



The Steyning, Wiston, Ashurst and Bramber (SWAB)

Neighbourhood Plan

Residents' feedback helps shape Neighbourhood Plan

January Drop-in sessions

Although it was not part of the formal Public Consultation for the Neighbourhood Plan, over 700 local residents attended our events in January to see information on the Local Green Spaces and proposed sites for future housing. The feedback was mostly positive with those broadly in favour with what was presented outnumbering those against by 2:1. This was however a good opportunity to listen to the views and concerns of local people and to make additions and amendments to our recommendations. We continue to take notice of the feedback we receive.

Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan is able to designate important local areas as Local Green Spaces (LGS) where it is considered that there should be increased protection against future development. Do have a look at the latest LGS Report on our website. Green Spaces have been identified and put into two categories – Category A (requiring further protection) and Category B (currently has adequate protection). Unfortunately, the examiner who assesses our Neighbourhood Plan will not allow us to increase protection by using LGS designation where it is considered that adequate protection exists.

Following the January events and the feedback received, the following additions and amendments have been made to the LGS Report –

- **Clays Field, Bramber** – We agree that there is a need for this important green area to be protected. It forms a necessary gap between Steyning and Bramber. Although it was omitted from our original recommendations, it is now included as a Category A site.
- **Memorial Playing Field** – We all completely agree that this is an important green space for Steyning and should never be considered for housing. It currently has a high level of protection as a Village Green and should not, therefore be included as a Category A site. However, the Neighbourhood Plan will strongly recommend that if this Village Green status is ever removed, the land be protected by designating the whole area as a Local Green Space. Remember, although the SWAB NP covers a 15 year period, it can be reviewed and changed if necessary every 5 years.
- **The Allotments in Steyning** – Both areas of allotments are owned by the Parish Council and are within the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and are therefore deemed to be adequately protected. The Parish Council has a requirement to offer allotment space and cannot release this responsibility if there remains a demand for allotment space – which there clearly is.

Housing sites

We do NOT want large scale developments in any of the four parishes and neither is there any evidence that they are required. However, we do need to ensure that our communities are sustainable and that our young people and those on low incomes can afford to buy and rent accommodation locally. The land we have for new housing is seriously constrained, particularly in Steyning, with the SDNP to the south and west, the A283 cutting through the town and floodplains to the north and east.

We can now provide updates on some of the proposed sites for new housing as follows –

- **Sweetland, Newham Lane, Steyning** – There has been much local opposition to the recommendation of this site for future housing but at this stage it does remain on the list. However, we are not proposing large scale development at all, with new dwellings being suggested on no more than 50% of the total site. The remaining area of the site will be recommended against any development within the Neighbourhood Plan and will remain within the South Downs National Park.
- **Bayards Field, Horsham Road, Steyning** – This land is owned by the Wiston Estate and we are working with them to agree a mix of uses for the site to benefit our whole community. It is unlikely that the entire site will be recommended for development and the remaining area will provide green space. This is a very important site for the Neighbourhood Plan due to its proximity to Steyning High Street, although access to the site for pedestrians and vehicles must be considered carefully.
- **Sites in Wiston** – The site adjacent to the Recreation Field (site 19 on our assessments) is now the most favoured site. It is recommended that between 6 and 8 houses be built on only part of the site with the remainder being kept as a recreation field and football pitch. This is also an ideal site for a new Village Hall in the future.
- **Maudlyn Farm, Bramber** – This area of land was split into three areas for our assessment, with only the field on the west end being recommended. We have had further discussions with the landowners and this area of the site has been reduced further to only the North West corner, adjacent to existing housing and the built-up area. Only around 6-10 small houses are recommended, preferably affordable or low cost market housing. The access is likely to have to be near the farm buildings.
- **Gatewick Farm, Steyning** – We were not able to recommend this site within the Neighbourhood Plan as it was offered only as a single undivided site and therefore was seen as too large. However, we have spoken to the landowner again and are now assessing a site of around 5 acres to the western side of the Farm. This is adjacent to the A283 but access to the site will need further consideration. It is outside of the SDNP and could, if agreed, provide a necessary mix of low cost market housing and affordable homes for Steyning in the future. However, the distance from the town centre and the need for pedestrian access across the A283 may be barriers to some types of development.

There is also continued on-going work on sites not listed above. Please remember that these sites have all been put forward by landowners who were already considering future development. The Neighbourhood Plan is allowing us all to consider how these sites should be developed to the benefit of our community or whether they should not be developed at all.

The next step..

We are currently working towards the production of the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan document and when completed there will be a statutory six week Public Consultation. This will be the opportunity for you to review the complete plan and submit your comments prior to the finalised Neighbourhood Plan. There will then be a formal Referendum at which residents will be able to vote on whether the plan should be adopted as an adjunct to the Horsham District Planning Framework.

On behalf of the Steering Group and all those volunteers working hard in our Focus Groups, I thank you for your interest in our Neighbourhood Plan.

Kind regards

Nick Mills

Chairman : **The Steyning, Wiston, Ashurst and Bramber Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**

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