Arundel (Philip and Ellen

13th November 2012.

R Green Esq.,
Littlehampton Gazette,
34 Beach Road,
Littlehampton,
West Sussex.
BN17 5HT.

Dear Mr Green,

Re: Fargro and the Vineries site.

I write following our recent telephone conversation, triggered by the Article on Page 5 of your newspaper of Thursday 8th November 2012.

As I explained, the article presents the move almost as a fait accompli, a done deal, that only needs planning permission to become a reality. It might well have been written by Fargro's spin doctors themselves, and certainly contains a lot of words and statements I recognise from their recent presentation. It also includes any number of matters that have no bearing at all on the open Grade 1 agricultural land South of the Vineries as a site for this huge complex. For example, details of development of the Toddington site, and its alleged benefits for the area; wondrous infrastructure works like a new bridge over the railway and a by-pass for Lyminster. Now what has that got to do with the suitability of the Poling site for this building? Pure spin.

This is so typical of the attitude and approach adopted by Big Business Bullies and their spin doctors. It suggests that the whole deal is so wonderful for all of us, and that any opposition is too late, nimbyish, and pointless anyway. They must not be allowed to succeed.

The facts are that Fargro chose to sell out for housing, and has collected or will collect a huge sum of money for so doing. Fargro "chose" Poling because the other sites, like Ford Industrial Estate are more expensive, and Fargro does not want to spend the money. A Director or senior manager of Fargro,whose name I cannot recall, confirmed the truth of both of these statements at their recent presentation. So much for "required to relocate" and "the only suitable site"! That is balderdash.

I enclose a copy of an e mail that I sent to Mr Carey, the company spokesman mentioned in the article. This encapsulates my objections and views in this matter, or some of them at least. Mr Carey is in fact an ex-politico employed by Curtin & Co, who purport to specialise in "community consultations". I enclose a copy of Curtin & Co's "Our people" taken from the internet.

If this monstrous development is ever built, it will cause huge detriment to the natural environment; to the Village of Poling and its residents, and to the wider area. It will also set an ominous and extremely dangerous precedent for the future of other areas of open farmland on the plain between the South Downs National Park and the Sea.

Not that Mr Coleman, the owner of the site who still lives I believe in Graffham, will worry much. He will not have to live with it. He will though have virtually doubled the size of his

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL A/74/13/

light industrial estate, and doubtless will have pocketed a huge sum of money at the stroke of a Planner's pen.

Likewise Paul Airey, Mr Coleman's Agent, and the spin doctors led by Mr Carey. They will both have collected fat fees and retired to their lairs respectively in Capel, Surrey and London. They will not have to live with it. As to Fargro, the Company will have profited hugely from the sale at Toddington; got hold of the cheapest "suitable" site "available"; and probably will make a substantial distribution to its shareholders with the money left over. Will the Directors and shareholders care very much about the damage they have caused as they rush off to the Bank with their fat cheques? I very much doubt it.

No, it is the people of Arun in general and Poling in particular who will have to live with and suffer the development and all its adverse repercussions.

If, perchance, I have got any of my facts or suppositions wildly wrong, then I shall withdraw them immediately and apologise.

Please feel free to edit, copy or use all or any part of this letter and enclosures, or indeed none of it, as you think fit. There is plenty more still to come out and be said, of that I have no doubt, but enough, perhaps, for now. As a local paper I very much hope that you will support the people of Arun and their lovely countryside. I would love to see you run a piece setting the record straight, following your somewhat unbalanced 8th November offering.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Philip Thomas

PS. I would stress that I do not represent Poling or any other residents in this matter, that is for the Chairman of the Parish Meeting. These are my own personal views.

...idea was ...ories.

...were going to transform the face of Britain by rendering it a great roiling multi-cultil machstrom of Polish bakeries and garam masala-flavoured chips – and they were going to leave the Conservatives pathetically clucking their disapproval and looking ever more tired, monochrome and generally out of touch. Mass immigration would please big business, they knew, since it would help employers to hold down wages with the cheap and efficient labour of those who had already shown their get-up-

we got a grip on our borders. Sure we stopped the influx of illegals, and that we should restrict acces... become and talent ... to contribute to – a... British economy. Al... would be a good thi... back our border co... somehow ensure th... Romanians and Bul... ranks of benefit tou...

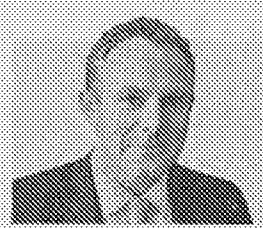
Yes, the Labour p... think that they coul... composition of the country; they were right

DAILY TELEGRAPH
17/12/2012
GENERAL v LOCALISM

...the Jubilee was great. The Olympics and ...exception of Heaven. Across a capital that ...boasts 300 languages, people are coming together to make a physical investment in the soil. If you want to get people to put down roots, then you might as well encourage them to plant carrots – and to do it together. Carrots, by the way, they originally came from Afghanistan and didn't really arrive on British plates (at least in their orange form) until the 18th century. Kick 'em out, would you?

Comment on Boris Johnson's view at
>> telegraph.co.uk/borisonsunday

We need houses – but don't forget the sewers



NICK HERBERT

Planners must ensure that communities have the infrastructure to cope with development

To those reading this over breakfast, an apology. Thanks to the great achievements of Sir Joseph Bazalgette and others in the 19th century, we rarely have to discuss sewers, taking their efficiency for granted – except for some residents in my constituency, for whom heavy rain, as we have had recently, causes lavatories to overflow and sewage to run in the streets.

