

MID SUSSEX LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
Small Scale Housing Allocations
Development Plan Document (DPD)

EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

Alternative Development Site
Ref. ALT/19

West Hoathly Station Goods Yard
Station Road, Sharpthorne, West Sussex

APPENDIX TO STATEMENT – SUGGESTED COUNCIL POLICY
by
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of
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on behalf of
Bluebell Railway Plc

March 2007

STATEMENT BY HENRY CLARKE, THE RAIL ESTATE CONSULTANCY LTD, ON BEHALF OF BLUEBELL RAILWAY PLC.
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1. SUGGESTED COUNCIL POLICY

- 1.1. As part of its commitment to Sustainable Communities, the Council will allocate part of the land at the former West Hoathly Goods Yard at Sharpthorne (shown on the accompanying proposals map) for residential development.
- 1.2. The plot of land to be allocated is approximately 0.5 hectares, with the potential for creation of up to 15 dwellings.
- 1.3. The Council will require that any new residential development will include a proportion of affordable housing to meet locally identified needs.
- 1.4. In recognition of the site's position within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Council will require any development proposal to be accompanied by a fully detailed Design Statement.
- 1.5. The Council supports the Bluebell Railway and the re-opening of a station halt at Sharpthorne. The Council will therefore require that residential development proposals within this land will make due allowance for future access to a re-opened station halt, in consultation with the Bluebell Railway Plc.
- 1.6. The Council will require that any new development will make a contribution towards local highway improvements, such as traffic calming or other safety measures at the southern end of Station Road at the junction with Top Road.

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2. BACKGROUND TO LOCATION AND INFORMATIVE

Location

- 2.1. The site is previously developed land known as the former West Hoathly Station Goods Yard. It lies within a parcel of land in the ownership of Bluebell Railway Plc, adjacent to the Bluebell Railway line at the northern end of Sharpethorne village, West Sussex. It is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2.2. The site is bounded by the West Hoathly Brickworks and the railway line to the east, and by an established tree belt to the west, which separates the Goods Yard from adjoining open countryside. Sharpethorne tunnel and the associated railway cutting lie to the south.
- 2.3. Part of the site, fronting houses in Station Road, is situated within the built-up village boundary as established under the adopted Mid Sussex Local Plan. A private foot-crossing of the railway, linking Station Road and Hamsey Road, bisects the site towards the southern end. Full access to the land is available via Station Road.

Informative

- 2.4. The Council wishes to support the effective use of land in contributing to tackling local housing needs, as appropriate, and where this does not conflict with other policies. It also supports the improvement and creation of local transport infrastructure.
- 2.5. The Council supports the reinstatement of a station halt at Sharpethorne on the Bluebell Railway (subject to conditions) within this land, as part of its commitment to sustainable transport and the local economy.
- 2.6. The Council also now wishes to identify use of this land for sensitive residential development, so as to contribute towards locally affordable housing needs.
- 2.7. The development will be required to be mindful of its setting in terms of its built form. It will be required to make a positive contribution to Sharpethorne and West Hoathly as a sustainable community, whilst demonstrating an understanding of the area's local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- 2.8. The Council will expect development to have regard for the need to retain a tree belt to the west, and to protect the adjacent area to the south which is covered by a Tree Preservation Order. Subject to any further reports, it is not considered that there would be significant infrastructure or ecological issues which would prevent the development of the site for residential use and the future reinstatement of a station halt.
- 2.9. The development will enable a revised built up boundary to be established to the north of the village which is more clearly delineated on the ground. It would also be anticipated that development of the site would provide an opportunity for a contribution towards enhanced safety measures that may be required at the junction of Station Road and Top Road.