. The eastern boundary of the site adjoins an existing ribbon of residential development, including The Old Police House which abuts the site to the east. The Weald Smokery lies to the site’s western boundary and the village of Flimwell beyond. The site presents itself largely as an infill site given its location between existing development to the east and west and the A268 to the south. The site adjoins arable land to the north which is bound by ancient woodland that forms part of Bedgebury Forest.

2.4. The A268, Hawkhurst Road, runs along the full length of the site’s southern boundary and links the site to Hawkhurst to the east and the A21 to the west. The A21 provides connections between Hastings, Tunbridge Wells and London.

2.5. The nearest bus stops are located 0.1 miles (1-minute walk) to the west of the site entrance, and provide services between Hawkhurst, Hurst Green, Rye and Tunbridge Wells. The accessibility of the site is discussed further in paragraphs 6.1 – 6.12.

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- 2.6. The site lies in Flood Zone 1, at low risk of flooding and is located wholly within the High Weald National Landscape (formerly called Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)). Opposite the site is a Grade II listed building called Old Timbers which is located to the south side of the A268.

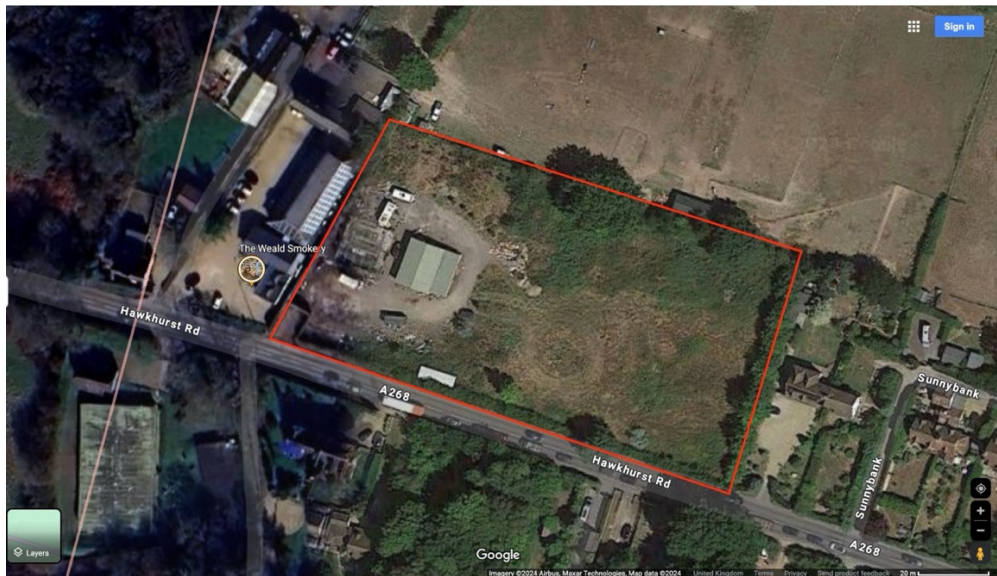


Figure 2.0 Aerial Photograph of site outlined in red

3. Planning History

3.1. The site is the subject of several historic planning applications. The most recent application (ref: RR/2020/174/P) for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of 8no. dwellings with access, parking and landscaping was refused on 30th June 2020 and dismissed at appeal on 6th September 2021 (ref: APP/U1430/W/20/3265770).

3.2. The Council refused the application on the grounds that:

3.2.1. The site lies outside of the defined development boundary for Flimwell and would therefore conflict with the overall spatial strategy of the Ticehurst Neighbourhood Plan which is to focus residential development in the existing villages and not to allow residential development outside village development boundaries unless a countryside location is essential.

3.2.2. The proposed development would result in harm to the character and appearance of the High Weald AONB (now National Landscape)

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3.2.3. The proposed form of development is suburban and uncharacteristic of the High Weald and would therefore erode the character and appearance of the AONB (now National Landscape).

3.2.4. Too many large dwellings rather than two and three bedroom dwellings to meet a locally identified need

3.2.5. No affordable housing provision

3.3. An allocation for the site under the Council's new Local Plan would render the site acceptable in principle. It is considered reasonable that grounds for refusal 2 - 4 could be overcome by sensitive building and landscape design. A Unilateral Undertaking to secure the provision of 4 affordable homes was submitted with the appeal which overcame the fifth reason for refusal.