This is an extreme symptom of an ever more common problem – a lack of infrastructure to support development. Residents move into new homes, only to discover that the local schools are oversubscribed. Roads that may have been adequate in a village become congested in what is now a small town.

There is meant to be a system in place that lets communities capture some of the profits made from selling land for development, allowing local infrastructure to be improved. But it hasn't delivered sufficiently. The Government hopes that a new community infrastructure levy will do better. And the National Planning Policy Framework, published earlier this year, says that planning authorities should work with others to assess the "quality and capacity of infrastructure ... and its ability to meet forecast demands".

While this sounds good, it doesn't actually require planning authorities to ensure that the roads, school places and sewage systems will be there when development is permitted. A stronger duty is required. And that's why, supported by 20 Conservative and Liberal Democrat MPs, I have tabled an amendment to the Growth and Infrastructure Bill, which is being debated in the Commons today, requiring planning authorities to identify that there is, or will be, sufficient infrastructure to support new development in their plans.

Let me be clear. Our aim is not to prevent necessary new housing. The rapid growth in our population, as revealed by last week's Census figures, cannot be ignored. Even if immigration is reduced, the demand for new housing will remain.

But in seeking to get housebuilding moving again, the Government must target its policies correctly. It isn't the planning system that's the cause of our dismally low number of new homes – buyers aren't there because of the downturn. Developers are sitting on planning permissions, unwilling to sell cheaper homes today when they can hold on to an appreciating asset.

Vince Cable has said that a 1930s-style mass housing expansion would help to fuel growth. But at that time, there weren't any planning controls, and the result was rapid and uncontrolled suburban sprawl. That was why the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act was introduced in the first place. Political leaders then saw no conflict between driving national renewal and ensuring that the countryside – whose very image had been held up as a cause for defending the nation – was protected.

It's also been argued that only 12 per cent of England is developed, so what's a percentage point or two more? That makes it sound as if we have plenty of countryside left to concrete over. In fact, we can't build on mountains, hills and heathlands, national parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty or the green belt. Moreover, delivering a ringing commitment to landscapes that are already specially protected ignores the half of our still-precious countryside that isn't.

The reality is that in the 1930s, nearly three quarters of England was undisturbed by development. Today, urban sprawl and the roads it brings intrudes across more than half of the country. It's the casual loss of this England, the quiet countryside around our towns and villages, that people worry about. Perhaps some home owners do try to protect their backyards. But most of us care about the countryside whether we can see it from our window or not. There's nothing selfish about wanting to conserve it for its own sake and for future generations.

Still, the planning minister, Nick Boles, is surely right to remind us that we cannot be complacent about the need for more homes. His call for new developments to be more aesthetically pleasing is one way to encourage popular acceptance of extra housing. Another is neighbourhood planning, in which communities are given the power and responsibility to plan for their future. In contrast to Labour's counterproductive housing targets, which are at last being abolished, neighbourhood planning has the potential to deliver exactly what's needed: realistic levels of new housing provision with local support.

But this new localism, which was pledged in the Coalition Agreement, must not be undermined – and there are worrying signs that local authorities feel unable to set the housing numbers they want, for fear of being overturned by the Government's planning inspectors. Communities who were promised a "fundamental shift of power from Westminster to people" will not be pleased if Labour's unfeasible housing targets are merely replaced with ones set through the back door.

The Government's definition of "sustainable" development is "ensuring that better lives for ourselves don't mean worse lives for future generations". This means that we should not deny young people the chance we've had to own our properties. But it also means taking care not to damage the countryside. And at the very least, it means ensuring that where such housing is needed, there is adequate infrastructure to support it.

Nick Herbert is the Conservative MP for Arundel and South Downs

Comment on Nick Herbert's view at
>> telegraph.co.uk/jeremyvine

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL A/74/13/

London to Glasgow
Brighton to London
Cambridge to London
Sevenoaks to London
Manchester to London
Bristol to London
Henley-on-Thames to London
Birmingham to Newcastle
Edinburgh to Glasgow
Liverpool to Crewe

DAILY TELEGRAPH
3/1/2013
LOSS OF FOOD PRODUCTION
+ INCREASING DEMAND

Food prices will keep rising as world tries to feed growing population, expert predicts

By Andrew Hough

FOOD price inflation will only get worse as the rising global population and climate change add to the volatility faced by British consumers, the Government's chief scientist warned yesterday.

In a blow to families struggling to pay grocery bills, Prof Sir John Beddington said the cost of food was "not going to stop" rising for the foreseeable future.

During a radio discussion about food prices, he said much of world's agriculture was dependent on stable weather patterns, which have undergone "major changes" in recent years.

This, he warned, meant that food supplies were "extremely fragile" and that reserves were subjected to extremes in conditions caused by climate change.

With food price inflation currently hovering at around 5 per cent, Sir John warned that as the world's population grows, and the fight against poverty becomes more successful, the volatility of prices would only get "worse".

"The concern [on rising food prices] has been there for some time and I think the message I got is this is not going to stop," he told BBC Radio 4's *World at One* programme. "The volatility is also going to get worse."

