

# **Shropshire Council** **Site Allocations and Management of Development** **(SAMDEV) Plan**

**Pre-Submission Draft (Final Plan)**  
**17 March 2014 – 28 April 2014**

## **Representations Form**

**Please note you can also make representations to the SAMDev Pre-Submission Draft using our online form via:**

[www.shropshire.gov.uk/samdev](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/samdev)

This is a formal consultation on the legal compliance and soundness of the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for examination by an Independent Planning Inspector. For advice on how to respond to the consultation and fill in this representations form please see the guidance notes available on the Council's website at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/samdev](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/samdev).

### **Your details: Who is making this representation?**

Name:	Messrs. C. G. and P. Weston and Mr and Mrs D. Holland
Organisation (if applicable):	
Address:	
Email:	
Telephone:	

**If you are acting as an Agent, please use the following box to tell us who you are acting for:**

Name:	Edward Landor
Organisation (if applicable):	Edward Landor Associates
Address:	PO Box 1983, Liverpool L69 3FZ
Email:	elandorassociates@btinternet.com
Telephone:	07879 991180

## Your Representations

**Please note, you must use a separate form for each representation you wish to make.**

(Please refer to the accompanying Guidance Notes on Making Representations when completing this section)

In the box below please give the policy, paragraph or section of the Policies Map your representation relates to:

S18:Whitchurch Area and Schedule S18.1a Allocated Housing Sites

Is your representation in support or objection? (please tick as appropriate)

<b>Support</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Object</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In respect of your representation on the policy, paragraph or section of the Policies Map, do you consider the SAMDev Plan is:

<b>Legally compliant</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sound</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If your representation considers the SAMDev Plan is not sound, please say whether this is because it is not (*Please tick all that apply*):

<b>Positively prepared</b>	
<b>Justified</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Effective</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Consistent with National Policy</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**In the box below please specify your reason for supporting or objecting.**

If you are objecting, you should make clear why the document is unsound having regard to the issues of 'legal compliance' or whether the document is not positively prepared, justified, effective or not consistent with national policy (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary).

This objection relates to Policy S18: Whitchurch Area [Pre-submission Draft (Final Plan)] and its strategy for delivering the identified housing requirement on allocated housing sites listed in Schedule 18.1a and as designated on the Proposals Map.

Policy S18.1 Whitchurch Town Development Strategy sets a housing target of 1200 dwellings to be provided over the plan period 2006 – 2026. Discounting current house completions and commitments in the first 7 years of the plan (estimated at 300 dwellings, paragraph 5.179), it is proposed that 733 dwellings will be provided on allocated housing sites and a residual of 167 units met from windfalls.

The SAMDev Plan Preferred Options (March 2012) identified a housing

target of 1000 units for Whitchurch by 2026. Discounting house completions and commitments at that time of 270 dwellings, it was proposed that the total be met by providing 602 dwellings on sites proposed for housing allocation with the balance of 128 dwellings met by windfalls.

In March 2012, The SAMDev Plan: Preferred Options identified six proposed sites for housing allocation:

Land West of Tilstock Road (WHIT009)	- 307 units
Land at Mount Farm (WHIT046)	- 100 units
Land South of Wrexham Road (WHIT037)	- 60 units
Land at Alport Road (WHIT021)	- 60 units
Land south of Liverpool Road ( WHIT068)	- 60 units
Land north of Mill Park (WHIT033)	- 15 units
<b>Total</b>	<b>602 units</b>

The Final Plan does not take forward the proposed allocations at Wrexham Road (WHIT037) and Liverpool Road (WHIT068). Thereby resulting in a reduction of 120 units on allocated sites. The deletion of these sites will be partly offset by the inclusion of 'Land West of Oaklands Farm', (WHIT051) providing 60 units. The most significant change, however, is the identified capacity of the Tilstock Road site (WHIT009) which will provide 500 units. This represents an increase of circa 200 units, over and above the previous identified capacity (307) for the same site. The Final Plan proposes a total of 733 dwellings to be provided on allocated housing sites in Whitchurch over the period 2014-2026, with an additional 167 dwellings from windfalls (900 dwellings in total). On this basis, the Tilstock Road site accounts for 68% of the allocated provision and 55% of the total housing provision for Whitchurch for the remaining plan period of 2014-2026.

