

HDC Local Plan HA16 / SMD1 Speaker Statement by Martin Kelland

The issue is about reclassifying the site **HA16 / SMD1** under the new Local Plan from being protected from development under the category of smaller villages / hamlets with little or no infrastructure in 2024, to an allocated site where many houses can be built from 2025 onwards,

Background

The site has been refused planning permission in 2015 by HDC on the grounds of conflicting with the aims of sustainable development and damage to the landscape / countryside setting.

The Henfield Neighbourhood plan examined the site and rejected it on the same grounds. This plan was **democratically 'made' in 2021**.

Small Dole is covered by 2 Neighbourhood plans, Henfield and Upper Beeding. Oxcroft farm has already been allocated under the Upper Beeding NP. If **SMD1 and Oxcroft were both built it would represent a 23% population increase** to Small Dole in one go. This would fundamentally change the character of the hamlet. Such an over-allocation in a small hamlet is one of the things that the 2 Neighbourhood plans sought to avoid in the case of Small Dole.

More recently, in 2024, in HDC's Local Plan consultation, there were 75 objections and only 1 supporter, the developer. Objections were received from Andrew Griffiths MP, Henfield Parish Council and Upper Beeding Parish Council as well as a multitude of residents.

As recently as October 2024 planning permission for the development of 2 houses adjacent to the site at Brooklands was refused by HDC on the grounds of unsustainability and landscape harm.

Conclusion

The reality is that nothing has changed. Small Dole still has no schools or medical facility and car use is essential to residents.

Changing the category of this site to allocated flies in the face of the facts of the situation and the feelings of residents made abundantly clear in the 'made' Neighbourhood plans and HDC's own local plan consultation.

It is in an unsustainable location and will harm the landscape, no matter what HDC say the site should look like.

It is an unsound, inconsistent and unjustified allocation.