



Horsham
District
Council

Horsham District Local Plan Examination

Response to Action Point 13

Matter 2, Issue 1 - Plan Period, Vision, Objectives and the Spatial Strategy- Is the context and Plan period clear and would the strategic policies of the Plan look ahead over a minimum of 15 years from adoption?

HDC37

Date: December 2024

Provide brief note on implications on the evidence base of extending the plan period.

1. The Council recognises that the plan if adopted in Autumn 2025 would have a 14.5 year timeframe. It is further recognised that the NPPF (paragraph 22) sets out that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption. It is accepted that to ensure strict compliance with paragraph 22, an extension of the Plan period by 1 year (to March 2041) would be necessary.
2. The first implication of this would be an increase to both the total housing need, and the total housing requirement. In short, our overall unmet housing need would increase by 917 (calculated using the standard method set out in guidance accompanying the September 2023 version of the NPPF), less the strategic sites still building out beyond 2040 (namely West of Ifield, North Horsham and Southwater) and any windfalls for that period.
3. The second implication is that the Council would need to consider updates and amendments to other elements of the evidence base, such that it reasonably aligns with the new Plan period. This includes recalculating the Gypsy and traveller needs (as the time period changes) and reviewing the Horsham Transport Study to identify potential impacts on the study findings. These updates would likely be a more time consuming task, potentially involving the input of consultants and specialist technical work.
4. As set out in our MIQ response M2.01, the practical difference in looking ahead 14.5 years rather than strictly 15 years is not likely to have any practical implications. The council will need to undertake two plan reviews prior to 2041 in any event, which will need to take account of the recently published NPPF housing targets and many other changed circumstances. Therefore given the need to consider those changed circumstances, adjusting the plan period now would not enable these issues to be accounted for with any accuracy at this point and are better addressed through that process. In short, there would be little or no practical benefit in extending the Plan period. This view aligns with the conclusion of the Inspector for the Future Mole Valley Local Plan¹, as set out in their report in paragraphs 79 to 82.

¹ <https://futuremolevalley.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/The-Inspectors-Report.pdf>