

**Horsham  
District  
Council**

## Representation Form

### **West Chiltington Neighbourhood Plan (2031) Regulation 16 Consultation - The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)**

West Chiltington Parish Council has prepared West Chiltington Neighbourhood Development Plan (WCNDP). The Plan sets out a vision for the future of the parish and planning policies which will be used to determine planning applications locally.

In accordance with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended), the West Chiltington Neighbourhood Development Plan and associated supporting documents will go out to consultation from **18 October 2024 to 29 November 2024** for 6 weeks inviting representations on the submission draft WCNDP, basic conditions statement, consultation statement and the SEA/AA and HRA assessment. Copies of the West Chiltington Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents are available to view on the Horsham District Council website. To view the plan and accompanying documents and to download the comment form please view:

<https://strategicplanning.horsham.gov.uk/WestChiltingtonReg16/consultationHome>

Hard copies of the documentation are available upon prior request for inspection at **Horsham District Council offices**; Parkside, Chart Way, North Street, Horsham, RH12 1RL between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday (01403 215398), **West Chiltington Parish Office**, The Parish Office, Church Street, West Chiltington, RH20 2JW, Opening 10am-1pm Tues & Wed (01798 817434). **West Chiltington Village Hall**, Mill Road, West Chiltington, RH20 2PZ.

#### **There are a number of ways to make your comments:**

1. Download and complete the comment form available from the link above and email it to: [neighbourhood.planning@horsham.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.planning@horsham.gov.uk); or
2. Print the comment form available to download by clicking on the link above and post it to: Neighbourhood Planning Officer, Horsham District Council, Parkside, Chart Way, North Street, Horsham, RH12 1RL

**All comments must be received by 5:00pm on 29 November 2024**

#### **NOTIFICATION**

All comments will be publicly available, and identifiable by name and (where applicable) organisation. Please note that any other personal information provided will be processed by Horsham District Council in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations. Horsham District Council will process your details in relation to this preparation of this document only. For further information please see the <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/privacy-policy>

## How to use this form

Please complete Part A in full, in order for your representation to be taken into account at the Neighbourhood Plan examination.

Please complete Part B overleaf, identifying which paragraph your comment relates to by completing the appropriate box.

<b>PART A</b>	<b>Your Details</b>
Full Name	Gary Constable
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone	
Email	
Organisation (if applicable)	
Position (if applicable)	
Date	3/12/24

## **PART B**

To which part in the plan does your representation relate?

Paragraph Number:	H2b Land at Smock Alley	Policy Reference:	H2 Land for Housing
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Do you support, oppose, or wish to comment on this plan? (Please tick one answer)

Support  Support with modifications  Oppose  Have Comments

<b>Please give details of your reasons for support/opposition, or make other comments here:</b>
<p><b>Policy H2 Land for Housing</b> <b>Policy H2b Land at Smock Alley</b></p> <p>This site has been the subject of three previous applications all of which have been rejected by Horsham District Council (HDC). Two of these applications were also categorically rejected by His Majesty's Planning Inspectorate within the last 10 years.</p> <p>I'm raising a specific concern with how this site has been included within the draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and will support my assertions with a series of irrefutable exhibits. The site selection process, undertaken by WCPC in 2021 in support of the draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is replete with irregularities and inconsistencies, and is underpinned by an incontrovertible predetermination and influence perpetrated by HDC.</p> <p>The following timeline summarises the process followed by WCPC to select sites which would subsequently be put forward into the Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 submissions and why a site previously rejected by WCPC, HDC, and His Majesty's Inspectorate became part of the draft NP. This proceeded an independent study by AECOM which found 6 possible sites to consider for inclusion in the draft plan.</p>

## The Site Selection Process Timeline

**19th January 2021:** WCPC Chairman met with HDC and informed them of WCPC's wishes to include two sites in the draft NP, one of which was Smock Alley [Exhibit A - minutes from Neighbourhood Plan Working Group].

**2nd February 2021:** WCPC site selection process commences and criteria and scoring model defined [Exhibit B - minutes from AECOM Reporting Working Group].

**3rd February 2021:** WCPC Vice Chairman of Planning met with HDC and confirmed the site selection process had been conducted and had agreed on two sites to be included in the draft NP, one of which was Smock Alley [Exhibit C - minutes from Neighbourhood Plan Working Group].

**11th February 2021:** site selection assessments revisited and verified with outcome of recommended sites decided to be put forward to the full WPCP for review and approval [Exhibit D - minutes from AECOM Report working Group].