The Government's chief scientific adviser has warned that demand for food and energy will jump 50 per cent by 2030, and demand for fresh water by 30 per cent, as the global population tops 8.3 billion. "There is going to be another billion people on the planet in 13 years' time," he said. "There are already a billion people in poverty. That is going to increase demand for food. Indeed the dilemma is, as we bring people out of poverty, the demand for food is going to go up."

He added: "The second complicating factor, of course, is climate change. We are going to see the extremes in rainfall, either floods or droughts. Put together that with our system of agriculture, you have got a real problem."

He said a different way of thinking on agriculture systems was needed, which was "climate smart" and did not rely on "unsustainable practices"

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aim to at raise at least £100 in sponsorship as well.

Anyone who is interested can contact our office (tel. 01293 416527, e-mail info@homestartcharns.org.uk), or visit our website at www.homestartcharns.org.uk/about-challenge/ for more information and to register.

Tracey Martin
Home-Start - Crawley Horsham and Mid-Sussex
1st Floor, Barton House
Broadfield
Crawley

W.S. GAZETTE & OBSERVER
23/1/2013
ALTERNATIVE SITES / PLANNING

THE Storrington and Dis… help awarded £9,300 by the H… help lead the community … past of the Old School.

This funding will enal… preserve the history of t… Storrington and its surr…

Inspire others to become involved in learning more about the past.

Anyone who wants to be part of the project by helping with research or sharing memories of the Old School can contact Stuart Duncan on 01903 741108 or email storringtonmuseum@hotmail.co.uk

Planners are halting progress

I READ with interest last week's letter from Mr Dixon. I have been associated with Ford Airfield for over 40 years and during that time every planning application has been a massive battle with Arun District Planners.

I have always been puzzled as to why they have adopted their policy of total refusal of anything on an area of land which has limited visual appeal and which is overlooked by a well established prison.

A recent planning application for over 100 affordable homes on a small area of land which is surrounded by existing tree screening from the road, and backed by the Rudford Industrial Estate, thus providing on site work opportunities, was finally refused on appeal on the flippant grounds of a lack of bus service.

This lack of transport has not stopped the proliferation of housing in Horsemere Green Lane.

Seemingly Arun District Council delight in high profile applications which they consider will swell their coffers, as the larger the applicant the more finance can be squeezed for their pet policies.

One only needs to see the traffic chaos which has been caused by the new Asda Store and the similar chaos which is about to descend when the new Morrisons is opened to speculate on Arun District Council actual Planning Policies. Just who is going to visit all these Supermarkets, especially with on-line shopping becoming ever more popular?

There is ample acreage at Ford for not only affordable housing, but also the opportunities to further develop an industrial base, both of which if managed properly could reduce the carbon footprint, unlike the increased traffic which will happen with the developments on farm lands north of Littlehampton.

If we are to pull ourselves out of recession we need to increase our industrial output, service industries might provide some jobs, but they do not boost our exports which is where our national income stream comes from. A recent survey amongst businesses in West Sussex found that their biggest obstacle to progress was the planners.

What a sad indictment!

M R S L Rudd
By email

Theology for today

THE CURRENT season of Worthing Theological Society's series of Theology For Today lectures continues on Monday January 28 when Rev Dr Hazel Sherman, minister at West Worthing Baptist Church, will present the topic "I did it whose way?". The lecture, which is to be held at West Worthing Baptist Church, South Street, Tarring, Worthing BN14 7LU, begins at

Tories revolt over threat to green belt

Isabel Oakeshott and Robin Henry

TORY backbenchers are battling to halt the development of thousands of acres of green belt land as David Cameron's localism agenda backfires.

MPs say local authorities are "misinterpreting and abusing" new planning powers to earmark vast tracts of lush countryside for housebuilding.

Downing Street has been warned that there is mounting anger among backbenchers that a government commitment to protecting the green belt is being flouted.

Last week, about 80 MPs, spearheaded by Tories from rural and suburban constituencies, launched an all-party group on green belt protection.

The group has met the planning minister, Nick Boles, and is demanding new powers of appeal for residents unhappy with proposed developments.

Chris Skidmore, the Conservative MP for Kingswood who chairs the group, says he faces a "continual fight" to protect green belt in his South Gloucestershire constituency. So much new housing is planned on green belt that he fears Bristol could merge with Bath.

"If there is one issue that unites people in the Kingswood constituency . . . it is protecting the green belt," he said. "Ever since Labour tried to build 10,000 houses on it, and even before, local campaigns led by committed residents have had to continually fight to prevent development that would pave over much of the open space between Bristol and Bath.

"We need a community right of appeal against planning decisions."

England's green belts are comprised of 14 designated tracts of countryside, totalling nearly 4m acres, intended to prevent neighbouring towns and cities merging.

The government last year drew up a controversial "national planning policy framework" to replace Labour's "regional spatial strategies". Under the policy, it is up to councils to decide how land is used.

Following a backlash from countryside campaigners and MPs, the new planning laws were hastily rewritten to protect the green belt, saying it could be developed only in "exceptional circumstances".

However, with England facing an estimated shortfall of 750,000 homes by 2025, the policy framework also requires councils to provide enough housing in their local plan for at least the next five years.

Boles has called for more than 1,500 square miles of countryside to be developed for homes and businesses, suggesting that "environmentally uninteresting fields" may have to be jettisoned.

Julian Sturdy, MP for the marginal Conservative seat of York Outer, is a founding member of the new parliamentary group, and is locked in a battle with the city council.

"We have a draft local plan which proposes 16,000 new homes on the green belt, including two entirely new towns to the north and south of the city of 4,000 and 3,500 homes.

