



**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's website and at selected deposit points. To view the plan, 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 ; 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 Council's privacy policy: <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.

PART A	Your Details
Full Name	Louise Constable
Address	[REDACTED]
Postcode	[REDACTED]
Telephone	[REDACTED]
Email	[REDACTED]
Organisation (if applicable)	
Position (if applicable)	
Date	2/12/24

PART B

To which part in the plan does your representation relate?

Paragraph Number:	1.11 H1.2 H2.b	Policy Reference:	H2 H1.2 H2.b
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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

Please give details of your reasons for support/opposition, or make other comments here:
<p>1.11 Plan states that the draft neighbourhood Plan has been through two previous pre-submission consultations, this is correct, but NOT with the current housing allocation of Smock Alley and Hatches. Different sites were part of the previous pre-submission consultations.</p>
<p>H1.2 Plan states that the draft neighbourhood Plan will protect the form of settlements in accordance with Policy 14 of the HDLP. Smock Alley housing allocation is within the West Chiltington Separation zone.</p>
<p>H2.b The Smock Alley site has already had 3 previous planning applications of which all 3 have been refused by HDC and 2 at appeal. Currently there is a 4th application. This application for development on the site decimates the hedgerow on the Eastern boundary citing the need for the visibility splay onto Smock Alley. This is not a suitable site for development.</p>
<p>H2 (Housing Policy) <u>1.Pre-Regulation 14 public consultation</u></p>
<p>The WCPC draft NP as presented is supported by a site selection process that has been rushed, appears to have been decided before formal meetings and discussion around site selections took place, and</p>

subsequently is full of inconsistent scoring of sites. This is a plan that gives the village two medium scale housing estates both outside of the built up area boundary.

In preparation of the 2021 draft NP that included the current housing allocation there was **NO** pre-Regulation 14 public consultation. No public meeting in the Village hall was held, no communication via email or posters, and no input was sought from the parishioners. There has been a complete lack of pre-regulation 14 engagement with the community. As part of the Consultation statement the PC have misleadingly provided photographs taken from a previous NP plan submissions and inserted July 2021 at the bottom of the page. The whole premise of a NP is for local people to choose the housing sites and NP's should be community led. This is a legal requirement, and should not be dictated by the parish council or the local planning authority. A survey was sent to all households on the 26th July 2021. This survey was sent after the Reg. 14 plan had already been passed and agreed by the full Parish Council on the 13th July 2021. Previous consultation took place on the previous sites included in the previous draft NP. Changing the sites selected for the 2021 plan and placing Smock Alley and Hatches in the public domain without proper consultation is against The Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations 2012. The PC have not been inclusive and open as designated in the Government Guidance rules.

In the *Neighbourhood Planning Roadmap* Statutory requirement. Planning legislation requires publicity and consultation to take place on emerging neighbourhood plans. However, this tends to be late-stage, for example consulting on the draft plan prior to submission. Early stage, informal engagement is also required, from the earliest stages of the plan-making process. When a completed neighbourhood plan is submitted for independent examination, it will have to be accompanied by a consultation statement, demonstrating that the legal requirements for consultation have been met.

On the *Neighbourhood [Planning.gov.uk](https://www.planning.gov.uk)* website it states

Consulting on, and publicising, a neighbourhood plan or Order

What is the role of the wider community in neighbourhood planning?

A qualifying body should be inclusive and open in the preparation of its neighbourhood plan or Order and ensure that the wider community:

- is kept fully informed of what is being proposed
- is able to make their views known throughout the process
- has opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the emerging neighbourhood plan or Order
- is made aware of how their views have informed the draft neighbourhood plan or Order.

Paragraph: 047 Reference ID: 41-047-20140306

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Pre-submission consultation and publicity Part 5, Regulation Stage 14 states the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan; that you consult any parties whose interests, the qualifying body considers, may be affected by the plan.

In previous consultation, before the 2021 submission, for the previous NP events took place and documents were produced, the village were involved in the sites selection process, however Smock Alley was never included before 2021.

- we have not been kept fully informed of what is being proposed
- we have not been able to make our views known throughout the process
- we have not had the opportunity to be involved with this change to the draft. 2021 NP
- as such our views have not informed the draft 2021 neighbourhood plan

A letter was sent to the residents that live adjacent to the sites selected for the draft NP from the WCPC dated 3rd June 2021 stating as we were residents that lived in an area likely to be impacted they wanted to make us aware of the potential housing allocation. We were not asked for any input.

This one letter that selected residents received telling us the sites that were going into the plan is not considered consultation, it was sent on the 3rd of June 2021 and the sites had already been agreed by WCPC. This letter was a crude reminder of the Parish Councils severe lack of inclusion and due diligence applied to their Reg. 14 submission.

