
Contact:

Steve Ashdown

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2nd June 2026

Laurie Wordsworth
Inquiries and Major Casework Team
Planning Inspectorate

By email only

Dear Laurie,

Re: Land at Colwell Farm, Lewes Road, Haywards Heath Appeal Ref: 6005786

I am writing to update the Inspector (and other parties) on the latest progress with the Council's emerging District Plan, and the implications of this for the Council's case at the Inquiry.

In its Statement of Case, the Council summarised the position relating to the emerging plan as it stood at that time, and (at para 5.9) advised that it would keep the inspectorate updated, as necessary. At para 6.7, the Council indicated its intention, as part of its on-going work with regard to the emerging district plan, to publish a long list of additional sites that (subject to in-combination testing) were considered suitable to meet the District Plan Inspector's request for the Council to increase the planned number of houses to support the unmet needs of adjacent authorities, namely Crawley and Brighton and Hove.

As means of an update, I can confirm that the long list was published on 15th May 2026 and that the appeal site was included on it. Although this does not necessarily mean the appeal site will be allocated (the list is still the subject of in-combination testing, and even if that is favourable, any new allocations will need to be advertised as main modifications which will then be the subject of further consultation) the decision to include the appeal site on the long list indicates an in-principle acceptance by the Council that the conflicts with policy previously identified in the decision notice are now outweighed by the need for the additional contribution to meeting the needs of neighbouring authorities which the District Plan Inspector is asking Mid-Sussex to make.

In light of the above, and in accordance with good practice and guidance, the Council has reviewed its position in respect of its reasons for refusal, and its case as set out in the submitted Statement of Case, and has concluded that it is no longer appropriate to resist the grant of planning permission on the appeal site. The Council therefore gives notice to the Inspector and the other main parties that it will not be defending the reasons for refusal and will not be submitting evidence to the Inquiry on those matters.

It is the Council's intention to engage with the Appellant to provide an updated Statement of Common Ground to assist the Inquiry.

The Council will still retain an interest in the Inquiry process and will be actively engaging with matters associated with the draft s106 Agreement and the draft conditions, to ensure that these elements are satisfactorily resolved.

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The Council wishes to emphasise that this letter is a direct result of the District Plan Inspector's request that it seek to identify additional sites so as to make a greater contribution to the needs of Crawley and Brighton & Hove than was provided for in the Submission Draft of the new District Plan, and of the further work which the Council has done to identify the most suitable sites to meet that request. These matters represent a significant change in circumstances since the Council's decision to refuse permission. The Council has reviewed its position following publication of the long list as promptly as possible and is notifying the parties at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "S. Ashdown".

Steve Ashdown
Head of Development Management