

CHIDHAM & HAMBROOK PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE CHICHESTER LOCAL PLAN : PREFERRED APPROACH

Characteristics of the Plan Area: a spatial portrait

The term East-West Corridor with regard to west of the City of Chichester is ill defined and the use of this term implies the focus of policy is on transport and through movement to the detriment of a more balanced focus on local settlement, existing residential, local countryside and amenity issues.

There is a lack of vision, clarity and coherence of planning policy towards the Bourne Villages, their character and the surrounding countryside that lies between the South Downs AONB and Chichester Harbour AONB

Policy S2 Settlement Hierarchy

Object

Chidham & Hambrook, among the other Bourne villages , is characterised as a 'service village' with no definition or explanation of what this means. This term does not reflect the special and unique character of any of these areas, it designates them as no more than utilitarian dormitory communities.

"The largest level of growth is expected in the service villages and settlement hubs, able to accommodate higher levels of growth without adversely impacting the character of the settlement".

An increase in growth of housing stock by 55% will undoubtedly negatively impact Chidham & Hambrook.

We believe the rationale for how the number of 500 dwellings for Chidham & Hambrook was arrived at to be wanting and the supplementary evidence to be inconsistent and contradictory. Figures in the 2018 HELAA report suggest that there is available land from achievable sites for 565 new dwellings. This is a completely unrealistic expectation. If these are assessed against the suggested CDC figure of 30- 35 per hectare and 80% developable this gives a total of 360 - 420. The figures seem to be almost entirely based on projections put forward by promoters. Consequently, we were told to put a call out for additional sites. Several of those that have come forward are on sites previously rejected by CDC on the grounds of impact on the AONB, significant access constraints, adverse impact on the landscape and detachment from the settlement boundary.

The Sustainability Appraisal sets out to select numbers in the Potential Distribution Strategies. Assuming a figure of 650 pa, across Chichester District, the predicted numbers for Chidham & Hambrook stay within a narrow range of 500-750, whereas other Parishes fluctuate widely eg Fishbourne 250-1000, Hunston 0-1000. Unlike other parishes, it did not consider a figure of less than 500 for Hambrook.

The Strategic Development Location Assessments seek to assess each district against sustainability criteria. Chidham & Hambrook has been scored with 11 negative and 7 neutral with only 12 positive.

We agree with your judgements with the following additions:

1a in addition to the bat population North of Priors Leaze Lane the Ham Brook is home to water voles.

4b This is a significant constraint. Without adequate public transport and no local facilities or services this will put considerable strain on both the A259 and A27 at both Emsworth and Fishbourne.

5a There is considerable risk of surface water flooding on a number of identified sites.

6a This should be a negative score. To speculate that Southern Rail **might** increase the service is no justification for assuming a shift to sustainable transport. The hourly service east and west is not adequate for commuters.

9 This should be a negative. There are no local shops apart from a very small and poorly stocked Post Office, which has erratic opening hours, and a charity shop. This doesn't constitute **some** shops. There are no medical facilities, sports facilities or recreation ground.

10a-12b There are extremely limited employment opportunities in Chidham & Hambrook so difficult to see how any of these would apply.

13a The Local Plan diminishes our rural economy by taking farmland and nurseries for development

13b We have high quality Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land .

We believe these judgements demonstrate that Chidham & Hambrook is less suitable for large scale housing numbers than other areas.

AL10/SA10 Chidham & Hambrook

Object

In 2014 at the last iteration of the Neighbourhood Plan there were 850 households in the Parish of Chidham and Hambrook. By the time the new Local Plan is published there will have been an increase in the number of properties in the region of 150 to a total of 1003 in the Parish, an 18% increase. The previous Local Plan had set a target increase of 25 houses. Whilst absorbing this number of properties there have been no changes to the infrastructure and services in the area to support the additional population apart from a charity shop and expansion of the Primary School which is now at capacity and has been for the last year. The new Local Plan requires us to accept a further minimum of 500 properties. This will increase our local housing stock by 50% and will undoubtedly increase the population area by a greater percentage given the age demographic of the area.

6.68 states that “ **opportunities to relocate and expand the school to two form entry will be sought.**”. We note that there are similar plans for a relocated and expanded school in Bosham with a site allocated for that purpose, in addition to a new school in Southbourne. Discussions with WSCC have made it clear they would not support the creation of two new schools in such close proximity. It is therefore nonsensical to suggest these two schools could be realised. WSCC data does not support it. Their calculations for schools are based on 210 Primary children for 1000 homes so patently 750 homes would not meet support for two 2 form entry schools. However, the current school is at capacity and cannot on its current site be expanded. If a school project is not forwarded in Chidham & Hambrook the additional children coming from 500 homes would need to travel to Bosham or Southbourne to attend school, along with children from 1100+ homes proposed in Southbourne. There needs to be some clarity and certainty on which of these proposed schools can be achieved and how they would be funded. We find it extraordinary that there is no policy statement on Education.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan

This gives us no confidence that the development of 500 homes will give us the infrastructure we need at the time it is required.

