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Dear Sir/Madam,

**Housing Allocation Masterplan submitted for Land at Hatches Estate, Land East of Broadford Bridge Road, West Chiltington (Horsham District Council's SHELAA reference SA066) as part of the public consultation (Regulation 14) on;**

**Pre-Submission draft West Chiltington Neighbourhood Plan (2016 – 2032).**

This covering letter presents a Masterplan for the already favourably assessed housing allocation on Land at Hatches Estate, east of Broadford Bridge Road in West Chiltington.

The purpose of the Masterplan is to provide further detail by way of recent survey work, reports and an indicative site layout for the housing allocation which has been previously submitted both within the Neighbourhood Plan process and as part of Horsham District Council's '*Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment*' (SHELAA) (2016) (reference SA066).

The Masterplan is submitted on behalf of the landowner West Sussex County Council (WSSCC).

The aim of the Masterplan is to reaffirm that the site is available for development to meet the village and District's housing needs and to secure a housing allocation which is deliverable (1-5 years) within the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

This development land has been positively assessed within Horsham District Council's SHELAA as being developable (6-10 years). The site is considered suitable by the District Council for fifteen units. The assessment states:-

- *the site abuts the boundary of the existing settlement and a small amount of development along the western edge of the site could be suitable;*
- *the constraints are access and topography, which could make development unachievable in the short term and;*
- *it could be delivered in a single phase.*

This Masterplan addresses these comments by undertaking survey work on the western edge of the site in respect to topography, drainage, trees and highways and demonstrates how these issues can be successfully delivered. It also addresses the comments previously made by local residents as part of the draft Neighbourhood Plan process who said they were largely unhappy with the site due to poor access and the impact of additional traffic on local roads/lanes. Particular attention has therefore been given to highway and access issues in this Masterplan submission. This survey work establishes the baseline conditions on site and provides direction to inform a sympathetic housing layout.

Within Section 3.5 (Housing) of the Pre-submission draft of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is noteworthy that the SHELAA (2016) (Evidence Base 14) for West Chiltington found that of the 12 sites considered for housing, only one (the subject site at the Hatches Estate) was 'deliverable' within the next 6-10 years. Along with the accompanying survey work and reports, the aim of the submitted Masterplan is for the housing allocation to be assessed as being 'deliverable' (0-5 years) as it can come forward sooner than originally expected.

### **Housing Amount and Type**

The SHELAA entry for the Hatches site notes that '*a small amount of development along the western edge of the site could be suitable*'. This is also reflected in the earlier Pre-submission version (2015) of the Neighbourhood Plan as shown in Figure 7 Proposal Sites (B) Hatchlands. Consequently, only the designated area is intended for housing development in the Masterplan. The development land measures approximately 0.845ha in area. The allocated number of 15no. dwellings is shown in the Masterplan. There are three existing agricultural buildings totalling approximately 505m<sup>2</sup> which will be demolished as part of the development and so there is a significant amount of existing development footprint on site.

It is noted that the Parish of West Chiltington commissioned 'Action in Rural Sussex' (AIRS) to produce a study of Local Housing Need, which was completed in April 2014. The AIRS Study identified a need for affordable houses in the Parish and a need for smaller units to enable older people to downsize. This is suitably addressed and delivered in the Masterplan. The schedule of accommodation for the site is as follows:-

- 5no. 2 bed dwellings;
- 6no. 3 bed dwellings;
- 4no. 4 bed dwellings.

The housing split comprises of 5no. affordable housing and 10no. open market dwellings. Of the affordable housing, there are 3no. 2 bed dwellings and 2no. 3 bed dwellings.

The proposed housing split is therefore considered to comply with Policy 16 in the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF, 2015) in terms of specifying housing sizes, types and tenures. Policy 16 refers to creating a mix of housing sizes, types and tenures in order to meet the needs of the District's communities, as set down in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

In the latest Northern West Sussex - Horsham SHMA Update (2012), it states that family housing remains strong across the District (rather than flats/apartments) (i.e. 3 and 4 beds). There is recognition that the larger development sites (of which Hatches would comprise due to being a major planning application) would therefore provide "*the best opportunity to deliver larger homes and a broader mix of sizes*". The SHMA also recommends that within the overall housing size mix, a proportion of 30-45% of new homes on larger sites should be three or more bed properties in order to adequately cater for family housing needs. It is considered



that the housing split in proposing 10no. dwellings with three bedrooms or more meets this requirement. Specifically, the scheme includes 6no. 2 and 3 bed open market dwellings and all 5no. affordable homes will fall within this housing size bracket. The proposed development is also considered to suitably blend in with its surroundings as well.

A summary explaining the survey work recently undertaken to prepare the Masterplan are set out in turn below:-

### **Drainage**

A drainage survey of the site has been prepared and has concluded that there are no fundamental concerns in proposing housing development on this land.

The Stage 1 report has shown that there are no significant drainage/flooding issues on site. This work seeks to address comments made about the site in the Site Assessment Report of the West Chiltoning Neighbourhood Plan (2015) in stating: *“local residents speak of surface flooding as an issue”*. In response, it can be maintained that the site lies outside of a flood risk area and the proposed development will utilise Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in order to form an improvement on the existing situation with controlled drainage methods and known rates of infiltration flow. This is particularly because there is no surface water sewer on site and so water currently discharges to ground. The proposed drainage measures can be incorporated into the housing scheme through the use of porous paving and a combination of ponds and swales. A total storage volume of 217m<sup>3</sup> has been estimated for this site. This can be divided between porous pavings and open pond(s)/swales. There is also an opportunity to include green roofs and rainwater harvesting into the design of the dwellings at a later stage (if so required by the Parish Council).

