
WGPC Public Consultation for Neighbourhood Plan: Housing

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Solutions

Wisborough Green Parish Council consultation exercise on proposed development sites within the village

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the results of a consultation exercise undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation on 14th and 22nd May 2013 to give parishioners (and other interested parties) the opportunity to feed back on a number of potential development sites within the Wisborough parish boundary. These potential sites were taken from CDC information which suggests they have been put forward over recent years. It is important to note that some or all of these sites may not be available for development, regardless of the outcome of the consultation. As is normal, they would only be available with current landowners' consent: likelihood of this has not yet been investigated because of the need to have consultation results on which to base any further action.

The consultation comprised 4 sessions. At each session a carousel system operated to give sub groups a chance to review and comment on all the proposed sites in an informal focus group approach. As part of this exercise, participants were asked to record their views and assessment of six potential development sites within the village. Three of these sites were subdivided into areas, each of which were consulted upon individually.

1. Nurseries: (Kirdford road sites) (brown field site)
 - a. Tanglewood
 - b. Greenways

2. Carters Field (adjacent to Nurseries; Kirdford Road site) (green field site in strategic gap)

3. Lands around EP Clark's Yard:
 - a. Clark Glebe: Glebe Field (green field site)
 - b. Clark Greenfield: another field (green field site)
 - c. Clarks Yard (brown field site)
 - d. Clark Stockers: land at top end of Long Croft (brown field site)

NB: Stockers site withdrawn after the consultation and may only be developed by the owner for his own dwelling

4. Newpound:
 - a. Green field: field at the junction of Newpound lane with B2133 (green field site)
 - b. Lazy Days – opposite Bellmans auction house: disused warehouse facility (brown field site)
 - c. Coal Yard – off B2133 (brown field site)

5. Land south of A272 (green field site)

6. Land south of Meadowbank (green field site)

The consultation document is appended to the report, which shows exact locations of these sites for reference purposes.

The headcount of participants was approximately 200 people although only 137 attendees registered at the consultation sessions.

2. EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

This report presents the findings of a consultation exercise undertaken by Wisborough Parish Council on a number of specific sites which could be developed for residential use within the village.

200 people attended a series of focus groups to give their evaluation on each site. (137 people actually registered their names on attendance).

A number of generic themes drive opinions and evaluation of the sites, and these should assume priority for any body/agency looking to develop within the village:

- current use of the site: there is a distinct preference to use brown field sites for development on the grounds that this would improve sites and not damage the integrity of current open spaces (green field sites)
- size of permissible development: there is a preference to see several small developments (10 – 20 max) houses rather than a single large development on the basis that these would be comparatively unobtrusive and could be developed in a way that is in keeping with the village.
- impact on the surrounding area, and the need to maintain the integrity of the village character and environment
- similarly, the desire to maintain/encourage the use of green space and landscaping within any new development
- the infrastructure required to support/facilitate access to the development, from a point of view of safety and accessibility: pedestrian access and traffic calming/the need to address appropriate road access is a major concern

Of those sites evaluated, those which meet these criteria most successfully are:

The Nurseries site(s)

