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From: Adrian Bennett

Sent: 30 March 2022 10:28

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

Subject: Objection to Planning Application FP/274/21/OUT

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Good morning

Having spoken to Silvie at the Planning Department in Worthing, yesterday, as she advised, I set out below my objections to Application **FP/274/21/OUT (re the existing Bognor Regis Golf Club area)**

Kind regards

Adrian Bennett

39 Lime Kiln Coppice, Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 8FZ

Dear Councillors, Planners

30th March 2022

FP/274/21/OUT (re the existing Golf Club area)

I am a near neighbour to the Golf Course and thus to the proposed site and am appalled by the idea of even more houses in the vicinity and very concerned about the impact this proposal will have

However, before listing my objections below, I would first ask, what has changed in our local plan ("to keep us safe") to warrant any discussion on this topic?

I refer you to an article (I presume you are all aware of this, but to emphasise the point) published at (<https://www.bognorregispost.co.uk/2017/12/homes-golf-club-ruled/>) by the BognorRegisPost on 17th December, 2017, entitled "**Homes at golf club ruled out**". Extracts below:

- HOMES should not replace tees at Bognor Regis Golf Club
- Councillors have ruled out allocating the open site in Felpham for housing in their emerging local plan
- The latest draft version of Arun District Council's land use...will exclude the prospect of residential development at the golf club off Golf Links Road
- Arun's local plan sub-committee unanimously agreed last week to exclude the course from the plan's latest version
- A report to the debate, led by Arun planning policy team leader Julia Dawe, stated: "The criterion states class C3 residential use will not be considered appropriate. While the council considers that a mix of uses is acceptable in employment locations, including C1 halls of residence for workers and students, it does not support the use of C3 residential. It is, therefore, considered that the criterion is required."
- ...a formal response from Arun...says: "The council can confirm that initial discussions have taken place with representatives of the golf club to discuss the potential relocation of the golf

course and redevelopment of the existing site for some housing.” “The site has been assessed as part of the sustainability appraisal and this has concluded that, due to various constraints, the site is not suitable for allocation within the local plan. “As a consequence, reference to the golf club has not been included within the plan”

- “...there is no intention to allocate the site for residential development as part of the local plan.”

I fail to understand what could possibly have changed and why this application should not be dismissed out of hand (as outlined above by your predecessors)

I appreciate that it ticks so many To Do list boxes: housing = people = jobs = local economy boost, rates income, but a full account needs to be taken of the downsides in the immediate area: eg total lack of infrastructure, schools (Hallam say new pupils will be absorbed – really!?), buses, safety, medical facilities, loss of green space / habitat, pollution, flooding, traffic congestion et al. These issues are already apparent right now as we all know only too well and will only be made worse

One could of course simply say, why don't the developers put the new estate where the new Golf Club would be – but this really is a diversion, as the infrastructure issues still remain

I have spent quite some time trying to go through the 16 pages of Plan headers containing the 152 documents, some of which are anything up to, maybe more than, 129 pp long and opening up a couple of dozen or so – but frankly it is easier to simply look at the current situation around us and imagine what it would be like – its not that difficult to understand the impact

I believe that the Felpham Parish Council has, quite rightly and courageously, voted unanimously to reject this application and trust that you will do likewise

My objections are several fold:

Infrastructure

There is virtually no improved infrastructure in the area despite some 800+ new properties already having been built and the area cannot withstand more what is simply infilling

- No buses stop here; its impossible to live here without at least one car in the family
- There is insufficient healthcare – Flansham Surgery is already overloaded
- The schools are bursting at the seams
- There is just one corner shop (the café has recently closed down)
- Developers have failed to (automatically, or be forced to, when requesting planning permission):
 - install Wifi to the door, so connectivity is compromised
 - provide electric car chargers; none have been installed anywhere

Traffic

The A259 was busy before the recently built adjacent Barratts / Bovis developments

Since then:

- A Lidl has recently been built beside the Rolls Royce factory and, it seems, will soon be joined by Range, with access at the Shripney roundabout
- The unfinished Salt Box development has added even more traffic, since its access is to that same Shripney roundabout
- The McDonalds roundabout already backs up in the first place, with cars queuing for Macdonald take-aways, resulting in all exits being simultaneously blocked with traffic queuing to access the small retail park behind or the main roads through to Bognor or Chichester with all their retail parks, as well as towards Fontwell and Worthing. Together with the two developments above, this seriously exacerbates the problem
- And now it seems that a Lorry Parcel Delivery and Truck Pick Up service will be operating from what is now a (very wet and muddy) field beside Lidl – even more traffic and pollution
- We also have the airfield seemingly operational again after some hiatus. Noise apart, they are already a concern with flying so close over our houses and it will be even closer for any new builds, but they too contribute to more traffic at the same roundabouts
- With c500+ houses proposed to be built in this application, experience around us on the Barratts' estate, has proved that most properties have at least 2 private vehicles (not counting any commercial vehicles driven by residents, that are not, by covenant, supposed to be there in the first place) which will equate to the best part of an extra 1,000 more vehicles on the surrounding roads. Not to mention the vehicles that will service or visit these properties

Link Roads

It is not as clear as it seems from their plans where exactly the entrance and exits would be for this new estate. Again, as we well know from the Barratts / Bovis development, where the link roads were supposed to be upon application and where / how they ended up, are two different things!

Presumably these will exit the estate via Downview Road. The Consultants' view that this will not cause any disruption at the Felpham Road crossroad lights is truly laughable! Its going to be chaos on Downview Road and the surrounding roads. Just add the Butlins holiday makers and the school run and those going to work!

