

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR REFUSAL

LOSS OF PUBLIC VIEWS

Views over the Wey valley from the public footpath which runs North/South on the Western field of the Highmead site, will be **lost for public appreciation and enjoyment** (*Image 1, page 4*). Building houses on this site would mean the loss of this rural view to the public.

PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Alton Golf Club, located further North up Old Odiham road was refused permission for 13 holiday chalets ref 21083/018. One of the reasons given was that **the development would rely excessively on the use of private cars** contrary to policies GS1 GS4 T1 and T2 of EHDC local plan. This development for 120 houses would thus be in the same category but many more would rely on the use of private cars.

This Highmead site is highly visible and adjacent to the Old Odiham Road site (ref 55097/001) which was recently refused planning permission. Two of the key reasons for refusal of planning permission for the Old Odiham Road site apply equally to the Highmead site. Namely that:

- 1) The proposed development would be an **undesirable extension of development** beyond the built up area and beyond the Settlement Policy Boundary of Alton (*Image 2, page 4*), which if permitted would be seriously detrimental to the visual amenity and rural character of the locality contrary to Policies CP2, CP19 and CP 20 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy.
- 2) The proposal constitutes an **unacceptable intrusion of development** into the countryside in an important gap between Alton and the strategic woodland area to the North West to the detriment of this rural area contrary to Policies CP19 and CP20 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

This development certainly would be very **visually obtrusive**. It would *"encroach upwards from the town into the rural scene"* which should be avoided according to the Government inspector in section 21 of the second review of the EHDC plan. It would also be **out of character** for this area.

BREACH OF SKYLINE

This development will **breach the skyline** (*Image 2, page 4*) contrary to the Alton Town Design Statement (Section 3.5 page 9).

OVERLOOKING AND LOSS OF PRIVACY

Many residents in both 'arms' of Grebe Close will be **overlooked** by the houses proposed in this application, which will mean **loss of privacy** for them.

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Old Odiham Road, Gilbert White Way, Wooteys Way, Anstey Lane and other roads in this area are **already at capacity**. 120 new homes means at least 170 more cars which will use these roads. The application is premature and the result of the Alton Transport Study (EHDC and HCC), should be awaited. This site is far from the town centre and on a very steep slope which will challenge accessibility by pedal and foot. This will encourage, not reduce car use, contrary to Transport and access policy CP29.

ROAD SAFETY

Just one access road is proposed from the site into Gilbert White Way, close to two recently built family homes and on a steep incline. In addition there are **no road crossings** for pedestrians and school children.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

ALTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

This site was considered **but excluded** from the allocations in the emerging Alton Neighbourhood Plan . January 2015. www.alton.gov.uk/AltonTownCouncil/UserFiles/Files/Neighbourhood%20Plan/SiteSelectionSupportingNarrativeversion19120115.pdf

LOSS OF PRIME ARABLE LAND

This site has produced a range of arable food crops for many years. The UK faces significant food production issues and good farm land is a finite resource. In October 2014 the Minister Eric Pickles issued guidelines regarding **avoidance of building on Greenfield sites**. This site should be retained as food producing land.

SEWERAGE

Thames Water has stated that their existing infra-structure **cannot cope** with this application and that they have "*concerns regarding waste water services in relation to this site*" (letter, May 29th 2014). The Proposal includes installation of "*an on site package sewerage plant*" to deal with all the needs of 120 houses. Details are not given which gives rise to neighbourhood concerns regarding bio-security and noxious emissions.

RAINWATER RUN-OFF

Residents are already aware of **large scale run-off** from this site into Grebe Close, Gilbert White Way, Curlews and the public pathway behind Wooteys Junior School. Building on this site will remove the capacity of the fields to absorb rainwater. The proposals include Swale ditches and a balance pond to deal with rainwater run off. The Swale ditch behind Hawthorns allotments overflows and floods neighbouring properties demonstrating that swale ditches are not a sustainable method of control. These proposals pay scant regard to local Geology. The retirement home south of Gilbert White Way is named "Marlfield" for good reason. It is opposite the proposed steeply inclined access road to the Highmead site. The risk of flooding is therefore very real.

