

# **The Steyning Society**

## **Further objection to DC/21/2233 Land north of Glebe Farm and Kings Barn Lane, Steyning, May 2024**

This objection is made on behalf of the Steyning Society by the Secretary, Tony Struthers OBE, MRTPI (Rtd)

### **Context**

The Society has previously objected to this application. However, as the Horsham District Plan Reg. 18 has now been published and many local residents have commented on these proposals we have revised and updated our objection. It is now 4 years since the application was lodged.

This is a speculative planning application with no foundation or relationship to the needs of Steyning or its community. We consider that it should be refused on the basis of prematurity, scale, design, affordability, water neutrality, highways, Lithium Battery storage and lack of community consultation.

### **Prematurity and Scale**

The Steyning Society **objects** to this planning application as it is premature. We consider that in respect of NNPF para. 49 *“the development proposed is so substantial ....that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to (the) emerging plan”*

The site was not allocated in the Horsham District Council's District Planning Framework 2015 and according to the most recent SHLAA is contrary to Policies 1 to 4 and 26. However, it has now been put forward in the latest District Plan Reg. 18 but it is still subject to the public examination.

In our representations on the District Plan we noted that the Council had failed to consult the Parish Council and that the examining Inspector cannot be satisfied that proper account has been taken of the potential sites available in Steyning, the needs of the Town or of the facilities, services and amenities available in the Town or of their adequacy.

We consider that the applicants have failed to show how the facilities, services and amenities of the town would be capable of withstanding the significant increase in the Town's population inherent in adding 266 homes to a town with a population of 5,124 (approximately 15%).

The site is very open and sits within an area which forms part of the landscape setting of the existing built form of Steyning, with wide open views across the Adur valley north and to the South Downs National Park. The visual impact resulting from development would urbanise the eastern edge of Steyning extending development into the wider open countryside. It would also lead to the loss of existing recreational land. It abuts an area of significant flood risk and would require significant mitigation to protect any proposal from the risk of flooding in the future or the effects of climate change. There are likely to be impacts on biodiversity given the designation of some of this land for biodiversity importance.

We understand that the housing needs assessment for Steyning is for around 165 homes over the next 15 years - at 265 the number proposed by this application is greatly in excess of stated needs.

### **Design**

As this is an outline application, no detailed designs have been submitted. It therefore fails to show how it implements the key features of the National Design Guide. In addition, In terms of landscape, we endorse the concerns of the South Downs National Park Authority and the likely impact on the setting of the National Park. There is a failure to show a landscape led approach or how the proposals will enhance the Park or minimise the impact.

### **Affordability**

Although the application refers to 35% affordability for the housing component, we can find no explanation of how this is to be implemented. The % seems to be confused as one of the documents quotes 40% as the percentage. There is no indication of any agreement with a housing provider such as a housing association. We consider there must be a cast iron guarantee of the amount and how and where affordable housing is to be provided.

### **Water Neutrality and Flooding**

It is recognised that the District is situated in an area of serious water stress. This is now a material consideration and applications must demonstrate that they are “water neutral” or do not result in a significant effect.

Many local residents have commented on the potential for flooding in the area and the impact of such development on the northern chalk stream. We have seen no evidence that this issue will be satisfactorily resolved and are concerned that local flooding will be further exacerbated by the proposals.

### **Highways**

We remain concerned that the existing 60 mph speed limit on the A283 must be adjusted to a lower limit to take account of the new roundabout and its access to the site. We can find no mention of this.

We also need reassurance that there will be **no** vehicle access to the site except for emergency access onto Kings Barn Lane. It is essential that the site is only accessible for walkers and cyclists unless there is an emergency.

### **Lithium Battery Energy Storage and Sewage Pumping Station**

There is no assessment of the implications and dangers posed by the site of Lithium Battery Storage System which is situated in Kings Barn Lane and is adjacent to the proposed development.

There is no mention of the Sewage Pumping Station and its proximity to the proposed development and its implications.

### **Consultation**

#### **The Steyning Society as the local civic society was not consulted by the applicants.**

Usually with a major proposal such as this there would be an exhibition, public meetings and consultation with local residents. There should have been a public exhibition in the Steyning Centre so that all residents of the town were aware of the proposals and properly consulted.

We can find no mention of consultations with the school or local medical practice. A wider and more comprehensive consultation should have been undertaken and this would have provided a proper community response.

**For the reasons as set out in this note The Steyning Society objects to planning application DC/21/2233 - Land north of Glebe Farm and Kings Barn Lane**

- **Prematurity and scale**
- **Design**
- **Affordability**
- **Water neutrality**
- **Highways**
- **Lack of and inadequate consultations**
- **Battery storage danger**