

# Briefing Note

## Mid Sussex SHLAA Analysis

January 2017

### Introduction

1. This note has been prepared on behalf of our client Countryside Properties to highlight some of the flaws in the site analysis that informed Mid Sussex District Council's (MSDC) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) April 2016 and the recent update paper MSDC 5.
2. Our client has a land interest south of Bolney Road in Ansty, which is identified as ref: 629 (AS/09) in the SHLAA. We attach a plan of the site, which illustrates the land in two parcels, phase 1 to the north and phase 2 to the south.
3. The phase 1 area is identified within the emerging Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan (ASBSNP) as a housing allocation for 'approximately 18 dwellings'. The phase 1 area also benefits from a resolution to grant (RTG) outline planning permission for 20 dwellings, which was made by MSDC at their Planning Committee meeting on 20 October (Application ref: DM/16/2347). It is anticipated that planning permission will be granted following the signing of a s.106 agreement.
4. The whole site was considered 'unsuitable for development' in MSDC's previous SHLAA's, but following the Neighbourhood Plan allocation, the most recent SHLAA now accepts the principle of development on phase 1.

### MSDC 5

5. We note that there are a number of factual errors in MSDC 5, but only highlight those below that are considered relevant to our client's interest. These do however raise questions over the validity of the whole document.
6. A factual error in para 63 (and elsewhere) the ASBSNP is referred to as 'Made'. This is not correct as the referendum is due to take place on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2017.
7. The summary table on page 29 suggests that the ASBSNP contains three housing allocations, whereas the latest version of the plan (Referendum Version dated December 2016) only contains two.
8. Our client's site is not included within the list of omission sites in Appendix 1 (MSDC refer to as 1 tick and 2 tick sites). The relevant page for Ansty is 31. It is assumed that this is because 'land south of Bolney Road' has 3 ticks in the 2016 SHLAA, however less than half of the site (18 dwellings) was considered developable, based on the allocation in the emerging ASBSNP. The other half of our client's site (phase 2) is rejected and it is this which is being promoted through the District Plan at present. On this basis the phase 2 site should have been included as an omission site on page 31 of MSDC 5.

## SHLAA – Land at Bolney Road, Ansty 629 (AS/09) – developable years to 2031

9. We respond to specific extracts of the SHLAA analysis below:

*In this sense the northern-most part of the site is in a relatively sustainable location local to the village centre. However, **the southern area would extend potentially a large amount of housing to the south away from the village centre and overall the site is still considered remote from higher-order key services and facilities.***

An emerging NP allocation is in place on the northern part of the site, which also benefits from a RTG. This secures vehicular access and two pedestrian accesses directly to the centre of Ansty. The sustainability of the northern part of the site (phase 1) has been accepted, and the same should be considered of the southern part (phase 2), which would form a modest extension to the development overall.

10. *The entire site is flat although set at 2 metres above the ground level of Bolney Road / A272. **This will make access arrangements difficult and will make development here visually prominent from the road, neighbouring properties to the east and wider landscape.***

The detail of the vehicular access onto Bolney Road has been approved as part of the phase 1 application. The approved access is of sufficient capacity to accommodate further development in phase 2, and this has been accepted by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) as Highway Authority. As vehicular access to phase 2 can be provided from phase 1, this constraint to development no longer applies. Development on phase 2 would also be less visible from Bolney Road than on phase 1, as the existing vegetation would be retained.

11. *WSCC also owns a freehold ransom strip along most of the boundary with Bolney Road meaning access could be limited to a specific point.*

This issue was resolved with vehicular access from Bolney Road being provided as part of the phase 1 development.

12. *The site area is defined by a historical and unchanged field pattern which is characteristic of the immediate vicinity. The boundaries of this site are weak in terms of screening with only young trees and bushes indicating that development would have a detrimental visual impact on the wider landscape. A public footpath (70CR) runs along the entire southern boundary between Bolney Road and Cuckfield Road and the character and perception of the village and surroundings as viewed from the length of this rural path could be fundamentally altered by development of this site; notwithstanding that views from the wider landscape are contained by a stronger boundary 200m to the south.*

The principle of development in this location has now been established by the phase 1 development. The phase 2 area is less visible in the landscape and any development proposals would also include additional landscape mitigation, in the form of a sensitive layout and additional buffer planting. It should also be noted that the site is not within an AONB.

13. *Larger-scale residential development with a single point access onto the very busy Bolney Road / A272 may have traffic implications so advice should be sought from the County Council.*

WSCC have approved the vehicular access to phase 1, which has capacity to accommodate further development on phase 2.

14. *When considered as a whole the site is not considered suitable for development, however 0.52 hectares of the site are allocated in the Submission Ansty and Staplefield Neighbourhood Plan.*

It is considered that all of the constraints to development identified in the SHLAA have been addressed through the phase 1 application. The remainder of the site (phase 2) whilst not allocated, should be included as an omission site in MSDC 5 (p.31).

