

Minutes



Westbourne

Parish Council

PO Box 143
Emsworth
PO10 9DX

07775654483

clerk@westbourne-pc.gov.uk

Minutes of Westbourne Parish Council's Planning Committee which took place on Thursday 19 June 2025 at 6.15pm at The Meeting Place, North Street, Westbourne.

Present: Cllr Lade Barker, Cllr Roy Briscoe, Cllr Nigel Ricketts and Cllr Jennie Scott and co-opted non-council member Mr Kevan Pegley.

In attendance: Clare Kennett, Clerk to the Council

Meeting chaired by Cllr Barker. No members of the public or press were present.

1. Election of the Chair of the Committee: Nominations were received for Cllr Barker, proposed by Cllr Ricketts and seconded by Cllr Briscoe with all in favour. Cllr Barker was **ELECTED** as **CHAIRMAN**.

2. Apologies for absence: Mr Frank Campbell.

3. Election of the Vice-Chairman of the Committee: Nominations were received for Cllr Ricketts, proposed by Cllr Barker and seconded by Cllr Briscoe with all in favour. Cllr Ricketts was **ELECTED** as **VICE-CHAIRMAN**.

4. Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.

5. Minutes of the meeting of 14 November 2024: Members **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true record which were signed by the Chairman.

6. Updates and issues from the minutes of 14 November 2024: There were no updates.

7. Planning applications: Members **RESOLVED** to make the following decisions.

25/00580/FUL: S73a retrospective change of use to steel fabrications. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Members **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the planning application. See comments in Appendix 1.

25/00571/FUL: S73a retrospective change of use of land to civil engineering contractors yard. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote. Members **AGREED** to **OBJECT** to the planning application. See comments in Appendix 1.

25/01275/TCA: Notification of intention to height reduce by 3m on 2 no. Yew trees and 5 no. Sycamore trees. Cedar Lodge, River Street, Westbourne. It was **AGREED** to have **NO OBJECTION**.

25/01275/TCA: Notification of intention to reduce heights down to 3m (above ground level) on 2 no. Yew trees and 5 no. Sycamore trees. Land south of Cedar Lodge, River Street, Westbourne. It was **AGREED** to have **NO OBJECTION**.

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8. Havant Borough Council local plan consultation: Members **AGREED** to resubmit the Council's objection to development of 260 homes at Long Copse Lane in Emsworth, and to object to the development of 2,000 homes at Southleigh between Emsworth and Denvilles. It was discussed that there would be an impact in Westbourne due to increased traffic travelling to Chichester as there were no plans for a relief road onto the A27. Members agreed to add their comments to the document added to Dropbox which the Clerk would submit for the deadline of 1 July. <https://www.havant.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/building-better-future-plan> See Appendix 2.

9. Planning appeals: There were no appeals.

10. Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group: It was **AGREED** to hold the next meeting on 18 September 2025 and the Clerk would inform members. Kevan Pegley said he would edit the current plan and Cllr Briscoe said he would speak to a planning consultant for advice on what needed to be reviewed in the plan.

11. Chichester District Council Enforcement Reporting: There were no updates.

12. Announcements and items for the next meeting: Cllr Ricketts gave his apologies for the next meeting.

13. Date of next meeting: The next meeting was scheduled to be held on Thursday 10 July 2025 at 6.15pm.

Meeting closed at 7.10pm

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Appendix 1

Comments for 25/00580/FUL: S73a retrospective change of use to steel fabrications. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote and
25/00571/FUL: S73a retrospective change of use of land to civil engineering contractors yard. The Old Army Camp, Cemetery Lane, Woodmancote

1. Summary of objection

The Parish Council strongly object to the proposed change of use at the Old Army Camp for the following reasons:

- It **contravenes national policy in the NPPF**, particularly regarding sustainability, noise, landscape, and heritage impact. It is well outside of the settlement boundary
 - It **conflicts with the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan**, especially policies relating to heritage, landscape character, biodiversity, and local distinctiveness.
 - It poses an unacceptable **impact on the adjacent Westbourne Conservation Area and Cemetery**, designated for its historic, visual, and spiritual significance and space for quiet contemplation.
 - It ignores **binding appeal decisions** which have upheld enforcement action against similar uses on the site.
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2. Incompatibility with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024)

