

## **Land West of Shoreham Road, Small Dole**

### **Statement of Community Involvement**

**March 2025**

**Prepared on behalf of Wates Developments Ltd**



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## **1. Introduction**

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) provides a detailed record of engagement undertaken by Wates Developments ('the Applicant') in relation to the proposed development of Land West of Shoreham Road, edged red on the Site Plan (Appendix 1), referred to as 'the site' from hereon in.

## **2. The Consultation Process and Objectives**

The Applicant has undertaken a period of pre-application consultation with the local community in order to meet the following objectives:

- To engage with the community and gather a range of valuable feedback on the proposals.
- To employ a range of feedback channels so the consultation process is accessible.

This report details the community consultation process which has been undertaken alongside engagement with Horsham District Council Officers, West Sussex County Council and Statutory Consultees as set out below:

### **West Sussex County Council**

- A Pre-Application submission was made to West Sussex County Council in July 2023
- A Pre-Application response was received from West Sussex County Council in October 2023
- Informal pre-app advice was sought from the LLFA (Lead Local Flood Authority) in October 2023. This was followed up with some further queries from the Applicant in March 2024

## **3. Background and Approach**

### **3.1. Policy framework**

The process of consultation undertaken has been in accordance with both national and local guidance on best practice of pre-application consultation. The details of the guidance followed is listed below:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)
- The Localism Act (2011)
- Horsham District Council Statement of Community Involvement (2020)

### **3.2. National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)**

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England. The document states that applications which can demonstrate early, effective, and proactive engagement with communities and other interested parties should be looked upon more favourably than those that cannot. It specifically sets out the following:

"Pre-application engagement and front-loading

40. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre- application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

41. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.

42. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

43. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.

44. The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.

45. Local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. These requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions, and should be reviewed at least every two 13 years. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.

46. Local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.

47. Applicants and local planning authorities should consider the potential for voluntary planning performance agreements, where this might achieve a faster and more effective application process. Planning performance agreements are likely to be needed for applications that are particularly large or complex to determine.

### **3.3. Localism Act (2011)**

The Localism Act (2011) is intended to empower local communities to participate in the planning processes in their areas and the consultation process has accorded with the key principles established therein for consulting with the public. Principally, these are:

- The publication of the proposed application widely, to an extent that can be reasonably said to bring the proposed application to the attention of the majority of persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land
- To make clear how interested persons may contact the applicant team should they wish to comment or collaborate in relation to the proposed development
- To give such information about the timetable to ensure that persons wishing to comment on the proposed development may do so in good time

- Have regard to the responses to consultation that have been made following the consultation process

#### **3.4. Horsham District Council Statement of Community Involvement (2020)**

The Statement of Community Involvement offers the following guidance:

*"Developers undertaking pre-application consultation with local communities and stakeholders are asked to address the following:*

- *Set clear objectives and agree the consultation approach with the Development Management Team, including who will be consulted.*
- *Let people know what the scheme is proposing, and be clear about what they can influence when making comments.*
- *Use different engagement approaches to maximise opportunities for people to influence the proposals. In particular steps should be taken to involve any seldom-heard groups that could be affected by a proposal.*
- *Submit a statement alongside the final planning application outlining the community involvement work that has been undertaken. This should include a summary of any responses received at consultation, and should explain how feedback has influenced the proposals.*
- *When developers are proposing to amend a scheme which already has permission they are still encouraged to undertake pre-application consultation with the Council, local communities and stakeholder. They are also requested to submit a statement as part of a final application clearly setting out what the proposed changes are."*

The Applicant has sought to undertake an open process of pre-application community consultation on the proposals in line with local policy.

### **4. The Engagement Process**

This section details the actions taken by the Applicant to enable the local community, elected representatives, and interested stakeholders to take part in the consultation process and provide feedback on the proposals for Land West of Shoreham Road, Small Dole.