Taking these changes into account and having regard to the relevant assessment criteria for examining Local Plans set out in paragraph 182 of NPPF the following representations are submitted;

### **Positively Prepared**

Whitchurch is identified in the Shropshire Core Strategy as a Principal Centre and a Market Town in Policy CS3.

In our representations to the SAMDev Plan Preferred Options we argued that the housing requirement figure for Whitchurch of 1000 dwellings was set on the conservative side. Completion rates in Whitchurch from 2006 - 2014 were constrained by the absence of any deliverable or viable allocated housing sites. This period also takes in the downturn in the economy. The National Planning Policy Framework advocates that the supply of deliverable and specific sites to meet housing requirements should include a buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the first 5 years of the plan. The buffer should increase to 20% in the latter plan period for the same reason.

We consider that the revised housing target set at an additional 1200 dwellings, to be provided over the plan period, is realistic and consistent with plan strategy to enhance the role and function of Whitchurch as a key centre

in North Shropshire.

### **Justified**

The number and size of sites proposed for housing allocation in the SAMDev Plan Preferred Options was balanced in terms of spatial distribution. It offered choice and allowed for differentiation.

The Final Plan proposes an overconcentration of housing provision in the remaining plan period from 2014 – 2026 to be met on one site at Tilstock Road (WHIT009). The change in planning strategy to focus housing development on one large allocated site has not been explored at any previous stage of the plan process nor is it justified in the Final Plan.

Furthermore, this revised approach raises issues of compliance and with other emerging plan policies. Policy MD2 – Sustainable Design identifies that the overarching aim of the Plan, consistent with Core Strategy CS6, is that new development will be designed to a high quality using **sustainable** design principles. For a development proposal to be acceptable Policy MD2 identifies 7 criteria to be met. Criterion 4 identifies that new developments must incorporate sustainable drainage techniques as an integral part of the design.

A Flood Risk Assessment submitted with an outline application (reference OUT/05077/OUT) for the development of 500 dwellings at Tilstock Road site identifies that *“a geo-environmental assessment has identified that the ground conditions do not favour a ground percolation based drainage solution”* ( Lees Roxburgh Limited, Flood Risk Assessment Land off Tilstock Road,, Whitchurch, December 2013) . As a consequence the proposal is that all surface water run-off will be disposed of through the public sewerage system. There are no proposals or possibilities of including sustainable drainage solutions at this site.

It follows, therefore, that the Tilstock Road site does not meet the criterion of a **sustainable development** in accordance with plan policy. The proposal to increase the capacity of the site for additional housing development (over and above that initially proposed in the SAMDev Plan) results in a considerable level of departure from the overarching principle of ensuring that all development is sustainable.

As the Tilstock site makes such a significant contribution to housing provision in Whitchurch over the plan period the strategic policy objectives of Plan are seriously undermined. For this reason, alternative housing sites which meet the relevant criteria of a **sustainable development** should be investigated and considered.

### **Effective**

As the housing requirement for Whitchurch is concentrated mainly on one site this will impact on phasing, delivery and housing supply.

The site will most likely be delivered in 5 or 6 phases. This will have a

detrimental impact on housing delivery in the early part of the plan following a long period when Shropshire Council has not been able to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply and house completion rates in Whitchurch have been low.

### **Consistent with National Policy**

For the reasons stated above, the housing allocation strategy does not accord with the principle of sustainable development which is identified in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework as "the golden thread" running through plan-making and decision-taking.

As now proposed in the published Final Plan, the housing allocation strategy for Whitchurch must be regarded as unsound when assessed against national planning policy.

**Please use the box below to explain the changes you think should be made to the SAMDev Plan in order to make it legally compliant or sound?** You should explain your suggested revisions to the policy, paragraph or section of the Policies Map, and why this change would make the plan legally compliant or sound. Please be as precise as possible (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

To meet housing targets and to re-introduce a spatially balanced distribution of suitable and available housing site in Whitchurch over the plan period, we would propose that Policy S18 and Schedule S18.1a is amended to include the allocation of 2.63 hectares of land at Mount Farm with an estimated capacity of 75 dwellings. The site is identified on the attached Location Plan.