The proposal fails to comply with several key parts of the NPPF:

- **Para 8–11 (Sustainable Development):** The proposal does not achieve the balance between economic, social, and environmental objectives. It creates unacceptable harm to amenity, local character, and heritage assets. It is outside any designated settlement boundary in an unsustainable location.
 - **Para 174–180 (Natural Environment):** The development would intensify industrial uses within a countryside setting, causing harm to local biodiversity and the rural landscape.
 - **Para 194–196 (Heritage):** The site lies adjacent to Westbourne Cemetery, now included in the **extended Westbourne Conservation Area**. As such, the development would adversely affect the **setting and character** of a designated heritage asset and is contrary to NPPF ¶194 which requires "great weight" to be given to heritage conservation.
 - **Para 191–193 (Noise):** The activities associated with steel fabrication and contractor yards are **inherently noisy**. The supporting noise assessments rely on mitigation that may not be fully deliverable and conflict with guidance under BS4142, particularly in relation to nearby Traveller and Showman sites.
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3. Conflict with the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan (WNP, 2021)

As a **made Neighbourhood Plan**, the WNP forms part of the statutory development plan and must be respected per NPPF paras 12 and 14.

Relevant policies breached:

- **LD1 (Local Distinctiveness):** The proposal conflicts with the plan's objective to preserve the rural and historic character of the parish.
 - **LD2 (Heritage):** The site lies adjacent to Westbourne Cemetery, now a **designated Local Green Space (LGS1)** and recently included in the **Westbourne Conservation Area**. Industrial development on its boundary is wholly inappropriate.
 - **OA1 (Sustainable Development):** The proposals fail to demonstrate sustainable integration with the local community or its infrastructure.
 - **BD2 (Natural Environment):** There is no demonstrable net biodiversity gain, and the industrial use increases pollution and disturbance in a **tranquil landscape**. Black smoky fires have been seen regularly rising from the site but CDC Environmental Protection are unable to prosecute any individual as the persons all nearby at the time say they didn't light the fire or have anything to do with them.
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4. Westbourne Conservation Area – Landscape and Setting Impact

The 2022 **Westbourne Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA)** explicitly states:

- The **Cemetery and its landscape gap** are now part of the conservation area due to their visual and historical importance.
 - The document emphasises the need to "**preserve the open farmland and countryside that form the setting of the historic settlement**".
 - Industrial uses at the Old Army Camp are **visually intrusive**, involve large vehicle movements, metal stockpiles, skips and storage, and are **fundamentally out of character** with the surrounding environment.
 - The CACA recommends **no intensification** of development in this sensitive setting.
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5. Enforcement History and Planning Appeal Precedents

The site has a **long and well-documented history** of unauthorised and inappropriate development:

- **Appeals APP/L3815/C/19/3203215, 3203219, 3203222** – dismissed in January 2023. The Planning Inspector found the use of the site as a **civil engineering yard**, with storage of skips, HGVs, plant and containers, to be

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unacceptable due to landscape harm, proximity to sensitive uses, and lack of policy justification.

- **Appeal APP/L3815/W/20/3255114 (2022)** – dismissed for a similar use on a nearby plot (Unit 2, Ten Acres). The Inspector concluded that such uses were **unsuitable outside the settlement boundary**, did not meet rural diversification criteria, and harmed the character of the area.

It is wholly inappropriate for the same applicant to **reapply for virtually identical uses** in the same location under a piecemeal strategy of applications (as seen in applications 25/00571/FUL and 25/00580/FUL).

6. Noise and Amenity Impact

While the applicant's noise assessment claims that impacts are "insignificant", the methodology assumes:

- Use of a fully enclosed building or a **2.4m acoustic barrier** that is **not yet installed**. Loud noises from the site have been heard as far away as a mile as the crow flies
- Assumes worst-case mitigation that has **not been secured by condition or design**.
- Does not account for cumulative noise impact across multiple plots (5 concurrent applications), contrary to best practice.

