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Monday, 25 November 2019

Dear Candidate,

I represent Village Concerns, a Local Action Group from the Parish of East Hoathly with Halland. We are campaigning to protect the character and ambience of our Parish. Village Concerns endeavours to ensure that development in the Parish is sustainable. We monitor housing proposals and galvanise the community to either endorse beneficial developments or challenge those that are unsustainable.

Village Concerns was established in 2016 when a developer submitted a proposal to build 205 homes on greenfield land which would increase the number of homes in the village of East Hoathly by 63 %. This was followed by other developers for an additional 200 homes in East Hoathly and 90 elsewhere in the Parish.

This follows on from a development in 2009 where 75 homes were built in East Hoathly increasing the size of the community by 25 %.

These proposals are unsustainable and would destroy this historic rural community.

This community has been on the limits of sustainability for decades yet has seen no improvements in infrastructure. Sustainability has actually reduced in the last decade:

Closure of a Pub.

Reduction in GP availability - many patients now diverted to Buxted.

No School places available.

No employment vacancies in the parish.

Bus services reduced with service to Lewes/Brighton cancelled completely.

Village Concerns supports the Submission Wealden Local Plan and believes that it puts housing in areas where infrastructure is more sustainable. It proposes a sensible precautionary approach to the protection of the Ashdown Forest and

Lewes Downs SACs. Village Concerns is strongly opposed to the the complacent approach of Natural England and neighbouring Local Authorities who are arguing that air quality is not a problem in the SACs or generally in Wealden. We specifically object to Natural England's stance that traffic emissions are causing no problems to the Ashdown Forest. Stage One of the Public Hearing of the Local Plan produced a significant amount of contradictory evidence from opposing experts in Air Quality. It is therefore logical that Wealden's precautionary approach is supported.

We urge that you support the Submission Wealden Local Plan and support our opposition to the unwanted and unsustainable planning applications in our Parish. Visit our website for more information - www.villageconcerns.co.uk

We have the support of over 130 households from this Parish and you may also be interested to note the two attached recent editorials that show how opinion on these matters is moving.

Thank you in anticipation of your reply, regarding your views on these matters.

Kate Richardson
Chair of Village Concerns