"To me, these proposals are deeply unsustainable for a city in which the existing infrastructure is already under great strain," he said.

Sturdy said he backed the government's drive for localism but accused the council of "abusing" its powers.

Last week, Newcastle city council announced it would develop 21,000 properties on green belt land.

In neighbouring Northumberland, Guy Opperman, the MP for Hexham, is fighting planning applications on green belt, and the health minister, Anna Soubry, has similar problems in her Nottinghamshire constituency of Broxtowe.

"Our Labour/Lib Dem council has failed to consult properly with residents, failed to assess our housing needs and has resolutely accepted the last government's housing target. The result will be at least 3,800 houses on our green belt.

"To make matters worse, the council has put forward green belt land before brown field sites," she said.

Paul Miner, senior planning officer for the Campaign to Protect Rural England, said the pattern was being repeated across the country. "There is plenty of brownfield land available for development but many of these councils are opting to develop green belt sites instead. You have to ask why."

Relief for Osborne as growth doubles

Kathryn Cooper

GEORGE OSBORNE will get a boost this week with official figures expected to show that Britain's growth doubled in the second quarter.

Annual growth is also likely to jump to its fastest pace for more than two years.

The figures will be a relief for the chancellor, coming only three months after he was criticised by the International Monetary Fund for failing to

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GENERAL - LOSS OF GREEN LAND

the year. Some City forecasters are expecting growth of up to 0.8%. All the main sectors of the economy — services, manufacturing, construction

recovery," although he stresses there are still risks to the global economy.

Finance ministers from the G20 group of nations meeting

Moscow last week stressed recovery remains "fragile [answer]".

the chancellor will unveil ails of his controversial ngage guarantee scheme s week, designed to boost housing market by ecovering up to £130bn of gher-risk loans. Critics say the scheme will pump up property prices rather than boosting housebuilding.

Growth doubles as 'all outsiders fire', Business

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL 4/7/13

r sets out local policies

and General Accident.

He worked for Kent County Council for five years in economic development and inward investment.

Some UKIP Local Policies

Taxes

Council taxes should go down not up, but this should not be achieved by simply axing services. It's about delivering services more cost-effectively through better partnership work, including perhaps more inter-county initiatives.

At district/borough level some of the economies of scale achieved within, say, the Adur/Worthing arena in recent years are worth noting.

Planning & Development

A strong bias against development of green space. All and any new development should be on a replacement basis. Old infrastructure makes way for new. Green space is sacred – there's not much of it left! Stemming the eternal tide of immigration from the [illegible] containing the surging demand for more development here in the South East.

Health

Lobby for the introduction of elected county health boards with a view to rebalancing staffing resources; away from top heavy management structures and more towards front line clinical staff.

Education

A positive purge on the unnecessary bureaucracy, which is paralysing and de-motivating the teaching profession. Teachers will perform best when trusted as the highly motivated professionals most of them are. The imposition of prescriptive dogma is not the way to improve results.

Internal Economies

Service departments within local government everywhere need to show a clear, meaningful contribution to the well-being of the community. The Acid Test is "would anyone really notice if we discontinued that particular activity?" In so many areas of modern politically-correct government, eg diversity monitoring, the simple answer would be No! Well, scrap these things – nobody will weep!

Staffing and elected members costs within local government must be subject to close scrutiny with economy at the forefront of our minds. Why are so many public executives earning more than the Prime Minister and in some case more that Barack Obama? The public want to know this and should have clear answers.

Local Referenda

If Democracy is to survive as a credible concept we need more public participation. UKIP believes that major planning and service provision decisions should go to local referenda when a petition is presented with support from 5% of the population. When residents believe they can make a difference, they'll participate. Big time!

There have been many false dawns

MOST people who live on the coastal strip between Littlehampton and Worthing will share the exasperation expressed by Lucy Hopkins in her letter of June 26 concerning this overdeveloped area, with more land earmarked for further building in the future without the necessary infrastructure in place.

It was impossible to miss your headline on July 3 "Go-ahead for A27 Upgrade", and I could not suppress a cynical smile. There have been several promises and false dawns during the period 1968 to 2009 when I was involved acting for property owners who were affected by small schemes where, for example, bends were straightened out and junctions improved.

Proposals for Chichester and Worthing were shelved, but not before the taxpayer compensated victims of blight and compulsory acquisition.

The biggest fiasco has been the failure to bypass Arundel. The new section of dual carriageway at Crossbush has not improved traffic flow one jot, and having seen the proposals 25 years ago to extend the road westwards from Crossbush to rejoin the existing A27 near Walberton and Slindon, which were not implemented, you have to wonder whether the department of the Ministry were fit to be in charge of such an important scheme. Perhaps vested interests were involved, but officially it was the threat to the rare orchids in Binsted Woods, and, of course, spiralling costs, which knocked the scheme on the head.

It has not been all doom and gloom – the new sections of A27 west and east of Chichester, and around Shoreham and Brighton delight road users and local residents, but one word of warning: from the date of my first meeting with engineers and surveyors on site at Shoreham to the time when I could safely consign my file to the archives, a period of 22 years (yes, twenty-two years!) elapsed.

I am confident that even if the Government keeps its promise, I, along with many others, will not be around to reap the benefits!

