



**BJC PLANNING**

**RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT ROWLANDS CASTLE  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

**On Behalf of Land and Partners Ltd and  
BJC Planning**

**With Particular Reference to Land**

**at**

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### CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. The Neighbourhood Plan
3. Proposal for Self and Custom Build Housing at Mays Coppice Farm
4. Government Guidance on Self and Custom Build Housing
5. Planning Considerations
6. Conclusion

### List of Documents

1. Draft Housing Layout
2. Tetra Tech Report dated 1 December 2021
3. Wider Concept Plan
4. Extract from the Draft NP: Map 9: Local Green Space
5. BJC Planning Letter of Chairman of the NP Steering Group
6. Copy of the Flyer circulated to households in the Southern Parishes

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Statement is in response to the Draft Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan that was published in February 2023.
- 1.2 A proposal has been formulated to develop part of the site for self and custom build housing. The scheme comprises 70 dwellings divided into 42 self and custom plots and 28 affordable dwellings (the draft layout is attached (<sup>1</sup>)). It is proposed that the housing should be mainly custom build housing possible with small enclaves of self build housing. The 28 affordable units could be developed on a similar concept as set out on the Council's web site. The details will be explained in more detail in a later section in this response.
- 1.3 The area of the site proposed for development comprises an area of approximately 4 hectares. The total area of land involved is 14.8 hectares. It is proposed that the other 10.8 hectares could be set aside for off-setting, re-wilding and green infrastructure to meet the requirements of nutrient neutrality and biodiversity net gain in the form of an ecological corridor.
- 1.4 The land at Mays Coppice Farm is under option to Land and Partners Limited and the development of the site is being promoted jointly by Land and Partners and BJC Planning. Land and Partners are very experienced at the promotion of sites but, I hasten to add, they are not developers. BJC Planning is a planning practice that was established in 1985. Both practices are experienced in this field and they are promoting sites for self and custom build housing in other Districts.
- 1.5 A number of studies have been undertaken by consultants to address the planning and ecological issues. There are no issues that cannot be mitigated. Landscape issues have been addressed recently and this has confirmed that the area proposed for development can be screened from most viewpoints. The existing access on to Whichers Gate Road is capable of serving the proposed development. The ecology surveys have been undertaken.
- 1.6 The land, subject to the promotional agreement, is used to grow hay and for occasional grazing of sheep on a licence basis by a local farmer. Mays Coppice Farm is more extensive covering a further 17.2 hectares

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<sup>1</sup> Draft Layout prepared by Thrive Architects

beyond the promotional area. This area comprises farmland, the existing dwellings, existing commercial and farm buildings. This land is not included in the promotional agreement-but all of the land is in the same ownership.

- 1.7 An outline planning application for a Garden Centre was refused in 2011 (ref: 30661/021). A public inquiry was held in 2012 to examine the proposal for a garden centre, horticultural glasshouse, car park and associated landscaping. The appeal was dismissed in June 2013 (ref: 30661/023: APP/MI710/A/12/2187927).
- 1.8 There were only two reasons of consequence for the dismissal of the appeal. These were highway issues and landscape impact.
- 1.9 A complaint was lodged with the Planning Inspectorate in respect of the highway reason for refusal. The Highway Authority agreed that it would support the highway solution if the planning application was resubmitted. However, the landowners decided not to proceed a new garden centre and the project was abandoned.
- 1.10 The reason relating to highway access has been resolved. Permission was granted on 6 November 2014 for an agricultural access (ref: 30661/025). Further highway advice has been received that this access can serve the housing scheme proposed.
- 1.11 The landscape practice, Terra Firma, appeared at the Inquiry for the appellants. The Report prepared by this practice is dated March 2010. The Appeal Decision and the report by Terra Firma at that time have been examined carefully as evidence to guide the emerging housing proposals.
- 1.12 The practice Tetra Tech has examined the ecological issues <sup>(2)</sup>. If the proposed development is supported and the farmland is taken out of agricultural use, it is expected that the owners will explore the use of their remaining land for further nutrient offsetting, bio-diversity net gain, re-wilding and green infrastructure. The Tetra Tech Report would require updating to take into account the emerging guidance.