**March 2021:** Site selection table and outcome published [Exhibit E - site selection table].

## Concerns Regarding The Site Selection Process

- As evidenced in bullet A, a unilateral decision was made by the WCPC Chairman to submit two sites, including Smock Alley, for inclusion in the draft NP. Contrary to standard procedure, full WCPC approval had neither been sought nor secured, and nor was this action supported by any evidence or analysis as it preceded the commencement of the site selection process by two weeks and several weeks before the process had concluded. This was an act of predetermination, circumventing all due care processes, and a decision which influenced subsequent actions by WCPC.
- As evidenced in bullet C, WCPC confirmed with HDC the selection of two sites, one of which was Smock Alley, less than 24 hours after the site selection process had commenced and several weeks before it concluded. It is simply not possible to conduct a fair and robust review of 7 sites in the space of two hours including agreeing upon a rating system.
- No site visits were conducted during the 2 hour analysis as the meeting occurred during hours of darkness given time of the year. At a minimum, a visit to each site should have been mandated as part of the due diligence process but this did not happen, subjecting analysis to purely a desk exercise.
- The site selection process was executed as a group exercise versus allowing each group member to work independently, assessing the merits of each site against the established criteria without the influence and biases of others present. The WCPC Chairman, who had already informed HDC of the site selection decision before the process had even begun, was present throughout the 2 hour meeting and therefore exposes the exercise to undue influence to back into a unilateral decision he had already made two weeks earlier.
- The quality level of the site selection analysis [Exhibit E] is highly questionable, with multiple irregularities and inconsistencies throughout, and an unfortunate byproduct of a contrived process to back into a predetermined outcome. To date, WCPC has not

responded to any of the concerns raised [Exhibit F - email to WCPC asking for clarity on irregularities].

- Throughout this entire process, the WCPC Chairman has reiterated multiple times the 'site will be developed [Exhibits G, H, and I - sample emails from WCPC] as advised by HDC, a predetermining factor which has been a persistent undercurrent during site selection. This is contrary to the fundamental principle of an NP being developed independently by the community for which it serves, absent of any influence and predetermination from HDC's own agenda. Unfortunately, HDC has successfully managed to influence the outcome of NP site selection to serve their own purposes and the WCPC, entrusted to make sound decisions backed by robust analysis and community involvement, has simply circumvented due diligence and complied in order to ultimately achieve NP approval.

The above concerns constitute a flagrant disregard for process due care resulting in a contrived site selection outcome for this NP, which conveniently aligns to HDC's agenda. This single site has been at the centre of significant controversy over a 10 year period simply because any decision to build upon it defies all common sense. It does not require a discerning eye to expose flagrant predetermination which ultimately makes a mockery of established planning processes and community engagement.

**What improvements or modifications would you suggest?**

The site selection process is recreated with the following mandatory principles applied:

- All the sites identified in the AECOM report are included for consideration and public consultation without any predetermination and undue influence by outside interests.



- **A robust, transparent, and fit-for-purpose scoring model and selection criteria are devised and consistently applied.**
- **Mandatory site visits for all participating WCPC working group members so they can appreciate the characteristics and nuances of each site in question BEFORE scoring.**
- **An auditable scoring process instituted with WCPC working group members executing in private and without the undue influence of senior WCPC members.**
- **Scoring outcomes, regardless of site(s) selection, which can stand up to fact-based scrutiny.**

(Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

If you have additional representations feel free to include additional pages. Please make sure any additional pages are clearly labelled/ addressed or attached.

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Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in relation to the West Chilton  
Neighbourhood Development plan?

Please tick here if you wish to be notified:

## Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Cllr Bob Gustar's Meeting with Barbara Childs & Catherine Howe from HDC

On Tuesday 19th January 2021 at 3.30pm

Venue: MS Teams Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Robert Gustar, Barbara Childs, and Catherine Howe

Also in attendance: Assistant Clerk, Elaine Hunt

- 1) Cllr Gustar updated BC and CH on the changes of personnel at the PC.
- 2) RG also explained that the PC has a revised view of how the Parish should move forward with its NP, which it wishes to re-submit with the inclusion of the two sites cited in Horsham DC's draft Local Plan, giving a scope for 28 new dwellings over the Plan period. Apart from the inclusion of this housing provision, the NP remains largely the same.
- 3) It was emphasised that the NP contains other policies that are important to the PC and the Parish and that is why there is a need for progression.
- 4) BC pointed out that HDC will shortly be publishing its Local Plan and if agreed it will go to consultation and to the Inspector.  
  
BC emphasised that if members agree to include the two sites (that appeared in the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan published in February 2020) they will become Council Policy and supersede any NP.
- 5) RG confirmed that his understanding of this point.  
  
However, he also told BC that Locality's advice to the PC is to progress its NP, and then if HDC's Local Plan ends up superseding it, the NP can be amended and updated. RG emphasised the fact that it could take HDC another year or even 18 months to have its emerging Plan 'made'. However, we are taking the 25 dwellings requirement in the Draft Plan as the number we need to be looking for.
- 6) CH stressed that this approach carries with it a risk, as pressures for example from HDC's duty to co-operate mean that numbers could change. RG said he understood the risk and thought the PC would be prepared to take it.
- 7) BC said that it looks as though WCPC and HDC are therefore more or less aligned and asked CH if she felt that the NP could therefore be progressed.
- 8) CH said her only concern is that the NP site allocation evidence has not been consulted upon yet, and it may be that this needs to happen before submission to HDC. (i.e. a further regulation 14 consultation). This may be needed to prevent a legal challenge at a later stage which could lead to the loss of all the policies and work on the plan. She agreed to check details with Norman Kwan to confirm this matter.

- 9) RG pointed out the possible financial issue this could create for the PC, having already almost exhausted grant and technical support opportunities getting the Plan to this stage. CH said she'd come back to us as soon as she can.
- 10) It was agreed that another similar meeting should be held in two weeks' time to discuss CH's update and the thoughts of the WCPC Planning Committee on the outcome of this meeting.

