

Rev'd Jim Field
14 York Road,
Littlehampton.
BN17 6EN

10th June 2019

Ref: LU/125/19/PL

My objection to the proposed new build in York Road/York Gardens.

ARUNDEL
TECHNICALS

1 JUN 2019

First, I am sympathetic to the national need for more low cost housing/ accommodation but cramming more rooms into an already overcrowded area with little managerial oversight is in not an intelligent solution.

Second, the parking in roads with double terraced housing is notoriously difficult anywhere and already recorded here but in York Road we additionally have cars parked from the Arundel road and adjacent roads where parking is restricted. Having to find a parking slot in the evening is extremely difficult and often results in us [elderly] residents parking one, two or even three streets away from our house.

Third, and by far the most important in my experience, is the downward slippery slope of social decline. I was for eight years the parish priest on a 'social dumping' ground estate in North Kent [Kings Farm, Gravesend]. Once quite a decent community the local authority, Gravesham, decided to introduce dysfunctional families to 'raise their game'. What in fact was raised was the crime rate. More difficult families and individuals who had been evicted from other council properties were moved in and the crime rate soared. Decent families moved out and other adjacent authorities took the opportunity to offload some of their problem families/individuals, including at least one London Borough. Council houses were not maintained or repaired, some houses were boarded up, burnt out cars were left on the streets, a newly installed CCTV post was sawn down and the police rarely put in appearances [when they did two patrol cars attended the second protecting the first from damage]. Much of my time was spent with the fallout from drugs, prostitution, theft, arson, loan sharks, pimps and the like. It probably came to a head when my Rectory was arsoned and burned to the ground with all my possessions - this made national news. On a visit by Rt Hon Michael Howard, then Home Secretary, he said to me, "I didn't realised that people could actually live like this". The downward slide is easy to start, usually with speculators and councils looking for an easy solution to difficult housing problems. The upward spiral is hard to kick-start.

Many seaside towns once had large houses, often holiday guest houses but now largely converted into multi-occupancies prone to the inevitable downward spiral. Just look at Margate, once a splendid seaside town but now a downmarket bedsit land. Don't let Littlehampton follow suit!

Rev'd Jim Field.

