

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 April 2021 16:34
To: Planning Comments
Cc: Laura Trott MP
Subject: 19/05000/HYB, Amended Application—proposed development of 635 houses at Fort Halstead.

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Ms. Claire Shearing, Case Officer
Planning Policy
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Kent TN13 1HG

Sent by email to: planning.comments@sevenoaks.gov.uk and laura.trott.mp@parliament.uk
Ref: 19/05000/HYB, Amended Application—proposed development of 635 houses at Fort Halstead.

Dear Ms Shearing

I am writing to object to the recent proposal to increase the number of houses for the above development from 450 to 635 with a corresponding reduction in the land available for commercial development. I objected to the previous proposal and all of my earlier objections still stand, but I think this change has the major disadvantage of substantially reducing the degree to which it is a commercially led development. There are other points that I wish to emphasise.

One of the concerns expressed previously was the increase in the traffic journeys through the local villages and the unsuitability of the local road systems to cope with this. This change will lead to significantly more traffic journeys not only from the additional housing but also because as there is less employment on the site then more people will be seeking employment elsewhere and so substantially increasing journeys. The poor state of the road on Polhill will likely not cope with this and Star Hill is equally unsuitable.

There are commercial development sites available locally that are not being taken up so what makes us think that even this reduced proposal will ever be utilised resulting in the danger of yet more space being allocated to housing in the future thus further exacerbating the traffic volumes.

When the initial proposal to build about 1,000 houses on Fort Halstead first came up in 2010 it was addressed by SDC under its then Core Strategy. SDC did not support it. Neither did the Kent Downs AONB Unit. Nor did the planning inspector at the inevitable public inquiry—he said the site: “Was not in a sustainable location as it's inhabitants would have to travel a considerable distance to access transport, shopping, and other facilities and that the development was not needed to meet the district's future development requirements.” SDC agreed and concluded: “In practice, this means that large-scale housing development at the site is unlikely to be granted planning permission.” SDC should have stuck to that decision. Instead, it fell for this nonsensical ‘Major Employment Site in the Green Belt’ notion. And 11 years later, look where that’s got us.

Have the courage to back both your and the planning inspector's original decision. This application is not sustainable, is unnecessary, will wreak havoc on local villages, and will irredeemably concrete over what is, and what should remain, Green Belt land.

I have copied this email to our MP Laura Trott also seeking her support to act against this development.

Yours sincerely

Maureen Robson

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