

Why There Is No Allocation of Housing Sites in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Although we did not know it at the time, when the new Council was elected on 2nd May 2019 the neighbourhood plan had fallen so far behind schedule that allocation of housing sites was no longer possible within the deadline imposed by HDC.

This is confirmed in the Planning Consultant's letters of the 10th & 24th July 2019.

When this emerged in mid-June 2019 the new Council was faced with two separate decisions to be conveyed to HDC.

Decision 1

Either

- a) Submit no Plan to HDC by its deadline;

or

- b) Submit such pared-back Plan as was possible by the deadline.

The Council decided to submit a pared-back Plan so that the Community would benefit from: -

- The increased rate of Community Infrastructure Levy, potentially worth upwards of £100,000,
- The policies which could be incorporated in the time available; and
- The public money already committed to the Plan and its predecessor SWAB not potentially being wasted.

Decision 2

Either

- a) Sign a memorandum of understanding with HDC, committing to review the Plan (or make one if not submitted now) in 2021/2022 and committing to allocate not fewer than the, currently unknown, number of houses to be assigned to Steyning by HDC under its revised Local Plan - but knowing that this number will be a "step-change" greater than the 165 calculated by AECOM

or

- b) Wait for HDC to complete its revision of the Local Plan under which it will assign housing allocations on a district-wide basis – which could mean nothing at all for Steyning – and only then decide if we wish to review our Plan to update and/extend our policies which could include additional housing allocations beyond any imposed by HDC

The Council decided to adopt the "wait and see" second option on the basis that it would be very unwise to make a commitment to something unknown.

This, incidentally, was what the similar sized community of Billingshurst also decided.

CLlr Rodney Goldsmith (Chairman Steyning Parish Council). 16th September 2019.