Nearby receptors include:

- **Residential dwellings**
- **Showmen and Traveller pitches**
- **Westbourne Cemetery**, a place of quiet reflection and mourning

These are all **highly sensitive** to industrial noise, particularly from **metalworking, grinders, forklift trucks and HGV traffic and toxic fires**.

7. Conclusion

The applications for the steel fabrication business and civil engineering contractor's yard at the Old Army Camp should be **refused** on the following grounds:

- **Conflict with the NPPF**, including policies on heritage (paras' 194–196), landscape (para 174), noise (paras' 191–193), and sustainable development (paras' 8–11).
- **Contrary to the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan**, especially LD1, LD2, OA1 and BD2.
- **Detrimental impact on the Westbourne Conservation Area**, as highlighted in the 2022 Character Appraisal.

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- **Contrary to previous appeal decisions**, which have clearly established the site as unsuitable for such industrial uses.
 - **Harm to residential amenity**, tranquillity of the Cemetery, and rural setting.
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The Parish Council respectfully urges the Planning Authority to refuse planning applications 25/00571/FUL and 25/00580/FUL in full.

Appendix 2: Havant Borough Council Draft Local Plan consultation

Havant Borough Council has invited comments on its draft Local Plan, Building a Better Future. As Havant Borough and Westbourne Parish share a boundary in the north-east of the Borough, Westbourne is particularly effected by any development. Two of the proposed housing allocations in this area are:

Allocation 1: Southleigh - in the words of the plan 'by far the largest in this plan'

Allocation 2: Long Copse Lane - right up against the Westbourne Parish boundary

Westbourne Parish Council has strong objections to both of these proposals.

Westbourne Parish has a Neighbourhood Plan which has been adopted by Chichester District Council. Any planning decisions made by the District Council has to take into account the Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council accepts that this constraint does not apply to the Borough Council but it asks that, as an immediate neighbour, that the Neighbourhood Plan's provisions are respected.

Westbourne is a modest but ancient West Sussex village that has long marked the western boundary of Sussex - hence the name. The Parish Council is intent on maintaining its rural character, and its role as a bulwark against the encroachment of urbanisation into this part of West Sussex, between the Downs and the development along the A259 corridor between Havant and Chichester. A concept that appears throughout the Neighbourhood Plan is that of the local gap: these are gaps between settlements, both within the Westbourne Parish and between these and the neighbouring settlements of Emsworth, Southbourne, and Hambrook. These gaps are essential to maintain "Westbourne's identity as a free-standing 'delightfully rural' settlement in a highly urbanised hinterland".

Westbourne retains a vibrant village centre, with shops, a doctors' surgery, a garage, two pubs, restaurants and a primary school. These services, and their related transport infrastructure, are of a scale to cope with a village with a population of some 2,000 (of a Parish total of 2,400). Street parking is the norm - very few of the village's houses were built with driveways or garages. But the village is steadily becoming more congested. The B2147 carries traffic from the A259 in Emsworth towards the north-west of Chichester. The section through the centre of Westbourne, past the thriving parish church of St John the Baptist, and on through the historic square, is narrow and winding, and has a much-ignored 20 mph limit. It already carries heavy traffic trying to avoid the ever-increasing congestion along the A259, as well as from the 250 new homes on Emsworth's Redlands Grange estate,

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completed in 2016 at the northern end of New Brighton Road. The B2147 has been identified as being unsuitable for HGVs.

1. Objections to Allocation 1: Southleigh

The Parish Council notes that this site is by far the largest in the draft Local Plan. The 2,100 dwellings proposed will lead to a population that will dwarf Westbourne's. With Chichester being a significant source of local employment and social infrastructure, there is a risk that many of the resulting vehicle journeys between Southleigh and Chichester will travel along Westbourne Road, the centre of Westbourne and Foxbury Lane (B2147). This is the most direct route for those travelling east to Chichester to avoid the chaos of the level crossing at the southern end of Southleigh Road, which is the only current access point to the A27. The A259 is already heavily congested and there is a bottleneck at the Emsworth roundabout.

