ALBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL'S STATEMENT

Thursday 5 November 2026, PM

Albourne

MM82: Land East of London Road, Albourne

MM80: Grange View House, London Road, Albourne

(a) The character of the area

- compatibility with Albourne in scale and character
- effect on heritage assets

If these sites go forward, then the very rural nature of Albourne will be changed beyond recognition. As a category 3 settlement, the District Plan provides that Albourne is suitable for proportionate development or growth only. On any measure, by including these sites (along with what is already proposed for the area) will be disproportionate, and would have the effect of surrounding the village and its many old character buildings, with large scale modern-day housing development. The Parish of Albourne has some 270 dwellings, but the actual village area is a small settlement containing approximately 150 dwellings. Including this site (along with MM92 below) will more than double its size. From walking the site, it is clear that the settings of four Grade II listed heritage asset buildings, Elm Studio, Elm Cottage, Mole Manor and Hillbrook House, will be adversely affected. In addition, the requirement in the Plan against coalescence with surrounding Villages will be further compromised. They will in effect no longer be separate communities. Indeed, the Albourne Neighbourhood Plan seeks to preserve the land east of the London Road, B2118, as a Local Gap.

(b) Access and movement

- movement patterns to and from the site
- bus links and footpath links
- the improvements at Hassocks Station

The proposed access to and from MM82 & 80, and the traffic movement generated would exacerbate the already highlighted congestion in Hurstpierpoint High Street. It is barely conceivable that the existing roads around Albourne could cope with the extra traffic movements generated by these additional sites, together with those already in the Draft Plan, without considerable adverse impact on existing Albourne residents. It is likely that these additional sites will generate yet more additional car journeys to Hassocks railway station, where there is no scope for additional parking. Of particular concern is that despite raising serious

issues about the additional traffic generated, the Council has seen no evidence from those promoting the developments that effective solutions are proposed or planned. With nothing coming forward after a considerable period of liaison, appears to indicate that there simply aren't any easy solutions to address movement patterns to and from the site, and therefore the additional sites must be unsound. As such without any coherent transport plan to properly address the issues, it is clear that major structural changes will be necessary to the local road network. Who is going to provide and pay for them?

(c) Social and community infrastructure and open space

- accessibility to social and community services and facilities
- open space and sports facilities

There are little (if any) dedicated facilities planned for these additional sites, or if there are any, they will be insufficient in Albourne for such a level of growth. There is no easy access to the proposed facilities at Sayers Common, and those in Hurstpierpoint are some walking distance away. The Master-plan for the Sayers Common development has evolved to take the community infrastructure much nearer to Sayers Common. If the additional sites are to be included then this needs to be reconsidered, and the infrastructure moved back to their original placements ("the holistic approach").

(d) Site conditions

- Habitats
- surface water, ponds and flood risk
- foul drainage
- noise environment

The land is mainly open countryside consisting of grassland fields. However, walking the site has identified the land as being rich in wildlife, such as ground nesting pheasant, buzzards, woodpeckers, red kites, bats, rabbits, herons, ducks, frogs and toads. It is obvious that with the scale of the development already proposed, these species will be further displaced from the local area of Albourne.

The site slopes to Cutlers Brook, which is already subject to winter flooding, leading to road closures. Surface water run-off will exacerbate this. The site is too limited to provide adequate attenuation ponds/systems. No provision has been made for waste water disposal.

In terms of noise, the site is situated between two major trunk roads, the A23 and the B2118. It is not clear what (if any) measures are being put forward to mitigate this.

Sayers Common

MM92: West House Farm, Henfield Road, Sayers Common

(a) Access and movement

- relationship to overall access and movement strategy

The comments above for MM82 and MM80 regard the inadequacies of the road network, equally apply. Specifically, the proposed access to and from the site via the B2116, which at this point is a narrow twisting road, will simply exacerbate the obvious dangers that already exist in this stretch of the road. There appears to be no plan to resolve or mitigate this. For example, how this site can have a safe walking and cycle route connected to the Master-plan sites, without some major highway improvements, appears to demonstrate an unsound approach to the problem.

(b) Social and community facilities

- relationship to the overall disposition of uses within Sayers Common

It is not clear what (if any) thought has been given to this. The site is far closer to Albourne, which is excluded from the DPSC3 Master-plan, and no specific infrastructure provisions have been made. There is no easy access to the proposed facilities at Sayers Common, some of which will be out of reasonable active travel range anyway. Simply describing the site as being in Sayers Common, when it is clearly in Albourne, does not overcome this.

(c) Countryside

- Impact on landscape and the separate identity of settlements

The land is much closer to the National Park, and will adversely impact the views from the South Downs. It will also clearly have a damaging impact on the character of the setting of the village of Albourne.

Overall conclusion: *If the view is that the extra work required on DPSC 3 confirms the soundness of the Plan, then the Parish Council believes that the additional sites put forward in the Main modifications, put the whole question of soundness back into the melting pot, in that the proposals are clearly in breach of a number of policies set out in the Plan, such as the spatial strategy, the non-coalescence provisions, and the overall sustainability of housing development to be built in the District. It is a concern that the Master-plan provision, which was intended to co-ordinate the provision of the new Sayers Village infrastructure requirements, now appears to only apply to DPSC3, and doesn't cover or include the additional sites. It seems that to the Council that*

land has conveniently become available, so these sites have just been added on merely to get up to the target figure.