From a safety perspective, I imagine the residents in the immediate Downview Road area would have grave concerns; you only have to stand and watch motorists speeding along, even given the speed bumps that have been put in, which they try to avoid

Or worse, they somehow join the estate to A259 perhaps via the possible emergency exit route – this will not improve matters at the roundabouts! And what would be the impact on current traffic journey times; how long would this take to create?

And another point about safety - and these comments cover the whole Felpham / Shripney area. A casual glance at the state of the roads almost anywhere, will reveal more potholes than you can

shake a stick at. Downview Road is no exception; there are holes everywhere already. Just what will it become as heavy lorries drive up and down it carrying all the necessary equipment and items for building all these homes

I am inclined to believe that this latter A259 route is their ultimate goal and that Downview Road is a diversionary tactic, and that this would be the negotiating concession!

Are there other accesses planned that we are not aware of, in the current estates? Have Barratts retained, or are they proposing to sell, the area that they did not build on just by the A259 (originally for a school, then a sports ground and since when, silence), meaning that instead, the access could be at the current Barratts entrance roundabout – that would undoubtedly put a disproportionate and dangerous load on this tiny roundabout, especially with the poor sightline regarding traffic coming from Worthing way

In any event, its going to be more misery for current home dwellers and those travelling around here

Pollution, Environment & Nature

1,000 extra vehicles (in addition to those from the other new sites noted above) adding to the congestion will have a significant impact on pollution locally, given that there will also be more queueing as the traffic will be significantly slowed

And that is excluding all the vehicles that will require access during the building process, which will it seems impact Downview Road and those crossing it the most

More noise, more dust, more particle emissions and the loss of more green space – in its own right, it should be of serious concern that one of the few green corridors separating Felpham from Bognor Regis is potentially going to be swallowed up – at this rate of building, the whole area will soon be concrete

We should also not forget just how much this will disturb the flora and fauna in the area, with natural habitats ("homes", locations, food, cover, nesting...) increasingly being whittled away with all the developments and infilling in the area

Transport, Walking and Cycling

I note generally all the blather about walking and cycling and how healthy we will all be, and while I fully agree that these facilities should be improved, who are we kidding when we say (however well-intentioned), so that means there will be fewer cars - that's naïve twaddle and we all know it

Even if there is eventually a bus service along the A259, how many people will take that to do their shopping at Shripney and then lug it all about. No, they will do what we all do, jump into our cars and drive down to the retail centres there - why are they building (allowed to build?) all these in the first place, if not for the bulk buy, 1 stop shop? That probably explains why we have only 1 corner shop for 800+ houses today

Emergency Access to the Estates

There is already a major safety issue here with the inability of emergency vehicles being able to navigate through the "parked" vehicles or even get round corners, never mind other sizeable vehicles which also need access (these Covid days) eg the many delivery vehicles and of course refuse collection lorries

This emergency service issue already urgently needs to be addressed by the relevant Authorities – they should not be waiting for potential lives or properties lost to act

We have also had several crashes and many near misses on a couple of these corners and a house fire across the way

There is no reason to believe that it will be any different at the new estate – see Parking below

Parking

Again, as we know only too well, parking is already a major issue on these estates, especially with the lack of double yellow lines and signs at pinch points and given our many cul-de-sacs, particularly as there is no enforcement of the covenants in place which all owners had to sign. I am sure it will be identical on the proposed new estate

Parking thus overflows onto pavements, grassed areas, or into neighbouring areas, or people simply just park where they shouldn't. The whole area, current and proposed, needs restrictions and diligent enforcement by the relevant Authorities - or Companies which have been given the responsibility for "private" roads, where unadopted, and which should mirror those

This is made even worse as many occupiers use their garages as storage areas and thus park wherever they can. There are times when one can barely get in or out of the drive or garden gate because they just dump their vehicles and walk off. The minimalistic assigned "Visitors' parking" is overwhelmed by occupiers to the extent that such vehicles simply add to the problem. And, please note, the "V" for visitor parking, is invisible almost everywhere as it is never repainted – or respected

Drainage & Sewage

As the Developer's website admits, drainage is a serious problem and, as we have seen with our own eyes this past couple of years, the golf course has, during the storms, frequently been more of a lake, with much of the course totally under water. This problem exists on both sides of the A259 with significant flooding over an extensive area of low-lying fields

The floodplain is perilously close as it zigzags around, and that is borne out by the maps that have been submitted with the application. How certain is it that these new houses won't be flooded out? What impact will this new development have on its neighbours in the way of drainage or protection eg SUDS? Would you want to buy a house built on a swamp?

And while it may be an unpleasant topic, sewage is nevertheless already a major issue. As so many news reports have highlighted for many years now, our water companies do not seem able to manage our current sewage removal requirements and continue to dump gallons of neat sewage directly into our waterways and the sea along our immediate coast. It seems that simply fining them for breaking the rules is not improving matters in this regard as recent reports have, yet again, addressed

Other Amenities

Last but not least, anti-social behaviour (vandalism, drugs/dealing, bullying, broken trees and hedgerows...) has been a feature of youngsters on Blakes Mead as they have little to do within the estates, despite the presence of a Community Police Officer and indeed a prolonged period of Police visits to try and deter it. The football pitch was never built due to the land allocation being too small apparently. This anti-social behaviour will increase further as there will still be nothing to do

This proposal deserves to be rejected immediately as a non-starter, without further discussion, and not be promoted upwards on appeal to a Government Inspector who has no knowledge of the area

Yours,

Adrian Bennett