We acknowledge that the draft Local Plan requires development proposals to "provide a comprehensive access and movement strategy" that includes:

"direct connections to the south of the A27 and railway line by sustainable modes. These must include

- a bus and active travel bridge over railway from Emsworth Road/A27 Warblington junction into the site
- connections to the A259 via the underpass and to Emsworth via the Washington road underpass"

If these conditions were adhered to, and there was a direct, unobstructed link from the development to the A27, the Parish Council concedes that the increase in traffic through Westbourne would be mitigated. But it is aware that developers are masters at negotiating their way out of taking responsibility for building expensive infrastructure, along with reluctance from National Highways.

Westbourne Parish Council strongly objects to the proposed development of 2,100 new homes at Southleigh between Emsworth and Denvilles without direct connection for vehicles on to the A27. Without a connection, the scale of traffic movements into Westbourne, West Sussex, would increase and have a serious impact on the village.

The other primary concern of the Parish Council is expressed very clearly by the site description in the draft Local Plan. It states: "The site lies immediately to the south of the South Downs National Park boundary and currently forms the remaining gap between Denvilles in Havant and Emsworth."

As already explained, the concept of the local gap is of fundamental concern to Westbourne Parish. It is true that the gap between the southern end of the village and Emsworth has already been filled, all but a 100 metre-wide strip along the river, by the New Brighton estate. So the Parish Council is concerned that the Southleigh development would comprehensively fill the gap between north Emsworth and the Havant conurbation.

Southleigh is a huge, greenfield site, currently in agricultural use. Its key features, listed in the draft Local Plan, include priority habitat woodland in the north of the site,

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trees and buildings with potential to support roosting bats, Bechstein's bats present in Southleigh Forest potentially foraging/commuting within the site, and the potential for hazel dormice (in hedgerows), badgers, breeding birds, and common reptiles. The Parish Council would like to question how the development of this site can be reconciled with your "implementation of the Environment Act ... to bring forward biodiversity net gain as a key outcome of new developments—leaving the environment in a measurably better state than it was before." (para 1.38)

2. Objections to Allocation 2: Long Copse Lane

The Parish Council notes with interest that the planning application for a residential scheme for 210 dwellings on land north of Long Copse Lane has just been withdrawn. The Parish Council has long objected to this application. Perhaps the developers discovered there were too many problems associated with the site.

Any development would create an unsustainable urban extension of northern Emsworth into an area of open countryside which lacks basic infrastructure and is not close to an established centre with associated amenities and facilities, including public transport. The Parish Council considers that Havant Borough Council should remove the site from its local plan and increase density in other sustainable areas of the Borough to meet its housing allocations.

The Parish Council's objections falls under the following headings:

1. Filling a local gap
2. Pressure on local services
3. Increased traffic on an unsuitable country lane
4. Increased traffic through the village
5. Flooding
6. River catchment
7. Loss of wildlife habitat
8. Potential water pollution

1. Filling a local gap

As already explained, the Neighbourhood Plan, adopted by the District Council, expressly commits to maintain the Parish's rural specialness and to prevent the encroachment of urbanisation. The Long Copse Lane site is in an area of open countryside, extending right up to the Westbourne parish boundary. The development would completely close the gap between Westbourne and north Emsworth - a gap already lessened by the Redlands Grange estate. The form and extent of the proposed development would have a significant and harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the local area and the wider landscape.

2. Pressure on local services

The proposal includes absolutely no provision for service infrastructure. Emsworth is two miles away. Which means the amenities offered by the much nearer Westbourne village - shops, pubs, restaurants, doctors' surgery, etc - will be used by the extra

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500 plus people that this development will house. This represents an increase of 25% on the current population of the village. A huge pressure on the current facilities, including parking - on top of that already absorbed from the 250 new homes in Redlands Grange.

Furthermore since Westbourne is outside Havant Borough, the Council will not receive any funding from the developers towards the improvement of these facilities, by way of the community infrastructure levy.