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<sup>2</sup> Tetra Tech Report dated 1 December 2021

### 2.0 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2.1 The promoters of the development are fully aware of the importance of Neighbourhood Plans to the local community. Both practices are or have been involved in the evolution of Neighbourhood Plans in other Districts. The policies and guidance in the Neighbourhood Plan are examined in this section.

2.2 The site proposed for development is in a very sustainable location as identified in the Plan. The village of Rowlands Castle is exceptionally well served by shops and facilities. Paragraph 1.2 sets out a list as follows:-

**The centre of the village around The Green provides shops, a garage, a doctors' surgery, a pharmacy, two hairdressers, a veterinary surgery, a café, three public houses, and the United Reformed Church. The Parish Hall with a nursery school, the Recreation Ground and the station are near the centre.**

2.3 The development proposals for the site include pedestrian and cycle access only via the Drift (please see the Wider Concept Plan <sup>(3)</sup>). The additional residents living in the development could assist with the Objectives of Policy 7

**to retain the vitality and viability of the centre.**

2.4 It is proposed to use the existing access on to Whichers Gate Road to provide vehicular access. Highway advice has confirmed that this access can serve the proposed development.

2.5 There are more facilities to the west of the site along Whichers Gate Road as stated in paragraph 1.2:-

**there are also a Church of England church and Primary School housing a further nursery school, another public house, hotel accommodation and a petrol station.**

2.6 The railway station is another important facility which assists the sustainability of the village. The development is within walking and cycling distance of the station.

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<sup>3</sup> Wider Concept Plan

### **Policy 1:- Gaps between Settlements**

- 2.7 The Plan recognises that the village is “dependent on nearby Havant and other towns for most shopping and services, together with secondary schools” but it is seeking to maintain the “visual separation and clear break between the settlements of Rowlands Castle and Havant” in order ...
- **To preserve the individual identity of Rowlands Castle and the integrity of the predominantly open and undeveloped land between it and Havant by preventing coalescence.**
- 2.8 *It can be observed from Map 2 -Gaps between Settlements on page13 that Mays Coppice Farm is not in the Gap.* The proposed development includes substantial new woodland planting parallel with Whichers Gate Road that will ensure that the area will maintain its woodland character and appearance.

### **Policy 2 – Landscape Character and Views**

- 2.9 The Locally Significant Views identified in the Report (August 2020) have been addressed previously. This section identifies views in the vicinity of the site.
- 2.10 The views into Mays Coppice Farm are extremely limited. A woodland copse, known as Oaklands Woodland, lies to the west of the site. It is a designated Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) due to its classification as “ancient semi-natural woodland”. This ensures that views from the west from travellers on Whichers Gate Road are limited.
- 2.11 There is a significant woodland buffer along Whichers Gate Road that already filters views of the site. This woodland can be reinforced. In fact, the ecology scheme in 2012 proposed more trees parallel to the buffer for the benefit of foraging bats. This would also limit views into the site from Prospect Lane (B4). The same applies to the views into the site from the vehicular access.
- 2.12 A Bridleway (No. 24) lies close to the western boundary of the farmland. This bridleway leads from Whichers Gate Road to the centre of Rowlands Castle. This bridleway is part of long-distance footpaths, Staunton Way and Shipwrights Way.

- 2.13 The bridleway is lined by trees and there is an indigenous woodland buffer, 20m wide, to the east of the bridleway. The woodland buffer was planted over 10 years ago within the farmland of Mays Coppice Farm.

