



16 November 2017

Strategic Allocation Policy SD81 brings together the WSCC depot and former brickworks site off Bepton Road in Midhurst (Pages 302/303) thus creating a significant portion of land for potential development. It is important that the recycling centre is re-sited to a location with good accessibility for Midhurst residents, but a well-designed residential development would enhance this rather ugly site. It also provides an opportunity to create a more effective buffer zone protecting Midhurst Common. However, consideration could be given to increasing this potential still further by the (compulsory?) acquisition of the land accommodating the low-grade commercial units in Station Road. Perhaps there is a case to be made that affordable housing should be more than the advisory minimum allocation.

Chapter 5.108 sets a minimum buffer of 15 metres between developments and ancient woodlands or veteran trees which appears to be totally inadequate considering that some native trees grow to a height of 40 metres. [This development should provide a much more substantial buffer between houses and Common.]

Development Management Policy SD37 refers to the circumstances under which developments in town and village centres will be permitted without reference to the adequacy or otherwise of existing infrastructure. As urban areas within The Plan increase so too do the demands made on existing sewage pipes and treatment centres. Chapter 5.158 refers in passing to 'adequate capacity of foul drainage but does not go far enough. The Plan should state the current usage and capacity of sewage treatment in market towns. Similarly, it should indicate usage and capacity of other major services such as schools, hospitals, health centres, emergency services, parking provisions, telephone lines and internet availability. It should be a requirement that any developer must demonstrate the adequacy of existing infrastructure or make provision for additional infrastructure.

Strategic Policy SD25 supports developments within settlements that meet specified criteria but no mention is made of infrastructure. Proposed developments within settlements should demonstrate either:

- (a) that current infrastructure has the capacity to cope with the extra demands placed on it by such development; or
- (b) the proposal contains appropriate measures to enhance the infrastructure.

There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Chapter 4.4) but new developments should not merely be sustainable; they could make a positive contribution to the generation of clean energy. 'Zero Carbon' is an aim (Chapter 4.28) but a generating surplus of clean energy would be a more positive and ambitious target.

The location of a new medium-sized supermarket in Midhurst should be re-examined. It could be that the Brickworks site or the Caravan site might be more suited to retailing, leaving The Grange site free for retirement housing.