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Response to the Local Plan Review consultation request

Letter from Steypning Parish Council in response to the South Downs National Park letter dated 10th November, which requested comments concerning the inclusion of potential new sites as per identified within the letter, which were to be returned by the 24th November as part of the Regulation 19 consultation procedure regards the South Downs Land Availability Assessment.

The main reason noted for this request is as per this extract from your letter:

The attached “has potential” site {Noted as ref # HO007 – Land at Horsham Road, Steypning} in your constituent boundary has been selected for your review and fact-checking because , new information received has led to a significant change from the 2024 LAA (i.e., revised indicative quantum or use, or change from “rejected” to “has potential”).

Introduction

Given the short timescale involved in having to respond, Steypning Council had to delegate its response to an appropriate representative committee and below is first a summary of the 10 responses, followed then by a conclusion, then examples of some of the actual comments received.

Response Summary

Views range from cautious support to firm objection, but most agree that any development at Bayards Field (HO007 – Land at Horsham Road, Steypning) would only be acceptable if it is small in scale, sensitively designed, environmentally responsible, and delivers clear community benefits. Concerns focus heavily on traffic and pedestrian safety on Horsham Road, heritage and landscape impacts (including the medieval boundary, biodiversity, and proximity to conservation areas), and longstanding issues with water run-off. Several respondents are wary given the volume of other housing already allocated in Steypning, while others feel the site could work if it follows earlier Wiston Estate principles - local needs housing, green building standards, ample green space, and community facilities such as a hall or ranger hub. Overall, the balance of opinion suggests conditional support rather than blanket approval, with strong emphasis on design quality, sustainability, and resolving access and environmental constraints.

Decision / Conclusion

Majority of members were cautiously supportive and generally open to further discussion, but clear that any future proposal must be **community-focused, environmentally robust, and carefully scaled**, with convincing solutions for **access, drainage, and heritage protection**.

Examples of individual Councillor representative comments received.

"In principle I think this is a good site for housing, it is close to the town centre, so would support businesses particularly at the NW end of the High Street, and is well placed for other facilities like both schools, the leisure centre, playing field, and GP surgery."

"We don't need a high 'urban content' but we do need a community hub to support youth, arts, promoting the vision of a gateway to the downs and the idea of affordable homes for downsizers and people who work locally."

"The imperative in my view is that this supports the town and not just provide more accommodation."

"Depending on the design, and proper support for self-build and a small density community interest trust - just a few homes (as a demonstration project?) I'm in favour if this is delivered well and appropriately."

"Density and road access- there doesn't seem room for the numbers they are suggesting, given the bottleneck in the road, the sharp bend and the proximity of pedestrians (school children) - even with some widening it's not going to solve that."

"The fact that the NPPF states that Bayards has historical significance of "being the only remaining intact medieval boundary of Steyning - has this factor not been taken into account? I thought this land had been designated as an LGS, but I may well be wrong. What security does an LGS have to prevent it from being developed at any point in the future? "

"As the site is ideally located on Horsham Road opposite SGS and Cuthman Centre, I would readily support the proposal provided that the access arrangements are jointly considered for housing and recreational use."

"Providing the W. estate overcome the most obvious obstacles - access, water, buffer zone for Mouse Lane, the change in house design desirable now, no over development, plenty of green space and some affordable/suitable for downsizers(!) homes, then I am broadly in favour."

"This might also be an opportunity for staff at the school to afford to live in Steyning."

"Although I am mindful of the historic hedge, I am also subject to the type and numbers of developments very much in support of this development. It is in effect infill between mouse lane, and the school so does not really change the footprint of the town, unlike Glebe Farm."

"I would support this development as a zero carbon small community focused plan, using local materials, communal heating via ground source heating and solar roofs, not panels, backed up by a battery storage system."

"This development must also sort out the water run off problems on mouse lane and the Horsham road and provide a proper pavement access route into town."

"The landowner was amenable to having footpath access through to Mouse Lane which would alleviate the footpath problems up to the leisure centre and School to some extent."

There was recognition that Bayards is not in the current Neighbourhood Plan, so there is no community mandate at this stage.