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25th February 2017

Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton BN17 5LF

Dear Sir or Madam

**Applications: P/134/16/OUT Sefter Road
P/140/16/OUT Pagham Road
P/6/17/OUT Hook Lane**

I fully accept that we need to provide housing for our growing population and that due consideration must be given to providing this on suitable sites. However, I believe that further careful consideration needs to be given to the positioning and sustainability of housing developments detailed in the above planning proposals and I firmly believe that **Sefter Road, Pagham Road and Hook Lane** sites are unsuitable for the proposed development of 1330+ homes on current Greenfield land.

Firstly the area is comprised of prime farmland; records show that the local environment makes it an exceptional growing climate producing some of the highest yields per acre anywhere in the country. As we prepare to leave the EU, we will need to become more dependent on producing our own food and less reliant on EU imports. Therefore all arable land that is recognised as high grade should be kept available for this. This area has some of the most fertile land in the country and should be kept available for food production, **as once built over it is lost forever!**

A clear example has been provided this year due to the possible impact of climate change, where the poor weather in Spain over the winter 2016/2017 has caused a shortage of vegetables here in the UK leading to self-imposed 'rationing'. With an increasing population we will need all the highest grade agricultural land to produce the quantity of food that we need to support it; **it therefore seems illogical to build on it!**

This point could not be better illustrated than in the article I have attached from the Daily Mail, Saturday 25 February.

Secondly, the area is notoriously prone to flooding and **Pagham Road**, the **Lower Bognor Road** and other local roads that link to them have been closed on occasions as a result. As recently as 2012 the whole area including Chichester suffered severe flooding and development on flood plains can only exacerbate this.

In terms of the local infrastructure, the main single track road leading to **Pagham** is extremely busy especially at rush hour and particularly throughout the summer holiday season. For anyone experiencing a lengthy wait when turning right from **Sefter Road** will know, this area is already congested and it currently presents a safety hazard without any additional traffic that development will bring. In addition the road is used by many large HGVs driving to local farms and distribution centres for transportation of produce. I understand that further HGV movements will occur if planning is granted for a new produce distribution centre generating further congestion. Additional construction vehicles on such an unsuitable road over the number of years that housing development will take would present yet another hazard. Public transport in the area is poor and the development would lead to further increased traffic

congestion as the population increases, as there is little work locally and most people will need to commute out of the area.

From information provided by the development contractor, it is stated that Grove House surgery at Rose Green is local to the **Sefter Road** site. Clearly little consideration has been given to the impact that an increased local population will have on an already extended medical service, where difficulties in recruiting Doctors has been noted which has led to an already overcrowded surgery.

In terms of coping with the populations requirements, it is understood from experts that Portsmouth Water has had difficulties in treating the foul water produced by the current numbers and that untreated sewage has been released into Pagham harbour on a number of occasions. With an increasing population driven up by regional development, what proposals have been put in place to deal with this issue in the years to come, are we looking at a potential health hazard!

Where are the provisions for improved infrastructure and additional healthcare to come from? The proposed development simply does not appear to be sustainable!

In addition, it appears that no decision has been made with regard to the A27 upgrades and it is considered imperative that no development should be undertaken in the surrounding district until a firm plan has been established. Queuing along the A27 when returning from Chichester is a regular experience, and this is without any of the regular events held at Goodwood! The local narrow roads have not been upgraded to cope with current traffic use (particularly HGVs) and there appear to be no proposals in place for this. Furthermore, the traffic lights at Oving are being closed which is likely to result in more traffic from the peninsula being directed onto existing roundabouts on the A27, causing further backed up congestion of the local road network

Having attended local public meetings regarding the development proposals in the area, at which knowledgeable and experienced individuals gave creditable arguments regarding how aspects of such developments will have a very negative impact; it was very evident that there is great strength of opposition from the local population who listened intently to well-presented information and that these and other proposed local developments will be strongly opposed.

I am firmly of the belief that the sites outlined are unsuitable for the proposed development and that the Council should be concentrating on using brown field sites in the first instant rather than reducing our valuable arable land, which seems very short sighted.

I would therefore strongly recommend that these proposals as they stand be rejected.

Yours sincerely



Michael Skinner

c.c. **Nick Gibb MP** for Bognor Regis and Littlehampton

George Eustice MP Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Savid Javid MP Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

British salad all year, grown under lights

By Sean Poulter
Consumer Affairs Editor

BRITISH-GROWN salad leaves will be sold 365 days a year with crops being grown in vast greenhouses under LED lights.

The technology means families who want salad in the depths of winter will no longer have to rely on imports from Spain or even the US.

Crops are being grown in a 1.5 hectare glasshouse at Evesham in Worcestershire, which runs efficient LED lighting, heating and watering.

The first product to come out of the spring-like microclimate is the Waitrose British Chard & Salad Leaves bag. However, Waitrose is charging the same as if it was importing them from Spain - £1.99 for a 100g bag.

Under the new system, the salad is grown using hydroponic technology, which means the crops are being constantly fed with nutrient-rich water.

It takes 35-40 days to grow the salad in these conditions compared with up to 112 in the field, so the yield is almost three times higher.

Rather than using chemical sprays to keep out pests, the

Go exotic, farmers urged

BRITAIN needs to grow more 'exotic' vegetables and stop relying on foreign imports, a farming leader has said.

Meurig Raymond, president of the NFU, spoke out after a national shortage of some vegetables caused by appalling weather in Spain.

Speaking ahead of the NFU conference in Birmingham, he said: 'British people want

to source more British food. The costs may be higher in the UK but the lack of these exotic vegetables has caused the issues we have seen.'

He said Britain has the glasshouses and polytunnels needed to grow courgettes, aubergines and lettuce. It comes after stores rationed veg amid a crop crisis caused by poor Spanish weather.

project, developed by salad supplier Wingland Foods, will introduce beneficial insects such as ladybirds to eat any bugs that could damage the plants.

The fact that the salad is being harvested in Worcestershire, rather than Murcia, in southern Spain, means they are much fresher when they reach customers.

Procurement manager at Wingland Foods, Rob Stevens, said: 'Our expert team are working on expanding the range of leaves available and bringing in new varieties of leaf, as well as ensuring the consistency in flavour, texture and size that is

delivered to customers.' Head of fresh produce at Waitrose, Nicola Waller, said: 'It's great to see the first of our British salad bags hitting the shelves so early in the season.'

'Developing this innovative new way of growing salad leaves means that we can source from the UK all year round, going even further in our commitment to British farming.'

It comes after an appalling run of weather in Spain, including drought, floods and snow, ruined crops this winter.

As a result, British stores were forced to ration sales of lettuces, broccoli, courgettes, aubergines and cabbage.

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Daily Mail - Sat. 25/2/17