

CHAPTER 8 HOUSING	
POLICY HO1	Housing type and mix
Q42 a) Do you agree?	Yes.
b) Is the housing mix required for both market and affordable homes in Wealden correct in our context? If not, is there evidence to support an alternative housing mix within the district?	<p>We agree to some extent with the draft policy in HO1 for housing type and mix but would like to see a range of property types included within this – bungalows, maisonettes, and terraced suitable for starter and downsizing.</p> <p>Bungalows appear to be a phrase absent from planning documentation, but with an ageing population and a number of householders not feeling ready for sheltered (warden-assisted) or extra care housing, they are looking to retain a larger space, but with level access.</p> <p>We support the plan’s encouragement for applicants to deliver ‘high quality, well-designed and energy efficient new homes,’ (para.8.1) as helping with energy savings will ultimately make the property more affordable to run as well as climate-change friendly.</p> <p>We support para.8.20 (pg. 219) to ensure 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms (smaller dwelling stock) are maintained and not lost to extensions and expansion. When working for TWBC between the years of 2007 and 2015, we saw this happen in the village of Bidborough, just north of Royal Tunbridge Wells. All terraced and semi-detached properties were extended which meant young people looking to stay in the village or families/older people downsizing were priced out of the option to stay in the parish.</p> <p>We welcome a greater mix of 1,2, and 3 bed properties and a reduction in 4 bed along with executive style housing. This has been quite apparent with the developments approved off Lewes Road, Uckfield.</p> <p>Wealden has a high ageing population and Uckfield has a higher young age profile as well as older age profile. As advised previously, there must be properties available to downsize to (not just extra care and warden-assisted flats). This would free up the larger properties and in turn free up the starter and 2-3 bedroom properties.</p> <p>Support packages are required to help older people move as it is daunting to pack up a home after 40 years and set up with new utility companies etc.</p> <p>The term ‘Affordable’ is also questionable in this area as affordable in terms of private rented is still unobtainable for most salary earners, particularly for younger local people without deposits and, shared ownership properties are known for being more expensive per month rather than straight rent or mortgage. The mix of housing, and associated costs must reflect the wages of the rural and service based economy of Wealden District.</p> <p>A mixture of housing styles and a range of numbered bedroom properties allowing for a mix of young old and families would also help to increase community cohesion and reduce community isolation to build ‘communities’ not just houses.</p>
c) Anything else that needs changing?	Starter housing and affordable housing (both definitions as per policy HO1 pg. 218) need to be closer to public transport and local employment areas to ensure sustainability for these residents starting off in their journeys of independence with home and work.
d) Have they missed anything?	We would repeat our previous points, in relation to location, particular for smaller units (1 and 2 bedroom), which might be suitable for young individuals, couples, and older people downsizing. These properties ideally need to be in close proximity to key service centres, and

	<p>in particular public transport. Less people are learning to drive now, due to the costs associated with lessons and vehicle insurance. If the Local Plan wishes to support the Climate Change agenda, we need to be clever about the location of infrastructure to reduce dependence on vehicles, and thus meet climate change objectives.</p> <p>Interesting that it references in para. 8.6. that it was mostly developers in favour of awaiting to see financial viability of a site/application before considering extent of ensuring high standards of build, climate change mitigation, adaptations, parking and private amenity space. With an ageing population, and many concealed households (younger people still living with their parents) due to the South East rural housing rental and mortgage fees, it's not just about higher standards but building sustainable homes – sustainable for the future (to support people staying properties longer due to affordability and to support an ageing population to live independently in their homes).</p> <p>We would support affordable accommodation for rural workers students and apprentices! This will reduce travel if they can live in close proximity to work.</p>
POLICY HO2	Housing density
Q43 a) Do you agree?	Yes, we would agree with this policy.
b) Is the Council's preferred approach of considering housing density on a case-by-case basis subject to the criteria listed the correct approach?	<p>Yes, housing density should be considered on a case by case basis – and we support HO2 1c) in particular with regard to the existing landscape, topography, and site constraints. For one it depends on whether the application is being proposed in an urban setting or very rural setting.</p> <p>A densely built but level site is also likely to be less impactful on key vistas into and out of the town/village than one which is situated on various gradients. An example is the Ridgewood Farm site, Uckfield. The density at which this site has been built out, adjacent to an ancient woodland and concerning gradient levels, has demonstrated that this site has and will be once complete, over developed. The density of the properties is too high, and as a result become quite a blot on the landscape on this escarpment and clue in the name 'Ridge' wood.</p>
c) Should this policy instead set out minimum density standards across the district? If so, what should this be?	<p>We believe the proposals set out in the Draft Local Plan with regards to housing type and mix, clearly requires an application to consider the needs of the area, and the landscape and topography in which it sits.</p> <p>We do not believe a minimum density standard should be set.</p>
d) Should we change anything?	No.
e) Have they missed anything?	No.
POLICY HO3	Brownfield Land
Q44 a) Do you agree?	We would agree with this policy. brownfield is definitely preferred over green field.
b) Should this policy consider supporting the redevelopment of 'brownfield sites' for housing	<p>If this refers to the redevelopment of old and unused agricultural buildings, in more rural areas, then yes.</p> <p>This could provide accommodation for rural workers and apprenticeships, and potentially visitor/tourism accommodation.</p>