MARK MONKHOUSE, FRICS (Rtd)
Poling, Arundel

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL A/4/13/

DAILY TELEGRAPH
LETTERS 25/3/13
GENERAL re PLANNING
v LOSS OF FOOD PRODUCTION

Concreting over crops

SIR – The Government tells us we are down to 65 per cent self-sufficiency in food, and that we must produce much more of our own, with a target of 85 per cent, excepting exotic fruits and vegetables.

Now Nick Boles, the planning minister in the same Government, tells us we must build more houses to accommodate a growing population, and that will require green open land (report, March 22).

David Cameron's mantra is that in planning the "presumption must be for sustainable development". That should be replaced by "presumption in favour of food production". It is no good expanding the population and building houses on green land if that means we cannot feed them.

M C J Curzon
Galphay, North Yorkshire

SIR – It is no surprise that local people have serious concerns about quality and sustainability of development, given comments such as those by Nick Boles.

These worryingly imply that controls on development may be reduced, at the expense of the planning system's ability to promote the long-term public interest.

The Campaign to Protect Rural England believes that for the planning system to meet needs with high-quality development in the right places, the public must have a system that they trust is delivering for people and the environment.

Kate Houghton
Campaign to Protect Rural England
London SE1

SIR – The Chancellor's decision to found his recovery plans on a house-building policy identifies the Conservatives' intention to sacrifice the English countryside for the chance to win the next election. What a price for us to pay!

Terry Morrell
Willerby, East Yorkshire

Life lines

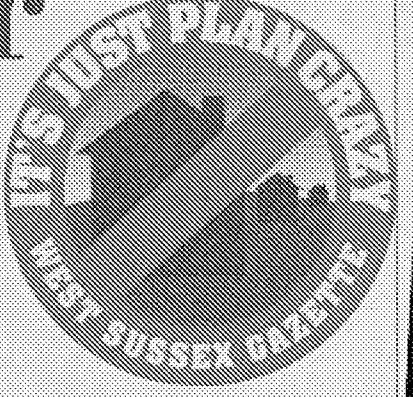
ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL A/74/13

SIR – "Nowadays, hardly anyone hears or reads poetry," writes C C M Parish (Letters,

GENERAL V USE OF BROWNFIELD SITES FIRST

1

Backing grows for campaign to save our countryside



By Joshua Powling
joshua.powling@sussexnewspapers.co.uk

DROVES of people have this week pledged their support to the West Sussex Gazette's 'Save Our Countryside' campaign.

And they are backing the newspaper's call for a rational debate on where future homes should go in West Sussex.

Late last month the Gazette launched 'It's Just Plan Crazy' as local authorities scramble to deal with Central Government's varied and ambiguous direction on planning policy.

Campaigners have expressed the fear that a planning 'free-for-all' could lead to tens of thousands of new homes, destroying the area's countryside.

Philip Thomas, of Poling near Arundel, said: "Your main article 'Save our Countryside' quite rightly highlights the potentially irreversible damage to our West Sussex countryside, if the completely ludicrous plans for thousands more unwanted houses in the area

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He added: "If this sort of catastrophic vandalism and wanton destruction of the countryside is allowed, where will it end?

"Just what sort of sterile legacy are we going to leave our children?"

Derek Hunnikin, of Hunston near Chichester, said: "Your Save our Countryside campaign is most welcome. The obvious question is, why does the government insist we need so many extra dwellings? And the answer is, of course, to house the huge influx of immigrants, in recent years. This is not a problem of race but of space. Britain is full!"

Gerry Orbell added: "Clearly much of the electorate doesn't think a lot of Tory building policies. Right now people are up-in-arms against proposed large-scale plans throughout the county - at Barnham, Southbourne, Tangmere, Angmering, Billingshurst, Storrington and Henfield, - right across the Tory homeland.

"This is not localism, this is a national policy of heritage theft. The Government is taking away our countryside although Eric Pickles in the very name of localism is claiming otherwise."

Meanwhile a West Sussex County Councillor has endorsed the Gazette's campaign, as James Walsh (LDem, Littlehampton East) said communities needed to be in control of their own destinies, building housing for locally identified needs.

Dr Walsh said: "We need a coherent use of brownfield sites first, and bringing back into use the estimated 1m properties unoccupied in town and city centres, through a mixture of private, public and housing association capital.

"Most of all rural communities must ensure small developments to provide really affordable housing for their local needs, and not see them all bought up by second-homers or wealthy city commuters."

Peter Winfield, a West Chiltington resident, added: "Of course, there is a very considerable need for new housing to be supplied in this country. There are so many ways in which this can be achieved, but building on agricultural land should not be the first option.

"Where housing is provided in local communities it should be tempered by local views and sensible planning considerations for such matters as infrastructure, health care, and road usage capacity."

junctions improved.

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Mark Monkhouse, FRICS (Rtd)
Poling, Arundel

Oil is a finite resource

ONE OF the things that has been completely overlooked in predictions such as Gatwick Airport forecasts, migration to the area and the promise of employment, is that oil is a finite resource and that our whole economy is focussed around it.

There seems to be a deep reluctance by politicians and businesses to take a responsible approach and accept that oil is an increasingly expensive and dwindling resource.

Alternative fuels are likely to come from a number of sources including electricity, nuclear and a small percentage of biofuels to name a just a few.

However, they will not replace the single source we have relied on for hundreds of years, and this will change our lifestyles in many ways.

For that reason, this should be a key time for planning to actively encourage a way of life less dependent on fossil fuels. Unfortunately it seems that the opposite is occurring.