Despite the rapid growth in housing numbers over the last five years there has been little infrastructure development. We have no medical centre, local convenience store, employment opportunities, early years or child care provision ,sports or recreational facilities.

Transport: there is no mention of any upgrades to any of the roads or junctions serving the Parish to alleviate congestion and to improve safety. There is no mention of cycling routes and walking provision to provide safe routes. This will be exacerbated by the 1,110+ homes proposed in the Southbourne Parish which will have a coalescent impact on Chidham & Hambrook, particularly Priors Lease Lane and Broad Road.

Education: the suggestion here is that Chidham & Hambrook will be contributing funding to a new school in Southbourne rather than a replacement school in Policy AL10. This represents yet another contradiction. It is unclear where or at which development Early Years and Child Care places would be accommodated.

Health: The nearest provision would be Southbourne

Policy S8 Employment

Object

7.1 Part Two Development Management states “ **place housing in locations which are accessible by public transport to jobs, shopping, leisure, education and health facilities.**”

There are limited employment opportunities in Chidham & Hambrook and it appears there is no demand for commercial premises in the area. Industrial units built by Taylor Wimpey on the Lion Park development were not taken up and consequently converted to housing. In the last few years three employment opportunities have closed down to be replaced by housing - two garages which sold, serviced and repaired vehicles, one of which sold petrol and a small stock of essentials, and a plant nursery. This will put an added pressure on traffic as more people drive to their areas of employment west or east using the A259. Public transport is limited and expensive.

Policy S23 Transport /DM8

Object

In Chidham & Hambrook the vast majority (80%) of the proposed new dwellings would be built off Broad Road and some sited on the adjoining Main Road, the A259. There is no provision for the road infrastructure impact of 2250 new homes along this road between Southbourne and Fishbourne. And this will impact the travel survey.

Currently Broad Road has significant safety issues for pedestrians, drivers and cyclists. There is limited visibility due to lack of off-road parking facilities for current residents which has resulted in a number of near accidents. Where it meets the A 259 there is a staggered junction with Cot Lane which, even at present, is difficult to negotiate. The combination of new housing leading to increased traffic in Broad Road and the potential significant volume of increased traffic coming from the 1100+ new dwellings in Southbourne will make this junction dangerous and untenable.

To the North of the Parish there will be increased traffic on the Common Road to Funtington and then the B2178 as a route into the city. Opportunities for any access to housing developments without using Broad Road or Main Road are extremely limited. All other roads in the Parish are essentially lanes, mostly restricted to single lane traffic and could not be used as access to developments.

Pedestrian access in Broad Road is very poor with footways in places too narrow to accommodate buggies, wheel chairs or motorised disabled scooters. As a consequence residents are heavily reliant on cars.

The added volume of traffic will cause significant congestion and decreased air quality. Accessing the A27 at Fishbourne will be further exacerbated by the lack of plans to introduce an additional junction and slip roads onto the A27 between Emsworth and Fishbourne, and for no right turns from the Stockbridge and Whyke roundabouts. The only suggested mitigation is to create a hamburger junction. The increased commuter traffic combined with beach traffic in good weather, will cause gridlock at this roundabout at every junction.

We object to the proposal to build a link road to Birdham which would go straight through a flood plain and a site of environmental significance and would have a negative impact on the views from the coast to the City and SDNP.

Public transport is limited to one bus service along the A259 and an hourly train in either direction from Nutbourne station. The bus is very expensive and the vast majority of passengers are those with bus passes. There is no bus service south to north. The train frequency is too limited as a viable alternative to car travel. We would like to see a more robust policy focussing on public transport links.

We support the creation of an integrated and sustainable transport plan for the District, or at the very least for the area west of Chichester. This plan should draw upon the ongoing work of the ChEmRoute group's investigations and proposals and be coordinated with WSCC with the goal of introducing high quality and separated cycle links between the villages along the A259 and Chichester.

CDC together with WSCC Highways should undertake to provide specialist advice to those Parish Councils chosen to implement proposed strategic housing allocations through Neighbourhood Plans along the A259 in order to assess the impacts of the scale of such allocations on the local highway network. Such advice should be provided in order to aid site selection prior to any master planning of the subsequent development proposal and to help find solutions to potential traffic problems

Policy S6 Affordable Housing

Support

There is a disproportionate number of detached and 4 bed houses currently in our housing stock. We would like to see a commitment for Social Housing in addition to Affordable Housing, which many local people cannot afford to rent or buy. This means many young people leave the area. There is too much flexibility given to developers here in delivering the housing need for the area. They must deliver their “affordable” requirement if sufficient housing to meet local needs is to be provided.

Policy DM3 Housing Density

Support

Specialist housing and housing for the elderly will require a lower density as it will be single story. It is essential that there are robust measures that will enable high quality homes to be built to enable elderly people to remain in their community should they need to move into adapted housing more appropriate to their needs. Similarly, life long homes for those with a disability who need specialist housing.