The drainage report also finds that there is a stream located approximately 200m to the south-east of the site. No other watercourses have been detected any closer. According to EA groundwater maps, the site is situated outside a Groundwater Source Protection Zone and the soil type (sandstone) is likely to possess good infiltration characteristics.

In conclusion, the site can accommodate the proposed housing development without increasing the flood risk on site or in the local area.

### **Trees**

An Arboricultural Survey accompanies the Masterplan. This has found that there are five mature Oak trees situated along the eastern boundary of the development site (T6 - T11 in the Tree Constraints Plan within the Arboricultural Survey, drawing reference PJC/4347/17A Rev 01) which are covered (with the exception of T7) by a Tree Preservation Order (in reference to trees T1 – T5 under TPO reference 1052 and dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2000). These protected trees will not be removed or adversely effected in any way by the proposed development including their Root Protection Areas. Even though several of these trees exhibit poor vitality according to the recent survey, they continue to provide landscape value due to their significant size and position (assessed as Category B1 and C1) and so have been retained in the Masterplan.



To the immediate north of the existing access, there are a number of mature trees (Category B1) including a group of Hazel and Birch (G1). These trees will also be retained and also offers a screening benefit when viewing the future development from Broadford Bridge Road.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) supports the removal of two tree groups in order to facilitate the proposed layout, but these are lower quality (Category C) and are situated close to the existing site entrance. The loss of these trees will be mitigated by planting during the soft landscaping phase of the development at the planning application stage.

The proposed development avoids both the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) of existing trees wherever possible and avoids excessive garden shadowing for future occupants as well. The approach taken with the scheme is therefore sympathetic to the trees on site.

In conclusion, the project team has surveyed the trees on site and therefore proposes a housing layout which is sensitive to their retention. Where removal is necessary, this only affects lower category trees which can be replaced with soft landscaping instead.

### **Access**

The site access for the housing development is proposed to join on to Broadford Bridge Road. This will reuse the existing site access currently serving Hatches farm and several residential properties, along with a number of improvements. Specifically, the existing access will have its carriageway built out on to Broadford Bridge Road to retain a minimum of 4.8m width, together with minor widening of the access at the site entrance. The alterations to the access will offer adequate visibility splays measuring 2.0m x 43m in each direction.

Given the topographical and arboricultural observations identified in survey work in the Masterplan, together with the light traffic flows and low speeds, the visibility splays are consistent with the recommendations in Manual for Streets for 30 mile per hour roads in these so-called 'exceptional' circumstances. It should also be noted that the modified site access will form an improvement on the existing access arrangement. It is therefore considered that the District and Parish Council's initial concerns can be satisfactorily addressed now that technical evidence in the form of a Transport Statement and a site access drawing (reference ITP-181-1-02 Rev P1) have been prepared in support of the scheme.

It should also be borne in mind that the existing agricultural barns on site could be converted to commercial uses (including B1 offices) under the Prior Approval process (Class R in the General Permitted Development Order, 2015). If that were to happen, when compared with the proposed housing development, there would be no intensification of traffic movement.

In terms of vehicle parking for the development, a minimum of 2 parking spaces for each 2no. and 3no. bed dwelling are provided, together with a minimum of 3no. spaces per four bed dwelling and 5no. visitor spaces. This parking allocation meets the required WSCC parking standards.

In summary, the existing access can be reused, albeit with some minor widening and improvements and can satisfactorily serve the proposed development. The proposed number of housing units (15no.) will not significantly impact the road system in and around West Chiltington village.



## **Scheme Design**

A Site Layout is included by way of indication as to how the housing development might be presented. Should the Parish Council find this particular site layout preferable, it can be confirmed going forward. Conversely, the layout of the dwellings can also be further explored, subject to any comments received.

The Indicative Site Plan (reference Dwg\_1711-02C) is considered to display an attractive and well-designed layout. It is considered that 15no. dwellings as identified in the Neighbourhood Plan (and allocated in Horsham's SHLAA) appears to be comfortably accommodated based on the site layout drawing.

Development is concentrated towards the southern portion of the site where existing development and the defined settlement boundary of West Chiltington are located. There is also a power cable in the northern portion of the site which development is comfortably stepped away from. There is potential to link up with a footpath to the north which will create greater connectivity from the site to the wider area.

The dwelling type and size is considered to suitably blend in with its surroundings. An examination of the surrounding dwelling types and sizes has shown a mix of detached and semi-detached properties, especially along Broadford Bridge Road and East Street. The scheme therefore includes 6no. detached and 3no. units of semi-detached properties which are considered to be in-keeping with their surroundings and particularly along East Street to the south.

In recognition of Objective 1 in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, the development is intended to accommodate affordable housing for future occupants who can demonstrate a local connection.

It is requested that the Masterplan be favourably considered and the site assessed as being 'deliverable' for development (1-5 years).

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Sullivan'.

**Damian Sullivan MRTPI, MSc (EXON Arch) MSc (TP), FRGS  
Senior Planner**