Unsustainable homes continue to be built with no means of accessing employment without getting in the car.

Shops, services and leisure are all reached by driving.

The continual argument is that we need more homes for our children, but surely what really counts is how and where they are built.

The thought should be how to build on an active sustainable working community, but instead this is currently driven apart by an acceptance of constant commuting.

This also raises the issue of local food security which should be safeguarded for the future by ensuring communities have access to locally produced food – by retaining the maximum amount of agricultural land possible.

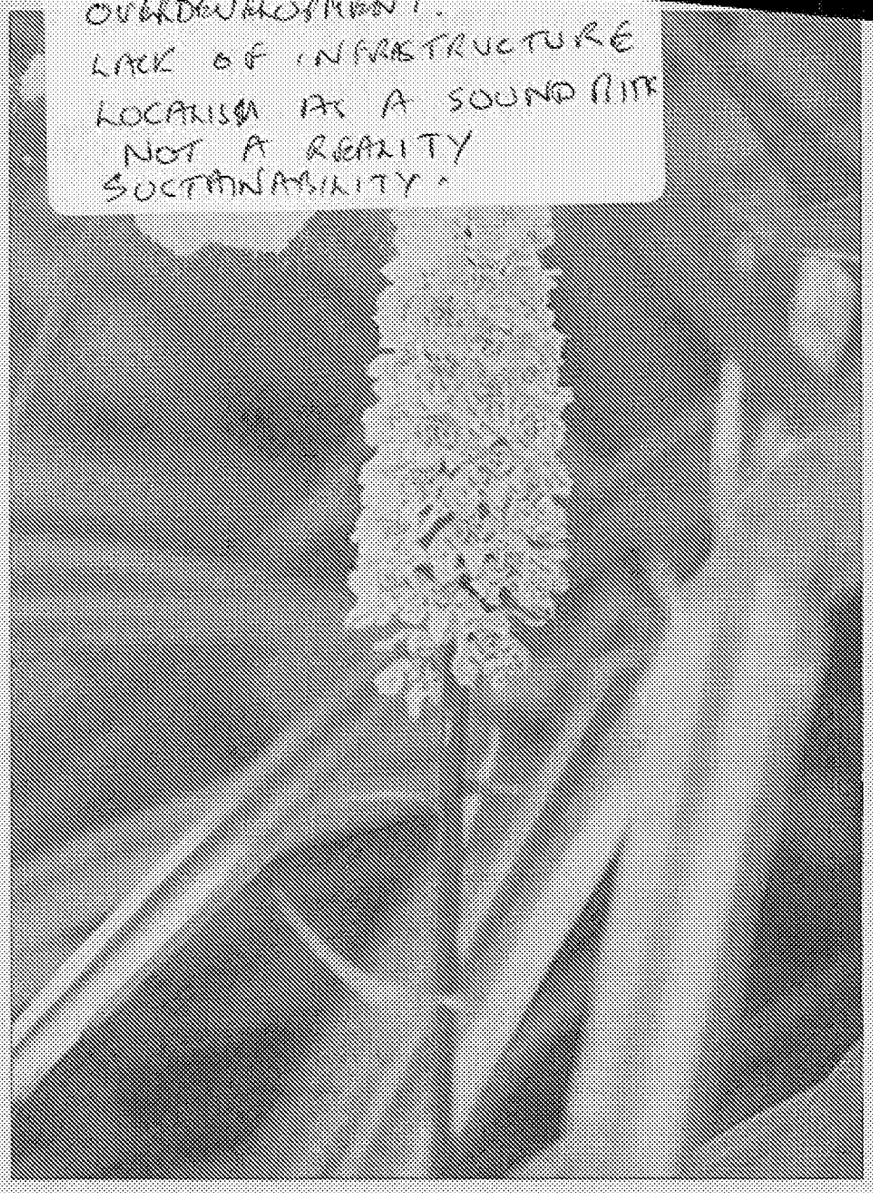
The NPPF guidance reflects all of this, however, its content seems to be lost in translation.

Responsibility lies with current politicians, businesses and councils to ensure that growth is natural and organic with a sustainable economy and truly locally led housing numbers along with a focus on the necessity of a thriving natural environment to support it.

Economy predictions should also be realistic and account for Peak oil, taking positive, early action now for future generations.

Although there are very few that dare to commit to giving an estimation to when oil production will start to dwindle, there has to be an acknowledgement that this day will come. Question is, will we be ready?

OVERDEVELOPMENT.
LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE
LOCALISM AT A SOUND BITE
NOT A REALITY
SUSTAINABILITY.



Our thanks to reader Helen Zetter for this photo. She wrote: "While in Ifold I noticed a single wild orchid. I have seen many smaller ones of a different variety in the Petworth area, but never having come across such a tall stemmed orchid near here in Ifold."

Lots of false dawns

MOST people who live on the coastal strip between Littlehampton and Worthing will share the exasperation expressed by Lucy Hopkins in her letter of June 26 concerning this overdeveloped area, with more land earmarked for further building in the future without the necessary infrastructure in place.

It was impossible to miss your headline on July 3 "Go-ahead for A27 Upgrade" and I could not suppress a cynical smile.

There have been several promises and false dawns during the period 1958 to 2003 when I was involved acting for property owners who were affected by small schemes where, for example, bends were straightened out and

Sussex Local Education Authority.
"Education Minister". Another oxymoron?

