

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF

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Sent: 07 February 2022 22:32

To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to AL/107/21/PL

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We are writing to object to the above planning application on the following grounds.

The previous outline planning application for this site (application reference AL/106/12) was refused on the following grounds:

1. Poor accessibility. The previous refusal noted that there would be a high dependence on private cars due to the lack of cycle links, regular bus services and distance from the railway. This represents unsustainable development and is therefore contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). None of these factors of poor accessibility have changed since the previous planning application was reviewed, and in fact the latest application is for significantly more homes than the previous application, suggesting that the reliance on private cars for transport will be even worse than that which was considered grounds for refusal previously.
2. Unacceptable increase in vehicle movements on Woodgate Road and the already long queues on the A29. The situation on the A29 has only got worse in recent years since the previous application was refused, and will continue to deteriorate due to the number of other developments being accessed from the A29 (Hook Lane, Fontwell, Eastergate – large residential developments in the area) as well as the currently undecided applications for land adjacent to Woodgate nurseries (directly opposite the entrance to Woodgate Road) and Lee's Yard. Also, and not to be forgotten is the recently opened business park to the south of Shripney off the A29 which is attracting a considerable amount of visitors.
The air quality local to the Woodgate level crossing is poor due to the amount of queueing traffic at frequent intervals throughout the day. The proposals to improve the junction of Woodgate Road and the A29 do not ultimately solve the problem – that the level crossing means that the A29 is not suitable for an ever increasing number of vehicles. At the busiest times of day (often where multiple train crossings coincide with school drop offs/pick ups) it can take over 15 mins to get out of Woodgate Road and beyond the crossing. Even when the train gates are up, the amount of traffic rushing to get across before the next train means that you have to wait along time before another driver takes pity and lets you out. It is incomprehensible how bad this will become when multiple cars are queueing to exit Woodgate Road due to the proposed increased demand on the Road. Simply widening the junction is not going to make any difference to this.
3. The previous application did not provide safe cycle or pedestrian links. This has not been addressed in the current application. The proposal to introduce a cycle path along Woodgate Road, crossing multiple driveways is dangerous. Trying to exit Woodgate Road onto the A29 during busy times is a quite frightening experience on a bicycle. The increase to traffic along Woodgate Road as a result of the 180 homes, with this being the single point of access, will only make cycling even more dangerous. The wider plan for the cycle path up the A29 does not present an improvement or provide a safe route with several road crossing points. The proposal for cyclists to join the carriageway right by the junction with Hook Lane which is a blind junction and at times difficult to cross on foot whilst looking behind you and this would be a whole lot worse on a bicycle.

The statement in the Transport Assessment suggesting only 9 cars are parked on the street is simply not true. Not only do the residents of Woodgate Road and Woodgate Close park on the street but so do some of the residents of Lidsey Road and all visitors generally resulting in more than 9. There are always a number of vehicles parked at the junction of Woodgate Road and Lidsey Road and there are frequently vehicles parked almost on the junction. This has caused numerous near misses with other vehicles as one turns into Woodgate Road. The proposals in this regard would therefore make an unsafe situation worse.

Whilst design is a subjective matter and therefore harder to qualitatively assess, we really are disappointed to see proposals so lacking in any kind of sensitivity to the local character and also so poorly considered in terms of scale. The scheme fails to reflect its setting as is demonstrated by the inconsistency across the various plots with regards to scale, massing and materials which results in disjointed placemaking and no cohesive feel to what could have been a new community. The house types and materials chosen by the developer and their designers look overly standardised and totally inappropriate – this could be any poor development anywhere in the country which, the

Arun Design Guide SPD seeks to avoid. Flat Block C is an dreadful example of developer standardisation. There is no precedent for the traditional use of weatherboarding black or otherwise or slate roof coverings in the area. The proposals for 2.5 storey houses and 3 storey high blocks of flats is completely out of context. Woodgate Road and the adjoining close consist of bungalows, and even beyond this there is very little precedent in the local area for 3 storeys plus exaggerated roof forms. The Arun Design Guide section J.05 states that “high pitched angles should not be used” yet many of the semi-detached house ‘types’ in the scheme have uncomfortably high ridge heights as a result of high pitched angles. There are numerous other examples of where this scheme fails to meet even the basic principles of the Design Guide.

The site layout should have been developed based on a thorough analysis of the existing site constraints and opportunities yet it has clearly been based on maximising available site area. The play area, whilst a welcome addition has been located at the back end of the site where there is little natural surveillance with a large attenuation basin between the play area and the dwellings.

The scale of the proposed development is completely inappropriate for access off of Woodgate road. The refused previous scheme (AL/106/12) originally was brought forward at consultation with residents based on 180 dwellings much like the current application. However, it was reduced to the subsequently refused proposal of 100 dwellings as a result of, amongst other factors, concerns over scale. The number of dwellings in this proposal would effectively double the entire current Woodgate area and the site will almost entirely be accessed off a small residential road. The scale of proposal is wholly inappropriate.

Yours faithfully
S Briggs and D Bayley

2 Woodgate Road, PO20 3SX

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