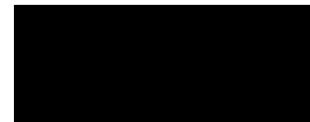




The countryside charity
Sussex

CPRE Sussex
Brownings Farm
Blackboys
East Sussex TN22 5HG



Mr Raymond Cole,
Case Officer
Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

17th July 2020

By Email: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Cole

F/4/20/OUT outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the development of up to 1,500 dwellings, 60-bed care home, B1 employment floorspace, local centre, land for a two-form entry primary school etc Land at Ford Airfield, Ford.

This site is allocated for mixed use including 1,500 homes in the adopted Arun Local Plan and Ford Neighbourhood Plan. The Ford Neighbourhood Plan states that the vision for Ford includes creating a new heart for the village; creating local amenities, jobs and education opportunities; retaining the Ford airfield car boot market; creating affordable housing for local people; creating housing for the elderly; preserving areas of agricultural land for food production; and, protecting the natural habitat within the area.

CPRE supported a Ford 'Making Places' two - day community workshop in June 2018 with Barton Willmore (the site promoters.) This was attended by 40 or so residents from Ford and the surrounding area, representatives from Wates Developments (one of the developers, along with Redrow Homes), the Sussex Community Housing Hub and a number of specialists.

CPRE welcomes the positive engagement the developers have had with the community and recognises that the design parameters proposed in the outline application partially reflect these discussions. In particular it welcomes the inclusion of:

- a 'heart' for Ford which includes the local centre and primary school in the centre of the development;
- the retention of the open-air market;
- the recognition in the design of historic and landscape features such as the airstrips and towpath.

To promote, enhance and protect a thriving countryside for everyone's benefit

President: Lord Egremont

Campaign to Protect Rural England Sussex Branch CIO | Registered charity number: 1156568

Facebook : www.facebook.com/CPRESussex | Twitter : @cpresussex

There are, however, some outputs from the workshop which have not been reflected in the proposed design. The proposed plans a spine road going north-south through the site. There were very strong views voiced at the workshop that there should not be a vehicular north-south route through the development site. Participants were keen to avoid creating a rat run through the site - *"Don't put a main road through the middle of the site. It will divide the community."*

There were also strong views about the nature of the heart of the development – especially having a central village green perhaps with a community orchard and village pond - a focal point where people could gather for events. Instead, the proposals show the primary school on one side of the road, parades of shops/other buildings on the other side and a piece of irregularly shaped 'left over' green space to the rear.

Making the green space the focal point of the heart as a village green would create a better sense of place and making the road part of the public open space would also help to slow speeds and discourage through traffic.

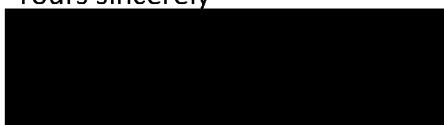
The community also wished to see the development having strong connectivity with the adjacent countryside and to nearby services such as Ford and Ford and Barnham railway stations, the A259 cycle path (and onwards to Littlehampton) and to the proposed cycle route along the river (linking to Arundel). Whilst there is some mention in the application of such connections there is insufficient detail to understand what off-site improvements are proposed to be provided or funded by this development. The proposals should improve provision for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders to access the countryside and the facilities that they need. The current Covid-19 situation has emphasised how important it is to our health and well-being to be able to safely exercise outdoors, and how much such facilities can reduce vehicular traffic on the roads.

The community also wished to see wildlife opportunities maximised and a strong green and blue infrastructure network across the site and linking into adjacent habitats. It is noted that there is an opportunity to reinstate the part of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal crossing the site, and this could be part of the wider Ford-Hunston Greenway project. Whilst the towpath is shown as a retained route in the proposed plans, insufficient space has been left to fulfil the potential of this Greenway.

We are pleased to see reference to the Ford Community Land Trust (CLT) and welcome a formal agreement with the CLT to ensure that the needs of the local community are met.

CPRE Sussex looks forward to continuing to work with the community and developers to ensure that this scheme creates a well-designed village with a heart and a distinct identity as more detailed design proposals are submitted.

Yours sincerely



Kia Trainor
Director