#### Location

The proposed site is situated south of and shares a boundary with the allocated site at Mount Farm (WHIT046).

#### Policy Context

Policy S18 identifies that the exceptional release of housing sites ahead of

2026 will, subject to the requirements of Policy MD3, be focussed on suitable land adjoining the development boundary including land within the A41by-pass to the west of town. The proposed site meets the relevant policy criterion in the emerging Final Plan, and qualifies for consideration.

#### Logical Extension and Access

The site provides a logical extension to the existing allocated housing site at Mount Farm, (4.92 hectares). This allocated site is the subject of a full planning application for 100 dwellings, including open space provision and a sustainable drainage solution (reference 14/01264/FUL) submitted by David Wilson Homes on 24 March 2014. This application includes provision for vehicular and pedestrian access to the subject site via Haroldgate. The road layout of the submitted scheme has been specifically designed with future development in mind, with vehicular access points capable of extension into the adjacent land.

#### Housing Delivery

David Wilson Homes has an established track record in delivering quality housing developments. David Wilson Homes have agreed a contract with the owners to acquire Mount Farm and have submitted the planning application mentioned above which will deliver a contribution of 100 dwellings towards Whitchurch's' housing target. David Wilson Homes and the owners are already close to reaching an agreement on an option for the adjacent land for a 'Phase 2' future housing development.

#### Sustainable Development

The site is in a sustainable location with good access to local facilities and bus services on Tarporley Road and Chester Road. It is within reasonable walking distance of the town centre and rail station and accessible by foot to the recently completed Sainsbury's food store at London Road.

#### Flood Risk

The site is not in a flood risk area. A sustainable drainage solution proposed to serve the allocated site, which forms part of the planning application proposals for Mount Farm, is capable of extension to serve the additional proposed development.

#### Nature Conservation

The Phase 1 Habitat Survey commissioned in respect of the allocated site indicated no nature conservation constraints to development. Indeed, the application proposed by David Wilson Homes on the allocated site includes various positive measures to enhance bio-diversity. These features would be capable of extension and replication to create connectivity between the allocated site and option land.

### Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

The proposed site is farmed by the Weston family, and forms part of a larger agricultural unit and dairy farm comprising 21 hectares at Mount Farm and 50 hectares at Lower House Farm. The centre of operations is at Lower House Farm.

DEFRA records show that the site is classified as Grade 3A. The loss of the site for housing development would not impact on the viability of the farm unit.

### Available

The proposed site is available, and can be developed in the plan period as a second phase to Mount Farm.

### Conclusion

The site is suitable for development as it adjoins the settlement boundary and would be a candidate for development in the longer terms in accordance with emerging policy.

There are no constraints to development. It is in a sustainable location and can provide a logical second phase of development to the allocated site which David Wilson Homes are committed to developing and delivering in the formative period of the plan.

Please be sure that you have provided all the information necessary to support your representations and any changes you are proposing. After this stage you will not be able to make any further representations about the SAMDev Plan to Shropshire Council. Any further submissions will only be

possible at the invitation of the Inspector conducting the examination, who may seek additional information about the issues he/she has identified.

**Do you consider it necessary to attend and give evidence at the examination?**

Yes, I wish to give evidence about my representation at the examination.

**Yes**

No, I wish to pursue my representations through this written representation.

If you wish to attend the examination, please explain why you think this is necessary in the box below:

The issues raised by this objection go to the heart of strategy with regard to housing delivery in Whitchurch and impacts on national and local planning policy which regards sustainable development as the underlining core theme.

These issues should be fully tested at a Public Examination.

