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12th April 2021

Claire Shearing,
Case Officer, (Planning),
Sevenoaks District Council Offices,
Argyle Road,
Sevenoaks,
TN13 1HG

Dear Ms Shearing,

Ref. 19/050000/HYB

Amended consultation of DSTL Fort Halstead Crow Drive Sevenoaks TN14 7BU

We feel that the amended application for the development of the Fort Halstead site should not be considered in isolation.

The potential number of proposed dwellings has increased to 635; together with the housing estate proposed for Broke Hill golf course at Halstead and the recent development of the former cold store site at Dunton Green, this threatens to cement these villages, together with Knockholt, into a significant urban sprawl lacking any overall plan. Consequently, the area seems unlikely to acquire the appropriate level of co-ordinated social infrastructure.

Water supply is already a major concern for the current residents at Fort Halstead. New residents will also need access to medical facilities as there is no GP surgery in Halstead, Knockholt or Badgers Mount. The amended plan refers to land safe-guarded for a primary school. If this commitment is not delivered, local village schools will not be able to cope with greater numbers of pupils.

The neighbourhoods of Knockholt and Halstead have a network of narrow roads and lanes which are often winding and ill-maintained. They are inappropriate for the current demand. The number of public bus services in Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount is reducing; delivery vehicles multiply; privately owned vehicles now require wider roads than in the past; and increasingly, road width is being sacrificed to on-road parking, often creating danger. The planned population will create more pressure on already busy roads: it is a recipe for disaster.

The introduction of an Historic Interpretation Centre as part of the planned development is most welcome. It is to be hoped that the visible earthwork of the ancient fort will be retained for future archaeological study.

The Green Belt is designed to retain green areas close to London for the use and enjoyment of Londoners, not simply for local residents. During the pandemic, this area of Kent has seen a rise in the number of walkers and cyclists enjoying the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The proposed increased scale of development at Fort Halstead will have a significant and detrimental impact on the conservation, natural beauty and tranquillity of this area. Wildlife, ancient woodland and biodiversity have flourished. 635 dwellings with associated roads, light pollution and people will destroy this for future generations.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Boyden
Christine Boyden

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