### **Policy 3 – Local Green Spaces and Protected Green Spaces**

- 2.14 The Neighbourhood Steering Group contacted BJC Planning on the 3 February 2022 drawing our attention to the proposal in the Emerging Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Development Plan to designate a ‘Local Green Space’ on the land to the east of the Bridleway 24. (Map 9 – Local Green Space <sup>(4)</sup>)

- 2.15 I consulted the landowners and I responded by letter dated 3 March 2022 <sup>(5)</sup> addressed to the Chairman, [REDACTED], that

**You are correct that the eastern strip of green shown on your plan to the east of the Bridleway 24 is partly within the control of my clients. However, this notated area is already substantially covered with trees which were planted by my clients in about 2009/2010. We have no objections to the proposal of the Neighbourhood Plan to create a “Local Green Space” here. This is not an area of land where we have any development proposals. Indeed, we are proposing the use of most of the farmland for “off-setting of nitrates and re-wilding”.**

- 2.16 The Neighbourhood Development Plan states that:-

**This area provides the users of Bridleway 24 with a sense of wooded rurality between The Drift and Whichers Gate Road. It is widely used by pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists for recreational purposes, and also by residents of Woodlands Avenue and Oak Tree Close walking to and from the village centre. Bridleway 24 is an ancient drove road. It is bounded by a SINC and Ancient Woodland, it is designated as ‘Priority Habitat Inventory – Deciduous Woodland (England)’, and it is an (Ecological) ‘Network Opportunity Area’.**

- 2.17 This is supported and it can be seen that we are proposing an Ecology Corridor from the Oaklands Woodland in the south west corner of the site to the north east corner.

- 2.18 The “Local Green Space” will limit views into the site from the west <sup>(4)</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Map 9 – Local Green Space

<sup>5</sup> Letter dated 3 March 2022 to the Chairman of the NP Steering Group

- 2.19 There are limited views from the east. Photograph B2 looks towards the site from the Bridleway 25 (route 201/25/1 on the Hampshire Rights of Way Map). However, this Bridleway is lower than the surrounding land and the railway line intersects the view. It is possible to see part of the site from the Bridge at Comley Hill but there is no footpath across the bridge (Photograph B3). This is not a viewpoint of significance because of the danger from traffic.
- 2.20 The farmland slopes from the northwest to the southeast in the vicinity of the proposed development. The gradient is more gently inclined towards the southeast of the site. A recent visit by the Landscape Consultant, instructed by the promoters, confirmed that area proposed for development cannot be seen from Woodberry Lane or from any footpaths in the National Park.
- 2.21 All of the other views are not from public viewpoints. Even localised views are limited by the avenue of trees that line the access track that serves the farm buildings and dwellings.

### **Policy 4 - Historic Environment and Non Designated Heritage Assets**

- 2.22 There are no historic assets in the immediate vicinity of the site.

### **Policy 5 - Design and Local Character**

- 2.23 This Policy states that:-

**Development proposals will be supported where they meet the highest standards of design, make a positive contribution to the local settlement character, are informed by their setting within the landscape and contribute to maintaining a strong sense of place.**

**The development proposals should demonstrate how applicable design principles contained within the Rowlands Castle Village Design Statement....have informed the design.**

- 2.24 It is proposed that the development will take the form of self and custom build housing. It is considered preferable to develop custom build housing with small enclaves of self build homes. Custom build makes it easier to coordinate the design of the dwellings. Self builders often want personal preferences. Both forms must conform to a design code and this can be agreed with the community.



- 2.25 Control over the design of the layout and the plots can be achieved with the aid of “Plot Passports”. These cover the design, materials and the layout of the plot.
- 2.26 Energy efficiency is a fundamental issue for people seeking plots. The use of solar panels and air source and ground source heat pumps is an important consideration. The site where the development is proposed is on south to south east sloping land. This will offer the opportunity to maximise solar gain.