The Applicant has endeavoured to conduct a consultation process which ensured the local community were properly informed of the plans for Land West of Shoreham Road and had the opportunity to comment on the plans.

#### **4.1. Community Engagement**

A leaflet containing a feedback form was mailed to 404 properties surrounding the site on Friday, 28th February 2025. The leaflet consultation area can be viewed in Appendix 2. The leaflet can be viewed in Appendix 3.

To date, 2 responses to the feedback form were received via email and a further 1 form returned via the Freepost address, with one of those responses extremely positive about the proposals. A sample of the responses received is provided below.

#### **4.2. Political Engagement**

In order to make senior and local representatives aware of the Applicant's intentions to bring proposals for the site forward and to establish an ongoing dialogue prior to the submission of a planning application, Horsham District Councillors and Henfield and Upper Beeding parish councillors were contacted in February 2025.

The following councillors were contacted:

- Councillor Martin Boffey (Leader, Horsham District Council)
- Councillor Ruth Fletcher (Portfolio Holder for Planning & Infrastructure)
- Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote and Henfield ward councillors
- Henfield Parish Council
- Upper Beeding Parish Council

In addition, the applicant attended a meeting with members of Henfield Parish Council and Upper Beeding Parish Council on Wednesday, 26th March 2025. Three representatives of Wates Developments presented the proposals to the Parish Council and members of the public in attendance. Questions and feedback focused on:

- The level of affordable housing to be provided
- The housing mix
- The compatibility of the proposals with the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan
- Protection of the public open space on-site in perpetuity to ensure it remains free of development
- How water neutrality could be achieved on-site
- How sustainable transport can be provided in a perceived rural location
- Concern regarding traffic congestion and the local road network
- Management of the public open space to meet the aspirations set out in the current proposals

#### **5. Feedback**

The following themes have been present throughout the written and verbal feedback received by the applicant from stakeholders and members of the community:

- A desire to see pedestrian access from New Hall Lane
- A desire for a hard standing path around the perimeter of the development for jogging and walking
- Positivity about the accessibility of the site to key local services and facilities
- Concern regarding compatibility with the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan

- Comments regarding traffic congestion and the local road network
- The capacity of local infrastructure to cope with additional development
- Water neutrality
- A current lack of community amenities

## 6. Response to Feedback

The Applicant has given the following consideration to feedback received during the pre-application consultation process.

Issue	Applicant's Response
A desire to see pedestrian access from New Hall Lane	This has been incorporated in the amended masterplan. This pedestrian access will provide access to areas of proposed open space and other pedestrian routes around and through the site providing additional recreational opportunities for both new and existing residents.
A desire for a hard standing path around the perimeter of the development for use jogging and walking	This has been incorporated into the amended masterplan for enjoyment of new and existing residents.
Positivity about the accessibility of the site to key local services and facilities	Within the vicinity to the site, there are a number of services and facilities that commensurate with a village location, including a Post Office, industrial area, convenience store, public house, and leisure space.
Concern regarding compatibility with the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan	Since the Henfield Neighbourhood Plan was prepared, housing need in the local area has increased significantly. In addition, as part of the emerging Local Plan process the District Council has assessed the site and considered it suitable for allocation within the draft Local Plan. These factors together with the other benefits of the proposals (e.g. provision of new areas of publicly accessible open space) outweigh, in our view, any harm associated with non-compatibility with the Neighbourhood Plan.