in less sustainable locations (i.e. beyond development boundaries)?	
c) Have they missed anything?	The concern is seeing how short Wealden DC's Brownfield Land Register is. Should Wealden DC be running a more targeted or focused campaign on brownfield sites when reviewing the SHELAA?
d) Should we change anything?	The concern is seeing how short Wealden DC's Brownfield Land Register is. Should Wealden DC be running a more targeted or focused campaign on brownfield sites when reviewing the SHELAA?
POLICY HO4	Small and medium sized housing sites
Q45 a) Do you agree?	We would agree with this policy.
b) Should we change anything?	<p>We would like to see smaller developments with a mix of 1-2-3 bedroom houses.</p> <p>These applications are more likely to see the residents integrate with the existing community and build relationships and are important to maintain the rural character and nature of the villages in Wealden. Large developments are swamping the hamlets and villages and thus changing the layout and pepperpotting of settlements in the Wealden landscape. Major developments also place substantial pressure on existing infrastructure and services.</p> <p>The policy says there are clear benefits in providing well designed new homes on small and medium sized site. However we do see that a number of the applications seem to typically seek to build larger executive homes of 3-4 bed and higher, and the only "green" is the gardens and possibly a tree they have to build around. We would therefore welcome, more focus on green infrastructure for these small and medium sized housing sites.</p>
c) Have they missed anything?	Small and medium sized housing sites would be the perfect size to trial new types of housing, such as self-build/Scandinavian type quick build homes which would be far more affordable for young people and families to create new homes and communities. Space for these developments should be supported, particularly in the rural setting of Wealden DC, where natural materials and wood, would be fitting to the green and wooded setting. This policy should therefore align and reference Policy HO5 moreso.
POLICY HO5	Self-build and custom house building
Q46 a) Do you agree?	We would support this policy and the support given to a variety of housing options for our residents.
b) Should the policy set the threshold to require self-build and custom build plots above or below 20 dwellings (gross)?	We don't believe a threshold should be set. It's unlikely that sites of 20 dwellings and over would be seen frequently at this stage in the plan period, so a more flexible and open approach, which is then considered on a case by case basis would be prudent.
c) Should the marketing period for the sale of self-build and custom build housing plots be at least 12 months or should this be a	18 months would be suitable in the current climate.

longer period (i.e. 18 months)?	
d) Should we change anything?	
e) Have they missed anything?	
POLICY HO6	HMOs
Q47 a) Do you agree?	
b) Should we change anything?	
c) Have they missed anything?	
POLICY HO7	Rural exception sites to meet local housing need
Q48 a) Do you agree?	We would support the policy.
b) Should we change anything?	-
c) Have they missed anything?	Every effort should be made to preserve the rural nature of Rural Exemption sites. Rural character is as important as area, heritage, landscape etc.
POLICY HO8	Affordable housing
Q49 a) Do you agree?	We would agree with this policy.
b) Is the proportion of affordable housing to be provided (at 35%) appropriate in the district? If not, should a higher proportion (i.e. 40% or 45%) be sought?	<p>With the broadening of the term 'affordable' to include social rented, private rented and shared ownership style owner occupied units, we would actually question whether the proportion should be higher.</p> <p>We are very conscious that a number of concealed households (young people still living at home, and families residing in much larger households than previously) conceals the real level of housing demand. Affordable units for all ages and stages of a person's life would be appropriate for rent and buying. We are also aware that a number of developers/applicants challenge the issue of viability and the original percentage of affordable often declines by the point of completion. An example would be the first phase of Ridgewood Farm, Uckfield. We would therefore question whether the proportion should be at least 40% to account for these situations.</p>
c) Is the Council's preferred tenure mix for affordable housing, including First Homes, correct, and if not, is there evidence to suggest an alternative tenure mix for affordable housing	<p>Needs of families at different stages, should be considered e.g. those wishing to move from a 'starter home' to a property more suitable for a growing family. Therefore not just 'first homes' should be considered but second homes too;</p> <p>There should be a provision for self build projects in addition to CLTs;</p> <p>Need to update 'affordable homes report' to challenge percentage of affordable housing required.</p>
d) Where First Homes are provided, is the minimum	-

