

25th November 2016

Dear Supporters

The Mid Sussex District Plan Examination Hearing Sessions begins on Tuesday, 29th November. It is anticipated to take three days and LAMBS will be represented by Martin Carpenter from Enplan (funded by your donations) and he will be supported throughout by members of the committee.

We have made a number of expert submissions since January 2015, including drainage, flood risk, ecology and transport to highlight the unsustainability of the new settlement promoted by Mayfields.

Last week, Mayfields sent a letter to all Mid Sussex District and Parish councillors encouraging them to make the choice to support their new town which patently undermines the Neighbourhood plans already in place. Please find a copy below of our letter to councillors highlighting the inaccuracies of Mayfields' arguments.

We are hopeful this Hearing is our final hurdle, but should the Inspector find a shortfall in the housing numbers giving Mayfields the opportunity to promote their new town, LAMBS, with your support will continue the campaign against Mayfields.

We will keep you updated on the progress of the Hearing.

Kind regards

LAMBS

Dear Councillor

You will have recently received a letter from Mr Peter Freeman who is a founding Director of the property company, Mayfield Market Towns.

Mayfields is a speculative venture which is promoting proposals for a new market town on a rural site straddling the Horsham/Mid Sussex boundary. Due to the obvious unsuitability of this location these proposals have been overwhelmingly rejected by local councils, MPs, land owners and residents. They

have also been rejected as “severely disadvantaged” by the government Inspector who examined the Horsham Local Plan. This site is an area of high flood risk, it is seven miles from the railway line and, due to its unspoilt nature, provides habitat for more than 60 listed and endangered species of wildlife.

We would like to draw your attention to the extravagant claims made by Mr Freeman in his correspondence to you (dated 17 Nov 2016). We believe many of his assertions are inaccurate and misleading. Mr Freeman is asking you to pressurise your council to consider his proposal as a viable CHOICE for Mid Sussex which is totally unrealistic.

Please see the following more accurate analysis of this company’s position:

Does Mayfields control enough land to be deliverable?

Mayfield Market Towns has not evidenced *any* ownership or control of land, despite being specifically requested to do so by the Planning Inspector examining the Horsham Local Plan last year. As outlined in Mr Freeman’s letter, the land on which Mayfields claims to have secured options is made up of a series of ‘parcels’ and, from our understanding, these are predominantly in Horsham District and therefore not available to Mid Sussex. As you know the Horsham Local Plan has now been adopted and specifically excludes the Mayfields proposal, which was described by the Inspector as “severely disadvantaged.”

LAMBS has documentary evidence of more than 4,000 acres of land within Mayfields’ target area where the owners are unwilling to sell to this company. In addition to this, extensive professional reports on transport, flooding and ecology within the area all highlight the undeliverability of the Mayfields proposal.

As openly stated in Peter Freeman’s letter the best Mayfields could achieve is clusters of housing on “Several” “parcels of land” - therefore to claim this is the “Masterplan” for a deliverable “market town” is pure fantasy.

Does Mayfields have the financial backing?

Mayfield Market Towns is not a developer - this company was specifically incorporated to promote this one scheme and its 2015 accounts show it has negative net assets. Mayfields is a purely speculative venture which is designed to make money for its directors and investors who will not be responsible for building any houses. The development at Kings Cross which Mr Freeman refers to in his letter has been the subject of controversy regarding its provision of social housing. Mayfields does not have sufficient financial backing to deliver its plans and the fact that it has sold half the company to Affinity Homes does not change this situation. Mayfields has made no secret of the fact that its financial model relies on purchasing land at agricultural values which is highly unrealistic.

Does Mayfields have the skills and the vision?

Mayfields does not have a coherent plan. Its proposed area of development has 'yoyoed' between Horsham and Mid Sussex and is constantly changing location, shape and form.

Mayfields' knowledge of the area is woeful:

This Company's first submissions to Horsham District Council labelled Haywards Heath as "Haywoods Heath" and Worthing as "Bognor Regis." Mayfields most recent 'Main Representations' to Mid Sussex District Council refer to Bolney Sub-station as "Botley" and routes a fast bus link to the railway station through the bottle neck of Hurstpierpoint High Street.

In acknowledgement of the problems posed by the absence of a railway line, Mayfields' first solution was to suggest that golf buggies should be used for the 7 mile journey to Burgess Hill Station!

Will Mayfields have less impact on residents than a group of alternative schemes? /Does Mayfields offer you protection from speculative development elsewhere in the District? /Will Mayfields be more successful in creating a community than add-on developments?

Eleven Parish Councils, two District Councils, two MPs and the vast majority of people living in and around the wider affected area vehemently oppose Mayfield Market Towns. This proposal fails on every criteria of the government's policy on new settlements and localism. Sir Nicholas Soames and Nick Herbert both ran in the 2015 general election on an anti-Mayfields ticket, and we have been advised that both will be speaking against the proposal at the Mid Sussex hearing (as they did at the Horsham hearing.) All of the parishes in and around the site have 'made' neighbourhood plans which roundly reject the Mayfields proposal.

Mayfield Market Towns is ignoring Mid Sussex District Councils' own locally led projects and flying in the face of the government's flagship policy of 'Localism.' Mayfields is based on a view that Mid Sussex forms part of the Brighton housing market area and should be treated as a suburb.

Yours faithfully,

LAMBS

