

# Workhouse Platt

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Workhouse Lane • Hook Lane • West Hoathly

## Call for Sites Submission



*The Workhouse - Prior to demolition in c.1860*



*Workhouse Platt 2013*

## Site History

- The site was home to the former Workhouse building, pictured above. It is thought to have been built in 1730, and is believed to have been demolished around 1865, prior to its demolition it was divided into three dwellings.<sup>[1]</sup>
- Since its demolition the area remained unused and in recent years a track was laid across the site to access fields below.

## Site Overview & Location

- It is accessed via an existing access from Hook Lane.
- The site is 0.3 acres
- It is located circa 170m outside the Built Up Area boundary as defined by the Mid Sussex District Council the Local Plan (2004 Proposals Map)



Figure 1 - Location Plan

<sup>1</sup> Ralph, J. (2012) *Old West Hoathly*. West Hoathly Local History Archive



Figure 2 - Site Plan

## Sustainable Location

- The site is ideally situated on the village boundary and represents a sustainable location.<sup>1</sup>
- The site lies adjacent to key community facilities the Village Cricket field, Tennis Courts & Bowls Club.
- The site is within 400m of St Margarets Church & The Cat Inn.
- The site is within 500m of West Hoathly Primary School and community recreation Land.
- An acceptable walking distance to local amenities is generally considered to be around 800m, around a 10 minute walk (assuming a walking speed of 1.4m/s) (Providing for Journeys on Foot, IHT 2000), with



this being increased to approximately 2.5km for cyclists, around a 10 minute cycle (assuming a cycling speed of approximately 4m/s).

- All these factors reduce the reliance on the private car, thus the site presents a truly sustainable location in line with local and national planning and transport policy.
- The NPPF encourages positive planning and a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- The current District Plan which is being prepared puts sustainable development at its core and aims to; *To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex.* This site presents such an opportunity.

## AONB Setting

- The site is situated in the AONB.
- it is noted that many of the sites considered in the initial call for sites were constrained by their setting in the AONB. MSDC place an emphasis on *strong defensible boundaries* to protect the AONB setting from the visual impact of new development. Natural buffers are considered the most appropriate option.
- The site is entirely bordered by mature trees, presenting a strong well defined boundary, consequently any development on the site would not be visible from any landscape vantage points, the development would be entirely screened. See Figure 3.
- Residential development of the site would result in negligible impact on the visual appearance of the landscape, which is what the AONB designation is designed to preserve. The natural buffer is comprised of both deciduous and evergreen species providing screening throughout the seasons.

- The site is located a suitable distance from surrounding dwellings, as such residential development would have no impact on the amenity of other surrounding properties.
- Residential development on the site would not lead to the coalescence of West Hoathly and Sharpthorne as it is located to the south of the village.



Figure 3 - Mix species offer a strong natural buffer

## Housing Opportunity

- The site presents the opportunity to provide much needed housing to the village.
- Mid Sussex have identified a need for 2000 homes to be delivered through the neighbourhood planning process.
- West Hoathly Parish Council in their draft Neighbourhood Plan have identified the need for 30 homes in the Parish within the next five years.
- As a consequence of the rural nature of West Hoathly & Sharpthorne as settlements it is considered that delivering these homes is best achieved by several small sites, as opposed to larger developments.
- This site has the capacity to support four sensitively designed market dwellings. Whilst this is marginally below the Local Plan (2004) requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare, it is felt that it would be excessive to locate more than four dwellings on a site such as this. The site could support a range of unit sizes in order to ensure a policy compliant housing mix and critically dwellings to support both individuals and families, providing a socially sustainable development.
- This site presents West Hoathly with a sustainable location suitable for residential development that would go some way to ensuring housing delivery in the Parish.

## Highways

- The site is served by an existing access from Hook Lane, that extends into the proposed development site. This means that no new access will be required. See Figure 4.
- Four homes will not result in a detrimental increase in traffic movements in the area, moreover the site can be accessed from both Ardingly and West Hoathly, reducing pressure on West Hoathly as an access point.

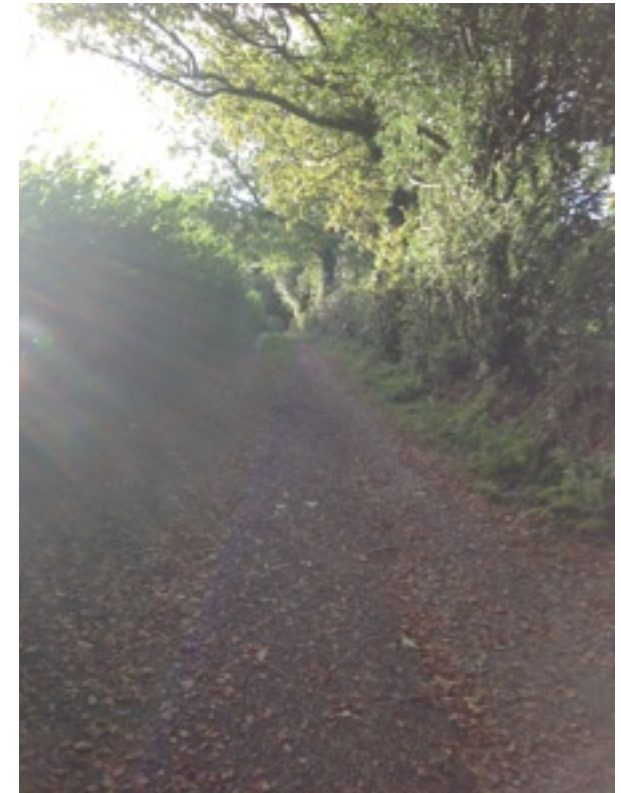
## Conclusion

Clearly the site is constrained by its location; marginally outside the settlement boundary, and is at present *undeveloped* however the sustainability credentials of the site clearly place it as a suitable site.

Historically the site has supported dwellings, this is a material factor that must be acknowledged. Whilst it is not strictly a brownfield site, development certainly would not result in the loss of valuable agricultural land nor land of any great amenity value. It is hoped that both the community, Parish Council and MSDC will consider this site with a positive approach.

Workhouse Platt is deliverable with the current owners willing to submit an application within 24 months.

Should you have any questions regarding this site please contact Will Buckley on 01342 811113.



*Figure 4 - Existing Access from Hook Lane*