



## **HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL PLANS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of the Plans Advisory Committee held on  
Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7:00pm in the Henfield Hall.**

**Present:** Cllr R Shaw (Chairman), M Andrews, F Ayres, E Goodyear, J Jones and A May.

**In Attendance:** Mr A Ross and Ms L Johnson from Wates and Ms L Hingley from the Cratus Group, 12 Members of the public and Mrs B Samrah (Parish Administrator – PA).

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were none.

#### **2. APOLOGIES**

Were received from Cllr D Grossmith.

The Chairman introduced the Committee and thanked everyone for attending. He said that the land of this proposed site was considered in the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) in 2021 but was not selected. He said that HDC created a draft Local Plan (LP) in 2024 and this included this parcel of land. He said that the LP went to the Inspector and after three days the inspection was suspended and is still suspended, and he did not believe that HDC have received a written reason for the suspension.

#### **3. PRESENTATION FROM WATES ON PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT LAND WEST OF SHOREHAM ROAD, SMALL DOLE**

Ms Hingley from Cratus, Ms Johnston and Mr Ross from Wates introduced themselves.

Mr Ross said that they were at the meeting to listen to comments from locals and possibly amend the planning application before submission. He said that Wates had been involved with this site for quite a while. He said that Wates was a family company that had been in business for 128 years, but were not a big building company but would take the site through the planning application but were unlikely to build the homes. He said Wates would either sub-contract the building work or sell the land to a builder once planning permission had been granted.

Ms Johnston said that Wates help with sustainable projects such as Sussex Green living.

Mr Ross said that HDC were in the same position as Mid Sussex with the Planning Inspectorate. He felt that Sussex had an added challenge of Water Neutrality (WN) to deal with.

He said that Government were pushing house building delivery and that HDC were now expected to deliver twice the number of houses that had been proposed in 2015. The Government requires councils to have a five year housing supply. He said that sites allocated in the LP were being considered rather than speculative sites.

MS Johnston said that the site was south of New Hall Lane and would provide 45 new homes, 35% would be affordable housing which was 16 homes. She said that 70% of the site would be public open space, that every home would have an EV charging point, there would be a car share club, an Orchard, a circular cycle and pedestrian route.

When asked about water supply Mr Ross said that Bore holes had been created to look for water or they would adopt the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS) through HDC.

Mr Ross said that the mix of houses would be between one- and four-bedroom homes, the exact numbers of each would be determined at the planning stage although the number of affordable homes was already set.

When asked about the green open space Mr Ross said that S106 is binding on the land and ensuring the open space is kept as that in perpetuity. He said that a management company would be created and they would be responsible for the open space, that there would be strict rules on what could be planted and where and that the green space was well maintained. He said that it was very rare for town or parish councils to take on new developments.

When asked about the reduction in house number from 2015 Mr Ross said that this proposal was a landscape lead scheme and one that was more acceptable to HDC.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting.*

## **OPEN FORUM**

In response to questions from members of the public:

- Water - Ms Johnston said that water would be processed on site and stored in tanks and this would be carried out by a private company who would issue bills to residents. She said that charges for water were fixed for all suppliers and would therefore be the same as with Southern Water. Mr Ross said that the Water supply would be off grid but that but drainage would link up with mains. Mr Ross said that two bore holes had been created and they had signed up to SNOWS with HDC.
- Planning Application Submission – Mr Ross confirmed that as soon as Wates had Environment Agency approval they would be submitting the Planning Application and that was likely to be in the next week or so. He added that HDC are more supportive to schemes already allocated on NHP and LP rather than speculative.
- Sustainability – Mr Ross said that every home would have an EV charging point and that there would be a Car Club which it was hoped would mean that some homes would have fewer cars. He said that there would be cycle and pedestrian routes within the site. Mr Ross admitted it was a challenge to encourage people not to use cars when living in rural areas. He re-iterated that HDC needed to provide for more homes in the district and HDC think that this scheme is sustainable.
- This location – Mr Ross said that he was aware of the other site that had been allocated in the NHP but that he was also aware that the other site has not delivered and that there is no indication of when or if that site would come forward.
- Green open space – Mr Ross said that this would be owned by residents and looked after by a Management Company. He said that the Planning Application would specify types of plants and where they should be planted In a Landscape and Ecological Plan. He said that the home owners pay to the management company to maintain the open space. He said that the detail will be prescriptive and in perpetuity. He also confirmed that cars would not be allowed to park there.

The Chairman said that there were three relatively recently built developments in Henfield where Management Companies looked after all matters including bin emptying plus dog waste bins, ground maintenance, road and lamppost maintenance. The Chairman said that Henfield's priority was to get the sites allocated in the NHP developed first and three of the allocated sites have already submitted planning applications. One further site is waiting details on Water Neutrality.

Other points that came from members of the public were:-

- This site would increasing the population of Small Dole by 34%
- A car is necessary to live in Small Dole, buses go to a few local towns but not directly to Brighton.
- There is no school in Small Dole so small children have to be driven to school in Upper Beeding.
- Could Wates talk with bus companies to try and increase coverage.

*The Chairman reconvened the meeting.*

The Chairman thanked the presenters from Wates and Cratus, he said that he appreciated that they had given up their time and responded to questions from the public. He also thanked the members of the public.

#### **4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

#### **5. ANY OTHER URGENT MATTERS TO BE RAISED BY COUNCILLORS**

There were none.

#### **6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025.

The Meeting closed at 7.58pm.