3.4. A full planning history can be found at Appendix 1.

4. Current Site-specific Planning Policy

4.1. As set out above, the site lies wholly within the High Weald National Landscape, outside of a settlement boundary, near the settlement boundary of Flimwell. Ancient woodland lies approximately 80 metres from the northern boundary of the site.

4.2. While part of the site is covered by a large area of hardstanding, it is acknowledged that the horticultural use of the site renders it not previously developed for the purposes of planning policy.

4.3. The broad location is adjacent to the settlement confines of Flimwell, wholly within the High Weald National Landscape. It comprises a mix of pasture, woodland, commercial and residential uses.

4.4. Paragraph 182 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (National Landscapes) which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. It sets out that the conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas the scale and extent of development should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

4.5. Paragraphs 82-84 of the NPPF state that planning policies and decisions should support housing developments that reflect local needs and should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Paragraph 83 sets out that planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive. Paragraph 84 states that planning policies should

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avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless exceptional circumstances apply.

- 4.6. Paragraph 88 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas and paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that planning policies should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. It sets out that in these circumstances, it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). Lastly, it states that the use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.
 - 4.7. The draft local plan identifies a need for between 5,158 and 7,287 dwellings and a minimum of 74,189 sqm of employment floorspace over the plan period. It also sets out that over 83% of the district falls within the High Weald National Landscape and the remaining 18% is largely covered by national or international environmental designations or within Flood Zones 2 or 3 or already developed.
 - 4.8. While the NPPF requires for development to be limited in designated National Landscapes, it is reasonable that some sensitive development will be necessary in the High Weald National Landscape within the district, for the need to be met over the plan period.
 - 4.9. It is demonstrated below that the site is sufficiently contained and well located to deliver sensitive development to meet the identified need.
5. **Regulation 18 Local Plan & HELAA Site Assessment – Site TIC0008 Flimwell East Broad Location, Hawkhurst Road, Flimwell.**

Availability & Anticipated Timescales for Development

- 5.1. The Council's assessment of the broad location sets out that *most sections are potentially available* but that the timescales for development are *unknown*.
- 5.2. On behalf of Cherry Tree Farm investments Ltd, it is confirmed that the site at Cherry Tree Nursery within the broad location, as identified in Figure 1.1, is available for development over the plan period to 2040 and within the first five years of the plan period.
- 5.3. Cherry Tree Investments Ltd own the freehold of the site. There is one tenant for which the lease agreement provides for the site to be vacated early in the event planning permission is granted

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for development of the site.

- 5.4. The planning history of the site which includes applications submitted on behalf of Cherry Tree Investments Ltd for residential development, demonstrates further the availability of the site for development in the short term.

Estimated Development Potential

- 5.5. The estimated development potential of the broad location is for *mixed use to include residential (100 dwellings), commercial and community uses (e.g. 2,850 sqm employment floorspace and 500 sqm employment floorspace)*.
- 5.6. The site assessment information for the broad location sets out that the eastern part of the broad location, within which the site falls would be suitable for residential-led mixed-use development.
- 5.7. The Council's Density Study 2024 which forms part of the evidence base to the draft Local Plan, sets out the density of sites such as this, within a countryside location, should be developed at a density that reflects the character of the surrounding area which is typically between 15-30 dwellings per hectare. Based on this, the site at 0.8 hectares could accommodate between 12-24 dwellings.
- 5.8. As set out above, a previous planning application for the site (ref: RR/2020/174/P) was for 8 dwellings. These were large, mainly detached dwellings set within large plots with garages and driveways (4 x 4-bedroom, 2 x 3-bedroom and 2 x 2-bedroom), together with a generous landscaped area along the site frontage.

Site Assessment

- 5.9. Page 67-68 of the HELAA sets out the following assessment of the broad location site:

5.9.1. *This is a broad location containing a number of individual land parcels and adjoining fields on the northern and southern sides of Hawkhurst Road, east of the A21 Trunk Road. It offers the potential for growth on the eastern side of Flimwell, although there are some significant issues which would need to be overcome before its suitability for development can be determined, particularly in relation to its sustainability and safe access. Fields within the eastern part of the broad location are relatively well contained within the landscape and could potentially accommodate a sensitive, residential-led, mixed-use development without significant impacts on landscape character and views, subject to the retention of roadside boundary hedgerows (where present) and an appropriate buffer to the ancient woodland to the north. Fields in the north-western part of the broad location, adjacent to the road junction, are more constrained due to their sloping topography, mature trees and historic*

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field boundaries, however, some sensitive development could potentially be accommodated here in order to link to a larger development in the eastern part of the broad location, and provide improved pedestrian and cycle links towards the crossroads. The field on the southern side of Hawkhurst Road is also relatively well enclosed within the landscape and could potentially accommodate a sensitive commercial development in keeping with the adjacent use, subject to the retention of mature boundary trees and the protection of the adjoining woodland.

5.9.2. *However, due to its scale, development at this broad location may constitute “major development” within the High Weald National Landscape (an AONB), which the NPPF resists other than in exceptional circumstances and where the development is in the public interest, and further consideration of this issue is necessary. Furthermore, the position of this broad location on the eastern side of the A21 means it is not well-located in relation to existing services and facilities within Flimwell, which lie on the western side. While there are bus stops and limited facilities within walking distance, the fast stretches of Hawkhurst Road and the A21 do not provide a pleasant walking environment or safe cycling environment, and significant measures to improve this would be necessary as part of any development, together with improvements to crossing facilities on the A21. Achieving safe vehicular accesses to the individual parcels could also be problematic, particularly for those in the western part of the broad location, and the impact on the capacity of the road junction requires further assessment. The advice of National Highways will be required. If development were to be accepted here it would need to include a mixture of residential, employment and community uses in order to create a sustainable community with much improved links to existing services on the western side of the A21*

5.10. It is agreed that the eastern part of the broad location, within which the site falls, is well contained in the landscape and could therefore accommodate a sensitive, residential-led mixed-use development without significant impacts on the character of the High Weald National Landscape and views.

5.11. As set out above, the site is particularly contained, located between the Weald Smokery to the west, a ribbon of residential development to the east and the A268 Hawkhurst road to the south. Further, the western section of the site is occupied by a large area of hardstanding that used to form the base for the polytunnels, together with a timber building and a vacant mobile home.

5.12. Ancient woodland lies approximately 80 metres from the northern boundary of the site which would act as a visual buffer to any development from the open countryside.

5.13. Based on the above assessment, it is understood that the Council intends to undertake further

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assessment of the broad location to confirm whether it is suitable, available and achievable with particular regard to its suitability in relation to:

- the sustainability of the location of the site
- whether safe access can be achieved
- the scale of development in relation to the High Weald National Landscape
- the impact of development on the road junction

5.14. The suitability of the site in this regard is set out in Section 6 below.

6. Suitability

Sustainability of the site

6.1. Paragraphs 78-79 of the NPPF states rural housing should be located where it would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities and should avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances. It further states that where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may help to support services in a village nearby.

6.2. While the Cherry Tree Nursery site and the wider, broad location identified by the Council currently falls within the ‘open countryside’ for planning purposes, it is within walking distance to the built confines of Flimwell and many local services and facilities, including Flimwell Park and the Woodland Enterprise Centre. Further, the neighbouring village of Ticehurst is only a relatively short distance away (2.1 miles) and this provides access to several facilities including a primary school, doctor’s surgery, public house and post office.

6.3. For this reason, it is argued that the site is not an ‘isolated’ site, in line with the High Court judgement of *Braintree District Council v SSCLG & Others*. These are set out in Table 1 below.

Local Facilities & Services	Walking Distance
Bus stops	1 minute/4 minutes
The Weald Smokery (shop and café)	1 minute
Country Furniture Barns	4 minutes
Flimwell Park: Birchwood Restaurant, Wild Iris Spa, The Potters Studio, Quench Cycles, Hive workspace including	



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hot desking, small office space and meeting rooms, Wealden Osteopaths & Spine Centre, Weald at Heart Forest School	4 minutes
Flimwell Village Hall	6 minutes
Woodland Enterprise Centre: Tate Fencing, High Weald National Landscape, Exhibition Hall, office space & meeting rooms (used for Covid vaccinations)	16 minutes

Table 1: Distance to Local Services & Facilities

6.4. Further, 4 bus stops are located within 4 minutes walking distance from the site where services to Hawkhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Ticehurst, Uplands College and Hastings can be obtained. It is 13 minutes by bus from the site into the centre of Hawkhurst which has two supermarkets, dentists, doctors' surgery, hairdressers, cafe and cinema. Please see Table 2 below which provides further information regarding the frequency of these services.