***AECOM Report Working Group  
Meeting #3 Notes***

On Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 at 5 – 6pm & 8pm  
Venue: Via MS Teams

1. ***Appoint Chairman for the meeting*** – Cllr R. Gustar was appointed Chairman.

2. ***Apologies for absence*** – None.

3. ***WG Site Assessments and Selection***

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council.

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020)

4. ***Next Steps***

Put together a proposal to go to the Full Parish Council which includes the lowest scoring sites using the selection process above. To do this in time for the March 2021 Parish Council Meeting.

To talk to HDC to let them know that we have settled on the sites we wish to include in our emerging Neighbourhood Plan and ask if they could support a Plan which includes those sites.

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting ended at 8.30pm.

## ***Neighbourhood Plan Working Group***

Cllr Chris Fagan's Meeting with Barbara Childs, Catherine Howe & Norman Kwan from HDC

On Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 at 2.00pm

Venue: MS Teams Virtual Meeting

Attendees: Chris Fagan, Barbara Childs, Catherine Howe & Norman Kwan

Also in attendance: WCPC Assistant Clerk, Elaine Hunt

- CF – Cllr Fagan explained to the meeting that the Parish's Working Group had conducted its Site Selection process and agreed on the two sites that were discussed at the last meeting and appear in the HDC Draft Local Plan that was published in Spring 2020. He asked if, on the basis that these two sites appear in our NP, HDC would be happy to support that NP.
- BC - Obviously not seen the Plan yet, but from what they are understanding about the work WCPC has done, using AECOM etc, then she feels that we have a good way forward now. Need to go through the Reg 14 consultation process though, as despite it seeming silly (with HDC having already done this for the relevant sites), NPs need to stand on their own two feet, and there is a standard legal process to achieve that which includes a consultation at Reg 14 stage. Understand how frustrating this must feel, but ultimately it is to protect the PC as there will inevitably be challenges, and a part of any challenge would certainly be around due process if the Reg 14 consultation is not completed. After doing all this work, no-one wants the NP to fail on a technicality.
- NK - Confirmed BCs assertion, and stated that he would be very happy to help and assist WCPC through the process and is available on the telephone at any time during the working week. He said that the evidence collected (via AECOM) seems very robust, so he is very happy to engage and progress the NP with us to Reg 14. He also has an array of resources that will help us, like contacts, comment form and public notice templates, address lists for statutory consultees etc.
- CF - Confirmed that the PC wants to do this right and not get caught out on a technicality.
- CH - Although Reg 14 is for Parishes to do, not only can HDC provide the PC with resources, but it also offers a Health Check before the consultation is carried



out where it will identify any possible issues with the Plan that can then be ironed out before making the Plan public. This is HDC's preferred method of approach to a Reg 14 consultation but it is not obligatory

- EH - Asked about the cost of the exercise, especially in the light of COVID restrictions and the need to do a mailing etc.
  
- NK - It is legal to do consultations during the pandemic, but they need to be carried out electronically, and therefore there's no reason they should attract additional costs. There is help from HDC with tools and templates to make this 'virtual' style consultation work.  
There is no need to do a mail out – just need to make sure the consultation is very well publicised and direct parishioners to e-mail and website options of responding to the consultation.
  
- BC - The COVID crisis has changed the world, and as long as there is publicity about the consultation on Parish Noticeboards, e-mailed to known interest groups and well-publicised via local magazines/other publications, then the PC will have fulfilled its obligations. There is no regulatory obligation to write to everybody (ie all residents). However it is a legal requirement to inform any those parties impacted by the emerging policies in the plan.
  
- NK - The consultation must be over a minimum of six weeks. It must be on the PC website, and HDC will also provide links to highlight the consultation. . After the findings are reviewed and any required amendments are made to the NP, it is submitted to HDC to carry out its Reg 15 consultation.  
Need to carefully record and document how we engaged with parishioners and supply evidence of 'reach'. This is a legal requirement, and also something that NK can help with.  
Also need a narrative of how sites were selected – Inspector will be looking at how decisions were made not just the decisions themselves. NK happy to send examples of work done by other parishes to assist.
  
- CF - Wanted to confirm that the '25' number that was in the HDC Draft Local Plan for West Chiltington Parish IS still the number, and how far into the future that number will hold.
  
- BC - That is the multimillion-pound question! Housing numbers keep changing for everyone, and indeed even since HDC's Spring consultation numbers have gone up for Horsham District. It would be wise for the PC to consider if there are other sites it would like to include in its Plan now.

- NK - Emphasised that how the PC deals with rejected sites is as important as how it deals with selected sites.
  
- BC - WCPC is very lucky that it is not the first PC to conduct a 'COVID-style' consultation – others have done it and a lot can be learned from their experiences; what worked and what didn't.
  
- EH - Thanked the HDC team for their time and attention to our NP efforts. Agreed we'd be in touch again with NK, and with CH and her team in due course.

Meeting ended at 2.30pm.

