

12 Gorselands,
SEDLSCOMBE,
Nr. Battle,
East Sussex,
TN33 OPT
01424 870433

email: [REDACTED]

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Cheryl Poole,
Programme Officer,
Sedlescombe Neighbourhood Plan Examination,
ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL.

SEDLSCOMBE NP HEARING PROCEDURE NOTE

Preamble:

I have been a resident of Sedlescombe for 32 years and have taken a keen interest in local issues during this period. Regrettably, in the past, our Parish Council and Rother District Council have granted permission for quite a number of new developments in our Village which is well documented for its heritage and uniqueness in terms of its buildings and general attractiveness, making it a very desirable place to reside. Quite a number of these developments were built on land that was previously agricultural or green space and all within the central part of the Village in areas such as Brede Lane or the Street. With the introduction of Neighbourhood Planning thankfully this has given the opportunity to the Parish Council to re-think its future planning needs so that it does not allow indiscriminate planning applications for new housing and, most fundamentally, allow the residents of the Parish to influence (not just the Parish Council) and develop a plan in the interests of the Village for current and future generations in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 (c20).

Consultation process:

I fully support the Parish Council, particularly policy 11, in its efforts to establish a Neighbourhood Plan that meets the requirements of future housing needs. I can confirm that the Parish Council at the outset fully consulted with the residents of the Village in terms of meetings and also exhibitions held in the Village Hall. In addition updates were issued via newsletters and also at its Annual Assembly. I am aware that the first Plan, which was supported by the majority of residents, was not accepted by RDC and was therefore sent back for further modification. The Parish Council once again revised some of the content with full consultation with residents and basically repeated the process in terms of newsletters and again was reported at its Annual Assembly. However, one fundamental element did not change and that was that both the Street Farm and Red Barn Field should retain their existing status as designated green space areas. It should be noted that **at least 88% of Sedlescombe residents fully support the revised Neighbourhood Plan** in its present format, are very adamant about preserving both Street Farm and Red Barn Field sites and therefore vehemently oppose any kind of development on these sites. The Plan recognises the need for future housing of various types and has also identified other sites that are considered to be better suited which will have less environmental impact on the Village and, at the same time, meeting RDC's housing requirements..

Green space issue – Street Farm

I understand that the total site measures some 4.5 hectares which is 11.1 acres (2.471 acres = 1 hectare) which is a substantial land area. I attach two photographs taken 10.06.17 which shows the panoramic views enjoyed from the Brede Lane side clearly identifying the trees beyond near the Pestalozzi estate. The views can be seen from Gorselands and particularly residents who live in Blacklands and East View Terrace. I understand that there are two

public footpaths and that these are used regularly by local residents. The land forms part of the High Weald Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty and clearly contains an abundance of wildlife and fauna. Landscape features covering such a large area are quite unique and need to be preserved for the continued enjoyment of not only the current residents but also future generations. Again, I would stress that to allow any development on this site would be detrimental to the majority of residents particularly those who reside either on or off Brede Lane (in terms of traffic congestion and other infrastructure related issues) as well as non compliance with the whole democratic process of local decision making.

Please note that once more I note that the developer has advertised the sale of houses on their website in connection with the Street Farm planning application despite the fact that this site is one of the main reasons why we are having this enquiry. In my view this demonstrates complete abhorrence to the official Examiner in carrying out his detailed examination and insults all the work submitted by the existing Parish Council as well as the numerous (over 400) supporters of the current Neighbourhood Plan.

HUGH DAVIDSON