Bus Service	Frequency
1066: Hastings – Hawkhurst – Tunbridge Wells	Hourly outside of peak times. Approx. every 30 minutes at peak times.
U1: John's Cross – Ticehurst – Uplands College	AM out & PM return weekdays only (term time)
U2: Hawkhurst – Flimwell – Ticehurst – Uplands College	AM out & PM return weekdays only (term time)
U3: Burwash – Etchingham – Uplands College	AM out & PM return weekdays only (term time)
U4: Flimwell – Ticehurst – Uplands College	AM out & PM return (term time)

Table 2: Bus Services

6.5. Comments received from the Highways Authority in relation to planning application (ref RR/2020/174/P) identified that both the eastbound and westbound bus stops would benefit from being upgraded as part of the development proposals for the site with raised kerbs, new poles and possible bus stop clearways provided. Further, the Highways Authority recommended that a pedestrian crossing point in the vicinity of the existing bus stops would significantly improve pedestrian safety. It is reasonable that these improvements could come forward as part of development proposals for the site and the wider broad location and would represent a



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significant public benefit.

- 6.6. As set out above, the Cherry Tree Nursery site and the broader location are not 'isolated' for planning purposes.
- 6.7. Given the range of local services and facilities within walking distance of the site, including employment opportunities and co-working space, together with the proximity of bus stops providing services to Hawkhurst and Tunbridge Wells, it is considered the Cherry Tree Nursery site and the wider broad location identified by the Council are in a relatively sustainable location. Further, the opportunities for significant enhancements to the existing pedestrian environment and existing bus stops would be of public benefit and likely lead to the increased use of public transport. When taking these into consideration, it is reasonable that residents of any new development on this site would use the local facilities, services and workspaces that are within walking distance of the site.

Immediate Pedestrian & Cycle Environment

- 6.8. It is acknowledged that the existing pedestrian and cycle environment surrounding the site and the wider broad location is not high quality. However, it is reasonable that improvements for walking and cycling could come forward as part of any development proposals for the site and the wider broad location, including improved crossing facilities at Flimwell Crossroads junction, crossing facilities to the bus stops and improved cycle facilities along the A268, Hawkhurst Road.

Safe Access into the Site

- 6.9. It was agreed by the Highway Authority in relation to planning application RR/2020/174/P that safe pedestrian and vehicular access could be achieved into the site. The Highway Authority confirmed that the appropriate visibility splays could be achieved over highway land or land that is in the control of the applicant but that some cutting back of foliage overhanging the highway verge would be needed. Such works could be secured as part of a planning application for the site.
- 6.10. Tracking drawings were provided as part of planning application (ref: RR/2020/174/P) to demonstrate that a refuse vehicle could enter and exit the site in a forward gear.
- 6.11. The Highway Authority identified as part of planning application (ref: RR/2020/174/P) that the footway on the north side of the A268 between the site and the bus stops is overgrown and narrow in places. While it was not considered reasonable to require for the improvement of this footway for a development of 8 dwellings, it is reasonable that the development of the broad location could bring about significant benefits to this pedestrian route. Cherry Tree Investments Ltd is in control of a significant portion of land adjoining the footway and would agree to the use

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of some of the site frontage for the widening of the footway in the event this was considered necessary.

6.12. Given the location of the site within the wider broad location, adjoining the A268 Hawkhurst Road, the site itself would be important to provide pedestrian and vehicular access to other parts of the broad location that are landlocked. Cherry Tree Investments Ltd has confirmed that it would be happy to work with adjoining landowners in a masterplan approach to the redevelopment of the site and the wider broad location to ensure safe and adequate access to the wider broad location as part of any development proposals for the site.