WEST CHILTINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

***AECOM Report Working Group  
Meeting #4 Notes***

On Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 3pm  
Venue: Via MS Teams

1. ***Appoint Chairman for the meeting*** – Cllr R. Gustar was appointed Chairman.
2. **Apologies for absence** – None.
3. **WG Site Assessments and Selection**

The Group re-visited the assessments conducted at its Meeting #3 and verified the contents of the tables and category scores.

A conclusion was reached about what proposal should be put forward to the full Parish Council at its March 2021 meeting.

4. **Next Steps**

Assistant Clerk to issue the updated site assessment tables to the Group for final comments/amendments/consideration.

Group members to feed their final comments back to the Assistant Clerk via e-mail. Assistant Clerk to make any final adjustments to the tables, then forward them to Maureen Chaffe for incorporation into the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base.

Group members to also forward to the Assistant Clerk any remaining errata in the AECOM Site Assessment Report, to include in an Appendix to the Report when it is published as part of the Reg 14 Consultation and also to feed back to Locality regarding AECOM's performance in producing its Report.

Cllr Gustar to draft an Agenda Item for the next Parish Council Meeting in March 2021, outlining the Group's recommendations on how to move the NP forward. This will include going to a Reg 14 Public Consultation at the end of March/beginning of April 2021 with the inclusion of the selected development sites.

Maureen Chaffe to commission the required SEA and HRA using the technical grants awarded by Locality.

Maureen Chaffe to commence her work updating the rest of the existing NP for changes required due to the passage of time, and to include new site data from the Spring 2020 Call for Sites and AECOM's Site Assessment Report.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting ended at 5pm.

## Site Selection Tables

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

\*Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

SITE SA066 Hatches Estate (Broadford Bridge Road)	Visual Impact	Tucked behind East Street and off Broadford Bridge Road, its impact was assessed as Low. Tree screening on the eastern side of the site, which, if retained, would also soften any visual impact. Also screened from the road with mature hedging/trees. The site currently contains several dilapidated barns which would be removed.	Points: 2
No. of dwellings per Section 6 – <b>15</b> Proposed by landowner: 10 market, 5 affordable.	Traffic Impact	Easy access to Broadford Bridge Road, a main road out of the village, heading North. This will reduce any potential increase in traffic noise and air pollution for the village. Near a bus route.	2
	Sustainability	Proposed footpath link to join an existing PROW, and potentially improve safety for easy walking to school, shop/PO, and pub. No requirement for tree removal.	1
	Heritage	Abuts land that is in the curtilage of a Listed building but is not very close to the building.	1
	HDC Acceptability	Abuts the BUAB. Controlled by WSCC. Included in Local Plan Consultation, and a good contribution to required housing numbers.	1
		TOTAL	<b>7</b>

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

'Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

SITE SA014 Land North of Finches Lane	Visual Impact	View from Recreation Ground would be severely damaged, especially due to the required loss of so many trees. Additional street signage would be required at access point on Mill Road.	Points: 4
No. of dwellings per Section 6 - 5	Traffic Impact	Traffic would spill into a busy thoroughfare of the village. WSCC may even require street lighting for safety reasons.	4
Proposed by landowner: 8 – 14 depending on density.	Sustainability	Would require the loss of many trees/woodland including approx. 2/3 of site covered by TPOs including in the middle of the proposed access route. The traffic would also emerge onto a stretch of village road that has a drainage issue with a lot of water run-off and regular floods. In the SDNP HRA buffer as a bat feeding ground.	3
	Heritage	Adjacent to Gentle Harry's Farm a Grade II Listed building, and one of the oldest buildings in the village, Daux Farm.	3
	HDC Acceptability	Too few potential dwellings.	5
		TOTAL	<b>19</b>

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

'Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

SITE SA319 The Paddocks	Visual Impact	Bordering a wood, so low neighbour impact, but no screening from Smock Alley so would be highly visible on all approaches (including the adjacent Public Footpath) as the site lies fairly low compared to the land around it.	Points: 3
No. of dwellings per Section 6 <b>- 3</b>	Traffic Impact	Close to a road leading out of the village, but on a tricky corner (with a small bridge which runs over a stream) with a history of road accidents.	3
Proposed by landowner: 10 market, 4 affordable (or 2/3 self-build)	Sustainability	The site is prone to getting very wet and boggy, and it is in the separation zone. Significant drainage problems present. A lot of woodland nearby and would impact significantly on PROW users.	4
	Heritage	No impact.	1
	HDC Acceptability	In settlement Separation Zone between WC and Thakeham. Low number of potential dwellings.	5
		TOTAL	<b>16</b>



Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

'Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

<p>SITE SA500 Land East of Hatches House (East Street)</p>	<p>Visual Impact</p>	<p>Right on a single track, main access route into the village. A raised site, elevated above the road, having a severely detrimental impact on the streetscape in the conservation area.</p>	<p>Points: 5</p>
<p>No. of dwellings per Section 6 - <b>5</b>  Proposed by landowner: 10 in total including appropriate % affordable.</p>	<p>Traffic Impact</p>	<p>Catastrophic. Opposite the school which already means that traffic on East Street is a huge problem. Road used for school parking making it very narrow and dangerous.</p>	<p>5</p>
	<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Good access to village facilities. On a bus route.</p>	<p>1</p>
	<p>Heritage</p>	<p>In the middle of the conservation area and next door to a Grade II Listed Building.</p>	<p>4</p>
	<p>HDC Acceptability</p>	<p>Rejected in the past. Low number of potential dwellings.</p>	<p>5</p>
		<p>TOTAL</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

'Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

SITE 1 Furzefield	Visual Impact	Tucked away but would require significant tree removal.	Points: 2
No. of dwellings per Section 6 - 5	Traffic Impact	In a built-up area with very narrow lanes.	4
Proposed by landowner: 4 – 6 dwellings. <b>Affordable housing only.</b>	Sustainability	Significant tree losses. Easy access to local shop/PO, butchers. Close to a good bus route.	3
	Heritage	No impact.	1
	HDC Acceptability	Never brought forward. Feasibility is low as Affordable Housing only. Low number of potential dwellings.	5
		TOTAL	<b>15</b>

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

'Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

SITE 2 Smock Alley	Visual Impact	Across two fields, housing density is reduced, and a tree corridor would shield it.	Points: 2
No. of dwellings per Section 6 – <b>14</b> Proposed by landowner: 11 market, 3 affordable. Incl 6 bungalows.	Traffic Impact	On a not too busy road, with no current traffic issues. Opportunity for safe access from road (Smock Alley). Access to a main road out of the village without going through the village centre. This will limit any potential traffic increase, noise and air pollution.	2
	Sustainability	There is a suggestion that the developer would deliver a footpath with any development, and potentially donate the woodland to the Parish Council as a wildlife area. Walking distance to local shop/PO, butcher, and pub. No tree losses, no TPOs, no flood risk.	3
	Heritage	Ancient woodland area would be donated.	1
	HDC Acceptability	In the Local Plan Consultation – new plan is a much lower density than previously rejected proposals. The site is effectively bounded by the existing built-up area on three sides and therefore 'fits' within it. In addition, because of how the site fits within the existing built-up area it does not encroach on the settlement zone between the Common and the Village.	1
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>

Each site rated as either Amber or Green in the AECOM Report was further assessed for its Visual Impact, Traffic Impact, Sustainability, Heritage Impact, and its likely acceptance by Horsham District Council (\*see footnote).

1 point awarded for Very Low impact → 5 points for Very High impact. Looking for the lowest scoring sites which can achieve the required 25 dwellings (from HDC's Local Plan Consultation in Spring 2020).

'Section 6' referred to in the tables below is Section 6 of the AECOM Site Assessment Report.

<p>SITE 3 Southmill House.</p>	<p>Visual Impact</p>	<p>Would be highly visible from several public footpaths. Additional street signage would be required at access point on Mill Road.</p>	<p>Points: 5</p>
<p>No. of dwellings per Section 6 – <b>5</b> (but need to demolish existing dwelling).  Proposed by landowner: 15 in total: 10 market, 5 affordable.</p>	<p>Traffic Impact</p>	<p>Traffic would spill into a busy thoroughfare of the village. WSCC may even require street lighting for safety reasons.  Traffic exiting the site would all need to go through The Common or the Village before reaching a main road, thereby potentially increasing noise / pollution for some residents.</p>	<p>4</p>
	<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Similar again to SA014 with traffic emerging onto a busy village road.  Gardens backing onto the site already suffer with waterlogging due to run-off. One of the neighbours has a well which needs an automatic water gauge and pump because of run-off/ flood risk and there is a stream running from the lake adjacent to the site that has become blocked in the past.  Bats very prevalent around the site, as well as badgers, and buzzards nesting in the trees. Near a natural lake which could cause safety issues for children, and also serves as habitat for many species of wildlife i.e. herons, ducks, frogs, toads and insects. TPOs on site.  Access directly opposite a public recreational facility.</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>Heritage</p>	<p>In close proximity to 5 Grade II Listed Buildings, including The Windmill.</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>HDC Acceptability</p>	<p>Had planning refused for multiple dwellings several times in the past. Low number of potential dwellings (net 4, with demolition of landowner's home). <b>In the separation zone between settlements, contrary to HDC and NP policies.</b></p>	<p>5</p>
		<p>TOTAL</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>

## CONCLUSIONS

### FINAL RANKINGS:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Site SA066 – Hatches Estate	7 points	AECOM Total Dwellings in Green/Amber Sites = 52
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Site 2 - Smock Alley	9 points	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> placed sites deliver 29 dwellings.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Site 1 – Furze field	15 points	HDC Draft Local Plan required 25 dwellings from West Chiltington Parish.
4 <sup>th</sup>	SA319 – The Paddocks	16 points	
5 <sup>th</sup>	SA014 – North of Finches Lane	19 points	
6 <sup>th</sup> =	SA500 – East of Hatches House	20 points	
6 <sup>th</sup> =	Site 3 – Southmill House	20 points	

### PROPOSAL

To progress West Chiltington Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan with the inclusion of the Hatches Estate site (15 dwellings) and Smock Alley site (14 dwellings) for development and provision of local housing. Total 29 dwellings.

\* Footnote: The Working Group considered what ‘Impacts’ were of most significant importance to the Parish from any development, and decided that Visual, Traffic and Heritage impacts were key. It also considered that Sustainability and its Acceptability to HDC had to be taken into account to arrive at a cohesive conclusion to the site selection process.

