

**LEYLAND, KNOCKHOLT ROAD, HALSTEAD, SEVENOAKS, KENT, TN14 7ES**

Claire Shearing  
Case Officer  
Sevenoaks District Council  
Planning Department  
Council Offices  
Argyle Road  
Sevenoaks  
Kent TN13 1HG

Your ref: 19/05000/HYB

14<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Ms Shearing

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990:-**  
**FORT HALSTEAD, CROW DRIVE, HALSTEAD, KENT TN14 7BU**  
**PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE NUMBER: 19/05000/HYB**  
**HYBRID APPLICATION – AMENDED CONSULTATION**

Thank you for your letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, giving notification that planning application 19/05000/HYB, relating to Fort Halstead, has been amended again. I have looked at the amendments, and am writing to stress that the objections and concerns comprehensively expressed in my previous letters of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020 still stand. The amendments have not in any way changed my views, and I remain strongly opposed to this application. I would therefore be grateful if you would take this letter and my previous letters of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020 into consideration when determining the amended application.

The current proposals for 635 dwellings, plus commercial, business and community facilities, constitute over-development of this site, putting too much pressure on already strained local infrastructure and amenities, harming the sensitive natural environment of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and damaging the site's irreplaceable Ancient Woodland.

It is essential that any re-development of this site is done sensitively and on a scale that can be sustained without harming neighbouring communities and the surrounding countryside. The number of proposed dwellings is 41% more than the original 2015 proposal for 450 new homes, with an average density ranging from 25 to 55 dwellings per hectare (DPH), considerably above the local housing density of 15 to 18 DPH. The creation of such a high-density, large-scale new settlement would dwarf the neighbouring villages of Halstead and Knockholt, destroying the rural character of the Green Belt in this vulnerable part of Kent. It would have a detrimental impact on the surrounding Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and overwhelm local infrastructure and transport networks.

### Design:

The amended application has not addressed concerns and criticism that the proposed design of the new development is too “urban” and inappropriate for its rural and sensitive setting within the Green Belt and Kent Downs AONB. The proposed development continues to be described as a “village”, with key areas referred to as the “Village Centre”, the “Village Mews” and the “Village Green”. However, it is clear from the scale of the proposals, the density, heights and distinctly urban style of the buildings, that this is a substantial new **town**, which looks more akin to South London than a village in the Kent Downs AONB.

### Contamination risk to neighbouring communities:

Finally, I must strongly reiterate the concerns and fears expressed in my previous letters about the **risks posed to existing local residents, the general public, and future residents by contamination, caused by the storage and use of ammunition and radioactive materials, and by residues from experimental testing at the Fort Halstead site for the last hundred years.** It is essential that the contamination issue is fully and properly addressed and that *all* areas of the proposed development site are fully investigated before any demolition and building works are permitted to commence. We need to be reassured and confident that our existing neighbouring communities will be robustly protected against any contamination risks to their health during the demolition and construction phases, and that future residents will not be at risk from residual contaminated materials remaining on site. I do not feel reassured by the amended consultation and remain greatly alarmed. I cannot help feeling afraid that the nature of the activities that have taken place at Fort Halstead for over a hundred years, and the severity and extent of the resulting contamination over the whole site, make it unsuitable for such a development. The financial cost to deal with the contamination issue will be immense, but if not carried out fully and effectively, the cost to human health could be much greater.

I would be grateful if these comments and my earlier letters of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019 and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2020 could be taken into consideration when determining the amended application.

Yours sincerely

A S Hayward

MRS A HAYWARD