



Growth and Communities

Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan
Planning and Building Control
Planning Policy
Neighbourhood Planning
Rother District Council Town Hall
Town Hall Square
Bexhill-on-Sea
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Ask for: Stephanie Holt Castle
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BY EMAIL ONLY

06 December 2024

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan - Regulation 16 Submission Consultation

Thank you for consulting Kent County Council (hereafter referred to as the County Council) on the Hurst Green Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 Submission Consultation, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The County Council has reviewed the Neighbourhood Plan and for ease of reference, has provided general comments on the Neighbourhood Plan followed by comments structured under the chapter headings and policies used within the document.

5. Housing Requirements and Strategy

Policy HG2: Housing Strategy

Paragraph 5.7

Highways and Transportation: The County Council, as Local Highways Authority for Kent, notes that the Neighbourhood Plan includes provision for 75 new homes along the A21 London Road at Hurst Green. The County Council requests, as the neighbouring Local Highways Authority, that it is included in any pre-application enquiries and consultations on future planning applications for this site. It would also ask that a transport assessment be included, which considers the impact on the local highway network within Kent, with details which are scoped with the Local Highways Authority for Kent.

10. Getting Around – Sustainable Movement

Policy HG18: Encouraging active travel

General

Public Rights of Way (PRoW): As a general statement, the County Council is keen to ensure its interests are represented with respect to its statutory duty to protect and improve PRoW in Kent (PRoW is the generic term for Public Footpaths, Public Bridleways, Restricted Byways, and Byways Open to All Traffic). The County Council is committed to working in partnership with local and neighbouring authorities, councils and others to achieve the aims contained within the County Council [Rights of Way Improvement Plan \(ROWIP\)](#) and [Framing Kent's Future 2022-2026](#). The County Council intends for people to enjoy, amongst others, a high quality of life with opportunities for an active and healthy lifestyle, improved environments for people and wildlife, and the availability of sustainable transport choices.

The Hurst Green Parish lies in East Sussex and borders the Kent Borough of Tunbridge Wells. The PRoW network is often considered a recreational network of paths. However, it can also provide means for people to access services and workplaces, and be a safer alternative to local roads, thereby increasing value to communities and individuals. This value is evidenced in the Regulation 16 Submission Consultation. The County Council welcomes the recognition within the Regulation 16 Submission Consultation and the aims to advance sustainable travel and leisure facilities for its residents – PRoW can positively contribute to these aspirations.

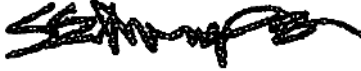
The County Council notes that it is likely that residents do walk or cycle from parish to parish; two existing PRoW run contiguously across the parish and county boundary and may assist local interactions – WC209 and WC210 (County Council references). Otherwise, residents have to use local lanes although these roads are generally no wider than a vehicle and are often enclosed by vegetation, making them potentially hazardous for walkers and cyclists due to conflict with vehicles - people can be deterred from cycling along existing roads due to levels of vehicular traffic.

For this reason, the County Council welcomes proposals for the creation of new off-road walking and cycling routes, as suggested in the Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, the County Council would also suggest that the Neighbourhood Plan could recognise the value of local PRoW for wellbeing and leisure, and to deliver benefits for community cohesiveness and sustainable/active travel and would ask that this be reflected in any further draft of the document.

To develop an onward connection in Kent, the County Council, as the Public Rights of Way and Access Service, would welcome an opportunity to work with Hurst Green Parish Council and East Sussex County Council to realise these ambitions.

The County Council would welcome continued engagement as the Neighbourhood Plan progresses. If you require any further information or clarification on any matters raised above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Holt-Castle', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Approved and signed on behalf of Stephanie Holt-Castle.

Stephanie Holt-Castle
Director of Growth and Communities