30% discount appropriate and if not, should this be at 40% or 50%?	
e) Where First Homes are provided, is a maximum price of £200,000 after discount an appropriate maximum sales value (noting that the maximum sales value nationally that can be applied is £250,000)?	£200,000 seems a reasonable maximum price for a discounted first home.
f) Where First Homes are provided, is an income cap (for individual households) of around £50,000 appropriate and if not, where should this be set (noting that the maximum national income cap is £80,000)?	The income cap of £50k seems reasonable, as it should be possible to secure a mortgage for a £200k property with this income.
g) In terms of the design of affordable housing and support for 'smaller clusters' of affordable housing within a housing scheme, should the scale of these clusters be defined by a number and in line with the scale of the wider scheme (i.e. small, medium and large schemes)?	We would support the integration of affordable homes into wider developments. Perhaps it would be better to support these proposals within the policy, and advise that it would be considered on a case by case basis. Major developments of 100 properties and more, would appear to suggest that clusters would still be separate communities, whereas on small and medium size sites, the cluster design would see more integration.
h) Should we change anything?	-
i) Have they missed anything?	-
POLICY HO9	Traveller and travelling showpeople
POLICY HO10	Traveller and travelling showpeople cont.
POLICY HO11	Specialist housing for older and vulnerable people

Q52 a) Do you agree?	We would agree.
b) Should we change anything?	-
c) Have they missed anything?	We would agree and encourage the building of specialist housing for older and vulnerable people whilst also encouraging the building of smaller properties within developments to provide a range of options for those wishing to transition to a new home, downsize or obtain a similar size space but with level access. Wealden has a high ageing population, and such policies need to be supported and strengthened. We therefore welcome in particular HO11 6 (a) - (c). It's about avoiding isolation, creating accessible homes in small clusters or communities, that encourage dependency and wellbeing
POLICY HO12	Residential accessibility standards
Q53 a) Do you agree?	No.
b) Should we change anything?	We would support this policy, but HO12(3.) basically provides all applicants/developers with a caveat or 'get out clause' if financial viability doesn't allow for a proportion of the units to built ready for adaptations or wheelchair accessibility. In reality only major planning applications will deliver these residential accessibility standards, and that could be 2-3 properties per 100 or 200 units, which is poor. With no enforcement or powers to make this mandatory, we would question the strength of this policy in the Local Plan.
c) Have they missed anything?	As above.
POLICY HO13	Internal space standards or new dwellings
Q54 a) Do you agree?	We agree with this policy.
b) Is there alternative evidence to suggest that the Council should not be adopting the minimum national gross internal floorspace standards?	-
c) Should we change anything?	-
d) Have they missed anything?	-
POLICY HO14	Rural workers accommodation
Q55 a) Do you agree?	We are satisfied with the contents of this policy.
b) Do you agree that where a rural occupancy condition is removed, that a new planning condition/planning obligation should be in place	We agree, because it will enable any accommodation built for the purpose of rural workers to remain as 'affordable' housing stock and avert the risk of the property owner trying to later sell for financial gain. Members questioned whether if a dwelling does get approval to remove the occupancy condition, and it becomes affordable housing, would further consideration be required at the outset, at the initial stages of consultation on the proposed location, so it is in close

to require the dwelling to remain as affordable housing in perpetuity?	proximity to the business and nearby transport links.
c) Should we change anything?	-
d) Have they missed anything?	<p>We are satisfied with the contents of this policy. The points included are robust and easy to understand. There is full clarity on what documentation is needed and how an application will be followed.</p> <p>To have temporary accommodation for the first three years is a good plan, especially with the requirement that it has to be at the site of the permanent build.</p> <p>This policy is an interesting read. One of our members' farming back ground comes from living in two tied cottages to a farm but a farm that is connected to a large estate. As far as they can see, large estate farming does not exist in East Sussex as it does in West Sussex (Goodwood Estate, Arundel Park Estate for example). These are long established estates all with workers' housing already included.</p> <p>With reference to para. 8.121, we would disagree with this. The majority of small holding farmers do not have the financial backing to install these services (CCTV, automated animal feeding machines) within their farm.</p> <p>We feel this element of the policy, is too strict, and does not provide the flexibility needed in Wealden District which sees more small and medium farmsteads to be considered on a case by case basis.</p>
POLICY HO15	Conversion of rural buildings to residential use
Q56 a) Do you agree?	Agree
b) Do you agree that the conversion of agricultural buildings should first consider business and tourism uses first before residential development?	<p>We would agree that agricultural buildings should be considered for business and tourism before residential.</p> <p>This is a good use of the buildings which would support other policies in developing business and tourist sites. For example if the farmhouse at Ridgewood Farm had been supported in policy at reserved matters stage for a community building or pubic house, it would have been preserved and continued to be an important part of the landscape within the development.</p>
POLICY HO16	Park homes and residential caravan sites
Q57 a) Do you agree?	
b) Should we change anything?	
c) Have they missed anything?	
POLICY HO17	Replacement dwellings in the countryside
Q58 a) Do you agree?	
b) Should we change anything?	
c) Have they missed anything?	

POLICY HO18	Extensions and alterations to existing dwellings
Q59 a) Do you agree?	We would agree with this policy.
b) Should we change anything?	We would like to see a stop to the alteration/extension of bungalows into two story accommodations to ensure that the provision of available market and rented properties for vulnerable or elderly people remains available. Sub division of older properties is financially viable for property developers but not for housing stock availability.
c) Have they missed anything?	
POLICY HO19	Extensions to residential gardens
Q60 a) Do you agree?	
b) Should we change anything?	
c) Have they missed anything?	