

WS3 Landowner Representations

Regulation 18 Consultation

Rother District Council – Local Plan 2025 - 2042

22 March 2026



Notice

This document and its contents have been prepared and are intended solely as information for Rother District Council – Local Plan 2025 - 2042 and use in relation to their 'Regulation 18 Consultation: Development Strategy and Site Allocations' in response to Question 34 of the draft Local Plan 2025 – 2042.

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Introduction

This report details supporting information for the proposed site allocation WS3 in Westfield which has been put forward by the landowner, to Rother District Council in consultation on the draft Rother Local Plan 2025 - 2042.

1. Site Plan

1.1. Summary

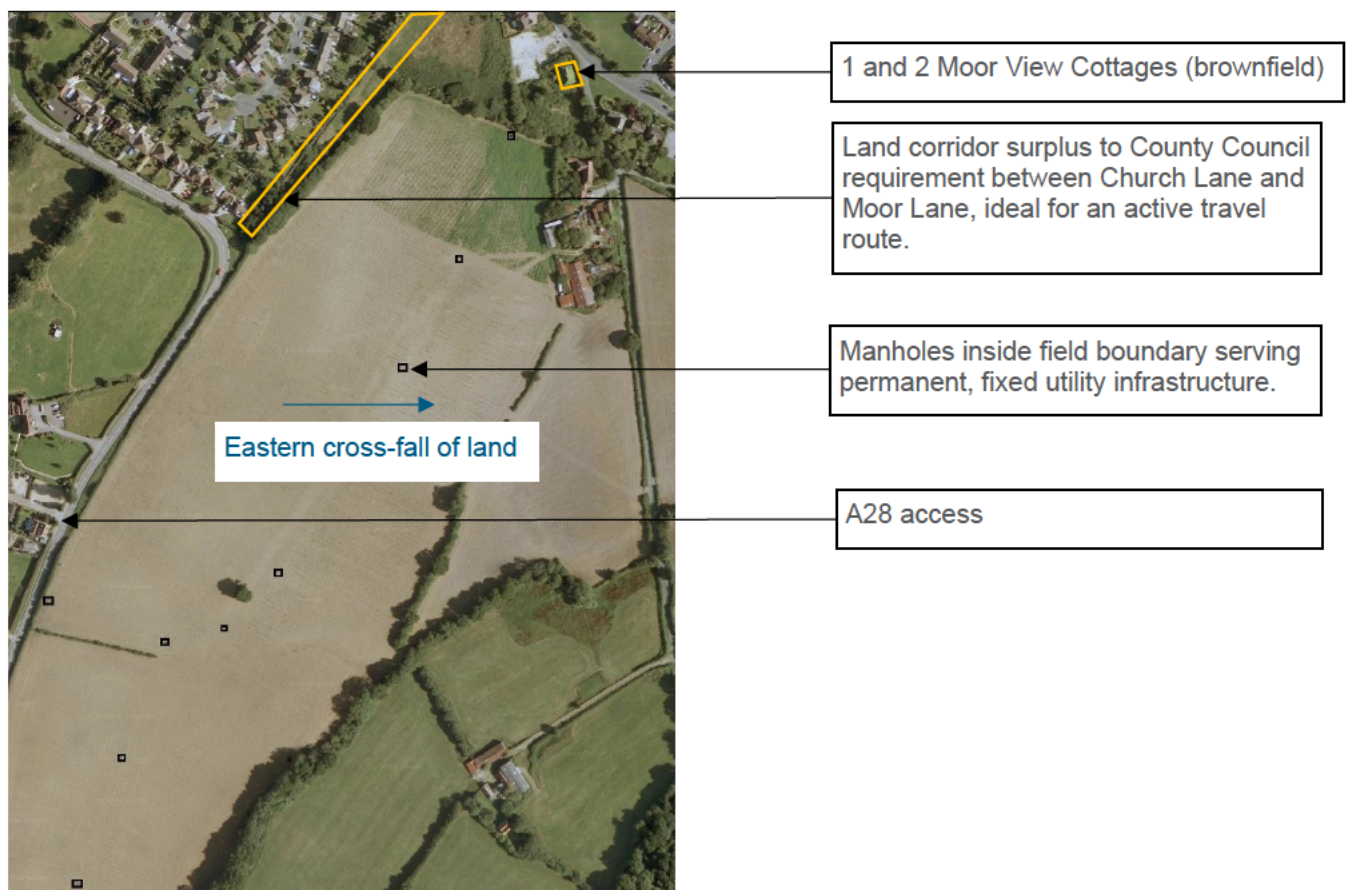
The proposed site allocation WS3 is situated at the southern end of Westfield village, adjoining the existing and proposed development boundary of the settlement. Contained within a single field boundary, the proposed site allocation encloses an area of 2.9 hectares. The total enclosed area is developable due to consisting of the brownfield site of former 1 and 2 Moor View Cottages and associated greenhouses and a parcel of land containing Southern Water infrastructure which crosses the site WS3 south to north, comprising of 14No manhole covers. The site also consists of BT Openreach access manhole covers which serve a separate utility corridor along the western edge.