Run-off from Eastern Highmead field (*Image 3, page 5*) crosses Gilbert White Way (*Image 4, page 5*), passes down Curlews (*Image 5, page 5*) and the entrance to Marlfield retirement home then floods the public footpath adjacent to Wooteys School (*Image 6, page 5*).



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Image 1



Image 2

Denied Old Odiham Road site
(ref 55097/001)

Proposed Highmead site, also clearly
demonstrating skyline breach.

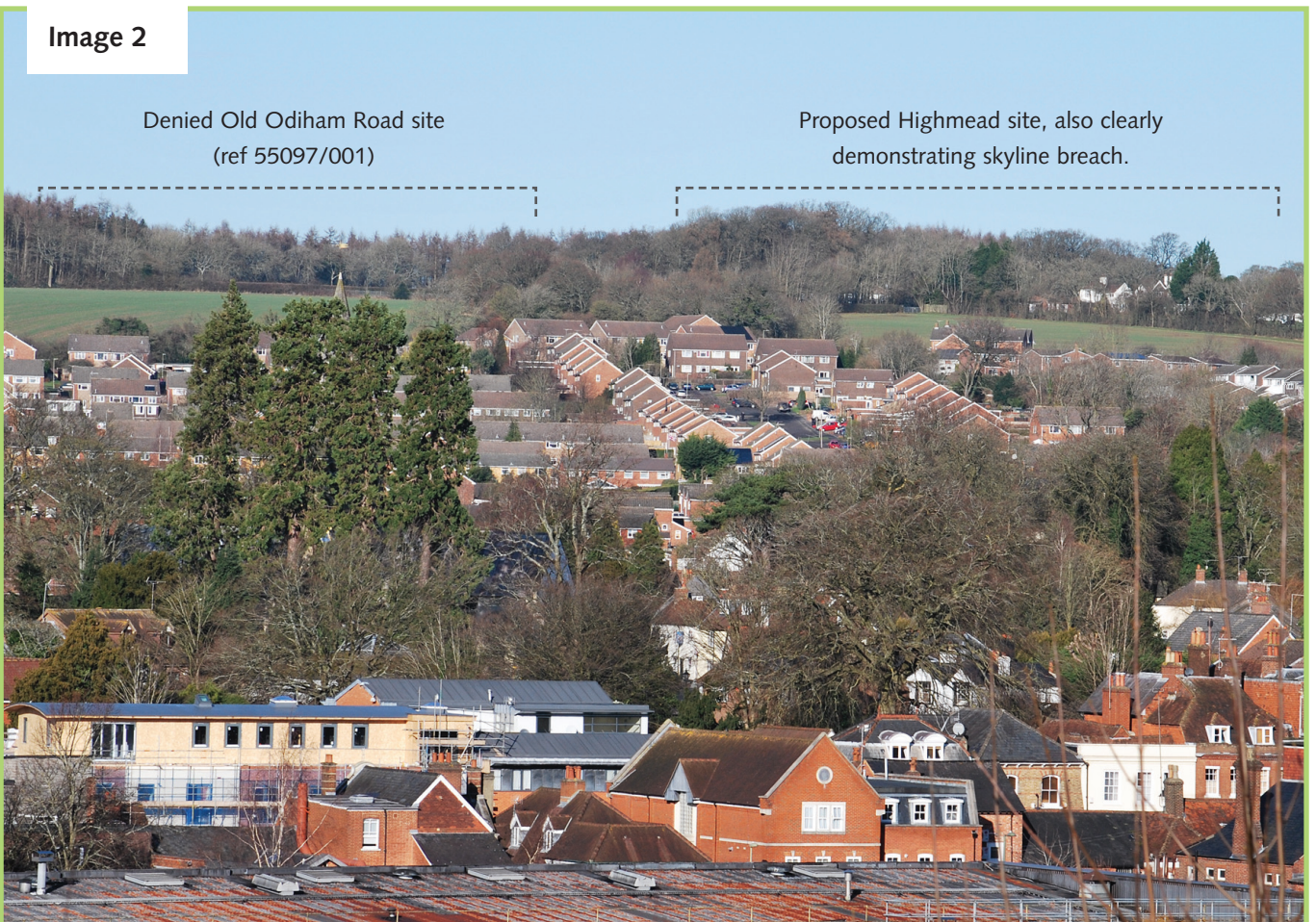


Image 3



Image 4



Image 5



Image 6