Richard W. Symonds
SCRAM Campaign for Hot School Meals & Playing Fields
Lavington Close, Ifield

On Sunday July 21 from 1-6pm the best of Reading's Gardens will open in aid of Reading in Bloom. This is a great opportunity to visit beautiful and varied gardens, not normally open to the public. In some of them you can learn about bee-keeping, admire classic cars, purchase some of the plants on sale, or relax in lovely surroundings while enjoying a cup of tea and home-made cake. Tickets, with map and list of gardens, cost £3.50 per adult (children free) and are available now from Reading News in Upper Reading High Street, or from 1pm on the day at the Towers Convent in Henfield Road where parking is available.

Test for local democracy

FOLLOWING the decision of the Horsham District Council planning committee to finally allow all the remaining applications put forward by Tesco Plc to develop the Silver Wok site in Brighton Road, Horsham, I find myself asking some key questions.

Whatever happened to local democracy? Why did councillors not listen and act upon the considerable body of objections registered by local residents?

Were the two sizeable petitions raised in opposition to the development just meaningless scribble?

Where was the local support for this development? Tesco often cited the latter but never seemed to be able to produce it!

This whole process and outcome is a classic case of perceived participation; as a resident and voter you might appear to be able to take a part in the decision making process, through the mechanisms and opportunities offered for voicing your concerns.

However, in reality your views will be ignored and your impact minimal at best. Decisions are pre-determined by corporate bodies and higher political authorities.

Tesco's introductory letter to their 'neighbours' clearly warned that there would be no point in objecting to their Brighton Road development, and so it came to pass.

Despite varied and well-argued objections from a large swath of local residents the HDC planning committee duly rubber-stamped Tesco's applications.

Lets' hope that the council doesn't rue the day it buckled to commercial pressure and corporate greed – flying in the face of local residents' (voters) opinion.

Residents in a broad area around the site will now just have to put up and shut up with the added traffic congestion, 24/7 noise disturbance, pollution and the dangers of vehicles (including large delivery lorries) moving in and out of the site onto an already busy highway.

The planners clearly learned nothing from the Redkiln Way fiasco.

I would urge those who objected to this development to now not use the store once it opens (quite literally we should vote with our feet).

Instead we should support independent and local shops (as well as Swan Walk and town centre businesses).

After all, this new shop was never really intended to benefit local residents.

Tesco's real target market are the commuters driving by throughout the day and the probable new housing developments to the south and west along the Brighton Road!

Gordon Humphrey
Brighton Road, Horsham

Concern over parking

I WONDER how many residents of Fernhurst are aware of the planning application made by the authorities to build two additional classrooms with staff accommodation and toilet facilities to the north west of the main school building?

What should be of concern to a wider audience, however, is the fact the numbers attending the school are planned to increase from the present figure of around 150 to a final figure of 210, with no proposals to improve the parking facilities for the people who gather twice a day on the A286 and adjacent roads to deliver and collect their offspring.

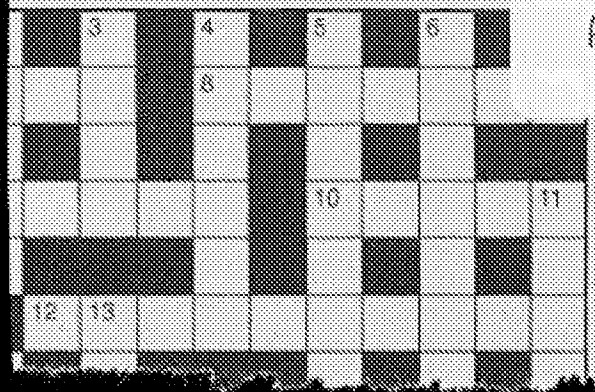
To put it mildly, the manner of their parking skills leaves a lot to be desired, even to the extent of parking almost opposite the traffic island nearby.

I have on several occasions had to stop when coming down Friday's Hill to allow large commercial vehicles to cross to the other side of the road to get past.

The combination of the poor parking and the refusal of traffic to slow down, many of whom regrettably are local villagers themselves, should be of some concern to what little of the remaining constabulary are even aware of our existence to the north of the Downs.

Ralph Lines
Cheshelt Close, Fernhurst

W.S. CAREW - LETTERS
17/7/12
LOCAL DEMOCRACY ?
PEOPLE BEING IGNORED



numbers puzzle which originated in Japan but is now popular throughout the world.
The object is to insert the numbers in the boxes to satisfy only one condition: each row,

...d 3x3 box, must contain nthe digits 1 through 9 exactly once. Completeing the puzzle requires patience and logical ability.
Can you complete the sudoku challenge. The solution will appear in next week's edition.

5				7		3		

Delight over museum visit

REFERENCE Mr Symonds' letter referring to CEM Joad.

I am delighted that Mr Symonds enjoyed his visit to the long awaited and recently opened new museum in Arundel.

With reference to the papers of CEM Joad, which were deposited with us recently.

These are currently being studied by a university researcher who is preparing an exhibition of the literary figures of the area.

The care pathway was originally developed at the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and the city's

'Our precious countryside being eroded by planners'

By Christopher Hope
Senior Political Correspondent

THE "precious, inspirational and irreplaceable" English countryside is in danger of being eroded by poorly planned developments, MPs and figures from the arts world say today.

The group warns "a fair say for local communities, who are increasingly unable to stop the destruction of their towns and countryside."