Policy S26 / DM19 Natural Environment

Object

The Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives 3.6 states that any development west of the city will

“ conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness, character and cohesion of existing settlements”.

The Sustainability Appraisal states, in relation to Chidham and Hambrook **“ The scale of the development will completely alter the existing development and there will be significant impact to the existing historic village”** These two statements are contradictory .

The magnitude of an additional 500 homes {growth of 55%) will patently alter the local distinctiveness and character of Chidham & Hambrook and risk coalescence with Southbourne. The landscape is characterised by extensive arable land with some nurseries and pasture. Hedges, bushes, orchards and groups of trees contribute to the landscape, as do streams which pass through the Parish. The South Downs National Park is to the North and the AONB of Chichester Harbour to the South.

The **CDC Landscape Capability Study** reinforces the detrimental effect development will have on the landscape and character in all areas within the Parish

Nutbourne East – Ham Brook Mosaic

Potential development is said to impact on:

valued views, visual corridor for views from Nutbourne Channel towards the SDNP, separation of Southbourne, Hambrook, Nutbourne East, the rural landscape setting, existing pattern of low density settlement.

It will also contribute to the loss of:

Pasture, arable fields, hedgerows, trees, woodland (ancient and semi natural) copses. The area is constrained by its remaining rural character.

Nutbourne West-Nutbourne East Coastal Plain

Potential development will impact on:

valued views, characteristics views to the harbour and the SDNP, views from the AONB and nearby peninsulas: wider separation between Nutbourne West and Nutbourne East, the rural landscape setting, of the AONB, the existing pattern of low density settlement, the well treed landscape setting.

It will also contribute to the loss of:

Pasture, arable fields, hedgerows, trees, woodland copses, characteristic landscape field patterns. The area is constrained by its rural and treed character which contributes to the open setting and character of the AONB.

Upper Chidham Coastal Plain

Potential development will impact on:

Valued views- to the harbour, hills of the SDNP, Bosham Church, setting of Nutbourne Channel and Bosham Harbour, setting of listed buildings, strong rural and tranquil character, views from the SDNP.

Contribute to the loss of:

Arable and paddock fields, hedgerows, trees, tree belts, patches of coastal grassland and wetland, characteristic landscape field patterns.

The area is constrained by its rural and tranquil character, the visually sensitive open large scale fields, its contribution to the open, rural setting of the settlements of Chidham, Nutbourne East and West and their wider separation and its contribution to the wider AONB landscape, including the setting of Nutbourne Channel and Bosham.

Nutbourne East North – Eastern Coastal Plain

Potential development will impact on:

Valued views, rural character, separation between Hambrook and Nutbourne East, semi enclosed and more open character,

Contribute to the loss of: pasture and arable fields, hedgerows, trees, and characteristic field patterns

Nutbourne East Nurseries

Potential development will impact on:

Valued views, characteristic views to the Harbour and SDNP, rural character, separation between Bosham and Nutbourne East, semi enclosed and more open character, the pockets of orchards and small copses.

Contribute to the loss of: pasture and arable fields, hedgerows, trees, and characteristic field patterns

There are clearly significant constraints on the landscape and character if large scale development were to take place in Chidham & Hambrook. The principles in the AONB Management Plan must be rigorously applied to any new developments.

Policy S29, S30, DM 32 Wildlife Corridor

Support

We welcome a specific Policy on wild life corridors located between the SDNP, the Chidham peninsula and Chichester Harbour. The Chidham / East Nutbourne wild life corridor linking important Green Infrastructure, is of special sensitivity.

A variety of species commute or forage between the harbour area and the SDNP including mammals, both deer and bats, of which 10 or more species have been recorded. Badgers, while not normally found on the peninsula, have been seen. Smaller species like Hedgehogs, stoats, weasel, moles, and small prey species, including tawny and barn owls, grey heron and migrant species such as Fieldfare and Redwing use these corridors. Development in this area should be constrained by proximity to the wildlife corridor identified by CDC.

The route for the proposed Wildlife Corridor outlined in paras 5.3 and 5.4 of the Background Paper does not present the full picture of the area's ecological importance. The Ham Brook follows a natural environmental course from the AONB to the SDNP. This natural water course is home to water voles (seen by CDC Wildlife Officer and local environmental volunteers as recently as January 2019) and the land north of Priors Leaze Lane is a Barn Owl Habitat. There is ancient woodland either side of the railway line next to the trout farm and this is a dormouse habitat too. This Policy would be strengthened by the reinstatement of the Ham Brook Wildlife Corridor.

The Parish Council fully acknowledges that it has a responsibility to contribute to the need for more new housing in the District. However, in view of the above, and having carefully scrutinised the evidence, we believe that 500 homes for Chidham & Hambrook is excessive and is not supported by the documentation. The low provision of amenities, the absence of planned sustainable transport, the proximity of the AONB, the sensitive nature of the landscape and the density of housing proposed, limits the development capacity of the land.

For the reasons given we would like this number significantly reduced by at least 50% in line with Bosham and Fishbourne.