Comments regarding traffic congestion and the local road network	The application will include a Transport Assessment which has analysed the traffic impact of the development. The scope of this assessment has been informed by discussions with the highway authority. It has concluded that there would be a negligible impact of additional traffic and that a safe means of access can be achieved at the site.
The capacity of local infrastructure to cope with additional development	The proposed development will make financial contributions via the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy which will be used for upgrading local infrastructure including schools and healthcare facilities.
Water neutrality	The application will be water neutral with onsite boreholes providing water to the new dwellings or by accessing the Council's offsetting scheme (SNOWS)
A current lack of community amenities	<p>Within the vicinity to the site, there are a number of services and facilities that commensurate with a village location, including a Post Office, industrial area, convenience store, public house, and leisure space.</p> <p>In terms of open space, play space and recreation, the development was designed to include two children's play areas set within an area of extensive public open space.</p> <p>Financial contributions for upgrading local infrastructure will be made as part of the development.</p>

## 7. Conclusion

A process of pre-application consultation has been undertaken by the Applicant to gather local feedback in relation to proposals for Land West of Shoreham Road, Small Dole.

The community engagement programme has used open, direct correspondence with residents and provided contact details for members of the development team in order to be as accessible as possible.

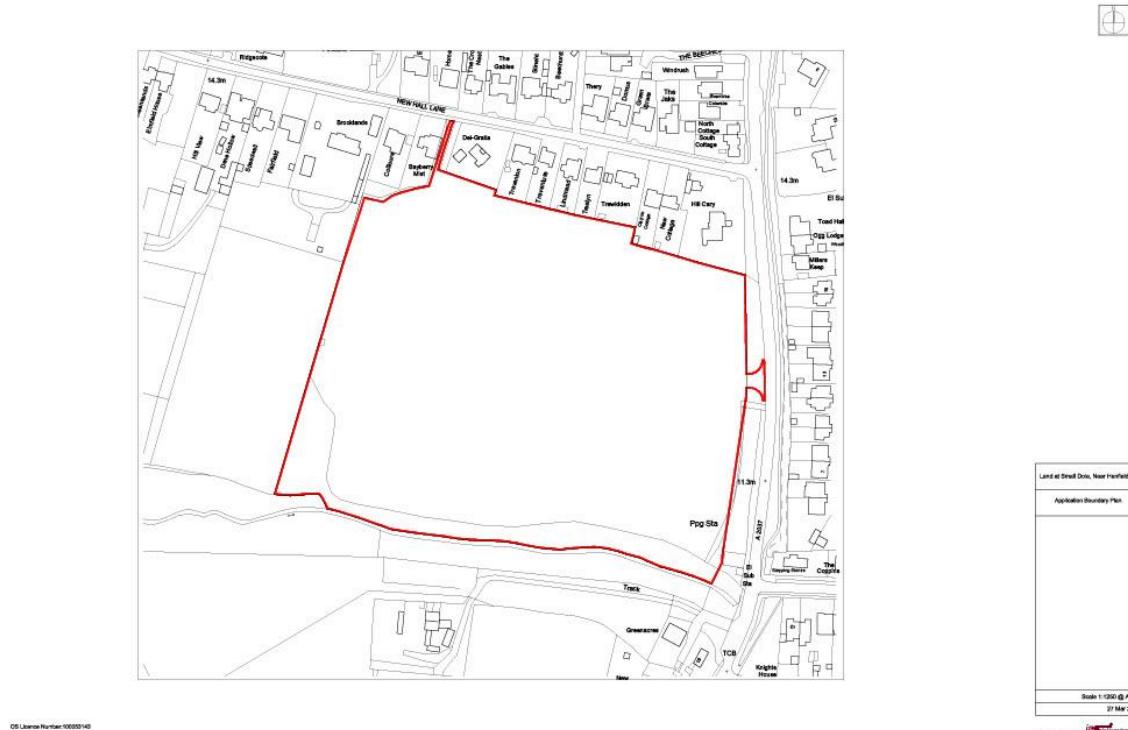
This pre-application community consultation has generated 3 feedback responses with respect to the matters that local residents wish to see addressed within a planning application. The applicant has also received a range of verbal feedback from local residents and community stakeholders which it has sought to respond to through the planning application.

Engagement has provided sufficient time for these matters to be impressed on the design and planning process and for the proposed scheme to be responsive to these concerns.