15. *This site, as a whole, is considered to be unsuitable for development due to its unmitigated visual prominence in the landscape and **significantly higher level than the properties across the Bolney Road. Development here would fundamentally change the character and appearance of Ansty Village as approached north along the A272** and from the public footpath to the southern boundary. However a smaller part of the site is allocated for development in the Submission Neighbourhood Plan, this would have a more limited impact on the character and appearance of the wider area.*
16. The impact from development on the site in terms of character from the A272 will be far more significant in relation to phase 1, which has now been accepted. Phase 2 will be well screened from the A272 with very minimal visual impact. Visual impact from the south can be addressed through mitigation. The site is not within a designated landscape.

## **Summary**

17. Approximately half of the site now benefits from a Neighbourhood Plan allocation and resolution to grant outline planning permission. These establish the principle of development at the site and demonstrate that many of the constraints identified in the SHLAA can be overcome. On this basis and having regard to this errors in MSDC 5, we consider the 2016 SHLAA and its recent update to be an unreliable evidence base on which to discount the District's ability to accommodate a higher housing requirement.

### **Contact**

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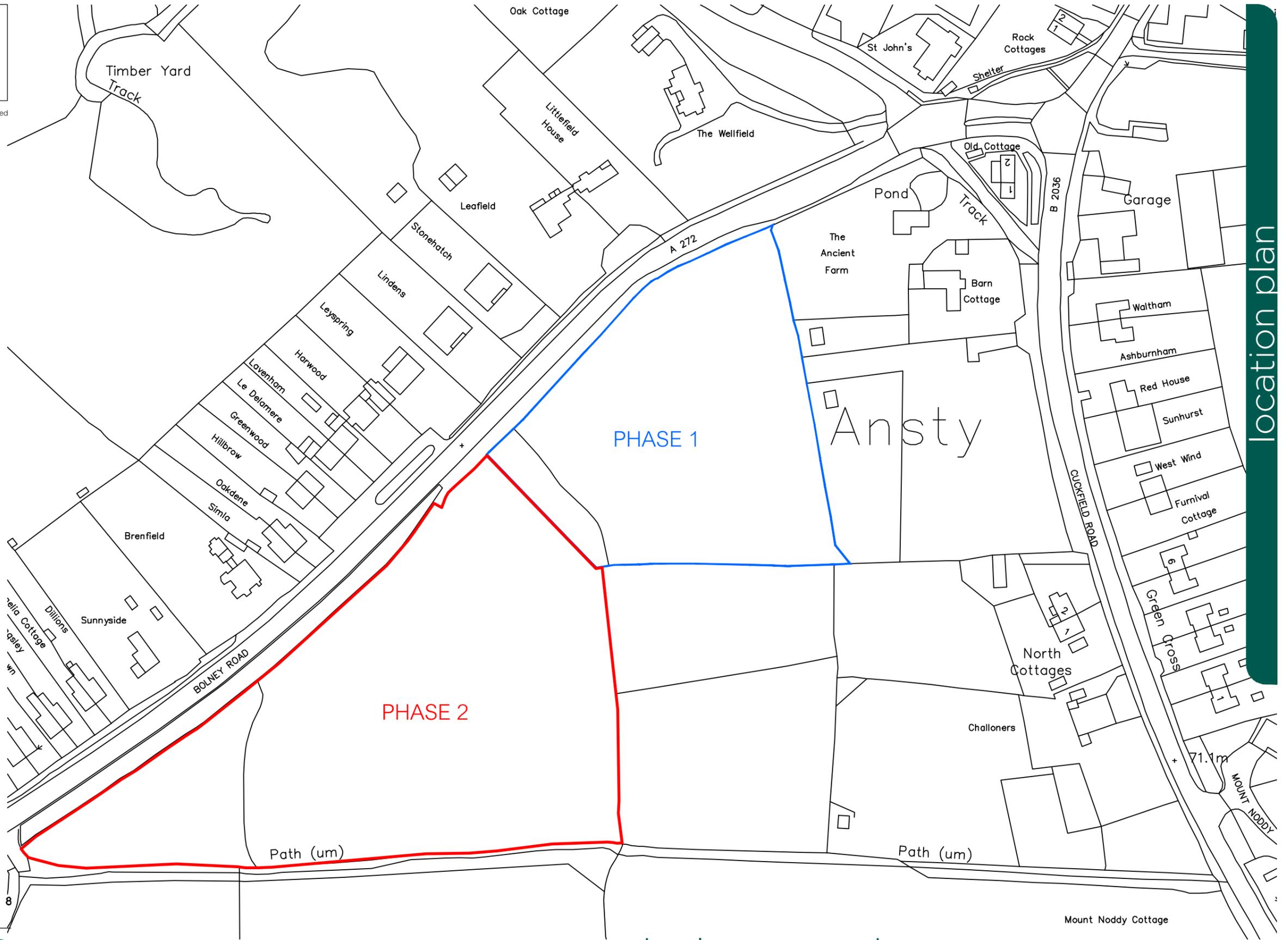
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location plan

Reference 1:1250



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bolney road, ansty, west sussex

rev date by details

Location Plan	24.02.2016	created
	1:1250 @ A3	scaling
		contact
reference	051510-CP-06	revisor