**From:** Gary Constable [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Site Selection Table  
**Date:** 7 June 2021 at 19:26  
**To:** Robert Gustar [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** West Chillington Parish Council clerk@wcpc.org.uk

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WCPC Planning Committee,

I'm raising concerns with regard to the Site Selection Table, specifically an absence of fairness and consistency, and have a number of questions I'd appreciate answers to.

As painful as any decision to build on a site may be for those impacted, it may be somewhat reluctantly palatable to some if the decision was supported by a robust and rigorous analysis. Sadly, the Site Selection Table, supposedly the primary artefact to identify the most appropriate sites, is anything but convincing. While I uphold a high degree of respect for those working in a volunteer capacity and typically refrain from being critical, the Site Selection Table is so contemptible that I feel compelled to challenge its dubious outcome. Some level of subjectivity and ambiguity is expected when weighing up the relative merits of each site. However, there permeates an irrefutable inconsistency throughout the analysis and a subliminal bias toward the two selected sites. I've selected a few of the most self-evident items and request clarity on each:

1. In the rationale for Land East of Hatches it quotes '*a raised site, elevated above the road, having a severely detrimental impact on the streetscape*' and yielding the maximum Visual Impact score of 5. For reference, this site measures just ~1 metre above road level, hardly imposing relative to other sites. However, the corresponding measure for Smock Alley, towering at ~10 metres above road level fails to garner even a mention and yields a charitable score of just 2. Please explain this scoring inconsistency.
2. In the rationale for Southmill House it quotes '*had planning refused for multiple dwellings several times in the past*' and, in a bold font to strengthen the message, states it is within the separation zone, contributing to its maximum HDC Acceptability score of 5. For reference, the last planning application for this site was over 30 years ago which is hardly relevant to this exercise. And yet the corresponding measure for Smock Alley with two recent and high-profile planning rejections at the Inspectorate level and also residing in exactly the same separation zone yields the lowest possible score. Please explain this scoring inconsistency.
3. In the rationale for Traffic Impact for Smock Alley it cites '*opportunity for safe access from road*' contributing to yet another lowly score of 2. And yet AECOM clearly states that access can only be mitigated through the widening of roads. Again, a subtle omission of the facts as it takes little planning knowledge to discern that any widening of roads will have a corresponding detrimental visual impact. Additionally, the widening of roads may actually erode the tree corridor which the Site Selection analysis deemed a mitigating measure. Please explain why the required widening of roads to achieve road safety was not factored into either Visual Impact nor Traffic Impact measures for Smock Alley.
4. The Southmill House site abuts the property of the incumbent Chairman of the WCPC Planning Committee. Please confirm he declared his interests and recused himself on the grounds of preserving maximum impartiality from the entire Site Selection process given his direct proximity to one of the sites.
5. The HDC Acceptability category garners a 20% weighting which, in my view, is generous for a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) supposedly a product of community self-determination. Nevertheless, common sense would suggest the scoring criteria for this category would be perhaps adherence to planning directives and, to a lesser degree, the number of homes to contribute toward the 25 home target. And yet on both the selected sites, Smock Alley and Hatches, it clearly calls out their inclusion in HDC's Local Plan which undeniably is contributing to their lowly scores in this



category. As a reminder, this is a NP and not a process dictated by HDC therefore rendering this scoring both unfair and inappropriate. All other sites were scored the maximum 5 which is ludicrous. For the record, HDC has only included these sites in their draft Local Plan due to interest from developers which they are obligated to do. It is most certainly not that they are deemed the most appropriate for development. As such, please explain why inclusion in HDC's draft Local Plan should have such a huge bearing on this score when the NP should be independent of any influence from HDC.

6. The engagement of AECOM was a laudable decision on the part of WCPC to elicit an independent perspective from experienced planning professionals. On the AECOM report only a single site was designated 'green' (East of Hatches House) and yet WCPC's Site Selection analysis deemed the same site the joint least favourable scoring nearly maximum marks across all criteria. While I can appreciate some level of localised nuance to be applied, I'm unable to reconcile the chasm in perspectives and therefore please explain this discrepancy.

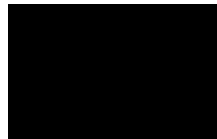
The independent AECOM report yielded one 'green' and several 'amber' sites and yet WCPC has selectively extracted elements of the report only where it supports their narrative and predetermined outcome. I find it statistically implausible that the same two sites in HDC's draft Local Plan just so happen to conveniently align to WCPC's Site Selection process, and by quite a margin, and yet the facts simply don't support the outcome.

In my view, it does not require a discerning eye to deduce a blatant attempt to contrive an analysis which backs into a predetermined outcome. The Site Selection Table is fundamentally flawed, and supports the WCPC Chairman's own admission to comply with HDC's wishes in order to ultimately achieve NP approval. The WCPC is entrusted to develop a NP and make the difficult choices on site selection, backed by irrefutable evidence absent of bias and predetermination, not to submissively fabricate a facsimile of HDC's draft Local Plan.

I look forward to WCPC's explanation to my six points above.