WS3 is optimally situated to support sustainable growth by capitalising on Westfield's existing road infrastructure connectivity. As identified in the draft Local Plan policy text, vehicular access to WS3 would be from the A28 and falls within the 30mph village speed limit. The site is on the same side as Hastings and Bexhill, enabling direct access via the A28 to the closest employment, commercial and recreation centres by use of the Queensway Gateway and Combe Valley Way, without contributing to village vehicle throughput.

1.2. Site Plan

The proposed site allocation for WS3 is highlighted below, alongside a proposed southern and eastern addition to fully maximise the potential of this development area (see Figure 2). This clearly shows the site is readily accessible from the A28 as well as the absence of hedgerows within the proposed site allocation, minimising any environmental impacts.

Figure 1 – Annotated aerial photo showing field boundary containing WS3 allocation (Taken from Google Earth)



The WS3 residential development can be realised with minimal infrastructure works. The site has direct access to the A28 for vehicular access. The site also encompasses Footpath Westfield 44 with direct access to Church Lane and Moor Lane pavements to reach central village amenities. Furthermore, the strip of land between the A28 Church Lane and Westfield Lane corner and the intersection of Moor Lane and Workhouse Lane could be used to establish a safe, segregated active travel corridor, noting it has been declared surplus to the County Council's requirements and therefore should be returned to the former owner's successors (see Figure 1). This active travel corridor would offer enhanced village integration of plot WS3 and provide an alternative, more direct de-carbonised means of accessing local amenities with biodiversity net gain potential.

1.3. Site Access

Figure 1 illustrates that the site is readily accessible from the southern approach to Westfield village along the A28.

Developing the proposed site allocation presents an opportunity to create a roundabout junction to replace the current 90-degree bend between Westfield Lane and Church Lane. Modifying the current A28 road alignment to include a roundabout junction could realise the following benefits:

- Increased road safety by reducing traffic speeds upon entering the village from the southern approach.
- Increased visibility by extending the line of sight at this currently hazardous road section.
- Increased pedestrian safety as pedestrians currently cross between the terminating pavements on opposite sides of Church Lane at this location. As identified, this would be aided by establishing the active travel corridor between Church Lane and Moor Lane, minimising the scope for conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles.

It should also be noted that the A28 is readily accessible by heavy-good vehicles (HGV) – notably during development. This will mitigate damage to verges (as incurred along smaller roads) together with travel disruption by allowing bi-directional traffic to pass freely. Noting WS3 is located on the southern side of Westfield, most vehicular trips generated from the development will have destinations in Hastings / Bexhill and therefore construction-stage traffic will not pass through the village and interface with Westfield Primary School.

2. Site Potential

2.1. Nearby Amenities

Situated adjacent to the A28 and serviced by an existing bus route, WS3 affords easy access to key existing commercial and employment centres including:

- The Conquest Hospital
- Ivy House Industrial Estate
- Castleham Industrial Estate
- Churchfields Industrial Estate
- Wainwright Road Industrial Estate
- Ravenside Retail and Leisure Park

WS3 is uniquely positioned in the Rother District to benefit from proximity access to the A21, The Ridge, Queensway Gateway and Combe Valley Way. The site therefore presents significant opportunity to promote growth of the nearby 'Hastings Fringes and Bexhill' area contributing to Local Plan Strategic Spatial Objective 5 alongside local residential and economic growth in Westfield.

Alongside the residential area proposed under WS3 it is envisaged a southern extension to the site of c.70m (see Figure 2) which could accommodate a mixed-use development. Establishing a mixed-use development adjacent to WS3 will create a unique opportunity for village employees to access places of work via continuous active travel corridors, as identified¹⁷; something which has not been provided and is not possible to the current business park in Westfield as it has no dedicated pedestrian access. This would therefore support inclusive employment opportunities, benefitting the local economy and fostering expansion of rural businesses (as per Local Plan Objective 6). Furthermore, residential and commercial dwellings can exploit the south facing orientation of the plot for solar energy generation, upholding the Local Plan 'Green to the Core' priority.

