

LocalPlan@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk

24<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Sir

I am writing with reference to the Borough Council's plans for the development of housing in Paddock Wood. I am guessing that you will be weary of trawling through all the seemingly endless reams of legal points and factual evidence. So, I will attempt to make this slightly different.

My focus and driving force is not some government target, whatever the research and data that lies behind it. Nor is it the political goal of pleasing the majority or avoiding legal challenges so that I retain power and status. Those are the forces that appears to be driving this plan to build as many houses as possible in one place, Paddock Wood.

My focus is on creating the best possible environment and way of life for our children, the future generations. It is on upholding the values that my England used to be admired for from the days of the Magna Carta – justice and fairness.

I will not attempt to bring details into this. I fear that part of the Council's strategy to overcome opposition to this plan is to overwhelm us with pages and pages of, often contradictory information. My own background in the military and then in the field of leadership development, I studied, practised and teach strategic planning and the importance of systems thinking – having a clear aim, taking all factors and their impact on each other and the aim into consideration. The Borough Council's plan lacks any sense of that quality of thinking. Just find a convenient place to build houses to hit the government's target.

My concerns. First, the loss of the orchards, the hop farms and agricultural land leading to a further erosion of our ability to fulfil the most basic and fundamental human activity – providing food for the people. In such an unstable world, politically and environmentally, we now rely on imports for the vast majority of our supplies. That is negligent and dangerous.

Second, when we first moved to the area, some 27 years ago, we chose not to buy available (and lovely) houses on the flood plain. I am staggered to see the building of huge blocks of flats beside the pebble beach in Folkestone. I am staggered to see the ignoring of such an obvious threat here in Paddock Wood. I wonder, in 10 years time, how many of the 'planners' and 'developers' will be held accountable for yet another example of neglect.

My next concern is the sense of fairness or lack of it, in the Borough Council's 'strategy' to push the vast majority of their housing targets onto one existing location. Rather than create

[REDACTED]

a new town and provide the infrastructure to support it or spread the load and not overtax any one village, town or facility the Council is destroying an existing community to protect their voters in the rest of the Borough. I know that, in the original plan, there was the promise of new facilities to support the housing. Well, there is no evidence of any new schools, changes to the roads, new surgeries and pharmacies. I don't know if that is case for a legal challenge or whether anyone is held accountable for these planning failings. I am hoping that you will know the answer to that and feel, in your heart, that this plan is not right, is not fair and worse, will take us away from that future we wish for our children.

In the indigenous tribes, people who understood the connection we have to the world around us, they had a decision making practice called the Seventh Generation rule. They would consider the impact of their decisions on the next seven generations. I am not asking for that – although, how refreshing would it be to see our political leaders adopting such a practice. I am asking for a holistic strategic plan for the Borough that takes into account all the factors - environmental, economic, social, demographic, technical - and is tested against those traditional values of justice and fairness.

I hope that you look beyond the data and the legal jargon to take action to stop this injustice and direct the Borough Council to adopt the planning process that I have touched on here/  
Thank you for your time and patience.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Peter Danby