

Mid Sussex

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Leader



The Voice of Burgess Hill, Hassocks, Haywards Heath, Hurstpierpoint, Plumpton Green, Wivelsfield Green.

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Hearing blasted as a 'kangaroo court'



HAYWARDS HEATH

Countryside campaigners fear planning 'free for all'

THE fate of a plan to build thousands of new homes is hanging in the balance.

The first public hearing of the Mid Sussex District Plan took place this week at Oaklands in Haywards Heath.

More than 100 people crammed into the building to watch the Governments' planning inspector examine whether the council has been co-operating properly with its neighbouring councils.

Campaigners claim the area is already being targeted by developers who are hoping for a planning 'free for all'.

The Council for the Protection of Rural England has warned that the district's green field sites could be lost forever.

The inspector is due to make his ruling in the next fortnight.

Dr Roger Smith from CPRE said: "From the start of the hearing there appeared to be a presumption on the part of the Inspector that MSDC had not complied fully with the duty to co-operate.

"At one point the inspector reminded participants that the hearing was about duty to co-operate, not housing targets, and then allowed the developers' representatives to continue to comment on and interrogate MSDC's Claire Tester on MSDC's housing target. This was more like a kangaroo court than a hearing."