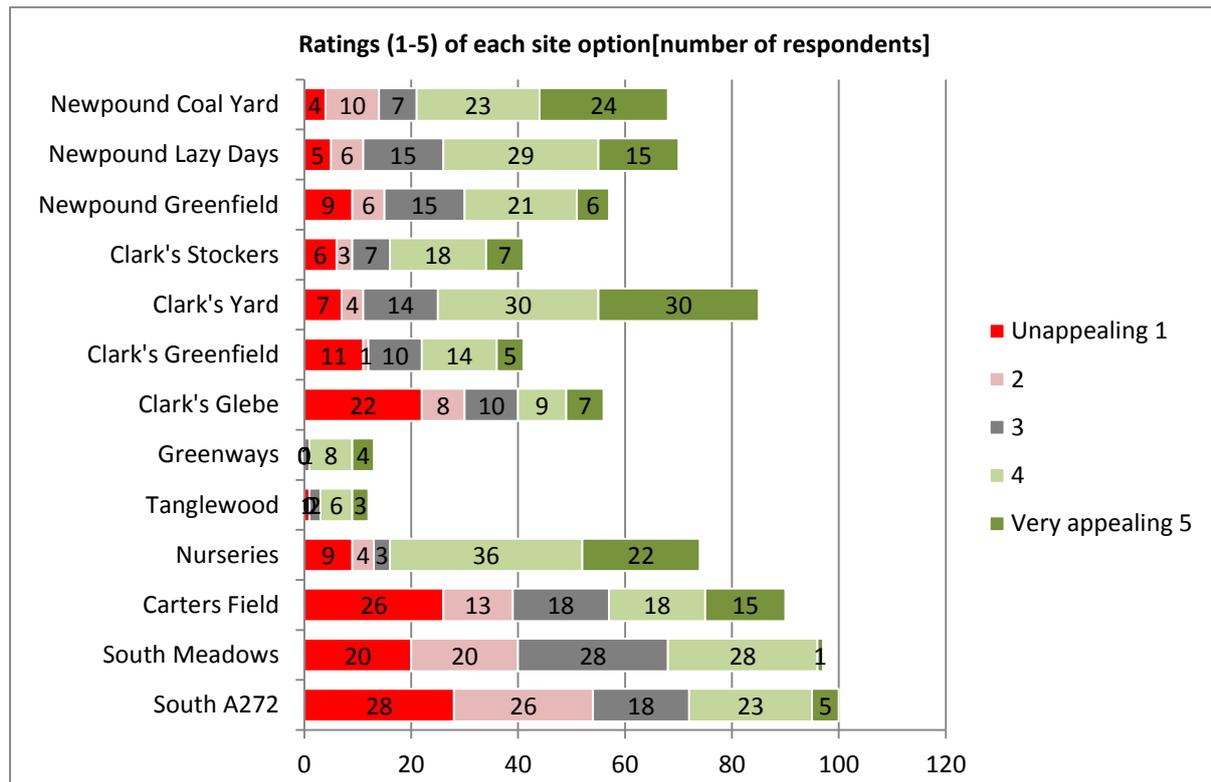
Clarks Yard

Newpound Coal Yard

3. OVERALL RATINGS OF SITE OPTIONS.

Participants were asked to score each site on a scale of 1 – 5, where 1=unappealing and 5=very appealing.

The chart below summarises the scores, and gives a clear indication of which sites are preferred/disliked. (Please note that this was essentially a qualitative process, not a statistically robust survey: as such we have deliberately avoided the use of percentages, as the sample sizes should be treated with caution if used quantitatively.)



Based on the mean scores, the sites in descending order of appeal are:

Greenways	4.2	(although only 13 people voted on this option)
Tanglewood	3.8	(although only 12 people voted on this option)
Clark's Yard	3.8	(85 people voted on this option)
Nurseries	3.8	(74 people voted on this option)
Newpound Coal Yard.	3.8	(68 people voted on this option)
Newpound Lazy Days	3.6	(70 people voted on this option)
Clark's Stockers	3.4	(41 people voted on this option)

NB: Stockers site withdrawn after the consultation and may only be developed by the owner for his own dwelling

Newpound Greenfield	3.2	(57 people voted on this option)
Clark's Greenfield	3.0	(41 people voted on this option)
Carters Field	2.8	(90 people voted on this option)
South Meadows	2.7	(97 people voted on this option)
Land South of A272	2.5	(100 people voted on this option)
Clark Glebe	2.5	(56 people voted on this option)

Not all sites were scored by everyone, but this in itself is an indication of the strength of opinion felt toward specific sites. For instance, the highest number of people voted (negatively) on the Land South of A272, sending a clear message that this option is not acceptable to a large number of people.

It is significant that the three most favoured sites are all brown field sites and, from their comments, this was clearly a driving factor in people's positive reactions.

Detailed comments for each site are shown in the following section.

However there are a number of generic themes which drive opinions and evaluation of the sites:

.. current use of the site: there is a distinct preference to use a brown field sites for development on the grounds that this would improve sites and not damage the integrity of current open spaces (green field sites)

... size of permissible development: there is a preference to see more than one development of c10 houses rather than a single large development on the grounds that these would be more unobtrusive and in keeping with the village

...impact on the surrounding area, and the need to maintain the integrity of the village character and environment

...similarly, the desire to maintain, encourage the use of green space and landscaping within any new development

...the infrastructure required to support/facilitate access to the development, from a point of view of safety and resonance with the integrity of a village setting: traffic calming and the need to address road access is a major concern.

4. THE NURSERIES

74 people rated The Nurseries development as a whole, and this was one of the most popular sites. The two elements of this were also individually evaluated by a small number of people as part of the consultation: these are shown below.

The attractive features of this option are:

- Development of a brown field site: enhancing appearance and making use of currently derelict land
- Continuation of the ribbon development/not out of place adjacent current housing

Concerns relate to:

- Access, lack of appropriate footpaths
- Safety: road access and weight of traffic
- The potential size of the development: there is a resistance to a large number of houses being built here
- The impact on views/outlook
 - It would lose rural vista and the very essence of village. Big concerns on traffic.*
- The development would eat into the strategic gap (mentioned by one person)
-

What would make The Nurseries more appealing?