### **Policy 6 – Over 55s’ Housing**

- 2.27 It is recognised that:-

**The Rowlands Castle Parish Housing Needs Survey for the period 2018–2036 evidenced a high demand for over 55s’ housing. The main characteristics of this demand is 1-2 Bed properties**

- 2.28 The proposed development can meet some of the demand for such housing. The custom build plots can be designed to meet the requirements of natural light and wider doorways. The concept is ideal for people seeking to downsize. This would enable people to maintain links with the village.
- 2.29 There is the opportunity to provide 1 and 2 bed properties especially in the form of affordable housing.
- 2.30 People could access the village on foot and on cycles via The Drift. The site is **“within a reasonable walking distance to the main village facilities around the Green”** and maintain **“links to the local community enhancing village life”**.

### **Policy 7 – Rowlands Castle Village Centre – Non-Residential Development**

- 2.31 This Policy is not of direct relevance to the site. However, it is emphasised that the proposed development which offers pedestrian and cycle access to the village will assist the objective of maintaining the ‘viability and vitality of the village’ as supported by the community.

### **Policy 8 – Parking**

- 2.32 The issues of parking in the village are recognised. It may be possible to assist by providing parking on the site and we are willing to discuss this with the NDP Team.

### **Policy 9 - Flood Risk & Groundwater Management**

- 2.33 The site of the proposed development is at low risk from flooding. It will be necessary to address surface water drainage. The issue of flood risk and surface water drainage was examined in 2012 as part of the planning application submissions.
- 2.34 An area of land is identified on the layout in the south east part of the site for surface water attenuation. It was proposed to use this area to the west of the access driveway for drainage ponds had the proposed garden centre had been permitted.
- 2.35 It is also expected that the self and custom build units will collect and recycle water.

### **Policy 10 – Community and Sports Facilities**

- 2.36 There are no proposals for community or sports facilities as part of the development. However, this is also a matter that can be discussed with the community to see if there are any benefits that the development could bring.

### **Policy 11 – Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Access**

- 2.37 It is recognised that walking, cycling and horse riding are very important considerations for the residents of Rowlands Castle.
- 2.38 It is a major objective of the scheme to provide safe links to the village centre from the site via The Drift. Ideally, we would like to provide a surfaced path up to The Drift. However, it is necessary to cross land under separate control to achieve this. This issue is considered later in this statement.
- 2.39 The Policy emphasises the need for signage for footpath and cycle routes. This supported. This is a matter that can be discussed with the community.

### **3.0 PROPOSAL FOR SELF BUILD AND CUSTOM BUILD HOUSING**

- 3.1 On the 15 March 2023 a Report was sent to the Parish Councillors, the Clerk and the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Steering Group to forewarn them that a Flyer had been circulated to every household in the Southern Parishes. The Flyer has the objective of encouraging residents in this area to Register their interest with the District Council.
- 3.2 The government requires Councils to maintain a Register of people seeking plots. The need to register is not widely appreciated and we were urging people in this area to Register their interest with the Council. Only people with a local connection to East Hampshire District can register with the Council.
- 3.3 There is a considerable local demand for self and custom build housing. According to the Council's Register 45 people are seeking plots in Rowlands Castle Parish. In the main, they are seeking plots in the countryside but, as I am sure you can appreciate, there is almost no prospect of obtaining a plot in the rural area. It is not certain that the 45 people seeking plots in Rowlands Castle will want a plot on our site so we have circulated the flyer to assess the local demand (copy attached <sup>(6)</sup>).
- 3.4 We would like to provide plots for people who live in the Southern Parishes but there are many people in the wider area who would like to build their own homes. We are also collecting information from other people who would like to acquire a plot in Rowlands Castle.
- 3.5 It is not our intention to submit a planning application at the present time. We have proposed the site for development in the recent District Council Consultation on the Local Plan (Reg. 18) for self build/custom build housing. In fact, *we would really prefer to work with the Parish and the local residents to develop an exemplar scheme.* We proposed in the Note to the Parish Council, dated 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023, that we would like to make a presentation to the community.
- 3.6 Most people understand the concept of self build, but it can be very demanding. The purchaser has to manage the project which can be very daunting. Custom build offers a simpler option than self-build. It significantly reduces the risks. Custom build plots offer the option of a

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<sup>6</sup> Copy of the Flyer

serviced plot where individuals can design and build their own home as part of a larger scheme. The development is coordinated so that there is a common design theme but the details and materials can vary. The construction is undertaken by a builder.