3. Increased traffic on an unsuitable country lane

Access to the site will be along Hollybank Lane and Long Copse Lane. New residents wanting to visit the closest facilities, Westbourne's, could walk, or they could take a bus offered by the "enhanced bus service" to Southleigh Road and walk from there. But we know what they actually will do: they will drive into Westbourne, along Long Copse Lane. As will those who need to get to Chichester - perhaps every day. There would be an increase in vehicle movements of private cars, lights good vehicles and larger vehicles on a regular basis along Long Copse Lane, which is already sensitive to traffic. The recently withdrawn application was accompanied by a traffic report which the Parish Council considers grossly underestimated the number of traffic movements that will result.

Long Copse Lane is a narrow, unlit country lane, bordered by high banks and hedges. The eastern section in West Sussex is too narrow for two-way traffic, has poor forward visibility and there are no footpaths or streetlights. It regularly floods in winter at the lower, eastern end. The flooding leads to a broken, potholed surface. It has a sharp, blind bend 150m from the junction with North Street in Westbourne. Many horse riders use it, and cyclists, and walkers. The western end of it is actually a public footpath. The junction with North Street is tight, with poor visibility. It is absolutely not suitable for regular vehicular traffic.

The Havant draft local plan calls for the widening of Long Copse Lane. Its nature and surroundings suggest that this would be extremely difficult and costly. The Parish Council would object to this by all means available. It is a country lane, and must remain a country lane.

4. Increased traffic through the village

The potential traffic problem is not confined to Long Copse Lane. Vehicles heading for the village must then travel along the already congested North Street, with cars parked on both sides, and through the chaos which is the North Street / East Street / The Square system of junctions.

Those going to Chichester may also choose to take this route, then out of the village along Foxbury Lane. Or, together with those heading north to the A3, they may turn left along North Street, past another crowded junction with Commonsides, and up Monk's Hill, also with its parked cars and houses along both sides. There is poor visibility from Monk's Hill to Emsworth Common Road.

5. Flooding

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Flooding is an issue throughout much of Westbourne village. In your own local plan draft the key features listed for this site include “Risk of surface water flooding”.

The Parish Council notes your policy 27: Drainage explicitly states “Without effective surface water management, development can itself increase the risk of flooding on a site or in adjacent areas, especially where it interacts with other potential sources of flooding, such as rivers or groundwater ... Planning permission will be granted where current and future drainage needs, including for the expected climate change scenario, have been fully considered and the drainage needs of the site are met in full over the lifetime of the development and flood risk is not increased elsewhere”.

We are concerned about adherence to this policy.

6. River catchment

A further critical factor relating to the issue of surface water, very specific to this site, is the fact that the eastern half of it lies over the catchment area for the river Ems. (Environment Agency: Water Framework Directive River Waterbody Catchments Cycle 2). The Ems is a rare chalk stream, close to sacred in Westbourne, which has suffered in recent years due to abstraction from its source aquifer. The Parish Council is therefore committed to preventing anything that might pollute the supply of ground water to the river, or reduce its flow.

This will be an issue that Havant Borough will understand. From para 4.118 of your draft plan: “the Borough is incredibly important in terms of the habitats and biodiversity it supports ... Defining features include the surrounding harbours and coastline, [and] the chalk streams and river valleys of the Ems and Westbourne ...”

Finally, two issues that, though they do not effect Westbourne directly, are cause for concern for the Parish Council.

7. Loss of wildlife habitat

The site is in an area of open countryside immediately adjacent to the northern end of the Emsworth/Westbourne wildlife corridor. As such, it would constitute a major incursion and barrier to wildlife connections between Hollybank Woods, Southleigh Forest, Chichester Harbour and the South Downs National Park. It is increasingly acknowledged that habitat should not be preserved in disconnected islands and that there should be buffer zones around them to minimise disturbance. There would be a loss of habitat for wildlife and 12 species of bats, including one of the largest colonies of rare Bechstein’s bats in the UK. The authors of the main ecological impact report that accompanied the withdrawn planning application play down the importance of the known barbastelle activity in the area and seem to be unaware of the alcathoe records. It would seem that no searches have been conducted since 2016.

8. Potential water pollution

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The WPC understands that there is insufficient capacity at Thornham waste water treatment works for any new housing within its catchment area. As of 1 January 2021, there was only capacity for around 950 new dwellings and 566 of those have already been accounted for by estimated completions since then, plus extant planning permissions in both Chichester District and Havant Borough. This effectively reduces the remaining headroom available for further applications to around 380 new houses. This includes applications currently under consideration. As you will agree, pollution into Chichester Harbour and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty must be avoided at all costs.

The Parish Council trusts that the Borough Council will take these objections into consideration as part of the consultation on the Havant Local Plan.

Re: Objection to Allocation of Site H6 (Land North of Long Copse Lane) and Site H10 (Land at Westwood Close) in the Draft Local Plan 2036

Westbourne Parish Council write to formally object to the proposed allocation of Sites H6 and H10 in the Draft Havant Borough Local Plan 2036 on the following planning, environmental and legal grounds:

1. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Non-Compliance

The proposal is contrary to the NPPF (December 2024), specifically:

- **Paragraph 8** – The development does not deliver sustainable outcomes across environmental, social, and economic objectives.
- **Paragraphs 174, 180 & 194** – The sites would damage a rare chalk stream (the River Ems), its catchment, and surrounding biodiversity, all of which must be protected and enhanced.
- **Paragraph 92** – It would harm the safety and wellbeing of the existing community due to unsuitable road infrastructure and traffic risk.

2. Inadequate Access via Long Copse Lane and Increased Traffic Through Westbourne

Site H6 relies on **Long Copse Lane**, a narrow **4m-wide country road** that is:

- Unsuitable for increased traffic volumes due to blind bends, poor visibility, and lack of pavements.
- Already under pressure from rural and agricultural users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.
- Physically constrained, offering no realistic potential for road widening or upgrade.

Increased vehicle numbers would:

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- Endanger pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and children.
 - Create congestion and “rat-running” through **Westbourne village**, using North Street and the High Street as a cut-through to reach the A259 or along the Back road to Chichester.
 - Cause unacceptable harm to air quality, road safety, and tranquillity in the Westbourne Conservation Area.
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3. Harm to the River Ems – a Rare Chalk Stream

The River Ems is a **globally rare chalk stream** and currently failing to meet **Water Framework Directive (WFD)** objectives due to over-abstraction and pollution.

- Sites H6 and H10 sit within the **Ems catchment and aquifer recharge zone**.
- Development would increase **impermeable surfaces**, reducing recharge, increasing runoff, and polluting downstream watercourses.
- These impacts directly violate the UK’s obligations under the **Water Environment (WFD) Regulations 2017**.

The **River Ems Restoration Plan (2024–2034)** clearly states that “no additional stress should be placed on the river or its aquifer if restoration targets are to be met” (Western Sussex Rivers Trust, 2024).

4. Conflict with the Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)

The proposed allocations are incompatible with the **Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan**, which forms part of the adopted development plan. Specifically:

- **Policy WB1**: Protects Westbourne’s rural setting.
- **Policy WB11**: Prevents coalescence between Westbourne and Emsworth.

Sites H6 and H10 would:

- Eliminate the final open **countryside gap** between the villages.
 - Suburbanise the landscape and contradict the locally agreed spatial strategy.
 - Undermine the legal weight of neighbourhood planning (NPPF paras 12 & 14).
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5. Environmental and Landscape Impacts

The development would result in:

- Destruction of wildlife habitats, hedgerows, and rural character.
- Loss of recharge land and visual intrusion into a sensitive **South Downs fringe landscape**.

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- Harm to the character and tranquillity of the Ems Valley corridor.
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6. Conclusion

For the above reasons, I strongly object to the inclusion of Sites H6 and H10 in the Draft Local Plan. These allocations:

- Fail national planning tests for sustainability and environmental protection.
- Breach legal obligations under the **Water Framework Directive**.
- Undermine the adopted **Westbourne Neighbourhood Plan**.
- Pose unacceptable risks to the **River Ems**, to road safety, and to the identity of Westbourne and Emsworth.

Westbourne Parish Council respectfully urges Havant Borough Council to remove Sites H6 and H10 from the Draft Local Plan 2036.