The Applicant will endeavour to keep the local community updated on the progress of the planning application over the coming months.

## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Red-line image outlining the site



## 8.2. Public consultation leaflet area



### 8.3. Public consultation leaflet

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## LAND WEST OF SHOREHAM ROAD, SMALL DOLE

Wates



Illustrative masterplan

Wates Developments is bringing forward proposals for 45 new high-quality, sustainable homes and extensive public open space on its site Land West of Shoreham Road, Small Dole.

The proposals will provide much-needed affordable housing and contribute toward addressing an identified shortfall in housing delivery in Horsham District.

The site is in the Regulation 19 Horsham Local Plan under Policy HA16 (SMD1).

Before a planning application is submitted for the site, we would like to hear your views to shape our proposals.

### About Wates

The Wates Group, established in 1897, is one of the leading privately-owned, construction, development and property services companies in the UK.

Our work is guided by inspiring better ways of creating the places, communities and businesses of tomorrow.



THRIVING PLACES



THRIVING PLANET



THRIVING PEOPLE

**Re-imagining places for  
people to thrive.**

Wates



Our proposals for the site will deliver a number of key benefits including, but not limited to:



#### New Homes

45 high-quality, sustainable new homes including new affordable housing to address an identified need in Horsham.



#### Landscape-led Approach

A landscape-led residential development with the introduction of new woodland and planting on the site to respect the character of the local area.



#### Climate resilience

New homes will be designed to be 'Net Zero Ready', offering sustainable technologies and renewable energy including solar and PV panels.



#### A Car Club

To reduce reliance on private car usage, encourage car-sharing and reduce local traffic congestion, an onsite Car Club will be established.



#### Connectivity

The development will be in a walkable and cyclable distance of key local services, amenities and facilities. A travel plan for the site will incentivise the use of public transport, with the site in easy reach of local bus loops.



#### Electric Vehicle Charging

Each home will come equipped with an electric vehicle charging point.



#### A Community Orchard

A community orchard to provide opportunities for residents to become involved in the natural surroundings of their new homes, providing a new community focus.



#### Access

It is proposed that a new vehicular access from Shoreham Road be constructed to serve the development. It is also proposed to provide a pedestrian footway from the site access to the north and south, connecting with the existing footway provision on Shoreham Road.



#### Ecological benefits

New bird and bat boxes will be installed to support local wildlife and promote environmental stewardship. Swales and SuDS will also be created to manage flood risk and ensure resilience to climate change.



#### Biodiversity Net Gain

The development will achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain through the addition of public open spaces, wooded areas and new planting.



#### Public open space

Up to 70% of the site, which is currently private land, will be publicly accessible open space. This is 8 acres above the policy requirement.





## HAVE YOUR SAY

We anticipate the planning application will be ready for submission in the coming months. Before the submission of a planning application to Horsham District Council, we would welcome your comments on our proposals:

Name:

Email:

Address:

Postcode:

What is your relationship to the site? Please tick those which apply

Local resident

Local elected representative

Local business representative

Community group representative

Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your comments on our proposals for Land West of Shoreham Road, Small Dole

If you would like more information, you can contact us in the following ways:

 Calling 0203 026 3143

 Completing the feedback form and returning it to

 Emailing [smalldoleconsultation@cratus.co.uk](mailto:smalldoleconsultation@cratus.co.uk)

FREEPOST - CRATUS COMMUNICATIONS

*(no further address details or stamps required)*

Please provide us with your feedback by Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Privacy notice: Cratus Communications Ltd (Cratus) is collecting and processing your data in respect to the proposals for Land West of Shoreham Road on behalf of Wates Developments. Where you provide your details, we are processing this information on the basis of our legitimate interest in order that we can understand your views on the proposed application and feed them back to the project team. For full details about how we process and handle your data please see our full privacy notice here: [cratus.co.uk/privacy-policy](http://cratus.co.uk/privacy-policy)