The scale of development in relation to the High Weald National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

6.13. The council's assessment of the broad location identifies that due to the scale of the broad location, development may constitute "major development" within the High Weald National Landscape which is resisted by the NPPF, other than in exceptional circumstances and where the development is in the public interest.

6.14. Paragraph 183 of the NPPF sets out that:

6.14.1. *"When considering applications for development within national parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

6.14.1.1. *the need for development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*

6.14.1.2. *the cost of, and scope for, developing outside of the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*

6.14.1.3. *any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.*

6.15. Footnote 64 of the NPPF sets out that for the purposes of paragraph 183, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designed or defined.

6.16. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010 Article 2 includes in its definition of major development, the provision of *dwelling-houses where the*



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number of dwelling-houses to be provided is 10 or more or the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more, and the development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more.'

6.17. The question of what constitutes a major development in the AONB / National Landscape has been tested in the courts.

6.18. In *Aston v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2013] EWCH 1936 (Admin), the judge concluded that:

6.18.1. *the word 'major' has a natural meaning in the English language albeit not one that is precise'; and*

6.18.2. *'to provide a precise definition would mean that the phrase has an artificiality which would not be appropriate in the context of planning policy'.*

6.19. In another judgement, in *R. (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC* [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin), the judge affirmed the approach taken in the *Aston* case in defining 'major development' according to "the normal meaning to be given to the phrase" and confirmed that the decision as to whether or not a development was 'major development' was a matter of planning judgement.

6.20. These judgements would appear to confirm that the determination of whether an application is 'major development' is fact specific and a matter of judgement for the decision maker. In so doing, and as the judgement in the *Aston* case refers to the natural meaning of the word major in the English language, then the Oxford English Dictionary definition which is "important, serious or significant" is relevant. The context must also be taken into consideration. Factors such as the location and size of the settlement affect the decision.

6.21. It is not just the DMPO definition that defines "major development" in the AONB/National Landscapes.

6.22. For example, in Appeal decision APP/Y2736/A/13/2197184, Land to the rear of Station Road, Ampleforth (decision dated 13 November 2013), a development of 30 housing units was found not to constitute major development in the context of the existing village development and in APP/C3621/A/11/2159362. Land to the rear of Springfield Road, Dorking (decision 30 April 2012) the Inspector concluded that "major development" may include both published and "common sense" criteria. He found that a development of 14 dwellings was not "major development" on any criteria.

6.23. In relation to the site, the proposed development of 8 residential units under planning application ref: RR/2020/174/P was not considered by Rother District Council to constitute "major

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development” for the purposes of paragraph 183 of the NPPF.

6.24. As set out in paragraph 5.7, in line with the Council’s Density Study 2024, the site at 0.8 hectares could accommodate between 12-24 dwellings at a density of between 15-30 dwellings per hectare.

6.25. In accordance with the decisions set out above it is important to consider the location and context of the site when determining whether development proposals would constitute major development. Given part of the site is occupied by hardstanding, building and caravan and the location of the site on the A268, between an existing ribbon of residential development to the east and the Weald Smokery to the west, the site presents itself as a minor infill site that is separated from the open countryside by ancient woodland to the north. On this basis, the impact on the National Landscape would be minimal subject to a sensitive design and layout. In line with other appeal decisions, it is reasonable therefore that a development on this site up to 24 dwellings would not constitute “major development” for the purposes of paragraph 183 of the NPPF.

6.26. In relation to the broad location, given the scale of the broad location and the estimated development potential of 100 dwellings and 2,850 sqm employment floorspace, when taking into consideration of the above court and appeal decisions, it is reasonable to determine that development of this nature would constitute “major development” for the purposes of paragraph 183 of the NPPF.

6.27. The Council’s identified need in the draft local plan is for between 5,158 and 7,287 dwellings and a minimum of 74,189 sqm of employment floorspace over the plan period.

6.28. Over 83% of the district is within the High Weald National Landscape and part of the remaining 18% of land is covered by national or international environmental designations, within Flood Zones 2 or 3, and therefore at risk of flooding, or already developed.