Their letter in today's *Daily Telegraph* comes before the launch on Monday of a major drive to save England's countryside by the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

It is backed by MPs, including Zac Goldsmith and Nick Herbert, as well as the comedians Jo Brand and Sir Tony Robinson and the *Mist Rises* author Michael Morpurgo, who have all signed the letter.

The new National Planning Policy Framework, which was introduced earlier this year, requires councils to promote "sustainable development" in planning decisions.

The Daily Telegraph's Hands Off Our Land campaign encouraged ministers to rethink some of the key reforms.

In the letter the group says: "The English countryside is precious, inspirational and irreplaceable, but it is being eroded every day as a result of poorly planned development." It calls on others to sign the "charter to save our countryside" on the CPRE's website, adding: "If we don't fight for our countryside now, we will lose it."

The group urges ministers to build on brownfield land and give local people a "stronger say" in developments.

A spokesman for the Department for Communities and Local Government said: "Our reforms are totally focused on better development and on building the homes we urgently need in a way that safeguards and protects the countryside. Local people have more power than ever to decide which sites are built on for development."

Letters: Page 21

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL A/24/12

Unwanted homes threatened in a planning free-for-all

By Joshua Fowles
Joshua.fowles@westsussexnewspapers.co.uk

TENS of thousands of unwanted homes could be built in West Sussex as residents fear a planning free-for-all will destroy the countryside.

Despite assurances from the Government that housing decisions now rest with communities, the West Sussex Gazette is today launching a campaign to give local people their voice back in the planning process.

We are acting after Arundel and South Downs MP Nick Herbert last week spelt out fears that Angmering could be turned into a 'garden city' because of development plans.

And he had earlier warned of similar fears after plans were revealed for 2,000 houses between Eastergate, Westergate and Barnham. Southbourne and Tangmere are also threatened with massive housing development.

"Local people are concerned that the infrastructure is inadequate to cope at the moment, let alone with a lot more housing," said Nick Herbert.

And this week a rallying call was issued by Sir Andrew Motion, president of the Campaign to Protect Rural England. He said: "I don't think this Government wants to wreck the countryside, but it is going to do so unless it changes course. Today the National Planning Policy Framework comes into full force and it is proving to be ground breaking in all the wrong ways. Developing greenfield sites unnecessarily and with inadequate local consultation is entirely the wrong way to make sure that we get the new homes the country so badly needs.

"This is a charter for builders and truly irreversible damage is already underway. It is urgent that something is done about it."

A decade ago this newspaper first launched its Save Our Countryside campaign and some 10,000 readers signed our petition which we took to Downing Street. Then it was opposing an initiative by Labour's John Prescott to 'concrete over the rural West Sussex.' We were supported by local Conservative politicians.

Today, it is the Conservative coalition which is pushing for greenfield development.

Meanwhile, facing the possibility of 64 homes in Mannings Heath near Horsham, residents have begged their MP Francis Maude, also minister for the cabinet office, to ensure uncertainties in the planning system would not allow damaging greenfield developments to slip through.

Like many other authorities across the country Horsham District Council is struggling to get a housing plan in place to replace the abolished regional housing strategies, leaving itself open to attack by developers through applications and appeals.

Facing the possibility of thousands of new houses in Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst, Conservative Horsham district councillors Peter Burgess and Christian Mitchell broke ranks last week declaring that 'Horsham is full'.

Alan Langford, one of several hundred Mannings Heath residents who packed out their village hall last week, said: "I have been left with the perception that this development is opportunistic.

"It seems to be taking advantage of the fact that for a period of a year or more the planning rules in Horsham will make it much easier to force through unpopular housing developments."

He said residents had unanimously condemned proposals made by Exclusive Hotels, owners of Mannings Heath Golf Club and South Lodge Hotel in Lower Beeding, for a seven-acre site south of the golf course.

However in a letter Mr Maude assured Mannings Heath residents that decisions over housing would rest with the people and their locally-elected representatives.

It read: "As a Government we believe that the best people to make decisions about how many houses are needed, what kind and where, are local people and their locally elected representatives - in this case, our Horsham district councillors."

He added: "The 2012 National Planning Policy Framework allows local communities, via local plans, to shape the future of where they live. We put an end to the top-down imposition of housing targets by central Government. The NPPF also focuses on sustainable development, preventing it if it's shown to be against our collective interest - particularly when looking at local infrastructure. Protection of our natural environment is also central to the new planning rules."

However the Campaign to Protect Rural England issued a report last week, which challenged the view that new planning guidelines were having the desired effect.

Sharon Spiers, CPRE's chief executive, said: "CPRE has closely observed how the NPPF is being implemented on the ground and what we have seen is deeply disturbing. Despite the rhetoric of localism, it now seems that local communities are increasingly powerless to prevent damaging development even in the most sensitive locations.

"The country badly needs more housing, including affordable housing in rural areas. But we will not get housing on the scale we need without popular consent, and there will be no popular consent unless local communities believe that that they are being listened to and that the planning system is minimising the loss of much-loved green fields.

Planning minister Nick Boles sparked panic among rural campaigners by hinting at an imminent relaxation of planning laws, coupled with measures announced in the Budget last week to create a new housing boom.

Now tell us what YOU think. To support our campaign - It's Just Plan Crazy - and to share your views email letters@westsussextoday.co.uk or write to us at The West Sussex Gazette, 14-16 Market Square, Horsham, RH12 1HD.

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL