

22nd December 2017

Dear LAMBS Supporter,

Firstly, we would like to apologise for disturbing you at this time of the year. However, it appears that MMT is on another publicity drive and we have been taking action on your behalf.

During the past week MMT has written to all your local Councillors, sending out a re-hashed version of it's so called 'Vision'. LAMBS responded immediately with the attached correspondence.

There is nothing new in MMT's latest propaganda - it is simply a recycling of old, tired and typically inaccurate material. However, the local newspapers - always desperate for stories at this time of year - have been persuaded to write a front page story which promotes MMT as a 'serious proposition' (as quoted in the Mid Sussex Times).

LAMBS is now urging people to write to the Middy questioning its decision to run the story at all for the following reasons:

- MMT is just speculation and is totally at odds with the Local Plan. Stories like this are damaging to local communities and are blighting a huge area of Sussex.
- MMT has a history of publishing inaccurate information and making false claims.
- MMT is just one of dozens of companies and individuals to respond to Mid Sussex District Council's call for sites. Why have they been singled out by the newspaper?
- This is just propaganda for speculative developers - surely not the role of a local paper.

An image of the newspaper's front page can be seen on the Middy's Facebook page at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/MidSussexTimes/photos/a.322797144450728.79727.322651164465326/1706209992776096/?type=1&theatre>

The email address for letters is: [middy.news@jpress.co.uk](mailto:middy.news@jpress.co.uk)

The editor's name is Gary Shipton.

The journalist who wrote the story is [joshua.powling@jpress.co.uk](mailto:joshua.powling@jpress.co.uk)

Apologies again for the timing of this email.

With warmest best wishes for a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year from

## LAMBS

Attachments:

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Councillorletter.dec17.docx	29.6 kB



Dear Ms Aplin

*I realise you are new to Mayfield Market Towns having only joined the Board on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and living outside the county (like all the MMT team!), but we read your article in this week's Mid Sussex Times and are concerned that you may have been misled. As a result, we are writing to help you out with some of the facts.*

*You said that you want to “engage with people who see MMT as a solution”. MMT tried this before in an advertising campaign in February 2017 which asked residents to contact their councillors. These adverts were so misleading MMT was censured by the ASA; and when LAMBS asked the Council about the impact they were told that no Councillors were approached as a result. This suggests that you may be looking for people who do not exist as no-one recognises the need for the solution MMT proposes; preferring to trust the Councils’ existing plans as supported by the Planning Inspector. You might have been told that this support existed as a result of the IPSOS Mori poll (repeated in the “Vision”) which states 71% of local people support the idea of MMT. If this is the case, finding supporters should be easy. However if, as reported in the County Times on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014, this was a highly misleading survey then perhaps it explains why you are having this difficulty.*

*You told the Mid Sussex Times that MMT is a “serious proposition”, probably based on the GL Hearn report and things you have been told. However, if you actually read this report (which was rejected by the Councils) then you will see it focuses on a different area of search and states that the area to the West that MMT is promoting was excluded due to its impact on the National Park. In addition multiple studies have shown development in the MMT area to be unsustainable due to transport and flooding issues. If you want to know more about this history, we suggest you contact the local Council, MPs and Horsham Inspector who have all opposed the scheme for these reasons.*

*We know that MMT does finally own some land in the area with the purchase of 46 acres which I am sure will prove a sound investment in time. This may have led you to believe that MMT has control over the land needed to complete the rather ill-defined “solution”; however, at the 2014 Horsham hearing MMT refused to provide any evidence, only stating that it “controlled” over 800 acres through options. MMT was never clear when these expired, but I expect it must be soon. In contrast, LAMBS submitted a map*

*demonstrating all the local landowners and residents who have not provided options which covered most of the area. MMT has said that the way to make the "solution" work would be through compulsory purchase which is hardly the "locally led and supported" development that the Government means by a Garden City. We do not think that this is likely as neither Council need the additional housing in one place as they have existing plans which do not require another 10,000 homes built on green-field flood plain. Their greater need is for affordable housing close to transport with services other than stables for all the horses.*

*We realise that you have probably been badly misled, but are not surprised as the MMT backers are very credible, rich, well connected, persistent and want to build a legacy somewhere. However, the good news is that the Vision document that they have produced can be used in almost any part of the country so hopefully you will get a chance to take the scheme somewhere closer to home like Taunton or Ramsbury where it may gain local support. Should you wish to know more then we would be happy to meet up if you are ever visiting Sussex, or you could always visit the LAMBS website at [www.lambs.org](http://www.lambs.org) which would provide facts about the situation rather than PR from Meeting Place Communications.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Geoff Zeidler*

*Chair, LAMBS*



Dear Councillor,

Firstly, many apologies for disturbing you at this time of year, however, the information contained in this email is of the utmost importance.

Earlier this week you will have received a 'Vision Document' from a London property company, Mayfield Market Towns (MMT), together with a letter from one of the company's Directors, Deborah Aplin. Unfortunately, as with many previous publications by the same company, this 'vision' is essentially inaccurate and highly misleading.

MMT has a poor track record in this area with a well documented history of publishing misleading information - in October the **Advertising Standards Authority upheld a complaint against MMT** for making false claims about this same proposal.

Sadly, this company is relying on the trusting nature of councillors and the general public who it hopes will believe what they read.

Please note the following **facts** in relation to Mrs Aplin's letter to you:

1. The GL Hearn report to which she refers identified four options but, critically, it **did not** identify the area west of Sayers Common as 'the most suitable area.' **In reality**, the report specifically excluded the area in which MMT claims to have 'acquired land.' When directly comparing the GL Hearn report with MMT's 'vision' on a map, it is clear that in fact, the two have very little in common.
2. GL Hearn did not identify the area to the west of Sayers Common for many reasons. Perhaps the most far reaching and damaging of these is the clear impact mass development here would have on the iconic view from Devil's Dyke (known as John Constable's 'Grandest View in the world'). This is exactly why the GL Hearn report stated that *'The location of the new market town should ensure that it does not adversely affect the setting of the Higher Weald AONB to the north and the South Downs National Park to the south.'*
3. MMT comprehensively fails to address the insurmountable issue of transport. This fundamental shortcoming was a major factor behind Horsham Planning Inspector, Geoff Salter's, rejection of the scheme. Mr Salter's report stated; 'to my mind significant concerns have been raised about the sustainability of the location of the Mayfields site, in particular its distance from the railway services and the strategic road network and the potential usage and viability of the park and ride proposals.
4. Mrs Aplin's letter refers to an Ipsos Mori Survey carried out in 2014. At the time the survey was the subject of many complaints for its biased nature - the resulting article published in the local paper is attached.

Whilst LAMBS has never advocated that development is not needed, development must be in the right places and not simply at the whim of a group of individuals who have no connection with the area and are intent on destroying thousands of acres of Sussex countryside simply for profit.

The government has also stated repeatedly that new settlements must be 'locally led.'

LAMBS hopes these clarifications and corrections will be helpful to you and trust you as our Councillors to make the right decisions on our behalf.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

LAMBS