IF:-

There are reassurances that any development would be less than 20 houses (ideally 10) to minimise the impact on the environment and accessibility issues

- Road and pedestrian footpath infrastructure is addressed: suggestions, though they might not all be desirable, included:-
 - o Footpath on development side of protected hedge
 - o A roundabout at The Cricketers Public House
 - o Traffic calming on Kirdford Road
 - o Good visual siting of access on the Kirdford Road

4.1. Greenways

13 people commented specifically on this site, and they were mainly in favour of this option.

Universally, the appeal of this site is that it, as a current brown field site in poor condition, would enhance the area – in effect, a win-win solution.

Only on the brown field section ideally

Derelict: does not impact on many residents

Derelict

Derelict and dilapidated site: it could improve the area

A priority, due to its condition

Another aspect in its favour is the central location: access to the village is easy, making this development a feel of being an extension of, but still part of, the village.

A continuation of existing housing, is walkable to the village

A central location, brown field, access to the village

Good access on Kirdford Road

What would make Greenways more appealing?

- Footpaths (which would benefit all residents anyway)
- Traffic calming: speed of traffic and traffic volumes are an issue along Kirdford Road (and the prospect of oil exploration would only exacerbate this as a potential problem).

4.2. Tanglewood

12 people commented on this, and most were in favour of this option.

The aspects which are favoured are:

- Currently is a brown field site
- Access into the village
- Suitability for families because of the recreation opportunities and access to the village

A continuation of existing houses and is walkable to the village

Ideal for families as it is so close to the village

On the downside, traffic and pedestrian safety is a concern:

The traffic along the Kirdford Road has increased appreciably and the speed has always increased. There is no pavement along the road and it is very dangerous for pedestrians

As with Greenways, the Tanglewood option would be made more appealing by ensuring pedestrian safety i.e.

- Footpaths (which would benefit all residents anyway)
- Traffic calming: speed of traffic and traffic volumes are an issue along Kirdford Road (and the prospect of oil exploration would only exacerbate this as a potential problem).

5. CARTERS FIELD

90 people voted on the Carters Field site: this was one of the least favoured options under consideration.

In its favour, Carters Field is a logical site to 'partner' a development at The Nurseries :

- It makes a single development site, of reasonable size
- Good access to the village
- Appropriate for a mixed development

However it is these very aspects which many people find unappealing or concerning

- The size of the development
For combined nurseries and Carters Field, too much development in the same place
3 sites together will be too big
- Traffic and access implications
Unacceptable due to traffic plus lack of footpath.
Access at S bend, road already has traffic issues
- Obtrusive impact on the village
Loss of key views
- The loss of a green field/ strategic gap area

What would make Carters Field more appealing?

- Environmental features
If community additions made (children's park or allotment, village/farm shop)
- traffic access, calming and speed restrictions
- pedestrian access: footpaths
- design of the development
May be set back as it is a large area so it does not look like all the housing in a line along the road.
Ribbon Development preferable, have houses like Garmens
- landscaping

6. NEWPOUND SITES

The attraction of the Newpound sites is that they are all brown field developments. Overall, the potential benefits of these sites are appreciated by the people who evaluated them:

- a good use of brown field site
- an opportunity to regenerate/revitalise that part of the village
Mostly brown field, it would make this area of village more sustainable, ie. Bat & Ball, worker housing
It might encourage re-opening of Bat & Ball + new shop?
- Limited impact on the core village environment and infrastructure because it is further out of the village, and although there is a distinct preference for smaller sites, a larger development here would have less impact
Less impact on the community by developing Newpound
- Very targeted toward a younger, more mobile demographic (but not appropriate for retirement housing)
- A chance to incorporate any development with business units/employment opportunities

Attitudes toward the three 'sub sites' did differ, as shown below.

6.1. Coal Yard

68 people voted on this site. Overall the Coal Yard is the most appealing of the Newpound sites, and one of the most acceptable overall.

It is, however, seen as a site suitable for a small development of houses. No real 'pluses' were mentioned apart from the benefit of developing a brown field site.

Concerns about this site relate mainly to accessibility of one kind or another:

- access
Very dangerous access
- it is out of the village (possibly restricting the type of families who could move there?)
- pedestrian access (footpaths) do not exist

6.2. Lazy Days

70 people voted on this site: it was considered by most of these to be an acceptable option with a clear focus on the demographic it would be suited to:

- Young families (with cars)
- Mixed residential and business units (to encourage local employment)
- But not retirement dwelling (not central enough)

NB: Whilst this site was consulted on alongside other sites where the main focus is on housing, any inclusion of this site in the Neighbourhood plan would be principally aimed at re-generating business use.