6.29. When taking this into consideration, it is reasonable that exceptional circumstances could apply and that an assessment of the development of the broad location in line with paragraph 183 of the NPPF would demonstrate:

6.29.1. a need for the development and a negative impact of refusing it on the local economy

6.29.2. that there is little scope to develop outside of the High Weald National Landscape or meet the need in an alternative way

6.29.3. that the effect on the environment, landscape and recreational opportunities is

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limited given the context of the site and can be further moderated through sensitive design.

6.30. Further, given the scale of the broad location and the associated development potential, it is reasonable that development of the broad location could secure a series of public benefits including affordable housing, significant improvements to the pedestrian and cycling environment surrounding the site and the existing Flimwell junction.

The impact of development on the road junction

6.31. The Highways Authority confirmed in relation to planning application ref: RR/2020/174/P for the site that the nearby A268/A21/B2087 (Flimwell Crossroads) junction suffers from issues with congestion during the AM and PM peak hours. In relation to the application for 8 dwellings, the Highways Authority concluded that given the low level of traffic likely to be generated by the development proposals, the Highways Authority was satisfied that the impact on the junction would be imperceptible. On this basis, development of the site would not impact negatively on the Flimwell Crossroads junction.

6.32. It is acknowledged that the estimated development potential of the broad location could exacerbate congestion at the junction in the peak hours and consultation with Highways England is necessary to establish what works could be undertaken to improve the junction. Large scale development at the broad location could support significant improvements to the pedestrian and cycling environment and to local bus stops, which would in turn reduce the reliance on the private car, together with improvements to the road junction.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. It has been demonstrated that The Cherry Tree site within the wider broad location is available for development within the early part of the new plan period.
- 7.2. Information has been provided on the accessibility of the site and the extensive range of local services and facilities that are within walking distance of the site, including workspace.
- 7.3. It has been demonstrated that while the site is located within the countryside for planning purposes, the site presents itself as a minor infill site, surrounded by an existing ribbon of residential development to the east and The Weald Smokery to the west and that it is reasonable that development of the site could come forward that does not significantly impact the High Weald National Landscape.
- 7.4. The Highways Authority agreed that safe access into the site could be achieved from the A268 Hawkhurst Road as part of planning application ref: RR/2020/174/P and identified a series of improvements that could be secured as part of a planning permission for the site.

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7.5. It is for the above reasons that the site should be included as part of the broad location, as an allocation site for development in version Regulation 19 of the draft Local Plan and beyond.

Yours faithfully,

Sascha Wardley BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI



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Appendix 1. Planning History

- RR/2020/174/P Demolition of existing buildings and erection of 8no. dwellings with access, parking and landscaping. Refused June 2020. Appeal dismissed September 2021.
- RR/2016/1574/P Change of use to residential development of one two storey, detached, 5-bedroom house with a double garage on site with licensed residential use. Refused. Aug 2016.
- RR/2014/1980/P Use of land for the stationing of mobile home for residential purposes. (Retrospective). Refused. Nov 2014. Appeal dismissed. Mar 2016.
- RR/2013/2094/P Outline: 11 no two-storey houses comprising one detached dwelling, 2 no semi-detached dwellings, and eight terraced dwellings – each with integral or designated parking provision plus 10 visitor parking spaces. To include 3 no affordable housing units. Refused. December 2013.
- RR/2013/1247/P Variation of condition 3 imposed on RR/2011/1500/P to allow maximum of two static caravans on site (and no touring caravan). (Retrospective). Refused. Aug 2013. Appeal withdrawn. Feb 2014.
- RR/2011/1500/P Retention of residential mobile home without complying with condition 1,2 & 3 (temporary 1-year consent) on RR/2010/1121/P Approved (temporary) October 2011. Appeal allowed in part Oct 2012.
- RR/2010/1121/P Retention of residential mobile home (retrospective). Approved (temporary). Jul 2010.
- RR/2009/1312/P Retention of chalet mobile homes. Refused. Mar 2009.
- RR/2006/1856/P Change of use of barn to allow sale of garden furniture, sheds, farm produce and plants and flowers including formation of parking area. Refused. May 2009.
- RR/2004/3394/ P Resubmission of application for erection of lean-to to existing agricultural storage building Approved Conditional. 2005.
- RR/2002/925/P Retrospective application – modification to existing Decision Refused. access. Application for two polytunnels and storage building 2002. May Appeal allowed in part March 2003.

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