Regards,

Gary Constable



**From:** Gary Constable  
**Subject:** Fwd: Annual Parish Meeting  
**Date:** 21 June 2021 at 13:39  
**To:**

**From:** Elaine Hunt <[planning@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:planning@wcpc.org.uk)>  
**Date:** 11 May 2021 at 10:22:59 BST  
**To:** "[clerk@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@wcpc.org.uk)" <[clerk@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@wcpc.org.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Annual Parish Meeting

Dear Ms Clare

Apologies for the delay in responding to your e-mail. This is a particularly busy period for the Parish Council but we are working hard to answer parishioners' queries as fully as we possibly can.

For your ease of reference, I have inserted answers to your questions, in blue, within the body of your e-mail below.

With best wishes

Elaine Hunt  
Assistant Clerk  
West Chiltonton Parish Council  
Parish Office  
Church Street  
West Chiltonton  
RH20 2JW  
01798 817434  
[planning@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:planning@wcpc.org.uk)

The office is currently closed, but you can contact us via e-mail or using the mobile telephone number.

My working hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

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**From:** Michele Hollingsworth <[mhollingsworth@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:mhollingsworth@wcpc.org.uk)>  
**Sent:** 29 April 2021 16:47  
**To:** West Chiltonton Parish Council <[clerk@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@wcpc.org.uk)>  
**Subject:** Annual Parish Meeting

Dear Clerk.

I would appreciate my email being shared with the chairman and council at the next PC meeting.

This was duly done – your e-mail was forwarded to all Councillors, and it was brought to their attention during the Parish Council Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

I attended the Annual Parish Council meeting via TEAMS on Tuesday 27th April. It was interesting to hear how much has been achieved by the council during this year and I am grateful for all the time and effort councillors have contributed for the benefit of West Chiltonton residents.

Thank you.

I recognise the difficulty of trying to complete the Neighbourhood Plan but as I said at the meeting, I feel the inclusion of Smock Alley as a site for development is a grave error that the PC will live to regret. Once building is allowed in the settlement zone they will be inundated by developers' requests for planning. I have attached a copy of my comments and question to the council, from the meeting. I was very disappointed to hear the chairman say the decision to include Smock Alley as a site for development will not be reconsidered.

Thank you for your comments. All of the points you have made refer to matters that were considered by the Working Group and scores were allocated accordingly. The site selection process was conducted fairly and honestly and is now complete. It will not be re-visited before the Reg 14 consultation with all parishioners.

From our conversation at the meeting the chairman made it very clear that the PC is being pressurized by HDC to include Smock Alley.. How can HDC justify this when they have used tax payers money to defend the site from [developers.at](#) appeal, not once but twice?

HDC has not pressurised the Parish Council. It has simply stated very clearly that a Neighbourhood Plan for the Parish will not be acceptable without a housing allocation for at least 25 dwellings over the period of the plan. HDC has included the Smock Alley site in its Draft Local Plan as one that could contribute to West Chiltington's housing number and is suitable for development. The Working Group's site assessment and selection process concluded that Smock Alley is indeed one of the least damaging options available in the village to contribute to its housing requirement. Both Councils have therefore reached the same conclusions.

Whether the Parish Council includes Smock Alley in its Neighbourhood Plan or not, it is clear that the site WILL be developed. Although HDC has refused the site twice, it is now happy with the reduced density of dwellings and will give permission for houses to be built there. An inclusion of the site in our Neighbourhood Plan is the Parish's only opportunity to try to manage and control the nature and extent of that development; attempting to keep it to 14 dwellings only and ensuring the promised landscaping etc is also completed.

The settlement zone between the village and common is one of the unique features of West Chiltington. If we have to find development sites for HDC we need to concentrate on sites identified as amber by the Aecom Survey that are not in a protected area.

All of the sites were assessed by the AECOM Report Working Group. The Parish Council would prefer to have no new development of this type in the village but it is clear that that is simply not an option. The Working Group's view is that the two sites selected are the least damaging to the village overall - as reflected in the assessments summarised in the Site Selection tables.

Clearly you disagree, and of course we respect your thoughts on the matter. When the Neighbourhood Plan goes out to consultation the Parish Council will hear what all parishioners have to say and will fulfil its obligations to respond accordingly.

The Parish Council is hopeful that parishioners will agree with its assessments and

The Parish Council is hopeful that parishioners will agree with its assessments and support its endeavours to progress to a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan with all the benefits that it will bring to the whole Parish.

Kind regards  
Michele Clare



**From:** Gary Constable ([REDACTED])  
**Subject:** Re: WCPC Planning  
**Date:** 28 May 2021 at 11:37  
**To:** West Chiltington Parish Council clerk@wcpc.org.uk  
**Cc:** Robert Gustar ([REDACTED]) Elaine Hunt planning@wcpc.org.uk

Thank you Anna for the prompt response. Can you please share who (name) advised the site 'will be developed', under what context (a meeting?) and when?

Regards,

Gary Constable

On 27 May 2021, at 12:19, West Chiltington Parish Council <clerk@wcpc.org.uk> wrote:

Dear Gary

Thank you for your email and I will take this opportunity to clarify what has been said.