2.Survey

The Parish Council sent a NP survey to each household as part of their Regulation 14 submission. The survey was dated 26th July 2021. As a reminder, we know from Parish Council site selection documents that the sites were presented to HDC as early as January, as these documents show WCPC confirming site selection to HDC on the 19th January 2021 and the parishioners not being asked their opinion via the Survey on these sites until the 26th July 2021. Results from the survey were published on the WCPC website with 700 respondents.

The results were poorly reported on Parish Council Neighbourhood plan website, and were very unclear to interpret for the average parishioner, which led me to question the PC on the 7th April 2022 via email. I questioned their method of reporting and interpretation of the survey results. The WCPC were also asked to share what criteria they would use to consider if a site should be withdrawn from the Reg.14 draft NP, they replied that they would wait and see the results and what came back from the survey. No action was taken.

Firstly, the Parish council received more than 700 responses to the Reg. 14 Survey Consultation. The CONSULTATION RESPONSES link on the website shows approximately 160 responses are listed. Which leads you to ask, why are there only 160 and not the full list of 700+ responses published? My understanding is that all responses have to be put into the public domain, albeit under anonymity to protect the responder.

I was also surprised on survey response item 4 (Do you agree with the allocation of Smock Alley within the plan?) with the large numbers of those who Strongly Agreed 103 and Agreed 194, of that high number there are no more than 10 comments supporting the allocation of Smock Alley published on the website. Given that the allocation of Smock Alley is such a contentious issue, it is unacceptable that the Strongly Agree and Agreed comments were not fully documented in the survey response section. In stark contrast there are approximately 75 Strongly disagreed and 22 Disagreed with the inclusion of Smock Alley in the plan, and of those disagreeing with the inclusion of Smock Alley in the draft, 50 comments appeared. A stark contrast to the 10 comments of those who agreed.

It appears from further scrutiny from the selection of comments published 160, that is approximately a third of respondents making comment disagreed with the inclusion of Smock Alley in the plan and yet Smock Alley was not taken out of the plan prior to the Regulation 14 being approved for the planned submission to HDC.

Another observation from the Reg. 14 Survey sent to Parishioners was a front page statement made by the PC, that read *"We do not have the option to refuse to allocate land for this housing and if we suggest other sites, it is almost certain that the sites we have identified will be built on anyway, so the village would end up with more housing overall."* This statement is misleading, influential and scaremongering. Parishioners would understandable feel they should agree with the draft plan set out before them. Otherwise the sites identified will be built on anyway and possibly would lead to more housing if certain sites were not allocated.

The survey continued and Parishioners were asked an initial front page question regarding their agreement with the housing sites in the plan. It appeared that the PC were counting this initial question from the survey as the Parishioners overall agreement with the plan. The question read as follows.

Do you agree with the policy H2 wording and the elements of the masterplan?

This question did not go into any detail regarding the sites that were being put forward in the plan. Policy H2 is directly questioning the parishioners if they agree with the site allocation. Many parishioners would not have understood the H2 reference and thought they were agreeing with the overall Masterplan. This initial question before any others, without any reference on the initial page that H2 was with regard to the housing sites was a loaded question which most parishioners agreed with, but then went on to disagree and make comments with the allocation of Smock Alley within the plan.

I questioned the Parish Council on the survey numbers irregularities regarding Smock Alley and was emailed a response from the Clerk. It was confirmed that the PC had counted each parishioner's response to the initial front page question as their agreement with the master plan. Even when a parishioner had objected to Smock Alley within the detail of the survey, if they agreed with the initial question their vote was counted as an agreement with the overall master plan and site allocation.

The Clerk at the PC wrote 9th May 2022, *As previously stated, the responses are published in full on the website. They have not been altered in any way. The Parish Council took the agreement to the plan as their response but has taken note of the comments and tried to mitigate impacts. It has not counted those responses as 'disagree' because that is not what was indicated.*

In summary the Smock Alley site was selected by the Parish Council Planning Committee. Seven individuals decided this site should be part of the West Chilton 2021 draft plan with a rushed site selection process, without pre-consultation with the villagers, and a loaded overall initial question on the Reg 14 survey which ignored further disagreement from Parishioners with the allocation of Smock Alley in the draft neighbourhood plan.

I urge you to protect this site from development, and eliminate Smock Alley from the draft neighbourhood plan.

What improvements or modifications would you suggest?

I would suggest a completely new consultation of housing sites for this plan. Let the village decide from all of the sites that were put forward on the AECOM report and not have the Parish Council Planning Committee make a rushed decision which has been led by Horsham District Council and not the community.

Smock Alley should not be in the plan given that it has been refused planning 3 times and refused by the Inspectorate. All reasons for refusal are irrefutable and cannot be mitigated against to make this location viable for development.

(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.

Do you wish to be notified of the local planning authority's decision under Regulation 26 of the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in relation to the West Chiltoningon Neighbourhood Development plan?

Please tick here if you wish to be to be notified: