



EAST PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs A Gardner, Planning Officer
Arun District Council
by email

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14th September 2021

Dear Anita,

The Planning & Licensing Committee of this council considered Planning Application **A/168/21/PL** at its meeting on Monday, 13th September.

The committee agreed unanimously to object to this Application.

This response focuses on where this council believes this proposal is contrary to the Arun Local Plan rather than on the detail of the proposal itself.

Section 3.41 of the Arun Local Plan mentions "a desire to retain the character of Arun's small settlements and countryside." This proposal site is outside the Built-Up Area Boundary in the Arun Local Plan and, if allowed, will start to eat into what has always been understood as a (Strategic) Gap Between Settlements between East Preston and Kingston on the western side and Ferring on the eastern side. This is a relatively small Gap and therefore perhaps worthy of additional protection. Local residents feel strongly such gaps should be maintained and fear once one development has been permitted there will be a domino effect and the whole gap will disappear very quickly, and once it has gone it will never come back.

Section 3.42 of the Arun Local Plan states, "Many of Arun's roads are already congested and the pressure on the local road network is likely to increase with further population growth and new development. Improvements to the local road network are required," but this proposal does not bring with it any improvements to the local road network. On the contrary, 76 new homes could realistically and easily bring an additional 150+ vehicles on to local roads at the busiest times of the day.

Section 3.43 of the Arun Local Plan states, "Planning policies can do much to minimise additional car traffic, both by reducing people's need to travel and by promoting alternatives to car use such as public transport, walking and cycling. This needs to be a key consideration in planning both the location and design of new housing". This proposal comes with no GP surgeries within walking distance, no primary schools within walking distance, only supermarkets and garden centres within walking distance for shopping, no sports facilities within walking distance and so on. There is a bus stop outside the proposal development but the nearest railway station is not within walking distance for many people. (It should also be noted West Sussex County Council has suggested the bus-stop be removed should the development go ahead. This would further reduce the likelihood residents of the new development would use public transport.)

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Section 4.5 of the Arun Local Plan states, "New development will have been successfully integrated within the District, creating attractive places to live, whilst protecting and enhancing the character of Arun's environment. By providing market and affordable homes, a wider range of local jobs, improved transport and community facilities, new development will have helped to improve the quality of life for Arun's residents". As partly stated above, it is difficult to see how this development will improve transport and community facilities and therefore this Application is contrary to this section of the Arun Local Plan.

In **section 4.9** of the Arun Local Plan, it says, "Those who live and work here will have better access to shops, jobs, services, health, education, community and leisure facilities, thereby reducing the need to travel and reliance on the private car." This council does not see this proposal as meeting this aim at all, therefore the proposal is contrary to this section of the Arun Local Plan too.

In its failure to reduce the need to travel and to protect and enhance Arun's outstanding landscape, this proposal is contrary to the "Strategic Objectives of the Arun Local Plan to be Achieved by 2031" (**Table 4.1**).

Referring to Arun's Local Plan Strategic Approach, this council cannot see how this proposal meets the strategic objective noted in **section 6.2.2** of the Local Plan, "New local jobs need to be created to meet the needs of the District's growing population, along with education and health facilities, shops, leisure and entertainment facilities." This proposal merely adds extra burden to all of those existing facilities.

Two paragraphs on, **section 6.2.4** says "The countryside area will be recognised and maintained reflecting its character and role as the coastal plain, with green wedges separating urban areas, whilst high quality agricultural land and environmental assets will be protected." As this proposal is to build on agricultural land within an identified green wedge, it is clear the proposal is contrary to this section of the Local Plan too. This is therefore contrary to Arun Local Plan Policy SD SP1a. This proposal is contrary to **section 7.1.2**, "It is important that this settlement structure is taken into consideration so that individual settlements do not completely coalesce and lost their individual character." **Section 7.4.2** phrases this more definitively, "It is important to retain the settlement structure of Arun District and recognise the value of gaps between settlements for preventing the coalescence of individual settlements and for retaining the separate identity and amenity of settlements." Section 7.4.2 continues, "Furthermore, the gaps, which are largely undeveloped, and fall outside the Built-up Area Boundary, are also crucial for protecting the areas of undeveloped coastline and for contributing to the District's multifunctional Green Infrastructure Network." Erosion of the "green wedges" will inevitably lead to unwanted coalescence of individual settlements, all of which are happy to interact in positive ways but want to retain their individuality. It would also be contrary to **Policy SD SP3**.

Section 7.1.5 explains the importance of the Built-up Area Boundary and the retention of Gaps Between Settlements as "key to the protection of the countryside and landscape". This proposal is contrary to **Policy C SP1** of the Local Plan which states, "Outside the Built-up Area Boundaries (as identified on the Policies Maps) land will be defined as countryside and will be recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty."

Section 7.4.4 states, "A clear break between settlements helps to maintain a "sense of place" for residents of, and visitors to, the communities on either side of the gaps." Whilst this proposal does perhaps meet the objectives of **section 7.4.5** in being "designed to minimise the impact on the openness of the gap," this council still fears granting Planning Permission for this proposal will see a domino effect and the loss of the whole gap within a short space of time.

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Section 12.1 of the Arun's Local Plan has a strategic objective for Housing Delivery to, in part, "Promote strong, well integrated and cohesive communities, through the promotion of healthy lifestyles, provision of good quality accessible community facilities and a safe environment, which delivers an enhanced quality of life to all. This includes meeting the needs of a growing elderly population." For occupants of the proposed development to reach any community, health, educational or leisure facilities would require them either crossing a busy A road or the railway line. This council does not believe this will result in the occupants feeling part of the "well integrated and cohesive communities" of either Angmering or East Preston. The proposal site is too out on a limb cut off from most of Angmering by the A259.

This council does not believe this proposal meets the objectives of any of these paragraphs from the Arun Local Plan.

Furthermore, this council is concerned about the impact the site will have on traffic management in the area and has a meeting scheduled with the West Sussex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport in order to discuss these concerns.

This council is also concerned about the extra burden upon the drainage systems in the area and hopes suitable infrastructure uplift will be incorporated into any Planning Permission granted.

On 10th April, 2013, Cian Cronin issued a Decision Notice for Planning Application A/130/12 which had been for a "New Chandlers BMW/Mini Dealership facility...". The Decision Notice described that proposal as representing "a significant encroachment into the countryside on a site not well related to the existing settlement. The area in which the application proposes development is a rural location surrounded by open countryside. The scale and location of the proposals would result in a significant adverse impact on the local landscape and visual amenity of the location and character of the area." This council does not believe this has changed.

As Planning Officers and councillors will see, there is much local objection to these Applications. This council stands alongside residents and other local councils in asking Arun District Council to refuse Planning Permission for this proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Cross – Clerk to the Council