

communication from Save Wealden from Overdevelopment Team (SWOT)

The following information from SWOT is regarding a meeting they and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) had yesterday with Wealden District Council.

SWOT is also an umbrella organisation helping villages like East Hoathly and larger urban areas in Wealden to oppose the threat of what could happen.

Both SWOT and CPRE are absolutely brilliant, with a wealth of knowledge and we cannot thank them enough.

David C and Nick are from SWOT. The writer is David C.

Take the time to read this, below, as it should help all of us to understand the issues in more detail.

||

Considering we managed to get a meeting at all with top level Wealden Councillors, top Planning Team and MP's present, I thought CPRE and SWOT players got their message across very well in today's crunch meeting.

Huw Merriman kicked off the meeting by quoting the Government's 1 million homes by 2020 (does Theresa May still support this though now Cameron is out of the picture ?).

Lots of initial debate about Brownfield v Greenfield development benefits.

David C focused the meeting by stating the following :

- i. Presume that all see it as a problem that we do not have a 5YHLS – if not why not ?
- ii. Developer led now with little opportunity to defend inappropriate applications
- iii. WDC fear of Developer appeals / costs associated
- iv. Bob / Ann on record as saying the proposed Objectively Assessed Housing Need is too large
- v. Ann is dismayed at this OAN immediately impacting our 5YHLS – meeting with Brenden Lewis (she had since met with his team)
- vi. Wealden residents are 'up in arms' about what WDC is doing to their countryside assets
- vii. New Action Groups are forming weekly
- viii. Residents queuing up to see their MP's now regarding over development
- ix. Votes will be lost in 2020 for Councillors and MP's
- x. Residents want to see Wealden fight their corner – they want to see Wealden's will in protecting our landscapes
- xi. They want to see a will to put a positive spin on reaching 5YHLS – not negative
- xii. They want to see WDC stand up to Developers, HM Inspector and Government
- xiii. They value their countryside more than an inevitable increase in Council Taxes
- xiv. They are worried that WDC are chasing the New Homes Bonus revenues and sacrificing our countryside to get it

At that point I circulated the last 6 months impact of Greenfield / AONB applications in South Wealden

Lots of good input from Roger / John (CPRE).

Then handed over to Nick for his detailed OAN / 5YHLS questions / recommendations.

As expected, Nus Ghani left at this point !(although she did say she would leave after 45 minutes initially).

No come back on Nick's questions / recommendations from Marina / Planning Team other to say she believed the SHMA was correct (but all others listening).

Nick presented his paper for moving the 5YHLS to 5.83 years by two simple steps; change to the Liverpool method for dealing with backlog (approved by HM Inspector in Lewes) and include future windfalls.

Kelvin came in at this point to say Barrister recommendations said they could not include future windfalls but was unprepared to say why - despite the Wealden Annual Monitoring Report saying that windfalls to date were running at 247 per annum.

Kelvin then announced the following;

- the SHMA is due to be revised prior to submission to Full Council (23rd Nov 2016 - a great day for public protest at Wealden if no note is taken of our recommendations !!!)

- the 5YHLS to be revised in October 2016

- Duty to cooperate (Eastbourne quota 2,000 homes) has been ditched !

All agreed (politely) that the meeting had been useful !

Nick / Roger to send documents discussed to Huw/NUs / Wealden as follow up.

Bob Standley mentioned Wealden's plan to fund a Housing Development Company - I said as long as they don't use AONB lands !

Last comment was from David C to say if in the meantime lack of 5YHLS persists then Wealden Planning need to do more in terms of Planning Judgement (aka Hopkins/Richborough judgements) and ensure Planning Committee Councillors know they have an opportunity to disagree with developments in protected landscape and beyond the Development Boundaries.

''

David C said to Huw, In particular Vines Corner needs to be protected now.