

Lovedean Village Residents Association

Reference – Southcott proposal, August 2025, EHDC application reference EHDC-25-0864-RES.

The Lovedean Village Residents Association wishes to object to this proposal on the following grounds:

DEVELOPER COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS – there has been no communication with the Lovedean community; Recently Taylor Wimpey held a public meeting in the Lovedean village hall to explain their upcoming proposal, but, sadly, Southcott have done nothing. The first that the community knew of the current submission was when it appeared on the EHDC website! The Planning Statement contends that the Southcott agent has been in discussions with Lovedean Parish Council – no such organisation exists. This would appear to be disrespectful to the people of Lovedean and shows that there is little care or consideration for the local community. Surely this does not represent best practice or complies with any requirement for community engagement?

INFRASTRUCTURE – The Planning Statement contends that there is a bus service in Lovedean Lane; there is none, and hasn't been for many years. Whilst the planning statement talks about local shops, in fact the nearest shops and bus stop is a kilometre away from this development, meaning most residents would be using motor vehicles, increasing the levels of traffic on an already heavily trafficked lane. How putting more cars on the road squares with achieving the stated net-zero policy of EHDC is a mystery to us. It should also be noted that doctors and schools in this area have very little capacity to cope with further loadings.

EHDC 5-YEAR LOCAL PLAN – the LVRA understands that EHDC do not have an up-to-date plan, nor, we also understand, will it have one until later in 2026. However, we are aware that all adopted policies within EHDC's JCS are still applicable to this development. Regarding developments within the District, it is clear that there are a number of sites, like this one, being developed currently, including Land East of Horndean. When the LEOH work has already commenced, which is on a substantially larger and better served scale, we wonder what the urgency is on getting this development, on a marginal and difficult site, approved achieves? According to the programme of works, it will be 2028 before anything is really completed regarding this proposal.

On the subject of site history, the fact is (although broadly overlooked in the Planning Statement) that the site history is not good – an application in 2014/15 refused and the subsequent appeal dismissed, with a repeat in 2017, of an application refused and the appeal dismissed. These should not be overlooked when considering the current proposal. And speaking of being overlooked, this was the principal reason, in respect of adjoining properties, for the 2014 application and appeal to be refused.

EHDC JCS Policy compliance (**EXPLANATORY NOTE FOR THIS SECTION** – all text in Bold italics is directly lifted from the relevant EHDC CPs.

The **texts highlighted in yellow** are the CP's words the LVRA believe are relevant to the respective CP non-compliances)

Turning now to EHDC JCS policy compliance, it is hard to see how this proposal complies with **CP19 DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**.

The approach to sustainable development in the countryside, defined as the area outside settlement policy boundaries, (a reminder is relevant that the proposed site sits outside the

Settlement Policy Boundary of the current EHDC plan) **is to operate a policy of general restraint in order to protect the countryside for its own sake. The only development allowed in the countryside will be that with a genuine and proven need for a countryside location, such as that necessary for farming, forestry, or other rural enterprises (see Policy CP6).** Within the South Downs National Park the pursuit of National Park purposes will be paramount.

7.4 The countryside (the area outside of settlement policy boundaries as defined on the Proposals Map) needs to be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity and qualities of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all.

7.5 At the same time, the countryside is under great pressure to meet a range of demands. Farming has a key influence on the landscape. Farm diversification and the reasonable expansion of existing rural businesses needs to be supported to help sustain agricultural enterprise and to maximise opportunities to strengthen the rural economy (see also Policy CP6).

7.6 It is therefore recognised that some development can take place which is beneficial to the countryside and the people that live and work there. The emphasis in the Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy is therefore to allow development in the countryside where it can be demonstrated that a countryside location is both necessary and justified. Such an approach will preclude development for which a rural location is not essential. Inappropriate types and scales of development will not be permitted in order to maintain the landscape character and quality of the countryside. The countryside will continue to be protected for its intrinsic value. Even so, it is possible to maximise opportunities to strengthen the rural economy by encouraging uses related to the land, including appropriate forms of agriculture, forestry and green tourism.

When considering the above information, there are clear areas of non-compliance, highlighted.

With regard to **CP20 LANDSCAPE**, we believe the key phrase is:

7.11 Development will not be permitted if it is unsustainable and fails to protect the special character of the landscape; we fail to see how putting 28 houses in a steeply sloping, (10m/50ft west to east; Geotechnical Engineering Ltd site report), back land, difficult site, with no amenities complies with this clear statement.

There is a clear non-compliance with **CP27 POLLUTION**, which states:

Development must not result in pollution which prejudices the health and safety of communities and their environments.

Development will not be permitted if it would have an unacceptable effect on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring properties through loss of privacy or through excessive overshadowing.

