

Dear Karl ,

22 FEB 2022

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH
FUTURE OF BOGNOR GOLF CLUB

We are writing to you as Arun Councillors to express our grave concerns about proposals to build 480 houses on Bognor Golf Course . We also represent an Action Group of concerned local residents who believe that the development, were it to proceed , would be yet another nail in the coffin of what used to be Felpham's beautiful and balanced environment .

It is our understanding that a planning application was submitted to Arun Council on 17 December 2021 . Please can you confirm whether this is indeed the case, and if so , please could you set out the process and timescale for the determination of the application as a matter of urgency .

Our principal concerns and objections are as follows :

1) The site is not identified in the Arun Local Plan 2011-31 adopted by Arun Council in July 2018 as a site suitable for housing development. Our understanding is that the site was assessed at that time as part of the Council's Sustainability Appraisal which concluded that due to various constraints , the site was not suitable for allocation within the Local Plan . Previous to this , we understand that Arun's Local Plan Sub-Committee had unanimously agreed in November 2017 that the emerging Local Plan should exclude the prospect of residential development at the Golf Club and resolved " there is no intention to allocate the site for residential development as part of the Local Plan " .

Therefore we are of the opinion that it would be wholly inappropriate for Arun now to allow any residential development, certainly not before a process of further reviews and amendments to the existing Local Plan , which would allow the necessary debate to take place on any proposed policy changes .

2) Policy OSR DM 1 of the Local Plan concerns the protection of existing open space , outdoor and indoor sport , community arts and cultural facilities and states : " Existing open space, outdoor and indoor sport, community , arts , and cultural facilities should not be built on or redeveloped for other uses " unless replaced by equivalent or better provision elsewhere . We are not aware of any evidence that there are proposals for equivalent or better provision elsewhere , and would seek your clarification and advice on this point .

3) Previous proposals for major development in Bersted and Felpham brought with them false promises of infrastructure improvements which were not delivered - such as additional health and educational facilities, such as doctors surgeries, new schools and the like . Instead , such developments in Bersted , Felpham , Barnham , Yapton , Eastergate and indeed across the entire Arun District have brought about precious little by way of infrastructure improvements , but rather bringing greater pressure on existing services - local schools are already at bursting point , and roads congested to the point of gridlock .

4) The list of objections goes on :

* increased flood risk (the Golf Club has had to close regularly after periods of heavy rain , and we are told by Government experts on climate change that the frequency of such extreme events will only increase in the future).

* threat to flora and fauna : Green Capital. Much is made in the Green Infrastructure master plan that has never gone to public consultation of the importance of a green route to the downs. The path crossing the golf course provides a rural route through a mature habitat, rich in wildlife all the way to Barnham – and without crossing a single road. Since the loss of open rural space with Site 6, this is now a highly valued amenity for Felpham and Bognor residents.

* highway issues - The A259 junctions are at capacity - and that is before Ford and Climping construction work begins. Downview Road has seen an enormous increase in traffic due to Site 6, with hundreds of children walking and cycling to school, often making sudden crossings of great danger on Downview Road. At school times traffic now backs up Downview Road well past Goodwood Avenue from the main traffic lights, making right hand turns for Goodwood Ave. and Dry Grounds lane residents difficult already. And because Downview Primary school has expanded to an enormous 650 pupils, over a 1000 parents and children visit for drop off, with many cars now parking at the top of Downview Road. All this makes Downview Road impossible and dangerous as a route for hundreds of new homes.

* sewerage: any significant development will add pressure to the already overloaded sewerage system- Southern Water was recently fined a record £90 million for deliberately dumping billions of litres of raw sewage into the sea due to infrastructure inadequacy . There were 6,971 illegal discharges during the period 2010-15 . So we have no confidence that there is sufficient sewerage infrastructure to accommodate further housing development in Felpham or indeed elsewhere . Water supply infrastructure is similarly under stress as climate change brings with it greater weather extremes of drought as well as flooding .

In short we say " enough is enough and no more " to any redevelopment of the Golf Course for housing and we are determined to do all in our power to ensure that any planning application submitted is rejected for the reasons set out in this letter .

Yours sincerely

Cllrs Stainton , Oppler , Madeley , Stanley

To Karl Roberts , Director of Planning , ADC Copy to Arun CEO , Cllr Chapman
Chairman of Planning Arun DC Nick Gibb MP Felpham PC Felpham Ward Members
Local County Cllrs