**Do you wish to be notified of any of the following? Please tick all that apply. We will contact you using the details you have given above.**

When the SAMDev Plan has been submitted for examination	Yes
When the Inspector's Report is published	Yes
When the SAMDev Plan is adopted	Yes

**Please return this form by 5pm on Monday 28 April 2014**

**You can e-mail it to:**

[Planning.policy@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.policy@shropshire.gov.uk)

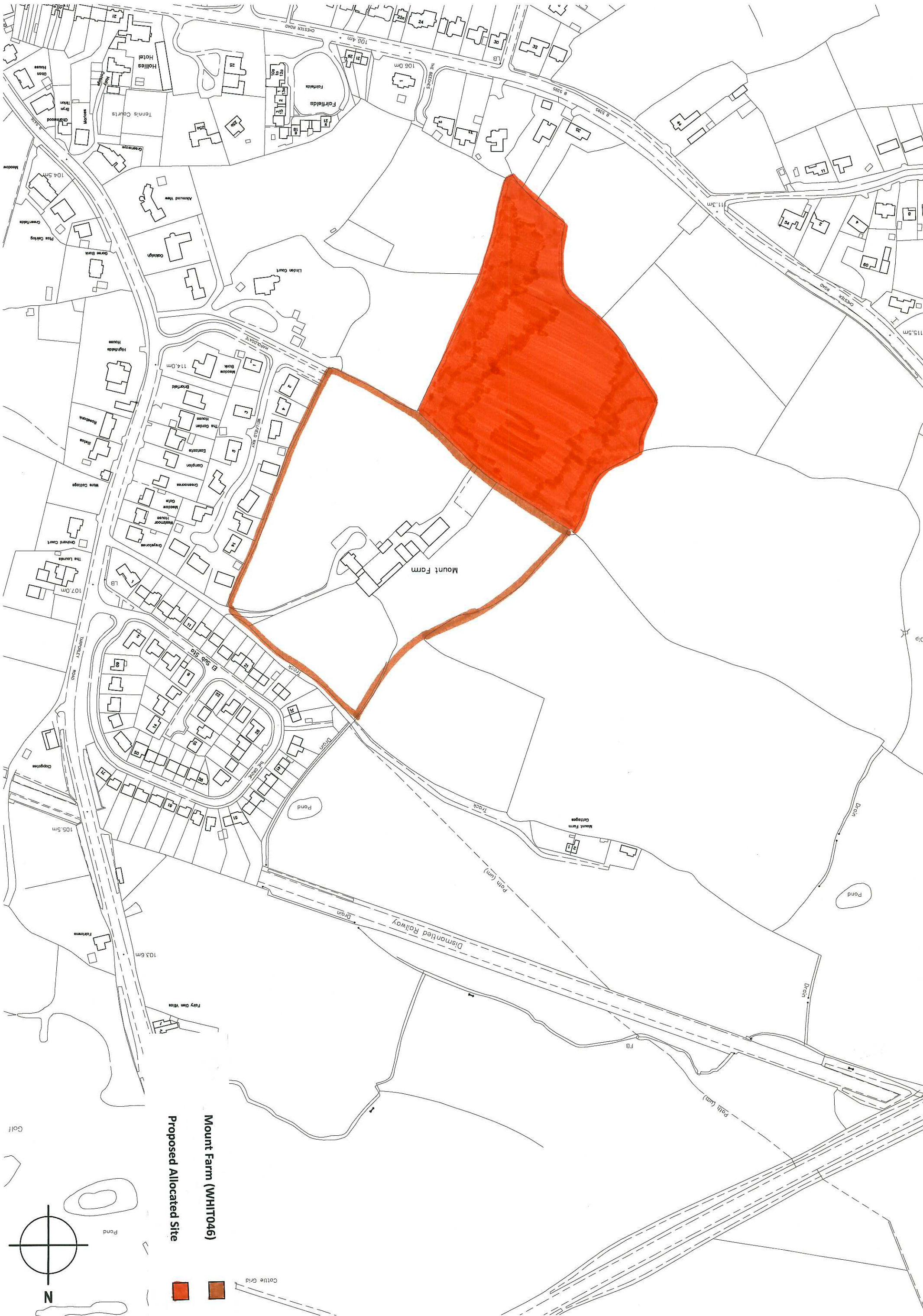
**Or return it to:** Planning Policy Team, Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

**Please note, we will acknowledge receipt of representations made by e-mail.**

Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information Act 2000

Representations cannot be treated in confidence. Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 requires copies of all representations to be made publically available. The Council will place all the representations and the names of those who made them on its





**Mount Farm (WHIT046)**  
**Proposed Allocated Site**

