

From: [RTW Town Centre Plan \(TWBC\)](#)
To: [Local Plan \(TWBC\)](#)
Subject: FW: Expansion of Paddock Wood and land at east Capel is proposed by policy STR/SS1
Date: 27 February 2024 08:56:38

From: Juliet Andrew [REDACTED] >
Sent: Monday, February 26, 2024 10:01 PM
To: RTW Town Centre Plan (TWBC) <RTWTownCentrePlan@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk>
Subject: Expansion of Paddock Wood and land at east Capel is proposed by policy STR/SS1

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In response to the significant expansion of Paddock Wood and land at east Capel is proposed by policy STR/SS1

As a resident of Paddock Wood I am writing to express my concerns regarding the propped development and aspects of the Local Plan generally.

Not having a legal background, I feel overwhelmed by the process and the lack of support for the lay man to respond and participate in the planning process – it is overly complicated which is why I have resorted to email rather than comment on the portal. I believe this to have been a deliberate strategy of TWBC. There has been very little in the way of information and local voting to determine if the local plan is in the local resident's interest. I have attended a few of the preliminary meetings, during which key facts have been skirted around. For example we have been told that there is a need for additional housing and when I asked specifically for numbers I was not given them but later having research showed that our local waiting lists do not equate to the volumes of housing being planned and the current level of unoccupied new developments are telling a different story. The number of people on the waiting list for social housing in Tunbridge Wells was 842 as of 26/05/23. Surely this has already been addressed in the first wave of development?

In addition, we have discovered that the social housing is being offered to people outside of the area such as Surrey – this should not be the case if the local waiting list has not been satisfied. It is also a fact that new private homes are being marketed by developers overseas. Why is this possible? It does not make sense that new developments are being planned on green spaces and farming land for developers to make a profit. Specifically in relation to the East Parcel of Paddock Wood, this development is primarily on best and most versatile farmland. How is this justified? In addition to development on agricultural land, the proposed East Parcel of Paddock Wood, a very high proportion of this land is apple orchards, with trees. Removal of these trees contradicts the government's initiatives to plant more trees.

There are still many brownfield sites that have not been developed but it seems that the distributed nature of these doesn't allow developers to gain as much profit! We firmly believe that these developments have little to do with providing local housing but more to do with

people profiteering on the back of rhetoric about so called housing requirements. Much of the land around the outskirts of Paddock has not previously been developed due to flooding risk but is now deemed as suitable. This development will in turn put existing properties at risk as the run off areas and flood zones are no longer viable. The flood concerns have been debated at length as a key reason not to build the East Parcel of Paddock Wood but despite there being no detailed answers the plans seem set to go ahead.

The local roads are not able to cope with the local traffic. We already have heavy road use and the roads are constantly in need of resurfacing. Just as one example Pearsons Green Road was resurfaced twice in 2023 and Mascalls Road is in continuing need of repair. The railway bridges on Queen Street are hazardous, with high volumes of vehicle accidents and including at least two separate fatal accidents.

There also is insufficient parking allocated to the new housing and Paddock Wood centre. There is an expectation that there will be a thriving community in the town, however those people living on the outskirts of Paddock Wood will be unable to walk into town as the roads are too hazardous, this is already the case but with the increased housing this will be exacerbated. Driving into town will be problematic as the car parks are at full capacity already and this also is a key issue for those wishing to use rail services to commute to work.

The lack of infrastructure is already an issue. We are unable to get appointments with our GP at Woodlands Health Centre. There is no longer a police station in Paddock Wood as this was sold for development and we have experienced a huge rise in crime since the first wave of new housing.

The developers in Paddock Wood have already abused planning rights and taken down preserved trees on the Church Farm development. They have not re-planted and appear to be totally unregulated. Builders are parked on the double yellow lines along commercial road and disabled spaces. There are no upsides for local residents only more traffic, pollution and inconvenience which will continue for many years if the local plan is allowed.

What we would prefer to see is a justified housing development plan with current data to support the planned volume of development, taking into account the existing housing that is unoccupied in the borough. Any shortfall should then be addressed by reviewing the brownfield sites (with full disclosure as to why these may be deemed unsuitable) and a distributed plan of housing across the borough rather than overloading one area that has insufficient infrastructure and is prone to flooding.

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