I think the wording might have been better if it had said 'we are advised that the site will be developed'. But the fact remains that the AECOM Working group are of the opinion that development of the Smock Alley site is inevitable.

The reason behind this evaluation is three-fold -

- In February 2020, Horsham District Council identified the site as suitable for the development of 14 houses and started a consultation.
- In October 2020, the AECOM report also identified the Smock Alley site as suitable for the development of 14 houses.
- In March 2021, the Parish Council reviewed all the sites identified by AECOM and identified the Smock Alley site as one of the two to be selected for inclusion in the neighbourhood plan.

All of this is in the public domain and can be accessed by any local developers who will sooner or later use the information available to support a development application.

The appeals which turned down the Smock Alley development in the past were for a density of housing three times greater than proposed now, and the political climate has changed with a far more aggressive policy to house building in the South of England.

It is the view of the working group that the best way to keep this development down to 14 houses with all the promised landscaping is through a made neighbourhood plan.

I would urge you to support this plan as it is the best way to minimise impact of development in your area.

Best Regards

Anna Chambers  
Clerk to the Council  
West Chiltington Parish Council  
Parish Office  
Church Street  
West Chiltington  
RH20 2JW  
01798 817434  
[REDACTED]

The office is currently closed but we can be contacted by email or on the mobile telephone number. Normal working hours are Tuesday-Thursday.

This e-mail is intended solely for the person or organisation to which it is addressed. It may contain privileged and confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient, you are prohibited from

Exhibit I

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**From:** Robert Gustar <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 25 May 2021 09:39  
**To:** West Chiltonton Parish Council <[clerk@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@wcpc.org.uk)>  
**Subject:** Fw: WCPC Planning

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**From:** Gary Constable <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 24 May 2021 20:26  
**To:** Robert Gustar <[REDACTED]>

**Subject:** WCPC Planning

WCPC Chairman and HDC Planning Team,

A neighbour forwarded to me a response she recently received from the West Chiltonton Parish Council (WCPC) regarding Smock Alley and while I will challenge a few of the statements made in the email below through the appropriate consultation channels I am drawing your immediate attention to a single statement. *"It is clear that the site WILL be developed"* (referencing Smock Alley) is both fatalistic and completely undermines the perception of a democratic and consultative process with regard to planning. Additionally, I take offence to bolding 'will' to emphasise the point and render community challenges futile.

We have been repeatedly informed by HDC that no final decisions have been made as both the West Chiltonton Neighbourhood Plan and HDC's Local Plan remain in draft status and community concerns will be considered through the pending consultation processes. However, the WCPC statement reeks of predetermination and makes a mockery of community engagement.

I find the statement unacceptable and an affront to established consultation processes, merely fuelling the perception of predetermination with regard to a particular site. Consultation is not just a check box; it is a fundamental right afforded to the community, and public servants responsible for planning need to uphold an unbiased and impartial perspective at all times. When those standards fall short it simply breeds contempt and destroys confidence and trust in process integrity. Therefore, I demand an explanation for why such a statement has been made.

Regards,

Gary Constable

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Elaine Hunt  
<[planning@wcpc.org.uk](mailto:planning@wcpc.org.uk)>



Exhibit I

JS

**From:** Jean Smith <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** Fwd: SMOCK ALLEY DEVELOPMENT  
**Date:** 13 June 2021 at 08:32  
**To:** [REDACTED]

Hi Gary

Just for your information, I'm forwarding an email reply from Bob Gustav when I wrote to him in April. He seems to imply it's a 'done deal' and agrees to it so that only 14 houses are ever built there. However, knowing the developers, once they get permission for 14, they'll push for more. As you say, we have a fight on our hands!

Share this with anyone, if you wish. Regards Jean and Nigel Smith

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Robert Gustar <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** 1 May 2021 at 17:44:35 BST  
**To:** Jean Smit <[REDACTED]>  
**Cc:** West Chiltoningon Parish Council <clerk@wpc.org.uk>  
**Subject:** SMOCK ALLEY DEVELOPMENT

Dear Jean and Nigel

I fully understand your concern regarding the Smock Alley development.

Therefore, I would like to make it absolutely clear what the dangers are and where the parish council is coming from.

We are advised that the development will take place. By including it in our neighbourhood plan we hope to cap the number of new dwellings at 14 on both fields and ensure the required landscaping takes place. The previous appeals are of no value under the HDC plan.

If anybody tries to advise you differently, please get back to me straight away,

Best Regards

Bob.

---

**From:** Jean Smith <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 29 April 2021 19:05  
**To:** Robert Gustar <[REDACTED]>  
**Subject:** SMOCK ALLEY DEVELOPMENT

Dear Bob

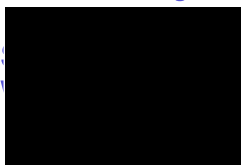
We were unable to join the virtual Annual Parish Meeting on Tuesday but understand that a lot of local people expressed disappointment at the proposals to develop in Smock Alley on the site that has been the subject of two government inspectors' refusal in very recent years.

We would like to add our strong objections to any proposal that the land is included in the local development plan for all the reasons that the government inspectors previously stated.

Regards

regards

Jean and Nigel Smith



Sent from my iPad