- 3.7 We have prepared a plan showing a layout for 42 self/custom build plots together with 28 affordable dwellings. The Council recognises that affordable housing can also be developed on the self build/custom build concept. This is noted on the Council's web site. It states that:-

**Affordable housing may also be self-built. In a rented custom-build scheme, tenants could be involved in self-build or agreeing to 'self-finish' homes perhaps in return for reduced rents or other benefits.**

- 3.8 We also propose that the construction work will be undertaken by local builders. We can control the development; we can appoint the builders and we can ensure that the development is undertaken according to our requirements by stipulating this in the contracts with purchasers.

- 3.9 There is another important consideration. It is our opinion that the development can bring significant benefits to the village. The scheme that we have prepared doesn't involve direct vehicular access to the village. It is proposed to provide pedestrian and cycle access to The Drift (please see attached plan <sup>(3)</sup>). Vehicles will use the access on to Whichers Gate Road as shown on the layout. I will elaborate on these points later in this Statement.

### 4.0 **SELF AND CUSTOM BUILD HOUSING**

4.1 The following paragraphs provide details of the legal framework that guides the development of self and custom build housing. The Act does not distinguish between self-build and custom housebuilding.

4.2 Self and custom build housing is strongly supported by the government. The government commitment is enshrined in the Self Build and Custom Build Housebuilding Act 2015 (and the Housing and Planning Act 2016). It was evident that the 2015 Act was not achieving the level of provision of plots that had been expected. The then Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, requested an independent review. This was commissioned in April 2021 and was led by Richard Bacon MP. He said that:-

**Building your own home shouldn't be the preserve of a small number of people, but a mainstream, realistic and affordable option for people across the country.**

4.3 Richard Bacon's Report made several recommendations to improve the provision. The District Council has not met the government's requirements to provide sufficient plots for self build and custom build housing. The aspirations of the many people to build their own homes are being suppressed in the District.

#### National Planning Policy Framework

4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is not legally binding itself, but Councils are expected to take it into account. The fact that the Local Plan makes no reference to self and custom build housing, means that the Council will have to refer to national planning policy guidance in any response to pre application inquiries and planning applications.

#### Government Consultation on the NPPF

4.5 A Consultation has been published by the government recently seeking responses to the proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework. The proposed revisions strengthen support for self and custom build housing.

4.6 The relevant paragraph states:-

Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to: those who require affordable housing – families with children; older people including for retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes; students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers; people who rent their homes and *people wishing to commission or build their own homes* <sup>33</sup>)

4.7 This paragraph also refers to a footnote (<sup>33</sup>) that states:-

**Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housing Building Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self build and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.**

4.8 The position is very clear. Councils should establish the number of *people wishing to commission or build their own homes*. The Council is required to maintain a Register. There are 112 people seeking plots in the District of which 45 are seeking plots in Rowlands Castle (2019). It appears that the Council has not identified sufficient plots to meet the demand.

### The Register

4.9 It can be seen that each relevant authority must keep and publicise a register.

4.10 The criteria for registering is straight forward. The main requirement is that the person seeking to Register lives in the District.

### Planning Practice Guidance

4.11 Planning Practice Guidance provides more detail and elaborates on the National Planning Policy Framework. It is divided into many sections and there is a separate section on self and custom build housing. It states that:-

The guidance is also a 'material consideration' when taking decisions on planning applications. This means that if a local policy is deemed out of date, local authorities may be directed by the national guidance's requirements.