6.3. Green field

57 people voted on this site: of the three Newpound options, it was slightly less attractive.

The positives relate to:

- Potential appropriateness for young families/singles (with transport)
- Useful links to the A272

But more comments expressed concern that this would be an 'out of village' development, almost a separate community because of its distance and the size of site. Individuals raised concerns about traffic, drainage/sewerage implications.

7. EP CLARK SITES.

4 individual sites within the “EP Clark” bracket were evaluated. Of these, Clark’s Yard stands out as being far more popular than the others. Detailed comments are shown below in the individual assessment.

Views were quite mixed on the EP sites, mainly because they encompass both brown field and green field sites. The former are far more positively received than the latter.

Similarly, perceptions of ‘ease of access’ are often subjective: one person may say that the site is too far out of the village whilst another may consider it to be relatively close.

Generally though, there is a desire for any development here to be:

- Sympathetic to the character of the village, specifically in keeping with the Church and its environs
- Small and compact, possibly taking the opportunity to ‘infill’ with existing properties to minimise impact
- Address potential issues with surface water run-off, which is obviously already a current cause of concern for residents

7.1. Clark’s Yard

85 people voted on Clark’s Yard, which of the four sites within the EP Clark land was the most acceptable to people.

Few people had any real views to oppose the site. The aspects which make it attractive are:

- It is a good use of a (current) brown field site
- Central to the village hub
- Close to the Church (but not considered to be obtrusive)
- Good access to the A272

The demographic appropriate to this site would include young families – especially as this is very close to the school.

7.2. Clark Stockers

NB: Stockers site withdrawn after the consultation and may only be developed by the owner for his own dwelling

41 voted on this site: of these, most were generally in favour of developing here. No individual comments were recorded about the pros and cons of Stockers.

7.3. Clarks Greenfield

41 people also voted on this site, which was marginally less attractive.

It would seem that this is seen as 'a field too far':

It sets a precedent for an extension east and north and has no natural boundary – this is dangerous as it means continued damage to green field

It sets a precedent for taking the remainder of the green field site

7.4. Glebe Field

56 people voted on this site, the majority considering it to be an unappealing option. The main objections to Glebe Field are that:

- It is very close to the Church

The church must be protected

The area by the church is not acceptable, and it is a green field

Respect issues

- It is a green field site

It is an oasis of safe dog walking for older folk

It is walking land

8. LAND SOUTH OF MEADOWBANK

97 people voted on this site, most of whom were negative about the idea of developing here. Comments about the land south of Meadowbank resonate with the other site south of the A272 and are quite different to those made in relation to Newpound, EP Clark or The Nurseries.

For these sites, the concerns relate to environmental aspects a/suitability of the land and traffic.

- It is not a popular idea to develop a green field site
- The land is not fit for purpose
 - Unused, marshy land, spoil good views*
 - Land is bog with standing surface water all winter*
- The traffic implications of access to the A272 are significant
 - No space for roundabout, poor pavement*
- Pedestrian access would be difficult
- Too large (mentioned by one person)

Evaluating the improvements which would make this site more appealing, it is clear that:

- improved access would make the site viable, suggestions were

Wider pavements, possibly cycle paths.

Road Improvements/traffic calming to reduce speed. Safety issues rather than sustainability need to be addressed.

Installation of a mini roundabout

Pedestrian crossing

Street lighting

- the most appropriate demographic is perceived to be more affluent, more select, smaller development size

As long as big houses with good appearance

Small development, no deeper than Balchins Close

Keep it small narrow and discreet. Prefer a strip development not a deep development

9. LAND SOUTH OF A272

This site attracted the highest number of votes (100): more than half of these were not in favour of developing this site on the grounds of:

- environmental issues of this particular site

dangerous access to the A272

threat to wildlife

Extends the village envelope in an incongruous manner, damage to natural habitat, damage to countryside and character, access,

A flooding concern

Marshy, habitat

Sloping nature of the site

- The depth of the building line
- The narrow access to the site (safety, practicality and impact on existing houses)

As it stands, for those who see attractions of the site, they relate to:

- its proximity to the village hub, as long as access considerations are taken into account
- limited visual impact (because of the slope of the land) – although this is countered by others who perceive the visual impact to be significant.

What would make this site more attractive?

Improving access and safety of access:

- Traffic calming and facilitation from A272
- Wider access, taking into consideration both vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- Possible access through Balchins Close

Include landscaping, sympathetic to the environment

Could create public space and give access to the river/ pond - this would make it more acceptable. Tree planting to screen development.

Leave space behind existing houses, and create more public green space

APPENDIX: THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT



3_2013 May
Consultation Housing.