2.2. Site Services

Located adjacent to the existing village development boundary and comprising of brownfield land, the proposed WS3 site allocation is well served by existing utilities and services including:

- Electricity
- Gas
- Telecoms (including fibre optic)
- Water
- Sewerage

It is noted that a main sewer runs south-north through the proposed WS3 site, affording easy connectivity and the opportunity for future enhancement / maintenance access. It is also noted BT Openreach telecom cables run along the western edge of the proposed site, adjacent to the A28. These are conveniently located for establishing new connections that will not require major diversion or disruption.

It should also be acknowledged that the WS3 site is contained within a single field boundary, lending itself as a self-contained area which can be developed with minimal disruption to nearby residents. This is aided by direct access from the A28 which is accessible by heavy good vehicles from the south for deliveries during development, avoiding constricted flows and highway disruption as associated with smaller roads.

2.3. Brownfield Site

WS3 adjoins the southern development boundary of the village. The site encompasses the brownfield land next to Stonestile Lane which was previously occupied by Moor View cottages and associated greenhouses. This land parcel has been incorrectly allocated as 'biodiversity net gain' in the draft Local Plan supporting text and

needs amending to reflect its brownfield status including existing access to utilities such as gas, water, electric and sewerage. As a result, the area is a priority for residential development under Local Plan Objective 10 and should qualify for a higher residential density, consistent with the character of the adjacent Goulds Drive development.

Furthermore, the wider WS3 area has been altered by human activity to establish the permanent sewerage and telecom utility corridors which run south-north across the site. These are supported by 14 sewer manhole covers and BT Openreach manhole access covers. The presence of fixed surface infrastructure in WS3 means the whole site aligns closely with the classification of brownfield.

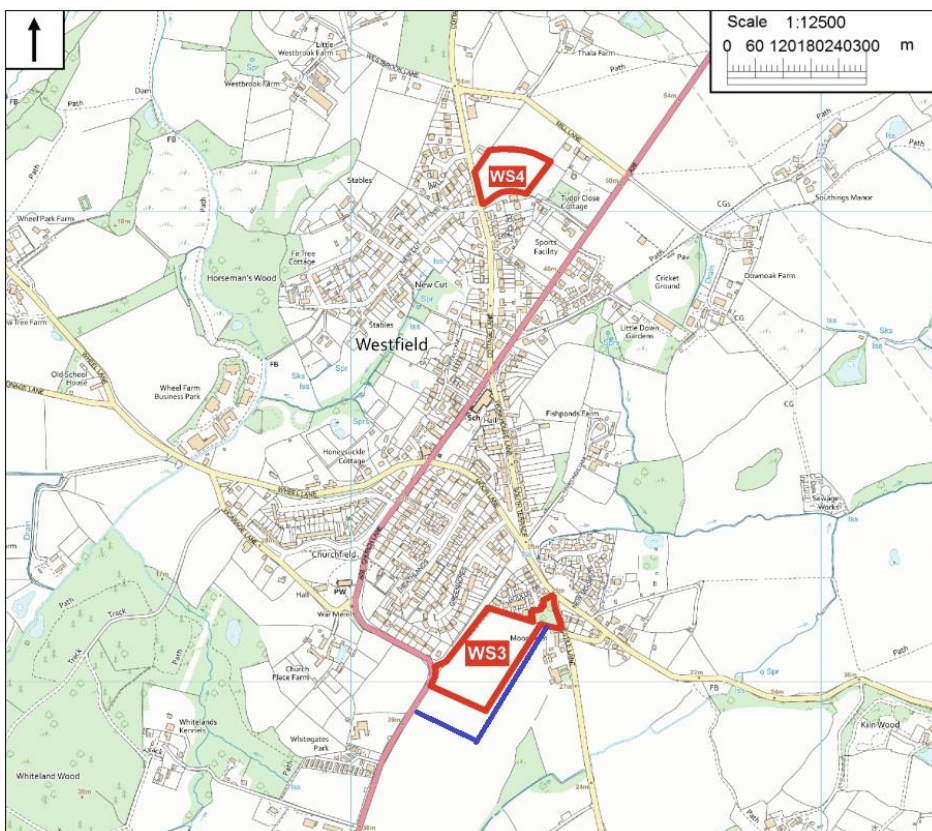
2.4. Site Typography

WS3 features an eastern cross-fall relief, lending itself to sustainable drainage and site water management, without extensive earthworks.