- 4.12 It should be noted that the East Hampshire Local Plan can be regarded as “out of date” in this context and therefore the Council must rely on the national guidance. The Planning Practice Guidance advises that:-

**Self-build or custom build helps to diversify the housing market and increase consumer choice. Self-build and custom housebuilders choose the design and layout of their home, and can be innovative in both its design and construction.**

The National Association of Custom Self Build (NASCBA)

- 4.13 The National Custom and Self Build Association is a not-for-profit organisation with the mission “**to make Custom and Self-Build a mainstream choice for everyone seeking a home of their own**”. Self/custom build housing offers many benefits. NASCBA has pointed out that:-

**Custom and Self build houses are built by SME housebuilders, who feed into local economy and train local people.**

- 4.14 NACSBA research revealed that many local communities are supportive of such developments and prefer this form of development to the indistinguishable estates developed by the volume housebuilders. The Council recognises that it will be very challenging to build zero-carbon homes during the local plan period. However, it is well known that the people seeking self build and custom build homes aspire to achieve the highest levels of energy efficiency (NACSBA).

- 4.15 NACSBA believe that there is a significant underestimate of the demand for plots. Many people who are keen to build their own homes are not even aware of the need to, or the importance, of registering with the Council.

- 4.16 BJC Planning is a Member of NACSBA.

- 4.17 Both Land and Partners and BJC Planning are experienced in this field and they are promoting sites for self and custom build housing in other

Districts. One case that demonstrates the planning controls is in Fareham.

- 4.18 Outline planning permission was granted on 3 January 2019 (under reference P/17/1317/OA). It was necessary to Discharge the planning conditions (ref: P/19/0061/DP/A). Condition 3 related to the details of the Design Parameters Guide). These applications can be viewed on the Fareham Borough Council web site. It can be seen that the Councils can impose conditions that ensure that the development can only proceed in accordance with the approved plans. Any changes require a new planning application.

### Emerging Local Plan: Issues and Priorities Regulation 18 – Part 1

- 4.19 The adopted Local Plan makes no reference to Self and Custom Build Housing. A specific response was made to the Consultation entitled the “Failure to make reference to self/custom build housing”. This was submitted in January 2023.
- 4.20 It is noted that the Council has no guidance in the adopted Local Plan and therefore must rely on the national guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy Guidance. This guidance is being strengthened in respect to self/custom build housing.
- 4.21 The legislation in respect of neighbourhood planning also emphasises the importance of the local community in the determination of decisions with regard to the future of its area.



### 5.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The site at Mays Coppice Farm has few planning constraints. We have received highway advice that this access can serve the proposed development. Ecological issues have been examined by a company called Tetra Tech <sup>(2)</sup>.
- 5.2 A landscape consultant has been instructed. The Consultant visited the site in December 2022 to update the previous report prepared in 2021. The consultant examined the land at Mays Coppice Farm and the adjoining site in the north west corner owned by Avens and Winnicott (please see the Wider Concept Plan <sup>(3)</sup>). The consultant confirmed that the site of the area proposed for the 70 dwellings was well screened and enhanced planting could reduce further any visual impact. The development would not be visible from most local viewpoints and that it could not be seen from any public places in the National Park.

#### Land owned by Avens and Winnicott

- 5.3 We believe that there would major planning benefits if the land at Mays Coppice Farm could provide pedestrian and cycle access to the village centre via The Drift. This would mean that occupiers of the 70 dwellings could access the village facilities without the need to use their cars. The village shops and facilities would have the benefit of more customers thereby enhancing the viability of the shops and adding to the vitality of the village as favoured by the government.
- 5.4 It is a policy objective of the Neighbourhood Plan that:
- The community is committed to retain the vitality and viability of the centre...**
- 5.5 Pedestrian access to the centre of the village is possible now using Bridleway 24. However, the promoters of the site would like to achieve a dedicated footpath and cycleway from the proposed development via The Drift to the village centre. This would involve crossing the land owned by Avens and Winnicott, as shown on the attached plan entitled "Wider Concept Plan" <sup>(3)</sup>.
- 5.6 The benefits of the access through their land are that it could provide a surfaced footpath for walkers and cyclists (and those on powered chairs for mobility). The Drift could be lit thereby providing a safe link to the