It is quite clear that the design as presented will cause significant overlooking of the adjacent, existing properties, due to the height of the proposed buildings, their location in the development and the steepness of the site's topography (see quantum, above)

This will constitute a significant loss of amenity for those properties. This is clearly apparent when the Landscape Section, drg No.C9 23 10 PL120 is studied closely. It should be noted that this drawing is incorrect in its representation of the slope of the land beyond the eastern site boundary. Whereas

the drawing shows a continuous slope to Lovedean Lane, in reality the rear areas of the adjacent properties drop between 1.4m and 1.8m to their respective floor levels. This fact indicates initial poor site survey work (communication with residents?) and will exacerbate the overlooking problem. **It is interesting to note that the Planning Statement, whilst claiming compliance with many JCS Policies, is completely silent on compliance with CP 27 indicating that the developer is not confident on this one.**

CP29 DESIGN – it is hard to see how what has been presented complies with the following wording from this Policy:

d) ensure that the layout and design of development contributes to local distinctiveness and sense of place, and is appropriate and sympathetic to its setting in terms of its scale, height, massing and density, and its relationship to adjoining buildings, spaces around buildings and landscape features;

h) take account of local town and village design statements, (backland filling up the valley side was prohibited in Horndean Parish design statement for Lovedean Lane) ***neighbourhood plans that identify local character and distinctiveness and the design elements of parish and town plans and conservation area appraisals;***

7.76 Local input in any development is, of course, crucial and that is why town and village design statements are so important. Putting up new buildings alongside something much older can sometimes be contentious, so it is important to be aware of any local special features of particular merit and to relate any proposals to the context of the site. The design of new buildings should be woven into the fabric of the living and working community.

CP30 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT – compliance with this Policy is also very questionable:

All new development will be required to:

a) conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the South Downs National Park if in the National Park and take account of this cultural heritage where the National Park's setting is affected;

b) reflect national policies in respect of design, landscape, townscape and historic heritage;

c) conserve, enhance, maintain and manage the district's heritage assets and their setting including listed buildings, conservation areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites and Historic Parks and Gardens;

d) ensure that the development makes a positive contribution to the overall appearance of the local area including the use of good quality materials of appropriate scale, profile, finish, colour and proven weathering ability;

e) take account of local conservation area appraisals and town and village design

Regarding heritage assets, the Planning Statement mentions two listed Grade 2 properties, 203, Lovedean lane and The Old Thatched Cottage. These 'two' are actually one and the same property! It is interesting to note that there is no mention in the Planning Statement of the other Grade II listed properties which will, inevitably, be impacted if this proposal goes ahead.

CP31 TRANSPORT

Through implementation of the Hampshire Local Transport Plan (2011 – 2031), the fullest possible use of sustainable modes of transport (including cycling, walking and public and community transport) and reduced dependence on the private car will be encouraged.

Development proposals will include a range of mitigating measures and, where appropriate, will be required to:

- a) **enhance the quality, viability, availability, accessibility and frequency of public transport and alternative community transport provision, especially in rural areas, to ensure that those without access to a private car have access to services and facilities necessary for their well-being;**

It is hard to see how, in the Southcott proposal, compliance with this Policy requirement is being met.

DRAINAGE

Other than the drainage consultants brief, high-level comments, including this key paragraph:

'The proposals will result in increased run-off which must be attenuated on site and not increase flood risk elsewhere. The drainage systems, including parking and access areas must be designed to cater for the 1:100 year + 45% climate change event.' the Southcott proposal includes no easily-found detailed proposal for the drainage approach for the site. As the site currently stands it is a natural 'soak'.

The consultant clearly states the proposal will result in increased run-off, and a detailed design needs to be considered and approved, and compliant with the requirements of CP 25, before any further consideration of granting planning permission can be made. This is particularly important in light of recognised climate change and the future higher and heavier levels of rainfall that can be expected.

ACCESS

The residents of Lovedean, and particularly of New Road, are still astounded that access to this site from New Road is considered appropriate and safe. HCC Highways lack of objection and the access permission granted by EHDC seems unfathomable.

Unless very careful traffic management of the junction occurs, this will be a constant source of concern for residents in this area.

This concern is already evident by the objections/comments received from Lovedean residents on the issue.

On a final, and possibly lighter note, what is putting a pathway in to Cold Hill lane about? There seems to be a collective head-scratching over this proposal and what it is trying to achieve. After serving a few houses, the eastern part of Cold Hill lane is an unmade farm track, generally quite overgrown in the summer, and sometimes completely flooded during times of wet weather, leading to..... nowhere in particular.....strange.

With respect to the comments above, the LVRA would request that this proposal is not approved in its current state. We would suggest that significant attention is given to the non-compliance with CP27 issue of overlooking and loss of amenity to the adjacent Lovedean Lane properties prior to any further redesign submissions being made.

