

From: Planning Policy
Sent: 27 July 2020 13:55
To: Planning Comments
Subject: FW: Fort Halstead Planning application 19/05000/HYB

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From: Mary Shephard [REDACTED]
Sent: 27 July 2020 13:44
To: Planning Policy <Planning.Policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk>; Alison Salter <Alison.Salter@sevenoaks.gov.uk>; DC North <dc.north@sevenoaks.gov.uk>; Cllr Fleming, Peter <cllr.fleming@sevenoaks.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
Subject: Fort Halstead Planning application 19/05000/HYB

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to object strongly to the revised plan for 635 houses at Fort Halstead. This is an increase of 235 on the previous submission and is totally unsustainable and an inappropriate development in such a rural area, which is green belt, an area AONB and on the protected North Downs.

An influx of a possible 2,500 inhabitants crammed into such a small acreage would swamp the local area, where there is no adequate infrastructure, public transport, schools, doctors, etc. This number of inhabitants is equivalent to three of the local villages. The average density locally is 15 to 18 dwellings per hectare, whereas this proposal's density is 25 - 50, the equivalent of a huge housing estate in the middle of two rural villages.

The impact on the environment and the existing flora and fauna would be irreparable. Has a thorough environmental study been undertaken and the protected species on the site been considered? Has provision been made for the relocation of such species, such as deer, badgers, bats, etc?

Then there is the enormous problem of the huge increase in traffic of perhaps an additional 1500 + cars. Again, has a proper study been made as to the impact on the existing roads, some of which are very narrow and unsuitable for large numbers of vehicles, including heavy goods lorries which would be required to service the estate? The idea that the development would result in only an additional 26 vehicles per hour is ridiculous. Star Hill is especially vulnerable with its narrow bends and steep incline. This proposal makes no mention of closing off the Star Hill entrance to traffic, which must be a pre-requisite. It's a dangerous enough hill as it is, especially with the volume of cyclists who use the route.

The traffic situation would not only affect the neighbouring villages of Knockholt and Halstead, but would also impact on the roads leading to Sevenoaks. Dunton Green and Riverhead would be in the firing line and any increase along the narrow Chevening Road would detrimentally affect Chevening and Chipstead villages and would be dangerous and lead to congestion at the traffic lights onto the A25. This junction already suffers from jams morning and evening and especially when there is an incident on the motorway. Villages along the A25 would also see vastly increased volumes of traffic. Has the impact on such areas been considered properly, not just that of the immediate vicinity? The vital importance of the environment, open spaces, green belt and parks has been highlighted with the advent of the coronavirus.

We therefore ask that you reject this proposal on the following grounds:

* Density of dwellings, swamping local villages

- * Protection of the Green Belt, and AONB, and the picturesque North Downs
- * Environmental impact on the vicinity and the local flora and fauna, including protected species
- * Volume of traffic on unsuitable roads causing congestion and pollution
- * Inappropriate development of the surrounding area
- * Safety issues for residents, cyclists and walkers
- * Fact that previous applications have been rejected on the grounds it was a non-sustainable location for such a development

Yours faithfully,

Mary Shephard
Combe Bank
Sundridge