village. This would meet the principle set out in the Emerging Local Plan that recognises the benefits for residents of having shops and facilities “**within 20 minutes of the site**”. (A Response to the Consultation: Issues and Priorities Regulation 18 – Part 1 was submitted in January 2023).

- 5.7 It can be appreciated that the preferred access to The Drift from Mays Coppice Farm crosses land in a separate ownership. The promoters of the Mays Coppice Farm have opened negotiation with the owners of this land to see if agreement can be reached on this matter. As part of any agreement the promoters of Mays Coppice Farm have offered vehicular access from Avens and Winnicott land to Whichers Gate Road.
- 5.8 The highway access to Whichers Gate Road was permitted several years ago and it has been implemented to a standard that could serve both developments. This would mean that the development of their site would not entail vehicles needing to gain access to the village centre.
- 5.9 Discussions have been commenced with the consultants acting for Avens and Winnicott but we have been advised recently that the owners wish to pursue the scheme that they have prepared which would provide direct vehicular access to the village. As a consequence, we are currently proposing to by-pass the Avens and Winnicott land by using the short length of Bridleway 24 to access The Drift that runs parallel to their land (as shown on the Plan). We will continue to discuss the possibility of crossing their land to provide a link to The Drift.

### An Ecology Corridor

- 5.10 It can be seen from the Plan that the development of the 70 houses would leave a substantial area of land available for an ecology corridor. This could help to satisfy the requirements in respect of biodiversity net gain and off-setting. The promoters have instructed the company known as Tetra-Tech to provide a report on the ecology benefits. The company has advised that the land can offer significant benefits in terms of off-setting and resolving the issues of nitrates. This undeveloped land is also capable of meeting the requirements of providing biodiversity net gain by “creating new green infrastructure”. The strategic wildlife corridor which stretches from the south west corner of the site to the north east corner of the land would facilitate connectivity to woodland in the south of the site towards the edge of the National Park (as shown on the Plan entitled “Wider Concept Plan”).

### 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 All of the policies and guidance in the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been examined. It can be seen that we are supportive of these. We are keen to bring benefits to the community and the village. The legislation makes clear that the views of the local community are a major consideration in the future of their village. However, any decisions must respect the guidance in local plan and national policies.
- 6.2 The site at Mays Coppice Farm could provide self and custom build plots to meet the existing demand for plots in Rowlands Castle. The provision of plots is strongly supported by the government. There is already strong demand for plots in the Parish. The Flyer has the objective of assessing the local demand.
- 6.3 It can be appreciated that there are very few constraints to the development but it could provide many benefits to local businesses and it would provide jobs for local people. It would enhance the viability of village shops and add to the 'vitality' of the village.
- 6.4 The proposed development will not introduce vehicular traffic into the village. The existing access on to Whichers Gate Road has capacity to manage the additional traffic. There are no local residents impacted directly by the development.
- 6.5 It is *not* our intention to submit a planning application at the present time.
- 6.6 We would welcome the opportunity to make a presentation to the community. We would explain how we could work together to create a development that local residents could be proud. We can discuss the many benefits that the development can bring.
- 6.7 There is the other significant consideration. It can be appreciated that many people who are seeking to design their own homes will have the opportunity to live in an exceptionally attractive and sustainable location.

***We would welcome the opportunity to make a presentation to the local community to explain the proposals in more detail and to explain how the community can help to guide the project so that we can develop an exemplar scheme of which everyone can be proud.***