



14th May 2021

Ms Charlotte Glancy
c/o Banks Solutions



MSDC Site Allocations DPD Examination

Dear Charlotte

I submit that the **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** and **Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)** have failed to take into account all available evidence when determining effects on biodiversity and environment, rendering the site selection unsound with regard to local policy.

This is primarily related to paragraph 3.3 of **Matters Issues and Questions (MIQ)**, it affects MIQ 2 the integrity of the SA & HRA and possibly MIQ 4.1.

Site Selection Paper 3 Appendix B Housing recommends SHELAA#594/SA15 Land South of Southway, Burgess Hill as suitable for development based on the **Sustainability Appraisal Regulation 18 September 2019**. SA Table 21 Summary of Appraisals: Rates SHELLA 594 as having zero effect on Biodiversity, concluding in a subsequent table "There are no formal biodiversity designations (Ancient Woodland, SSSI, Local Nature Reserve, etc) on or adjacent to any of the site options"

Site Allocations Development Plan October 2019h references **Burgess Hill Neighbourhood Plan (BHNP) Policy G4** Local Green Space, which states: "The following sites and areas and sites are designated as Local Green Spaces and protected from development: Land between Chanctonbury Road and the railway line. The green space forming part of Burgess Hill Rugby Club on the boundary of Dunstall ward (Sparrow Way) and Snake Wood (ancient woodland)."

The area to the east of SA15 containing TPO trees and the ancient claypit (filled in by the developer) was known 30 years ago as Snakes wood (due to their presence) although the name has recently been mis-directed to the wood north of SA15, formerly Greenacres farm.

Since SA15 is adjacent to Snakes wood, the conclusions of the SA are not valid. Furthermore **BHNP 2015-2031 Appendix E** defines V14 Land South of Southway as "Open Space to be protected" This is in accordance with Policy G1 Areas of Open Space, which fulfils Core Objective CO 6.

You may well ask whether this has any tangible effect on biodiversity and environment. **SA154 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal - Land off Linnet Lane** acknowledges the diverse range of animals in this location, including rare and declining species. As a neighbour, I can confirm this having had a bat fly around the bedroom, baby newts, slowworms, hedgehogs, male and female grass snakes in the garden (plus one in the house) and a tawny owl carry squealing prey past the end of the garden. Not to mention numerous bird species and the occasional nightingale.

It is reasonable to ask whether the wildlife can re-locate. In practice this is difficult for reptiles and bats. Furthermore, the area forms part of a wildlife corridor between the woods to the north and

the Pookbourne stream. In the past two years, the ponds adjacent to the rugby field dried out, hence an uninterrupted connection to a reliable water source is vital. SA151 indicative layout shows no allowance for this. Either the development should be rejected or substantial mitigation incorporated.

BHNP Policy G3 Nature Conservation and Biodiversity states “The existing West Park reserve will be extended to include Pookebourne Stream and Woodland” It also states “In addition, the Town Council will seek appropriate improvements to the habitat network in development proposals wherever possible”. This is an opportunity to honour that commitment.

Yours Sincerely

Michael Fell