In line with Local Plan Objective 1, it is envisaged that the site drainage strategy will exploit the land's natural relief and Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) to attenuate surface water to the east. This will mitigate surface water flooding and water treatment pressures as well as holding the potential to create a biodiversity net gain area. In addition, this would provide an aesthetic and sympathetic buffer between WS3 and Moor Farmhouse, preserving local heritage in line with Local Plan Objective 3.

Establishing this multi-functional blue green drainage infrastructure can only be realised if WS3 is extended east (by c.15m) to capitalise on the cross-fall of the site. Accordingly, sustainable development of WS3 requires green infrastructure to be developed to the east of the site, not the south as proposed in the draft Local Plan policy text. Furthermore, establishing a hedgerow along the southern boundary of WS3, as proposed in the draft policy text (item 7), would compromise forming a safe A28 access with good lines of sight to achieve the 'highway works necessary to make the development acceptable'. The visual obstruction of a hedge in this location would also forego the opportunity to implement a suitably modified village approach to improve safety and reduce vehicle speeds compared with the current 90-degree bend.

Figure 2 – OS MAP showing site allocation WS3 and landowner advised eastern and southern additions (blue) to realise the full potential of this site (Taken and edited from the draft Rother Local Plan 2025-42).



2.5. Site Aspect

The southern facing aspect of the proposed WS3 site promotes the adoption of photovoltaic roof panels for renewable solar energy generation in both residential and employment-generating development. This will contribute to the energy-efficiency of the development in line with meeting the carbon net-zero 2050 target and 'Green to the Core' Local Plan priority.

2.6. Site Accessibility

The proposed site allocation is readily accessible with:

- Vehicular access along the A28
- Pedestrian access to the village along established pavements and Footpath 44
- Public transport via the connecting bus routes which, with enhanced service provision, would promote more sustainable travel.

The development of WS3 could promote the establishment of a dedicated active travel and biodiversity net gain corridor along the strip of land identified between Church Lane and Moor Lane, achieving amenity and associated wellbeing benefits.

2.7. Site Extent

The extent of the site lends itself as a self-contained area which can be developed with minimal disruption to nearby residents. This notably includes:

- Developing site-wide infrastructure connections / assets which are appropriate for the demands of the development.
- Accommodating all construction-stage activities within the site boundary i.e. compound facilities and material storage. The ability to store construction materials on site will realise three key benefits: i) fewer vehicle movements to site, ii) an associated reduction in carbon emissions and iii) greater scheduling control over site deliveries avoiding conflicts with peak commuting times and road disruption (due to the lower number of overall journeys).
- The ability to develop a sustainable and sympathetic site-wide drainage strategy.

The proposed site allocation, allowing for eastern and southern extensions, also lends itself to free and considerate settlement planning to create a place which is safe, secure and attractive. The centralised development opportunity presented by WS3, combined with existing infrastructural connectivity, affords economies of scale which makes it more attractive to investment by creating conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

2.8. Development Potential Summary

WS3 is uniquely positioned to capitalise on Westfield's existing infrastructure connectivity and brownfield land to support residential and mixed-use development, unlocking local social and economic growth.

Sustainable site development requires extension of the WS3 eastern boundary to encompass the complete cross-fall of the land to harness a natural drainage strategy. Provision of blue green infrastructure therefore needs to be focused to the east of the site, not south as proposed by the policy text, unlocking multi-functional drainage, environmental and heritage aesthetic screening benefits.

WS3 adjoins the village development boundary and is serviced by active travel routes to reach local amenities, aiding integration. The site also has potential to capitalise on the surplus to requirement land strip between Church Lane and Moor Lane to establish a segregated active travel corridor, with biodiversity net gain capacity, which links to the heart of the village.

Being located south of the village, this proposed site allocation affords readily available connectivity to nearby Hastings and Bexhill commercial centres e.g. via the A21 and Combe Valley Way, fostering local economic growth without contributing to village traffic throughput. Vehicular access from the A28 will require a southern

extension to WS3 to accommodate 'the highway works necessary' whilst maximising the safe lines of sight already afforded by this location. This also maintains the potential to integrate the WS3 access with a suitably modified village approach, improving road safety for all users.

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